

A Regular Oddity: Natural History and Anne Lister's Queer Theory of Tradition

Laurie Shannon

'call me an "oddity" if you please'

Anne Lister (1824)¹

What might it mean to try to think forward to Anne Lister, instead of looking backwards to find her foreshadowing the present future? For that purpose, this inquiry brackets freighted keywords like 'identity' and even 'subjectivity', lest they retroactively colour her writing too much with preoccupations of our moment. What frameworks does Lister call on to write her own way forward? The ubiquitous phrase dubbing her 'the first modern lesbian' has surprisingly much to recommend it, but its three descriptors raise as many historiographic questions as they resolve.² Helena Whitbread precisely captures what *does* seem modern: Lister's articulation of an 'unswerving credo', '*I love & only love the fairer sex.*'³ This chapter expands our picture of the non-modern idioms on which Lister drew as she forged an authority to live the remarkable way she did. In particular, her unwavering claim that 'Nature' authorised what she called her 'oddity' – itself so striking in the history of ideas – demands a closer account of its premises. If we read Lister predominantly within a metric of transgression or even nonconformity, we may miss the scope of her intellectual project (as well as some of the grounds for her storied confidence). For Lister stakes a claim to core cultural knowledge and textual traditions in order to make venerable ideas about Nature answer to her life. Embracing 'oddity' and composing a lifelong brief in its favour, Anne Lister *articulates a theory*.

Nature offers perhaps the most Protean concept in the history of ideas. Even so, Lister's improvisation made it mean something daringly new. This excavation of her claim on Nature locates it within the tradition of natural history, a durable mode of thought that (from early modernity to Darwin and beyond) mingled classical science and the Christian creation story. Natural history assumed a creator and dwelt more in the details; its close cousin, natural theology, moved in the other direction, proposing to

prove God's existence retroactively from the order evident in those details. They share one archive.⁴ Since the Renaissance, as the mostly Christian cultures of Europe assimilated ancient material ranging from Pliny's encyclopedic *Historia Naturalis* to Horace's aphorisms into vernacular writing, the related concepts of God and Nature converged. The two terms almost interchangeably named an artist-creator of the world's 'creatures', and classical and Christian origin stories alike emphasised earthly splendour as fit for direct moral contemplation.⁵ So configured, this tradition aims not just to explain the variety of lifeforms, but to tarry with it. In natural history's embrace of original diversity, Lister found a mandate for her 'oddity'. It was 'regular' because it followed natural rules of creation.

The opening chapters of Genesis loomed large in the natural-historical archive and not only as theology. Its creaturely procession establishes differentiation itself as natural. Divine fiat grounds a quasilegal existence for the distinct kinds being formed. All are legitimate, in the most technical and absolute sense; this God is not making any mistakes. By virtual decree, all forms of life are enrolled and enfranchised to thrive, each according to their kind – to go their own ways, to persist in being as they were made, and so to spread their metaphorical and literal wings across earth's elemental spaces. The Genesis origin story, then, backs native diversity with the single, strongest warrant available to human thought: a godly mandate for all creatures great and small to continue 'as-built'. In colloquial terms, they are supposed to be themselves.

Anne Lister fully grasped the extraordinary authority that natural-historical discourses and the providential logic of Genesis combined to make available, not simply to justify her 'oddity', but to see a divine hand in it. So much so we can call her theory creationist, keeping in mind this was no flat-earth vision and the evolutionary models modern creationism arose to deny had not yet arrived. By contrast to modern creationism, this non-modern, creatures-and-creator logic endowed every one of the world's creatures with a native patent backed by divinity itself. In conjunction, natural-historical habits of mind favoured the ramifying enumeration of particulars over the clustered groupings of taxonomy.⁶ Character approaches the singularity of a fingerprint. We might now associate the capaciousness of natural history (as a habit of thought at the cosmic level) with a tendency to open-ended lists and even a spirit of inclusivity. As we will see, Lister conscripted these perfectly traditional habits of thought to authorise her own, queer form of life; we can call her method *queerly traditional*. Providence provides.

The term 'queer', of course, marks a swerve, a surprise, a puzzle or a break – being akimbo to expectation instead of following an assumed or common path. But we should not yet set 'queer' in opposition to 'normal', because that scientific term barely appears in print before rising in usage after Lister's death in 1840.⁷ The word 'tradition', by contrast, indexes something that abides. It suggests an oppressive weight when marking a constraining tyranny from the past, 'handed down' regardless of the specific person on whom its burden falls. But 'tradition' derives from Latin *tradere* (to hand over, deliver, surrender, transfer or give up some possessory interest), and this fuller resonance suggests a more interesting practical dynamic of authority for so-called traditional transfers. They might be linear, they might even be lineal, but the line need not run straight or in prescribed directions. How did Lister, born to provincial Yorkshire gentry in 1791, engage the textual bedrock of her cultural inheritance? Fostered by her unmarried aunt and uncle in the free and queer domesticity of Shibden Hall above Halifax, and enjoying broad social and intellectual scope in York and Paris, Anne Lister took tradition queerly in hand.

