

Monsters, daemons, and devils:

The Accusations of Nineteenth-Century Vegetarian Writers

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...if there are any whose tastes are so vitiated, and whose hearts are so hardened, as to delight in such inhuman sacrifices, and to partake of them without remorse, they should be looked upon as daemons in human shapes, and expect a retaliation of those tortures which they have inflicted on the innocent, for the gratification of their own depraved and unnatural appetites.¹

The supereminence [sic] of man is like Satan's, a supereminence of pain; and the majority of his species, doomed to penury, disease, and crime, have reason to curse the untoward event, that by enabling him to communicate his sensations, raised him above the level of his fellow animals.²

...I should not hesitate to conclude that this said custom of flesh-eating is either that very principle of evil which we denominate "the devil," or something so parallel with it, that by getting rid of this awkward habit, we should in great measure banish his satanic majesty from the face of the earth; and indeed from the whole universe; since here alone, among the variety of inhabited globes, has the devil, all this time, been carrying on his hateful operations.³

I find myself wondering at the outset whether, in these terms of Joseph Ritson, John Frank Newton and Percy Bysshe Shelley, my reader is a monster. If so, how should one begin?

A multitude of questions immediately present themselves for consideration: is anything but the most antagonistic communication possible when the vegetarian engages with the monster? If the possibility of genuine communication exists, can it be achieved without offending, alienating, or antagonising this awesome beast? Can the beast be tamed? Converted? Redeemed? Abjured? Or will my text be consumed, digested and eliminated

with as much consideration as that given to those unfortunate individuals who are routinely dismembered into monstrous foodstuff?

Foolish as they may seem, these opening jests draw attention to a genuine dilemma confronting vegetarian writers in the early nineteenth century. From the perspective of a meat eater, vegetarian discourse depends primarily upon what must appear to be a rather vicious and uncharitable characterisation of the production of meat and the people who produce and eat it. I have chosen the most extreme examples of the rhetoric of monstrosity available in each of the vegetarian texts I wish to explore and included them above to provide, first of all, a touch of provocation and controversy, but also to convey a sense of the difficulty one can experience when trying to balance an *uncensored* vegetarian perspective with the sensibilities of a non-vegetarian audience.

Of the three authors I consider in this piece, Shelley will not require introduction. Ritson and Newton, however, will be less familiar to many readers. Antiquarian Joseph Ritson (1752-1803), best known for his comprehensive compilation of Robin Hood lyrics and poems (comprising 2 volumes, published in 1795) converted to vegetarianism in 1772, maintaining that commitment steadfastly until his death thirty-one years later. Ritson was certainly an intensely idiosyncratic and vehement individual,⁴ as was John Frank Newton. In contrast to Ritson's radical bent, Morton describes Newton as conforming 'to the image of a faddish middle-class radical'.⁵ Percy and Harriet Shelley developed strong ties with Newton and his Zoroastrian, nudist, vegetarian family at Bracknell between 1812 and 1814. It was Newton's *Return to Nature* (1811), along with the example of vegetarian living he and his family modelled, which introduced and converted the Shelleys to vegetarianism. Although relatively unknown outside of vegetarian scholarship, Newton may be more familiar as the model used by Thomas Love Peacock for Mr Toobad in *Nightmare Abbey*.

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One of the foremost political priorities of vegetarian writing, today as much as it was in the early nineteenth century, is what Carol J. Adams calls restoring the absent referent.⁶ Adams defines the absent referent as follows:

Through butchering, animals become absent referents. Animals in name and body are made absent *as animals* for meat to exist... The absent referent permits us to forget about the animal as an independent entity; it also enables us to resist efforts to make animals present.⁷

Adams' term refers to absence in discourse as well as *absence from perception*, such as that generated by the secrecy and exclusion utilised to protect intensive farming practitioners from public backlash. Acts of vegetarian restoration involve challenging the discursive operation of the absent referent, an operation employed (both consciously and unconsciously) to distance human beings from the violent modes of production which produce their food, and thus from their responsibility for that violence.

As the vegetarian writers of the early nineteenth century consistently employ this strategy, later explicitly identified and developed by Adams in her critical theory, it is appropriate at this point to digress briefly in order to give a clear explanation of this aspect of Adams work, as well as some of the central ideas of Pierre Bourdieu's *Masculine Domination*, a text that has also proved very useful in approaching the work of early vegetarian writers.

When political vegetarian writing engages with instances of that negative manifestation which is the absent referent (as it frequently does in discourses such as those of agriculture, animal experimentation, or hunting, for instance), the restoration of *context-appropriate* terms such as 'murder' and 'torture' in the place of language deployed in order to elide

responsibility for violence and suffering, enacts the restoration of the absent referent.⁸

As an example of the kind of discursive context within which this vegetarian operation can be carried out, consider the self-representations of hunting as 'sport', of the hunter as sportsperson, with all of the corollary investment in values of fairness, 'fair play', an equal contest between 'adversaries', the esteem and priority of the hunter's skill, craft or even artistry, and the like. When we consider the reality of the modern, commercialised hunting experience (which has become the experience of the numerical majority composed largely of occasional hunters, individuals with limited opportunities or resources who consequently demand value for money when they engage the services of game reserves) the high-flown rhetoric of sportsmanship is speedily brought back down to earth:

The high powered guns and bows, one would imagine, change things a bit – as do the professional hunting guides, native guides, trackers, aerial and satellite photography services, static-free two-way radios with headsets, binoculars, barbed-wire fencing, infrared lights, motion detectors, heat sensors, "bionic ear" sound systems, herd transport and engineering, small aircraft and helicopter piloting, snowmobiles, all-terrain vehicles, thermal boots and camouflage, dog teams, baits, lures, decoys, mating callers, cub callers, high-powered scopes, and armor-piercing bullets that all these same sports are here to buy and sell.⁹

Any such gesture towards the restoration of subjectivity to animal victims, through an emphasis on their experience as opposed to rewritten, fictional human subjectivities which attempt to bypass the ethical consequences of violence, is a powerful tool of vegetarian discourse as it draws attention to both physical and *symbolic* systems of violence generally kept from our awareness as subjects.¹⁰

In the discussion that follows I argue that each of the vegetarian writers under consideration consistently employ such gestures as they draw upon a complicated, interdisciplinary framework in order to argue for the adoption of vegetarianism on a national scale. 'Monstrous consumption' is the phrase

I have chosen to describe the particular combinations of meat-based diet, physiology, individual and social psychology (monstrous consumption as practised by the individual) and their impact on economy and agriculture (monstrous consumption on national and global scales), that British vegetarian advocates sought to address through their writing.