This chapter traces Lister's bold theory that natural history and theology backed her 'oddity'. We have a powerful and growing sense of the role of erotic/obscene Roman writers and Romantic models like Byron and Rousseau in Lister's knowledge repertoire.⁸ Scholars have shown she read Roman poetry and its annotated commentaries both forensically and for pleasure; they have also analysed how she deployed literary references in social situations to gauge/engage friends and lovers.⁹ To extend our overall mapping of Lister's thought and citational range, this chapter adds natural-historical and theological discourses to the other resources she so keenly mined for sexual and related forms of knowledge. That context, in turn, enables us to take 'oddity' more seriously as the word Lister chose for herself across her decades of writing.

Lister was an erudite, multilingual collector of the vocabularies of sexual knowledge, from ancient poetry to dictionaries to contemporary anatomical sciences.¹⁰ But whether recording exchanges with friends or musing, and across her crypt hand and plain hand alike, to gloss herself Lister chooses 'oddity'. Occasionally she calls herself '*an* oddity' (as in my epigram), but she embraces oddness mostly by the adjective 'odd', or as '*my* oddity', denoting a property she possesses. Indeed, even in crypt hand she tends to avoid nominalisation. In a telling encounter with Frances Pickford (the most similar 'oddity' Lister ever met), however, Lister

classifies 'Pick' in just that way, calling her 'a regular oddity'.¹¹ Two 'regular oddities' will never be 'the same', but Chris Roulston has demonstrated how this encounter challenges Lister's justifying sense of singularity; Pickford's similarity 'threatens to obliterate Lister's own sense of uniqueness'.¹² Lister immediately differentiates herself, noting '*she supposes me like herself how she is mistaken!*'¹³ For Lister, 'oddity' encodes irreducible singularity; there is nothing justificatory or confirming in doubles or likeness, let alone in some larger grouping.

By this same logic, for herself, she seems not to have adopted the classifications she assiduously gathered from her wide reading, notably the agentive nouns *tribade* (Gr.) and *fricatrice* (L.), drawn from the verb 'to rub'.¹⁴ If we read her disinclination to adopt such categorical nouns alongside her 1823 transcription of Rousseau on singularity ('*Je ne suis fait comme aucun de ceux que j'ai vus; j'ose croire n'être fait comme aucun de ceux qui existent*' / I am not *made* like any of those I've seen; I dare to believe not *made* like any of those who exist), we can see how Lister's theory of being a singularly 'made' creature is not only non-identitarian, but anti-identitarian in effect.¹⁵ While she does not quote the entire passage, Rousseau's paragraph immediately goes on to pose the question 'whether Nature did well or ill when she threw away the mould that *made* me', directly linking Romantic singularity to the older creationist discourse considered here.¹⁶ What affordances might we moderns have missed by mistaking Lister's choice of 'oddity' for a quaint, vague, euphemistic or merely archaic usage?

As Susan Lanser has argued, 'oddity' along with terms like 'singular' and 'unaccountable' index lesbian/nonconforming behaviour; Caroline Gonda has further emphasised how such 'allusive codes' can expand 'our sense of the patterns and possibilities of lesbian narrative and lesbian history' in the period.¹⁷ In usage, the heyday for 'oddity' runs from 1750 to 1899, neatly bracketing Lister's life.¹⁸ Despite the commonplace that our prolific diarist lacked words for her experience, for Anne Lister 'oddity' answered. Continuing her invitation to Sibbella Maclean to 'call me an "oddity" if you please', Lister underscores it: 'I am odd, very very odd.'¹⁹ 'Oddity' connected Lister's sense of social and sexual singularity with the providential force of a creation story, one that carried the imprimatur of godly backing. Conceptually, it derives from a natural-historical vision of creation that authorises variety and favours particulars; 'oddity' thus serves in a wider logic of ethical self-accounting and also navigates the apparent polarity (for us) between the queer and the traditional. Ultimately my inquiry aims to complicate notions of Lister's 'conservatism' by suggesting

the larger traction of her argument: that authorising one's own life – necessarily, paradoxically – entails queer traditionality. Indeed, it seems impossible that the optimistic philosophical tradition compressed in Pope's phrase, 'Whatever IS, is RIGHT', has EVER been put to queerer or more radical purpose.²⁰

The Past, On Time

If history arcs, it also loops. The monumental testimony of Lister's journals (from 1806 and continuously from 1817 to 1840) survived as a time-capsule literally immured at Shibden Hall. Their importance remained completely unknown until Helena Whitbread's paradigm-breaking volumes brought them out of the archive and into the world in 1988 and 1992.²¹ In life, Lister traced thousands of peripatetic miles to and from Yorkshire, sojourning in European cities, scaling peaks from Ben Nevis and Mount Snowdon to the Pyrenees and the Alps, seeking world enough to match her investment in it. She died in distant reaches of the Russian empire, the farthest from Yorkshire she had ever been. Thanks to Sally Wainwright's drama *Gentleman Jack*, her story has (re)taken this sweeping stage, as Lister comes home again in the twenty-first century.

Even so, the *Gentleman Jack* project had to be pitched some twenty years before its proper 'time' arrived. Wainwright's 'exquisitely scripted show' and Suranne Jones's 'alchemical' performance as a 'force of nature' have given Lister a soundtrack of her own; the *Guardian's* five-star review called it a disruptive 'masterpiece' that arrived at just the 'time' it was needed and 'one of the greatest British period dramas of our time'.²² At once timely 'period drama' and 'of our time', the series establishes, for all time, the exclamation mark of Anne's all-black attire, her sustained romantic (but not sexual) disappointment, the tenacity of her hope, her cognitive firepower, her covert emotions of butch sentimentality, her polymorphous authority and her inexhaustible zeal. Suggesting the queer temporalities at stake in the show's many disruptions, Wainwright and her team aimed to represent Lister 'like she was from a different planet, almost'.²³

In this time-twist between now and then, Lister's long occluded writings and emergence as an LGBTQ+ icon inspire contemporary enthusiasts practising their own queer traditionality.²⁴ New cultural practices have sprung up under Lister's banner, as she vaulted from the small screen into fan art, fiction, swag, blogs, social media groups, GIFs, memes, street art and growing institutional adoption. Within months of the 2019 airing of

the show's first season, the West Yorkshire Archive Service launched a diary transcription project, recruiting 150+ international transcribers and earning a national award for volunteer engagement in 2020.²⁵ In 2021, Wainwright and Jones unveiled a bronze sculpture at the heart of Lister's home town and the University of York established Anne Lister College; town and gown moved beyond mere gestures of inclusion to incorporate LGBTQ+ history in permanent landmarks of our common culture.²⁶ In 2022, hundreds descended on Halifax for Anne Lister Birthday Week, and the Anne Lister Society's inaugural meeting showcased new research on the diarist.²⁷ Across this range of registers, Lister has been ardently embraced as a sudden, dazzling ancestor, one her enthusiasts never knew we had lost.

If notions of 'queer heritage' or 'queer tradition' seem paradoxical, they reflect Lister's own method: moving ahead partly by looking back. In Jones's words, Lister has landed, 'cutting through history to 2022'.²⁸ The world had become ready for a 'lesbian superhero'.²⁹ But history cuts both ways, and part of the force of Wainwright's writing springs from its care with the historical Lister's signature habits of thought and phrasing, making *Gentleman Jack* singular in the repertoire of television drama: a diary curation of its own.³⁰ The script incorporates Lister's own words, often in verbatim soliloquy, and the speeches of others she transcribed. Historically accurate, large-format journals appear, like characters, in Wainwright's indelible drama. What if the historical 'oddity' of Lister's 'proud spirit', leaping out from her emerging text, is part of her present power?³¹ As bumper stickers proclaim – relaying a diary leitmotif in Lister's own hand, abbreviated style and optimism – '*ver. fine day*'.

The material specifications of Lister's journal are as singular as she was. In two partial volumes and then across twenty-four continuous volumes from a formal *incipit* (21 March 1817) until six weeks before her death in 1840, Lister inked an estimated five million words, roughly a sixth in unspaced, unpunctuated cipher. Pepys's diary is the closest precedent. Traversing the 1660s, it likewise bridges historico-political, household and frankly sexual matters (also using code). It too speaks in the charismatic voice of a particular personality. But at 1.25 million words, Pepys's diary is one-quarter the heft of Lister's. Measuring in European novels, Proust's *À la recherche du temps perdu* measures a tad longer than Pepys (1.26 million words); Richardson's 1748 *Clarissa* is shorter, at just under a million. Lister's journal chalks up to roughly five *Clarissas*.

These staggering statistics cannot overshadow the even more extraordinary content of a text whose time has come.³² UNESCO named the diaries a pivotal document in British history in 2011; for the history of

sexuality, Emma Donoghue likened Whitbread's publications – without hyperbole – to the discovery of the Dead Sea Scrolls.³³ What this chapter proposes further is that we also understand Anne Lister's 'journal' as an emerging masterpiece of English writing, a monumental text to reckon with in literary, ethical, and intellectual terms as well as documentary and historical ones.³⁴ For Lister's diaries join the pantheon of self-accountings from the Stoic philosophers to Augustine, Montaigne, Rousseau and beyond. They command our attention as a highly engaged thinker's sustained analysis of the challenges her 'oddity' posed, but also as a spirited showing of why Lister's claim to proper cosmic membership is a rightful one. Choosing the path of greatest resilience – day upon day, year after year – Anne Lister's journal models one way to take life very seriously.