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The first fifty years of the nineteenth century in England comprised a critical phase in the history of our continually changing relationships with other beings, witnessing the first, limited legislative gestures towards institutionalising more compassionate attitudes towards animals, the founding of the first societies dedicated to animal advocacy and protection, and the first English vegetarian and vegan organisations.

A particularly fascinating feature of these years was the emergence of a small group of ‘ethical vegetarian’¹¹ writers who appropriated the established discourses of medicine and, more specifically that of dietary ‘regimen’ in order to reach and more effectively persuade a wider audience to adopt a range of political opinions which might otherwise appear wholly unrelated to diet. In seeking to appropriate the authority invested in culturally dominant discourses they hoped successfully to negotiate the communicative dilemma I described in the opening paragraphs by approaching their readers through familiar, trusted discursive paradigms. While articulate and well informed, these individuals were self-educated, not acknowledged experts in the fields upon which they drew, as Newton’s opening comments make clear:

While I make no pretensions to medical science, I cannot consent to be reasoned or ridiculed out of my feelings; nor to believe that an illusion, the truth of which has been confirmed to me by long-continued and reiterated observation. (Newton 499)

None possessed formal medical training, and although each writer refers to medical publications as well as to their own empirical observations on diet and health (for both human and non-human beings) to support their vegetarian arguments, I will argue that their most persuasive, most enduring arguments; those most relevant to twenty-first century audiences, do not come from the institutionally authoritative discourses they appropriate (such as medical science or religious ethics) but derive from a discourse of 'feelings'.¹²

This prioritisation was not shared by their contemporary readers, however, and an awareness of the rhetorical strategies likely to be most effective in a Christian, meat-privileging monarchy is evident in all three texts. Publishing in 1802, 1812 and 1813 respectively, Ritson, Newton and Shelley (who also began a second, unpublished prose piece on vegetarianism in 1815), frequently employ scientific, medical and religious arguments, evidence from ethnographic and travel reports and interpretive readings of the Old Testament. While this content may appear, at times, to detract from an animal-advocacy emphasis in their work and to the significance of 'feelings' within their ethics,¹³ as I have suggested, this represents a rhetorical strategy directed towards the promotion of the political interests of the writers. I argue that twenty-first century readers should attempt to read the works in question with a sensitivity to their publishing context; to be mindful of the fact that much of the argumentation has been determined by attempts to anticipate receptive prejudices and therefore should not be taken lightly as a representative demonstration of a particular author's attitudes or ideas. In establishing the context of their publications, Rod Preece's observation on eighteenth and nineteenth century vegetarian publishing is particularly relevant:

We can presume with some confidence, if not with certainty, that animal interests were rarely mentioned by some of the vegetarian advocates, or rarely mentioned at length, not because they were thought irrelevant but

because it was thought that they would not resonate as effectively with the audience. Only an appeal to the maintenance of the reader's health could be fully persuasive.¹⁴

In discussing Shelley, Ritson and Newton we can expand the above notion of health to incorporate physical, mental and spiritual dimensions, each of equal significance. Within these vegetarian discourses this emphasis on interrelationships leads to a paradigm of health that extends to incorporate ecological and universal dimensions as the consequences of individual practice are extended into the external world.

This insistence on relationships between the internal and external, microcosmic and macrocosmic, brings scientific discourses into conjunction with psychological, social and economic discourses, so that the resulting writing, ostensibly concerned with personal dietary choices, articulates a highly complex *political economy of consumption*, able to combine the interests of various social groups into a single discourse where, conventionally, the commonalities between them were frequently either unperceived or unexpressed. The combination of socialist, feminist, atheist and animal advocacy perspectives in vegetarian writing allows for a much more powerful critique of systems of hereditary patriarchal privilege but it is not without its drawbacks. As any one of these ideological positions is likely to alienate a large segment of the population in early-nineteenth century Britain, we must question the efficacy of grouping them together into single discourses and consider the motives for doing so.

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It is indeed, observes Plutarch, a hard and difficult task to undertake (as Cato once say'd) to dispute with mens bellys that have no ears... and it is no easy task to pull the hook of fleth-eating from the jaws of such as have gorge'd themselves with luxury, and are, as it were, nail'd down with it. It would, indeed, be a good action, if, as the Aegyptians draw out the fromach of a dead body, and cut it open and expose it to the sun, as the onely cause of all its evil actions, so we could by cutting out our

gluttony and blood-fheding, purify and cleanse the remainder of our lives...¹⁵

Ritson's elaboration of an argument first made by Plutarch¹⁶ is a useful point at which to begin a consideration of the vegetarian writers of the early nineteenth century, demonstrating interesting features of both their style and their sense of their own political positioning within a society whose dominant voices advocate the consumption of 'meat'.

Through Plutarch's observation, Ritson demonstrates his awareness of his audience's predisposition towards a specialised form of deafness; that is, towards a refusal to entertain arguments arrayed against their habits of self-indulgent luxury (in Ritson's terms). The same awareness is evident in Newton's opening lines (quoted earlier), in his insistence that he will not be ridiculed out of respecting his feelings. This is perhaps a simple point but it is a point well worth drawing attention to; vegetarian writers were clearly aware of the marginal nature of their arguments within their socio-political contexts. While I would suggest that this would be the case of vegetarian writers in any culture invested in the perpetual normalising of animal slaughter and exploitation, the long history of shared animosity and warfare between England and France results in an especially potent English symbolic nationalism located in the discourse of dietary norms as they pertained to 'meat' dishes and the modes of preparation deemed appropriate to them. Although written in 1747, the words of Robert Campbell, author of *The London Tradesman*, demonstrate values, assumptions and prejudices which endured long into the nineteenth century. Indeed, the characteristic conjunction of xenophobia and natural superiority in Campbell's dietary discourse is likely to be familiar to the twenty-first century reader from personal experience.