Scholars approaching the journals from whatever discipline (and it will take all of them) must contend with the intellectual confidence Lister summoned where nothing predicts it. Of course, this poses a constitutional, even metabolic question. Lister's anomalous situation, too, as the inheriting female member of a fading provincial line, was enviable. She well understood place has its privileges and eagerly expected her eventual inheritance to give her greater 'éclat' – indeed, 'éclat enough to pass off my oddity'.³⁵ But a journal like hers does not derive from any complacency about place. It stems from a non-modern and broadly theological imperative to grasp one's place. With the mental dedication of an ultramarathoner, Anne Lister took the time to muster a principled authority to live her way. She sometimes passes as libertine or transgressive, industrialist or 'entrepreneurial', stylistically imitative, and sometimes 'archly' conservative in religion or politics. The balance of this chapter, instead, analyses the learned resources of the queerly traditional Anne Lister who exhorted herself to 'never fear, learn to have nerve to protect myself & make the best of all things . . . & then face danger undaunted'; who affirmed simply, on the scrap of paper by which her code was cracked in the 1890s, 'in God is my hope'.³⁶ This Anne Lister gave new life to the storied Horatian line that still overlooks the housebody she renovated at Shibden Hall – *justus propositi tenax* (the just hold true to purpose) – as, of all things, a motto of queer confidence.

The Bias of Nature

To broaden our ethical and literary reckoning of the diaries and unfold Lister's queer traditionality, some precedents from natural history will situate what it means to claim a God-given nature in the nineteenth

century's earliest decades. While Lister attended lectures with leading natural historians in late 1820s Paris, even befriending palaeontologist Georges Cuvier, these academic pursuits followed on intellectual ideas she had already framed from her own very wide reading at home in Yorkshire. The tradition of natural history approaches the world in a cornucopian spirit. Beginning with Aristotle, its open-ended encyclopedias collect lore about the world's creatures. The key figure in the historical relay of classical ideas – Pliny the Elder – captures this open attitude, musing, 'the more I observe nature, the less prone I am to consider any statement about her to be impossible'.³⁷ Pliny's sprawling, first-century classic, the *Historia Naturalis*, held a bursting treasury of not exclusively scientific details. From the sixteenth century, it served as a gateway text for Latin learning and continued to be cited, *pro et contra*, by scientific thinkers from Bacon to Linnaeus, Buffon, Cuvier, and Darwin. Lister was familiar enough with Pliny's compendium to record an October day in 1822 spent 'Till very nearly 4 looking over Pliny's natural history . . . having first put my hair in curl'.³⁸ That December, she mused about translating this mammoth text herself.³⁹

The ramifying, inclusive style of Pliny's classical natural history was absorbed into the enumerative aspects of the natural sciences by Lister's time. But the supervening biblical account gave further legitimising force to a vision of creaturely life as a matter of distributed, even prodigally scattered endowments.⁴⁰ As ancient natural history and Christian doctrine amalgamated during the Reformation and Anglican settlement, Genesis played a multivalent role, dressed in its new garb of vernacular translation; it signified as both natural history *and* scripture. The opening verses of Genesis enumerate a parade of creatures, rising in order of their creation. The emerging series of kinds (the fowl of the air, the fish of the sea, the beasts of the earth) shows distinct domains made proper to each. Each creature rightfully holds a divine endowment and *imprimatur*.

With the expansion of Latin learning and the Englishing of liturgy and theology, new archives of vernacular writing disseminated what it could mean to think of having an 'appointed' or God-given nature. As a core example, one of the *Sermons or Homilies to be Read in Churches* (1547) expands Genesis, using a poetry of lists:

Almighty God hath created and appointed all things in heaven, earth, and waters . . . al birdes of the aire . . . earth, trees, seedes, plantes, herbes, corne, grasse, and all maner of beastes keepe them in their ordre . . . all kyndes of fishes in the sea, rivers and waters, . . . yea the seas themselves, keepe their comely course . . .⁴¹

Here we see natural history's enumerative style inflecting theology. This language instils each creature with an agency to continue, according to the arc of its own natural ways; the refrains stress how things have a delegated sovereignty to 'keep themselves' to their own 'comely [fitting] courses'. Although the Homilies were no longer read systematically in churches in Lister's time, they suffused English culture. Indeed, the catalogue for the posthumous sale of Lister's library lists her copy of the *Sermons or Homilies to be Read in Churches*.⁴² Like her contemporaries, she routinely read sermons aloud at home when family were indisposed to attend church.

Meanwhile, another text from the Elizabethan vernacular mix of theology and naturalism remained a cornerstone of Anglicanism, with a major Oxford scholarly edition published in 1836. This treatise on church governance by Tudor theologian Richard Hooker found in these laws of Nature a *via media* between Puritanism and Catholicism. Hooker's account of a God-given nature pertains here: 'All things that are have some [natural] operation . . . for unto every end, every operation will not serve. That which doth assign unto each thing the kind, that which doth moderate the force and the power, that which doth appoint the form and the measure, the same we term a law.' These kinds trace a 'course' established by Nature, as 'wonted motions', 'unwearied courses' and customary 'ways'.⁴³ Hooker explicates a theology of Nature in which created beings possess a signature arc or way of acting.