As one of my contentions is that reference to the hostile contexts within which vegetarians were publishing is essential to an accurate evaluation of

their work, and as those writers employ (at times) rhetoric strikingly similar to Campbell's, if to a different end, I will quote him at some length:

In the Days of Good Queen *Elizabeth*, when mighty Roast Beef was the *Englishman's* Food; our Cookery was plain and simple as our Manners; it was not then a Science of Mystery, and required no Conjunction to please the Palates of our greatest Men. But we have of late Years refined ourselves out of that simple Taste, and conformed our Palates to Meats and Drinks dressed after the *French* Fashion: The natural Taste of Fish or Flesh is become nauseous to our fashionable Stomach; we abhor any thing that should appear at our Tables in its native Properties; all the Earth, from both the Poles, the most distant and different Climates, must be ransacked for Spices, Pickles, Sauces, not to relish but to disguise our Food. Fish, when it has passed the Hands of a *French* Cook, is no more Fish; it has neither the Taste, Smell, nor Appearance of Fish. It, and every Thing else, is dressed in Masquerade, seasoned with slow Poisons, and every Dish pregnant with nothing, but the Seeds of Diseases both chronic and acute. This depraved Taste of spoiling wholesome Dyets, by costly and pernicious Sauces, and absurd Mixtures, does not confine itself to the Tables of the Great; but the Contagion is become epidemical; Poor and Rich live as if they were of a different Species of Being from their Ancestors, and observe a Regimen of Diet, calculated not only to supply the Wants of Nature, but to oppress her Faculties, disturb her Operations, and load her with, till now, unheard of Maladies.¹⁷

Campbell's inflammatory text certainly affords us a clear example of Atkinson's characterisation of the sociological operation of dietary rules: '[f]ood and drink, then, would appear to be one appropriate mechanism for the expression of meanings and values concerning the relationship between Nature and Culture, between the spheres of Human and Animal species, and concerning the boundaries of 'civilisation' (that is, 'our' way of life, whoever 'we' may be).'¹⁸

Campbell's idealisation of 'our way of life' is powerfully articulated through the rhetorical opposition of 'plain', 'simple' and 'natural' English fare, to a contagious, dangerous French alternative. The result is a transparent exercise in nationalist propaganda. The virulence of Campbell's anti-Gallicism, however, should not blind us to other, less obvious, political operations within his discourse. While this extract from *The London*

Tradesman provides a useful representation of some of the most common discursive conventions employed to normalise the conventional and popular practises of animal slaughter, closer reading of Campbell's language suggests that 'meat-discourse' is also complicit in a parallel normalising of internal, systemic socioeconomic inequalities. Although Campbell suggests a commonality of experience in the words 'Poor and Rich live as if they were of a different Species of Being from their Ancestors', the two dietary paradigms he juxtaposes here, the historic, apparently plain and simple diet of meat, and the pernicious and costly conventions of French cooking, were absolutely *not* available to poor and rich alike.

Even if we allow for the passage of sixty years which brings us to a boom period for the livestock industry, meat remained a dietary luxury enjoyed by the middle and upper classes. Rogers' suggestion that '[p]oorer families might only cook a roast on a Sunday'¹⁹ during this period is simply ludicrous. In the unpredictable early decades of the nineteenth century, war and corollary disturbances in trade and finance were exacerbated by sequences of poor harvests producing the very real threat of nationwide famine in 1812. This period also saw highly unpopular market interference by parliament in the form of the Importation Act (1815). This tariff on grain was specifically geared towards the protection of landed interests in a time of widespread want and anxiety for the lower classes.

To make matters worse, in the years following the Corn Law, the same dire pattern preceding the near-famine of 1812 was repeated in the short harvests of 1817, 1818 and 1819. A weekly roast was out of the question for families who could not afford bread. These circumstances shed some light on the vegetarian writers' project, particularly their characteristic blending of the political and medical. If you belonged to the wrong class, the one produced inescapable effects on the other. The malnutrition of the disadvantaged was inseparable from considerations of its political origins. The combination of poor harvests, economic policy which specifically

inflated the cost of staple foods for the poor, and war expenditure 'caused dearth and distress with widespread rioting, culminating in the tragedy of Peterloo'.²⁰

It is ironic that the great days of British beef occurred during a time when the economically disadvantaged were unlikely to *see* beef, let alone eat it once a week, certainly not with the average labourer's income ranging between 8 and 12 shillings a week.²¹ In fact, it was much more likely that the special once-a-week food experience, for the 'poorer families' Rogers refers to, was the fact that their meal was *hot*, either because the surplus fuel was available or because they could afford the charge of the local baker who would heat their pots in his oven, a common practise in villages, towns and cities. When poorer families ate meat it would invariably be in the form of cheap cuts of preserved bacon, 'a sixpennyworth of pieces'²² or if one was lucky enough to work in agriculture, 'a farmer might compel his workers to take diseased and unsaleable meat in lieu of wages'.²³

The disparity between the economic boom in British livestock industries and the general threat of starvation which plagued the poorer majority during the same years, considered in relation to the economic policies of the same period (outlined above) supports economist Amartya Sen's contention 'that famines are not the result of a simple shortage of food available per head of population. Even during famines, food is available; if people starve, it is because they lack the *entitlement* rights to food – entitlement through employment and earnings, through social security or through ownership. In other words, people go short of food because of the economic, social and political relationships in which they are bound up.'²⁴

Campbell's discourse trades upon an ostensibly shared, universal understanding of the constitution of 'the Englishman' in order to persuade readers that a 'meat' diet (in tandem with the values he ascribes as inherent in this diet) symbolises the essential nature of this ideal individual and his ideal nation. The resulting characterisation is articulated through

ideologically potent connections to the nation, and to one of its most celebrated monarchs; the institution of 'meat' is thus inseparable from the institutions of the nation and the monarchy, a triangle of mutually reinforcing ideologies which perpetuate socioeconomic injustice. For the propagandists of 'mighty Roast Beef', the Elizabethan era is routinely deployed as the precedent upon which a diet consisting almost entirely of plainly prepared animal flesh, along with the requisite 'natural' English values, behaviour and physicality, are founded.

With this in mind we must consider the potential for vegetarian discourses, in opposing the conventions of animal consumption, to be interpreted and responded to as an attack on the scheme of traditional values of which normative flesh-consumption figured; namely monarchism and nationalism. The likelihood of such a reception was influenced by vegetarianism's long and troubled history within Western religious contexts:

The most significant form of heresy seemed always to include a doctrine that rejected the eating of flesh foods. Thus, more than ever, the church was not only coerced by force of circumstance to regard the eating of flesh as proper and normal, and the rejection of the eating of flesh as intrinsically heretical, but also came frequently to regard flesh eating itself as a mark of normality and hence acceptability.²⁵

Although, as we shall see, vegetarian writers posited alternatives to the dominant Christian interpretations of dominion as it is divinely authorised in Genesis, and to the post-deluge sanctioning of animal consumption derived from the same authority, for many, vegetarianism was inseparable from socially undesirable unorthodoxy, whether it suggested the 'un-English' foreignness evoked by Campbell (usually in terms evocative of the French and thus dangerously revolutionary in the nineteenth century), or an heretical inclination which might spiritually contaminate the unwary. Although vegetarian writers attempted to appropriate traditional Christian discourses, these prejudices and the corresponding suspicion they engendered should not be underestimated. Perhaps the most powerful

negative association, however, was the association between vegetarianism and poverty. A vegetable diet was the meagre diet of the poorest classes. This negative stereotype, too, may have been given more credence by religious history, in particular the tradition of Christian asceticism. Despite the superior spiritual credentials of religious ascetics, the obvious characteristic which distinguishes them from the majority of the population is that of self-denial, of going without.

In light of these observations regarding meat-consumption, culture and socioeconomic class, it may seem unlikely that discourses such as Campbell's were representative of widespread cultural biases. We must consider, however, that the representations of cultural norms function routinely to preserve existing systems of privilege and disadvantage and operate successfully despite their representational limitations.

We should also not underestimate the powerful operation of social aspiration in encouraging the adoption of unrepresentative values among the disadvantaged. The consistent identification of animal consumption with 'Englishness' promoted the convention of imitative lower-class consumption of far less desirable meat-based dietary additions, as already indicated (in addition to off-cuts and diseased meat, we should also consider the historical role of offal in the diets of the labourers in a range of cultures).

The inclination of impoverished classes to demonstrate affinities with the privileged through their choices of staple foods is most evident in the dietary preferences of the English poor as they informed choices regarding bread in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The prevalent bias towards bread made from 'fine white flour' as opposed to 'coarse' and 'dark' breads made from rye is a particularly poignant example of the physiological consequences of exploitative systems of socioeconomic class as they are perpetuated through culturally conditioned food values.

Despite the efficacy with which rye bread had functioned as a European staple for centuries, and despite empirical evidence of the superiority of

such bread when compared to bread made from 'fine white flour', the association of rye bread with foreigners, and with foreign peasantry more particularly, had terrible consequences for the health of the poor. 'A person living largely on bread, as many of the poor were forced to do, could easily obtain all the iron they required for blood-formation from 1 ½ lb. of wholemeal bread, but the same amount of white bread provided just about half the estimated requirements of an adult. This was one reason why anaemias of dietary origin became much more prevalent in the latter part of the [eighteenth] century, although they had been distressingly common among the very poor ever since industrialisation began.'²⁶

...all diseases, including deformity, are artificial, as much so as any production can be artificial... the existence of poverty is our choice, not our necessity ... and finally ... this heated and furious condition of things which we see around us, this infinite scene of toil and conquest without any competent purpose, is produced by the dire effects on the human frame of animal food.²⁷

In light of the above observations it should be stressed that Newton's suggestion that disease and deformity are of dietary origin was entirely reasonable within its context. While today we can appreciate that such a grand pronouncement is guilty of oversimplification, a twenty-first century reader is probably incapable of overestimating the prevalence of malnutrition in English society (amongst the lower classes especially) which was caused by a range of factors, some already considered, including widespread nutritional ignorance, lack of available dietary variety, the accidental destruction of nutritional content through early industrial methods of food processing, and the shocking prevalence of food adulteration which frequently saw the incorporations of toxic substances (included lead and arsenic) in foods and alcoholic beverages.

Teeth and bones were especially prone to disease among the less affluent classes who could not afford, could not procure regular access to dairy products or were afforded access only to very poor quality, often

contaminated produce. For example, the early nineteenth century exhibited a high frequency of rickets (resulting in bone deformities) carried over from the eighteenth century, a condition attributed to vitamin A deficiency. Wealthier families with access to regular, uncontaminated dairy products and animal flesh were spared this condition. Vitamin A deficiency is a particularly salient example as it produced particularly *conspicuous* conditions (affecting teeth and bone formation) which, while dietary in origin, were easily interpretable from a teleological perspective, thus ostensibly naturalising distinctions between social classes and reinforcing the values underpinning the systems which produce them. As we shall see, these connections were evident to vegetarian writers²⁸ in whose work '[the] body itself is the locus of an examination of a corrupt system of institutions which render it harmful to itself.'²⁹

It is indeed, observes Plutarch, a hard and difficult task to undertake (as Cato once say'd) to dispute with mens bellies that have no ears... and it is no easy task to pull the hook of flesh-eating from the jaws of such as have gorge'd themselves with luxury, and are, as it were, nail'd down with it. It would, indeed, be a good action, if, as the Egyptians draw out the stomach of a dead body, and cut it open and expose it to the sun, as the only cause of all its evil actions, so we could by cutting out our gluttony and blood-fleshing, purify and cleanse the remainder of our lives...³⁰

Returning now to Ritson's earlier description of bellies with no ears, those all-consuming vessels of vice and luxury, I hope I have begun to encourage readers unsympathetic to vegetarian rhetoric, who may have found Ritson's comments preposterous, to consider the possibility that there may be cause for taking some of his claims more seriously. Certainly, I hope I may have demonstrated the need to reevaluate the reception Ritson's treatise received upon publication, at which time it was generally perceived as a demonstration of his 'incipient insanity'.³¹

In particular, Ritson's image of 'the hook of flesh-eating', suggests to me an awareness of the very real difficulty experienced by anyone attempting to

divest themselves of the powerful hold of addiction and I would suggest that any perception of hyperbole should be moderated by the knowledge that this addiction was socially prevalent and culturally normalised. Such a reading may seem anachronistic but it is supported, I think, by the dual-emphasis in all of the writers in question on the abstention from flesh combined with abstention from alcohol (a substance whose addictive and detrimental qualities were well known in the early 1800s), as crucial steps towards health for both the individual and society. Furthermore, Ritson's subsequent allusion to the funerary customs of the Egyptians might now seem less an exercise in figurative fancy, and more an observation on the dietary manifestations of socioeconomic injustice alluded to above, the so-called province of 'gluttony and blood-fheding'.

The context provided in this section, particularly with regards to continuities between physiological and dietary factors, and the psychological, social and political organisation of the nation, provides us with an opportunity to revisit vegetarian arguments and representative strategies, potentially with some of our own prejudices as readers ameliorated. I will turn now to a contextualised consideration of the vegetarian discourses of monstrous consumption in detail in order to qualify the claims made in the introductory section of this paper.