A detailed account of intervening developments exceeds my brief, but Pope's popular poem cited above, *An Essay on Man* (1734), faithfully rehearsed this older creationist vision in which everything across the natural world accrues sacred licence by its rightful share in divine intention. From our perspective, the poem's notorious line, 'Whatever IS, is RIGHT', sounds mainly complicit in the controlling hierarchies of a *status quo*. But in Lister's hands, this very logic shows itself ready to turn to queerer purposes. In scientific contexts, a theology of creation remained central during her life, and works like William Paley's widely read *Natural Theology* (1802) continued to propose that whatever exists can only have been intended to be. In 1859, Darwin would challenge natural theology's view of God as the direct author of each creature and its faith in the creaturely immutability that, as discussed below, anchored Lister's self-accounting. In Lister's lifetime, meanwhile, texts like the compendious *Dictionary of the Natural History of the Bible; or, A Description of All the Quadrupeds, Birds, Fishes, Reptiles, and Insects, Trees, Plants, Flowers, Gums, and Precious Stones Mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures* (published in Boston, London, Glasgow, and Dublin from 1793) worked to 'open new beauties

in the sacred volume', even citing 'the natural history of foreign countries' as important for actual biblical understanding.⁴⁴ Natures are God-given; thus they teach and speak.

To begin turning to Lister's own textual improvisations on what it means to have a God-given nature, two Shakespearean pivots show how readily these traditional ideas could apply to *human* variety, particularly concerning gender and sexuality.⁴⁵ This creation model – in which an endowed bent is conferred by divine art or Nature's hand – shapes the two most intriguing close encounters between Nature and sex/gender in the canon. First, in the gender-bending Sonnet 20 ('A woman's face with nature's own hand painted'), the (male) poet imagines the process by which Nature creates his (male) beloved. Line ten proposes that 'nature, as she wrought thee, fell a-doting', randomly making the beloved male by a slip of her drifting hand. Nature's creatures, including humans, are 'wrought', or made, and the process contains enough free scope for a 'doting' Nature to vary her plans. Shakespeare casts sexual difference as something almost accidental – because Nature, as an artist, has her queer freedoms and moods.

The second instance is a textual crux in *Twelfth Night*, the most queerly convoluted of Shakespeare's comedies. When the cross-dressed boy actor playing Olivia, a female character who has fallen in love with another female character, Viola (who is also played by a boy, but spends most of the play disguised as a man), discovers these layered masks, another character (Viola's twin) naturalises the attraction between two likes. 'So comes it lady you have been mistook', he says, but, he explains, 'nature to her bias drew in that'.⁴⁶ The idea of Nature drawing to (keeping to) her bias comes from the game of bowls, where an inbuilt weight (the bias) directs the natural course of the ball as a bent or turn. By these lights, natural movement (life, hope, desire – all the creaturely prerogatives) bends or curves; no 'nature' can be straightened or confined against its own grain. This conception of nature encompasses both the freedom of Nature as an originating artist and distributed sovereign nature(s), which all naturally desire the self-constancy of staying 'true to purpose'. Every nature is endowed by a creator with a bias all its own.

It Was All Nature

Anne Lister does more than accept or explain that she is 'odd, very very odd'; she justifies it with arguments resting squarely on natural history's sense of this native, creaturely endowment. 'Oddity' bundles many things

beyond sexuality, as Lanser and Gonda have shown, and Lister captures that range. Countless diary passages register other people's notions of her singularity. Of a London dressmaker, Lister writes, '*I think she understands me to be a character.*'⁴⁷ Flirting with Miss Browne, who asked about her youth, she explains in 1819, '*I was a curious genius & had been so from my cradle*'; to Maria Barlow, asking in 1824 what her servants made of her, she answers, '*Oh, merely . . . that I have my own particular ways.*'⁴⁸ Setting off from Shibden in 1832, she likens it to 'exile', considering how her 'own people . . . are accustomed to my oddities, are kind, & civilized to me'.⁴⁹

Beyond these glancing instances, the diaries make clear her 'oddity' was a common topic of conversation; it is not too awkward to discuss and even supports flirtation. Indeed, Lister often notes that people like her that way. On 2 July 1821, for example, she describes being '*led into talking about myself . . . my figure, manner of walking & my voice; their singularity etc*' by Emma Saltmarsh, naming all these '*my own oddities*'. But crucially she adds that Emma '*does not appear to object[;] in fact she thinks me agreeable & likes me. So does her husband*'.⁵⁰ Another friend, Ellen Empson, '*said I was odd but hoped I would not change*'.⁵¹ When Lister argues that her 'inquisitive, curious' gaze is *like* other people's, a new acquaintance in Paris counters, '*No . . . it is only like yourself. But I don't dislike it.*'⁵² Though her beloved Aunt Anne wryly commented in 1832, 'Well, you're a queer one & I'll ask no more,' Lister is always answering for her 'oddity' – *the thing is*, with evident success.⁵³ Singular, odd, curious, particular, queer: that she has something to answer for is unsurprising. The surprise is the apparently persuasive weight of the answer she reliably gives. Putting it plainly, she explains to Mrs Barlow as their Paris intimacy proceeds apace, '*it was all nature*'.⁵⁴

Indeed, we might add, it was all 'nature's bias' in the Shakespearean sense: Nature's embedded weight or guide directing a God-given 'inclination' or 'turn'. Across the years, Lister keenly prosecutes this natural and creationist theory of her native 'oddity', transcribing sustained dialogues with friends and lovers into her journal. Considering three of these by the lights of natural history shows both the erudition and the daring of Lister's experiment in queer traditionality. In a deft editorial decision, Whitbread's first volume opens with one such conversation, extending over two months in 1816. Tortured by the heterosexual marriage of her greatest love, Mariana Belcombe, Lister is brought into close quarters with Mariana's sister, Nantz; a dalliance ensues. Edging into the topic, Lister tells her '*I should never marry. Could not like men. Ought not to like women.*'⁵⁵ But she immediately undercuts the wrong implied in 'ought not' by

accounting *for my inclination that way by diverse arguments*’; Lister expounds on *‘my penchant for the ladies. Expatiated on the nature of my feelings.’* Working by diverse arguments, expatiating on nature as an inclination or penchant – and succeeding with Mariana’s sister – Lister then contends with Nantz’s fear their sexual engagement is wrong. Sticking to the language of scholarly debate, Lister confidently writes, *‘I dexterously parried all these points.’*

Distinguishing male homosexual acts from female (with the latter *‘certainly not named’* in the Bible), Lister actually bends and expands scriptural logics in her favour. She transfers opprobrium from same-sex connections, per se, to the inconsistency of playing both sides instead. She calls it *‘infamous to be connected to both sexes’*, but finds allowances for those who exclusively *‘kept to one side of the question’*. Making her case to Nantz, Lister continues:

I urged in my own defence the strength of natural feeling & instinct, for so I might call it, as I had always had the same turn from infancy. That it had been known to me, as it were, by inclination. That I had never varied & no effort on my part had been able to counteract it. That the girls like me & had always liked me. That I had never been refused by anyone.

These lines reverberate with keywords from across the ‘nature’s bias’ tradition: instinct, a consistent ‘turn’ since birth, an unvarying ‘inclination’ so deeply planted it cannot be redirected. The ‘feeling’ is ‘natural’ – and defensible – because it is native. The absence of terms like ‘lesbian’ and related vocabularies aside, we are watching Lister forge a discourse of her own, seized from the heart of traditional texts, including the Bible.⁵⁶ Using marked rhetorical phrases (*‘for so I might call it’* and *‘as it were’*), she musters older understandings of a bespoke endowment for every ‘made’ creature – and conscripts them queerly to make a peerless case for legitimacy. We may add, too, her ‘oddity’ having ‘always’ been liked and ‘never’ refused (essentially ratified by the world) chimes with Pope’s logic, *‘whatever IS, is RIGHT’*.

A second episode extends the argument from Nature, as Lister takes Frances Pickford’s measure. In 1823, she expands her earlier points. *‘If it had been done from books & not from nature’*, she reasons, *‘the thing would have been different. Or if there had been any inconsistency, first on one side of the question, or the other, but, as it was, nature was the guide.’*⁵⁷ Nature may wend, but it does not waver. Indeed, it is precisely this consistency principle that shapes the emphatic grammar built in to of one of the most singular declaratives in sexuality’s long history: Lister’s 1821 claim not just

'to love the fairer sex', but to 'love *& only love the fairer sex*'.⁵⁸ With Pickford, Lister distinguishes 'the thing' (nature-based sex between women) from the notorious counterexample of whatever we decide goes on in Juvenal's racy Sixth Satire, which she knowingly critiques as both '*artificial & inconsistent*'.⁵⁹ The sexuality she justifies is, in sharp contrast, both '*the effect of nature*' and also '*always consistent with itself*'. Across these passages, nature rarely appears without its companion gloss, self-consistency. *Natura propositi tenax*.