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In Physiological discussions, the moral and intellectual faculties should never be disjoined from the physical and organic...³²

Man is an whole the complicated parts of which are interwoven with each other, that the most remote and subtile springs of his machine are connected with those which are more gross and obvious, and reciprocally act upon each other.³³

The politics and mechanics of consumption provide the vital connection between the microcosm of the body and the macrocosm of an agricultural landscape, itself a political entity tainted by a long history of injustices

heaped upon the poor; most significantly for the vegetarians, this injustice was evident in the clearances of land repurposed for livestock grazing, and the signification of livestock (cattle in particular) as monstrous consumers.

Euripedes says, “This wretched stomach of ours subdues us all. Into this we pour everything... the stomach, in defiance of the indignation of the gods, takes all things into itself, whether suited to it or not; and to this cause may be attributed the vices and miseries which abound on all sides of us.”³⁴

Classical discourses of temperance (and intemperance) provide the rhetorical foundation for the physiological model argued by Ritson, Newton and Shelley in several significant ways. Most apparent of these is the authority still invested in classical authors in the early nineteenth century. In appropriating their writing, vegetarian authors gesture towards an apparent, historic continuity in legitimate discourse, a continuity with renowned ancient writers whose work is positioned as historical precedent, thus lending the contributions of the nineteenth century vegetarians increased credibility. We have already considered an almost identical argument, although referencing Plutarch rather than Euripides, in the work of Ritson; the hard and difficult task of disputing ‘with mens bellys that have no ears’.

More importantly, however, in developing the connections Euripides and Plutarch posit between the insensate stomach and human vice and misery, the vegetarians find the unifying tropes for their notion of monstrous consumption: the insensate, insatiable and destructive *appetite* arising from perverted *taste*. These two central metaphors are crucial to the success of vegetarian discourses which, as we shall see, take particular exception to the modern influence of the aesthetic on human dietary conventions.

The tropes of destructive (or monstrous) appetite arising from perverted taste enable the vegetarian writers to develop a system of interrelated modes

of consumption that expands their political discourses beyond the dietary or the purely physiological, incorporating the consumption of land but also the immoral consumption of 'entertainment'. Ritson, Newton and Shelley build upon this foundation with the addition of a range of other authoritative discourses, most significantly the rhetoric of the cardinal sin of gluttony (which incorporates the idea of self-destructive addiction and thus conforms well to the classical trope of the defiant appetite) and the notion of 'Mal-regimen', of disease resulting from a range of bad modes of consumption. Immoral taste promotes a deranged appetite, encouraging destructive modes of production and consumption and consequently, diseased societies and diseased individuals. In my view, this is the essence of Shelley's maxim: 'Crime is madness. Madness is disease.'³⁵

The resulting identification of multiple modes of consumption (incorporating class-specific diets, the political distribution of land and popular forms of 'entertainment') as complicit in a social predisposition towards violence and social injustice represents an important contribution vegetarian authors have made to the discourses of temperance they draw upon. It is also the foundation of their notion of monstrous consumption. The vegetarian notion of monstrous consumption can be considered as an oppositional matrix of 'objectively harmonized'³⁶ schemes seeking to challenge the unquestioned elitism encouraged by the cultural and political status quo.

Consider the characterization of the monstrous consumption of 'entertainment' advanced by Ritson and Shelley below, as compared to the characterization of the typical monstrous consumer of animal flesh that follows:

Montaigne thinks it some reflection upon human nature itself, that few people take delight in seeing beasts care for or play together, but almost every one is pleased to see them lacerate and worry one another. I am sorry this temper is become almost a distinguishing character of our own nation, from the observation which is made by foreigners of our

belove'd pastimes, *bear-baiting*, *cock-fighting* and the like. We should find it hard to vindicate the deftroying of any thing that has life, merely out of wantonness; yet, in this principle, our children are bred up, and one of the first pleafures we allow them, is the licence of inflicting pain upon poor animals: allmoft as foon as we are fenfible of what life is ourfelves, we make it our fport to take it from other creatures.³⁷

Shelley looks to history for similar examples of this abhorrent aesthetic:

Could a set of men, whose passions were not perverted by unnatural stimuli, look with coolness on an auto da fe? Is it to be believed that a being of gentle feelings, rising from his meal of roots, would take delight in the sport of blood? Was Nero a man of temperate life? could you read calm health in his cheek, flushed with ungovernable propensities of hatred for the human race?³⁸

It is Shelley too, who makes the most explicit connection between the monstrous consumption of entertainment, and the monstrous consumption of animals:

Sows big with young are indeed no longer stamped upon until they die, and sucking pigs roasted alive; but lobsters are slowly boiled [to death] and express by their inarticulate cries the dreadful agony they endure. Chickens are mutilated and imprisoned until they fatten, calves are bled to death that their flesh may appear white: and a certain horrible process of torture furnishes brawn for the gluttonous repasts with which Christians celebrate the anniversary of their Saviour's birth – What beast of prey compels its victim to undergo such protracted, such severe and such degrading torments?³⁹

Shelley's identification of animal torture with the pageantry of Christmas celebrations draws the same connection between institutions and socially prevalent forms of violence implied in his examples of the Spanish Inquisition and the decadence of Imperial Rome under Nero. The unifying feature in all three examples is the socially normalised inflicting of unnecessary suffering upon the powerless for the purposes of titillation through sensation. The underlying cause is seen to be the same: perverted conventions of 'taste' among an elite minority. The connection between an

immoral diet and the more general immoral pleasures is stated even more directly by Ritson:

The barbarous and unfeeling sports (as they are call'd) of the English, their horse-racing, hunting, shooting, bul and bear-baiting, cock-fighting, boxing matches, and the like, all proceed from their immoderate addiction to animal food. Their natural temper is thereby corrupted, and they are in the habitual and hourly commission of crimes against nature, justice and humanity, at which a feeling and reflective mind, unaccustom'd to such a diet, would revolt; but in which they profess to take delight.⁴⁰

Ritson's inclusion of boxing in a list otherwise devoted to 'sports' that rely upon animal suffering and slaughter, both conspicuously (in the case of baiting, for example) and implicitly (in the case of horse-racing) demonstrates a *continuum* of social manifestations of monstrous appetite. Beginning with the 'sport' least dependent upon the conspicuous suffering of animals, building up to the most violent and lethal forms of such 'entertainment', yet culminating in a form of socially sanctioned violence experienced exclusively among human participants. Ritson's list, if implicitly, positions the vegetarian argument in alignment with Enlightenment ethicists (notably Kant) who considered violence towards animals a dangerous precursor of violence towards humans.