A third conversation extends from Lister's meeting Maria Barlow in Paris in 1824 to their becoming lovers, giving another sustained meditation on 'the thing'. The same marks of argumentation and off-setting distinction recur. Lister takes up a '*vindicating style of conversation respecting myself*'. She explains: '*Said how it was all nature. Had it not been genuine the thing would have been different.*' Lister amplifies the earlier distinction between her own, authorised natural 'ways' and artificial or bookish ones. Here we find her disclaimer of '*Saffric regard*' or '*Sapphic love*' (glossed as the use of sexual devices) on the grounds that '*there was artifice in it. It was very different from mine.*'⁶⁰ By 1832, as Lister faced new challenges wooing Ann Walker, she writes of these naturalising arguments as long settled. Countering Walker's fear that the legal jeopardy male lovers would face implied that their connection too was wrong, Lister '*appealed to her reason & put my arguments on the basis of religion*'. She records what is by now shorthand for earlier arguments: '*I answered this in my usual way: it was my natural & undeviating feeling etc etc.*'⁶¹

Appealed to her reason? On the basis of religion? Etc etc? Across these textual cruxes, Lister's queer naturalisation of her 'oddity' draws on traditional intellectual resources to make a boldly original case for Nature's backing. At the same time, she sets a rigorous, even unforgiving, standard for the natural 'thing'. Both sexual artifice and inconsistency in sexual object choice stray from Nature into a zone she has no care to defend. Nature, as an inclination, a bent or a turn – instilled from birth and 'not put on' – is righteous, even ethical.⁶² The Listerian path is not straight, but it is still narrow because it unfolds, ultimately, as an *ethical* construction. To round out this account of the intellectual resources Lister taps to justify her ways, we must add one more thread: the ethical tradition of Stoicism.

Whether drawn from Zeno, Epictetus, Diogenes, Horace or Cicero, the Stoic ethos appears in aphoristic maxims strewn across print and manuscript culture – in Greek, Latin and English garb. As Nicholas White describes, 'from the Renaissance until well into the nineteenth century, Stoic ethical thought was one of the most important ancient influences on

European ethics', especially due to 'the effect it had had in antiquity, and continued to have into the nineteenth century, on Christian ethic[s]'.⁶³ Stoic ideas infused discourses of consolation, its doctrines proposing that the ethical life and the happy one converge in a life lived 'according to' or 'in agreement with nature'. Let nature take its course; keep to Nature as your guide. Equipose reigns between release and restraint. Lister herself highlighted a major *locus classicus* for this principle, inscribing it on the flyleaf of one of her volumes. Quoting Horace's aphorism (likely from memory, since it is good Latin but not exact), she writes: '*naturam expellas furcâ, licet usque recurrat*'. In more fulsome English, it exclaims, 'Go ahead! Drive nature out with a pitchfork if you want to try, it will always rush back in.'⁶⁴ This nature is the same inextinguishable inclination, instinct, bent, genius, penchant, bias, or turn inscribed in bodies across the creationist traditions of natural history and theology.

In Shakespeare's phrasing of the inscription process, 'Nature as she wrought thee fell a-doting'. Lister's friend Eliza Priestley accounts for Anne's 'oddity' in exactly this way. '*Speaking of my oddity, Mrs Priestley said she always told people I was a natural, but she thought nature was in an odd freak when she made me.*'⁶⁵ In addition to taking 'oddity' as natural and making Nature its artist-creator, two further points stand out in both cases. First, Nature's creatures are not the only place where 'oddity' unfurls its flag; that 'odd' old girl Nature herself possesses it, as one of her freedoms, moods, or powers. Queerness is no exclusively human prerogative. Nature was in 'an odd freak', but Lister is not a 'freak of nature'. Second, questions were openly asked in Lister's environment, but (more surprisingly) not only Anne Lister, but even Mrs Priestley has an answer. When she records the answer Mrs Priestley says she 'always' gives to others who ask, Lister recounts: '*I looked significantly & replied the remark was fair & just & true.*' The extraordinary passage records what Anne Lister herself experienced as recognition, what she herself judges a 'fair & just & true' representation.

In the process of setting her creatures off with their odd scripts, *where* might we say Nature inscribes the 'bias'? Lister '*had thought much, studied anatomy, etc*', but she drew a confident conclusion: '*No exterior formation accounted for it*'; instead, '*It was all the effect of the mind.*'⁶⁶ My penultimate example of Lister's thought addresses the mind as the place where 'oddity' resides. In her journal's priceless treasury of women's engagements, Lister not only records live conversation, but often copies letters sent and received. In 1824, she transcribes a dialogue of letters with Sibbella Maclean, a much-understudied Scottish friend and lover whose poor health and Hebridean remoteness foreclosed one possible future for Lister.⁶⁷

We find Maclean summoning the idea of Nature's bias to comprehend Anne and sending it back to her. Anne's ardent admiration had led Sibbella, who seems to have felt undeserving, to call Anne 'romantic', to which Anne objected. At a pivotal moment, Lister recounts 'Finished reading my letter by this morning's post from Miss Maclean . . . she is sorry she called me romantic.' Lister transcribes Maclean's apology:

I shall never do so again, & am sorry I did so – I am convinced what you write, and how you will ever act is from *the natural bias of your mind* – I can assure you I thought not of affectation, or applying to you romance in the common acceptation of the word – your mind is not formed in the ordinary mould.⁶⁸

Maclean repudiates the charge of affectation Lister heard in 'romantic', disclaiming artifice by invoking the larger discourse of Nature under discussion here. Assessing Lister by the mind and echoing Rousseau's idea of Nature throwing away 'the mould that made me', Maclean affirms that Lister writes and acts – and 'will ever act' – both with constancy and in accord with 'the natural bias of [her] mind'. In this friendly terminological negotiation, we find (once again) Nature conjured as the authorising figure.