It is here in their critique of institutionalized violence that the vegetarian writers' allegiance to Rousseau is most evident. Considering this allegiance will allow us to look specifically to the relationship between monstrosity on the social and individual levels, including its expression in individual physiology.

Were even their health not concern'd, it would be expedient, on account of their disposition and character [to abandon a meat-based diet]; for it is sufficiently clear from experience, that those people who are great eaters of meat, are, in general, more ferocious and cruel than other men. This observation holds good of all times and all places: the English barbarity is well known...⁴¹

Although neither Newton nor Shelley quote Rousseau directly as Ritson does in the above excerpt, their arguments demonstrate a consistent debt to Rousseau's language and logic:

man, in quitting the nutriment on which alone nature had destined him to enjoy a state of perfect health, has debased his physical, and consequently his moral and intellectual faculties, to a degree almost inconceivable. Real men have never been seen that we are aware of, nor has history, not even poetry, depicted them. It is not man we have before us, but the wreck of man.⁴²

All vice arose from the ruin of healthful innocence. Tyranny, superstition, commerce, and inequality, were then first known, when reason vainly attempted to guide the wanderings of exacerbated passion.⁴³

Both Newton and Shelley trace the beginning of this process of devolution to what they delineate as the prototypical application of the aesthetic to the culinary (the perversion of taste), the moment when humans first 'applied fire to culinary purposes; this inventing an expedient for screening from his disgust the horrors of the shambles.'⁴⁴ This blending of the physiological requirements of human consumption with the artificial motivation of an aesthetical (as opposed to physiological) stimulation becomes the vegetarian alternative narrative of the fall, related in the cases of both Newton and Shelley, through their retellings of the myth of Prometheus. To substantiate this argument of artificiality, Shelley emulates Ritson in drawing on Plutarch. It is worth considering Shelley's development of Plutarch's rhetoric by looking at his language side by side with a more direct translation of the same passage as quoted in Ritson:

but, if you wil contend that you yourfelf was born to an inclination to touch fuch food as you have now a mind to eat; do you, then, yourfelf, kil what you would eat: but do it your own felf, without the help of a cleaver, mallet or ax; as wolves, bears, and lions do, who kill and eat at once. Rend an ox with thy teeth, worry a hog with thy mouth; tear a lamb to pieces, and fall on and eat it alive as they do: but, if thou had'st rather ftay until what thou eateft is become dead, and art loth to force a

foul out of its body, why, then, do’ft thou, againft nature, eat an animate thing? Nay, there is no one that is willing to eat even a lifelefs and a dead thing as it is, but they boil it, and roaft it, and alter it by fire and medicines, that the palate, being thereby deceive’d may admit of fuch uncouth fare.⁴⁵

Let the advocate of animal food, force himself to a decisive experiment on its fitness, and as Plutarch recommends, tear a living lamb with his teeth, and plunging his head into its vitals, slake his thirst with the steaming blood; when fresh from the deed of horror let him revert to the irresistible instincts of nature that would rise in judgment against it, and say, Nature formed me for such work as this. Then, and then only, would he be consistent.⁴⁶

Plutarch’s importance as an early source for vegetarian arguments is indisputable; the argument quoted and paraphrased in the excerpts above remains one of the most compelling arguments modern vegetarians can employ against the generally unexamined practices of animal consumers. Shelley’s translation or adaptation is, however, both more concise and more powerful. I suggest that this is a consequence of the nineteenth-century vegetarian’s preoccupation with restoring an awareness of the visceral evidence of the absent referent. Where Plutarch employs a more neutral description of horrific acts, Shelley takes us immediately into the raw bodily cavity, forcing us face-first into the gore and blood. The strategy is calculated, and is particularly suited to societies that go to significant lengths to mediate the production of meat, shielding ‘the consumer’ from the violence that their diet requires others both to enact, and be subjected to. The discursive restoration of this reality has two argumentative functions.

Firstly, in simplifying Plutarch’s list (which also included the ox and the hog) and focusing only on the image of the lamb, Shelley demonstrates his awareness of the potential of Plutarch’s argument by developing its strengths. While the examples of the ox and the hog are effective in conveying the unfitness of human beings for ‘natural’ predatory behaviour, Shelley’s adaptation concentrates upon an individual animal possessed of the combination of traits most likely to appeal to a reader’s sympathy. Apart

from the various religious significations of the lamb, its infancy, dependence and mildness heighten both the pathos and the revulsion that Shelley's experiment provokes. Shelley further adapts Plutarch by limiting his case to an animal easily subdued by an adult human (unlike the wild boar or the ox). Rather than focus on the impossibility of the task (which could tend to render the argument ridiculous), something I would suggest Plutarch does to the detriment of his point about humane sensitivity, Shelley focuses on feeling, on our involuntary abhorrence, a feeling he propounds with graphic imagery.

Ritson follows a similar strategy, identifying individual animals, and more importantly, individual relationships between humans and animals which he examines in relation to the practise of animal consumption. Consider the following two excerpts from Thomson:

but you, ye flocks,
What have ye done, ye peaceful people, what
To merit death? you, who have given us milk
In luscious streams, and lent us your own coat
Against the winter's cold?

he, whose toil,
Patient and ever ready, clothes the land
With all the pomp of harveft, fhall he bleed,
And ftruggling groan beneath the cruel hands
Even of the clown he feeds? and that, perhaps,
To swell the riot of th'autumnal feaft,
Won by his labour?⁴⁷

The reality of the absent referent is brought home by Thomson's demonstrations of a widespread human failure of reciprocity, the suggestion of a deeply ungenerous and ungracious exploitation, a gratuitous taking from individuals who unprotestingly give so much of themselves to supply human wants. These discourses explicitly challenge the denials inherent in the objectification of animals, the cognitive conjuring trick through which their individuality, their generosity, their familial relationships, as well as

their relationships with humans, are negated in order that they may be perceived as non-entities.

Secondly, and more positively, the appropriation of arguments from Plutarch and Rousseau emphasises the innate goodness of human beings, as it assumes that their better natures will rebel against the hypothetical experiment of eating another being alive. Thus, the argument aligns with Rousseau's discourses, which posit a similar innate goodness, if one buried beneath years of successive corruption at the hands of evolving human institutions of government and religion.

What the combination enables is a discourse of monstrosity that positions the monstrous individual as the unwitting victim of a monstrous system. This allows the vegetarian writers to speak plainly, utilising appropriately graphic terms, in restoring the absent referent and in characterising the monstrosity of meat, without *necessarily* alienating their readers. As such, an individual's history of monstrous consumption is potentially excused under the condition that she act on the information presented to her by these vegetarian writers and change her monstrous ways. This positioning of 'the monstrous victim', as such, is further developed through the rhetoric of addiction and disease:

for here I would observe once and for all that this essay is no vehicle of malignity and sarcasm. It would indeed be an ineffectual method of lowering our species, to trace their good qualities, as I am heartily disposed to do, to the nobleness of their nature, and their errors to the corruptions of society. Men are more to be commiserated than blamed for being driven by impulses, arising out of causes not sufficiently investigated, into the baseness of avarice, or the trammels of ambition. Many a headlong passion has been excited by the food and drink which have stimulated the brain through the stomach...⁴⁸

Shelley follows Newton's reasoning, if somewhat less tactfully:

How will you inspire that imbecile being with a persuasion of the importance of active virtue and the faithful discharge of the numerous

duties of social life who is by the physical imperfections of his nature constituted the canting nurse of his own morbid sensibilities? The attempt is more common, but scarcely less absurd than to reason with a lunatic, or to require from the dying man the exertion of that mental power, and enlightened subtlety of research for which when in health he had been conspicuous.⁴⁹

* * * * *

A writer on population of some celebrity, has contended that the destructive operations of whatever sort by which men are killed off or got rid of, are so many blessings and benefits, and he has the triumph of seeing his doctrines pretty widely disseminated and embraced; although no point can be more clearly demonstrable than that the earth might contain and support at least ten times the number of inhabitants that are now upon it. (528)

It may come as a surprise to learn that Malthus, who Newton is criticising here, makes exactly the same argument in the very text for which he became notorious:

I cannot help thinking that the present great demand for butcher's meat of the best quality, and the quantity of good land that is in consequence annually employed to produce it, together with the great number of horses at present kept for pleasure, are the chief causes that have prevented the quantity of human food in the country from keeping pace with the generally increased fertility of the soil; and a change of custom in these respects would, I have little doubt, have a very sensible effect on the quantity of subsistence in the country, and consequently on its population.⁵⁰

An Essay on the Principle of Population is perhaps the last place one would expect to encounter this line of reasoning. Malthus' attack on utilitarian principles – much in the fashion of Burke's *Reflections* – depends upon the credibility of its fatalism and fear-mongering, only a successfully inculcated hysteria could support the opinion that 'no possible contributions or

sacrifices of the rich, particularly in money, could for any time prevent the recurrence of distress among the lower members of society'.⁵¹

The proposal of a vegetarian mode of food production of the kind Malthus apparently advocates in redistributing the resources currently employed in breeding and feeding livestock runs rather contrary to his other arguments. Certainly, in isolating horses and pasture-fed livestock, Malthus has indicated one very effective sacrifice that the rich could make to prevent recurrent distress and deprivation for the broader population.

It is here that we find rare common ground for Malthus and Shelley; both thinkers advocated the vegetarian system of food production as a solution to systemic inequity and widespread suffering, and both thinkers published their arguments during the period of English history that saw beef reach the pinnacle of its symbolic power, a degree of cultural esteem it has not enjoyed since. We should not, however, disregard the fact that Malthus contradicts key arguments in his *Essay* by making this inclusion. Whatever his motivations may have been, we are now able to consider the last incarnation of monstrous consumption, that which links the microcosm of the body to the macrocosm of the land:

The change which would be produced by simpler habits on political economy is sufficiently remarkable. The monopolizing eater of animal flesh would no longer destroy his constitution by devouring an acre at a meal, and many loaves of bread would cease to contribute to gout, madness and apoplexy, in the shape of a pint of porter or a dram of gin, when appeasing the long-protracted famine of the hard-working peasant's hungry babes. The quantity of nutritious vegetable matter, consumed in fattening the carcase of an ox, would afford ten times the sustenance, undepraving indeed, and incapable of generating disease, if gathered immediately from the bosom of the earth. The most fertile districts of the habitable globe are now actually cultivated by men for animals, at a delay and waste of aliment absolutely incapable of calculation. It is only the wealthy that can, to any great degree, even now, indulge in the unnatural craving for dead flesh, and they pay for the greater licence of the privilege by subjection to supernumerary diseases.⁵²

In the concise presentation of a matrix incorporating human *and* animal embodiment and physiology, the socioeconomic determination of various human and animal modes of consumption, and the dietary consequences of an inequitable distribution of land arising from perverted tastes, Shelley produces a powerful critique of institutionalised social injustices, but the crucial point from the vegetarian perspective is the sympathetic demonstration of the dynamics of this system, the objective harmony evident in these ‘intersections of the corporeal and corporate interests’.⁵³

At the beginning of this essay I questioned the efficacy of combining multiple, widely unpopular ideologies into single discourses aimed at producing change in popular opinion. Ultimately I consider this to be the product of perspicacity, rather than naïveté; of the vegetarian writers’ perception of subtle systemic interactions operating on the periphery of human awareness and of their desire to bring this political matrix to the attention of their audience. As for their allegations of monstrosity, while I am not without my own opinions, this is something that must be left, as I think Newton, Shelley and Ritson intended it to be, to the conscience of each individual.

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¹ Joseph Ritson, *An Essay on Abstinence from Animal Food, as a Moral Duty* (London: printed for Richard Phillips, 1802), 232.

² Percy Bysshe Shelley, "A Vindication of Natural Diet," in *The Prose Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley*, Rev ed. E.B. Murray, ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 79.

³ John Frank Newton, "The Return to Nature; or a Defence of the Vegetable Regimen; With Some Account of an Experiment Made During the Last Three or Four Years in the Author's Family," reprinted in *The Pamphleteer* 20.39 (1822): 3:421-22.

⁴ Ritson made both his atheism and his Jacobin sympathies plain; in the *Essay on Abstinence*, books are cited in the French style, while 'god' (along with the first person singular) is consistently written without capitalisation.

In the last decade of the eighteenth century Ritson rejected conventional English spelling in favour of his own distinctive, ostensibly phonetic system. This new scheme was employed in all of his subsequent publications. For more information on Ritson I recommend Timothy Morton's "Joseph Ritson, Percy Shelley and the Making of Romantic Vegetarianism" in *Romanticism* 12.1 (2006): 52-61, and also the introduction to Morton's *Radical Food: The Culture and Politics of Eating and Drinking, 1790-1820* (London: Routledge, 2000).

Readers familiar with the conventional spelling and grammar of early-nineteenth-century English will most likely have already noticed Ritson's phonetic laws in action although they may well have attributed the many irregularities to appallingly shoddy transcription on my part!

⁵ Timothy Morton, *Shelley and the Revolution in Taste: The Body and the Natural World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 152.

⁶ Carol J. Adams, *The Sexual Politics of Meat* (New York and London: Continuum, 2006), 177.

⁷ Adams, 53.

⁸ From a different theoretical perspective, Bourdieu's definition of anamnesis (following Plato and Freud), as 'the familiarity gained by that reappropriation of knowledge... that is both possessed and lost from the beginning' is consistent with what we have been discussing under the name of the absent referent. Pierre Bourdieu, *Masculine Domination* (Stanford: California: Stanford University Press, 2001), 55.

Readers may also find it useful to consider similarities between the restoration of the absent referent and the postcolonial and feminist practice of 'writing back'.

⁹ Matthew Scully, *Dominion: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy* (New York: St Martin's Press, 2002), 62.

¹⁰ Bourdieu describes symbolic violence as 'a gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible even to its victims, exerted for the most part through the purely symbolic channels of communication and cognition... or even feeling'. Bourdieu, 2.

¹¹ The description 'ethical vegetarian' arose to preserve a clear distinction between those whose vegetarianism is motivated by a) a concern for their personal health (health vegetarians) or b) the superior ecological sustainability of vegetarianism (ecological vegetarians) and c) those motivated by belief that killing animals is morally wrong where non-violent alternatives are readily available (ethical vegetarians) Along with many other 'ethical vegetarians' I think the term is problematic – ecologically motivated vegetarianism is essentially as 'ethical' a choice, for instance, and ethics are certainly not limited to the 'animal' liberation issues. The categories are also in no way mutually exclusive. More subjectively, I think the phrase just sounds smug – as though everyone else is 'ethically' inferior.

¹² In this way vegetarian writers challenge traditional classical dualisms that reinforce patriarchal ontology; as Carol Adams argues, the classical dichotomies of masculine/feminine, rational/irrational, logical/emotional, human/animal are essentially interchangeable expressions of the same dominant values. Such systematic, diacritical constructions produce what Bourdieu describes as *objective harmony*: 'schemes, shaped by similar conditions, and therefore objectively harmonized, function as matrices of the perceptions, thoughts and actions of all members of a society' (Bourdieu, 33).

¹³ My suggestion is that these patriarchal discourses are compromised for the purposes of advocating vegetarian ideas, depending as they do upon a system of values which is antithetical to vegetarianism. As such they potentially intrude into the text as it is read by non-vegetarians, and their currency and authority will tend to eclipse vegetarian arguments or, worse still, the values and assumptions which inhabit the authoritative discourses will have the effect of reinforcing a reader's predisposition to reject vegetarian argument as ridiculous or dangerous.

¹⁴ Preece, 251.

- ¹⁵ Ritson, 93.
- ¹⁶ The earliest surviving vegetarian arguments are made by Plutarch in several essays on the eating of flesh and on the nature of non-human beings; they are available in *Plutarch's Moralia*, volume XII, Harold Cherniss and William C. Helmbold, eds. (Cambridge and Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1957).
- ¹⁷ Robert Campbell, *The London Tradesman* (1747), quoted in J.C. Drummond and Anne Wilbraham, *The Englishman's Food: A History of Five Centuries of English Diet* (London: Pimlico, 1991), 214-215.
- ¹⁸ Paul Atkinson, 'Eating Virtue,' in *The Sociology of Food and Eating: Essays on the sociological significance of food*, Ann Murcott, ed. (Aldershot, Hants: Gower Publishing, 1984), 11.
- ¹⁹ Ben Rogers, *Beef and Liberty* (Sydney: Random House Australia, 2003), 172.
- ²⁰ Drummond and Wilbraham, 279.
- ²¹ Drummond and Wilbraham, 281.
- ²² Drummond and Wilbraham, 281.
- ²³ Nick Fiddes, *Meat: A Natural Symbol* (London and New York: Routledge, 1991), 24.
- ²⁴ Stephen Mennel, Anne Murcott and Anneke H. Van Otterloo, eds. *The Sociology of Food: Eating, Diet and Culture* (London, Newbury Park and New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 1992), 6.
- ²⁵ Preece, 145.
- ²⁶ Drummond and Wilbraham, 390.
- ²⁷ Newton, 500-501.
- ²⁸ And also to non-vegetarian writers, as Cobbett demonstrates: 'The labourers seem miserably poor. Their dwellings are little better than pig-beds, and their looks indicate that their food is not nearly equal to that of a pig.' William Cobbett, *Rural Rides*, November 7th, 1821 (1853 Edition), quoted in Drummond and Wilbraham, 279.
- ²⁹ Timothy Morton, *Shelley and the Revolution in Taste* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 136.
- ³⁰ Ritson, 93.
- ³¹ Adams, 115.
- ³² Newton, 423.
- ³³ Shelley, *The Vegetable System of Diet*, 149.
- ³⁴ Newton, 514.
- ³⁵ Shelley, *Vindication*, 82.
- ³⁶ Bourdieu, 33.
- ³⁷ Ritson, 96-97.
- ³⁸ Shelley, *Vindication*, 82.
- ³⁹ Shelley, *Vegetable System*, 152.
- ⁴⁰ Ritson, 88.
- ⁴¹ Quoted in Ritson, 49.
- ⁴² Newton, 527.
- ⁴³ Shelley, *Vindication*, 79.
- ⁴⁴ Shelley, *Vindication*, 78.
- ⁴⁵ Ritson, 48.
- ⁴⁶ Shelley, *Vindication*, 80.
- ⁴⁷ Quoted in Ritson, 178.
- ⁴⁸ Newton, 527.
- ⁴⁹ Shelley, *Vegetable System*, 148.
- ⁵⁰ T.R. Malthus, *An Essay on the Principle of Population* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 129-130.
- ⁵¹ Malthus, 37.
- ⁵² Shelley, *Vindication* 85.
- ⁵³ Morton, *ibid* 133.