What are the consequences, then, of Anne Lister's queerly traditional claims on Nature to justify her 'oddity'? For one thing, she defies the grip of charges against 'unnatural' behaviour. The charge goes back to Romans 1:26, about women abandoning 'the natural use for what is against nature', a passage with which she was highly conversant.⁶⁹ In later historical circumstances, *fin-de-siècle* and modern writers like Oscar Wilde and Vita Sackville-West would have their reasons to embrace this language, articulating homosexuality *against nature*. Lister instead outflanks the narrow biblical charge, reversing Pauline condemnation to insist on the wider theological perspective in which Nature is on *her* side. Rather than seeing herself turning from Nature or violating its laws, she claims exactly the opposite. She and her method too are 'odd', surely, and 'queer' in all the senses – but not 'deviant'. She is supposed to be here – as such, and as is; she is, in other words, 'a *regular* oddity'.

'When we leave nature, we leave our only steady guide, and from that moment become inconsistent with ourselves.'⁷⁰ Wresting this impeccable maxim from the pedigreed resources of the past, Lister reads that tradition queerly – which ironically includes taking it literally. Nothing in that archive prepares us to think it includes 'a capital grubbling' or 'right middle finger up queer', as she writes with such indelible economy. But

with this argument, she dares natural history, theology, and philosophy – on their own terms – to say otherwise. A second consequence of Lister’s end-run on her own time, then, is a revised sense of ours as somehow the crowning goal of some less perfect past. Walking alongside Anne Lister as she thinks her way up the mountain of a nineteenth-century life offers an ethical resource to us, as we clamber about in the twenty-first. Consider what she knew about surviving. Contemplating her bold experiment in queer traditionality, we moderns might hope to catch up with her fluency in the everyday work it takes to live ‘undaunted’. If Anne Lister posed ‘an enigma even to [her]self’, as she mused in a letter to Sibbella, we should also pause to note that she seems to have solved it.⁷¹

Notes

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- 1 Anne Lister, letter to Sibbella Maclean, 10 July 1824, *Anne Lister Papers*, West Yorkshire Archive Service (WYAS) [hereafter *Lister Papers*], SH:7/ML/142.
- 2 The gloss often appears in quotes without attribution. R. Norton, ‘Anne Lister: the First Modern Lesbian’ (1 August 2003), www.rictornorton.co.uk/lister.htm, accessed 12 February 2021. Norton himself was the first to moderate this claim, noting ‘the absence of a political consciousness’. We should also note that Lister voices no *desire* for ‘political community’ as we understand that idea.
- 3 H. Whitbread, ‘Initiations, Explanations, Discrimination: Anne Lister’s Strategies of Seduction’, in M. McAuliffe and S. Tiernan (eds.), *Tribades, Tommies, and Transgressives* (Newcastle: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2008), pp. 109–27, p. 110. The force of her exclusive emphasis (‘*only love*’) is detailed below. Lister inked this credo on 29 January 1821 (*Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/E/4/0122).
- 4 See, for example, William Paley’s much-republished *Natural Theology: or, Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity, Collected from the Appearances of Nature* (London: J. Faulder, 1802), which Lister extracted in her reading notes (*Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/EX/1). Lister’s neighbour, Eliza Priestley, was Paley’s daughter. On Darwin and natural theology, see A. Clifford, ‘Darwin’s Revolution in *The Origin of Species*: a Hermeneutical Study of the Movement from Natural Theology to Natural Selection’, in

- R. J. Russell (ed.), *Evolutionary and Molecular Biology: Scientific Perspectives on Divine Action* (Vatican City: Vatican Observatory, 1998), pp. 281–302.
- 5 By longstanding interpretation, the created world held edifying value. In the 'two-books tradition', creation (the 'Book of Nature') relayed the same verities as scripture (the 'Book of Revelation'), following Romans 1:20: 'For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.' On this tradition in the nineteenth century, see D. Lincum, 'Criticism and Authority', in J. Rasmussen et al. (eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Nineteenth-Century Christian Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), pp. 72–88, p. 75.
 - 6 On natural history's preference for enumeration over reducing lifeforms into fewer categories, see B. Ogilvie, *The Science of Describing: Natural History in Renaissance Europe* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2006).
 - 7 'Normal', Google Books NGram Viewer (a broad search engine for word frequency in English print), analysing 1700–2019: https://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=normal&year_start=1700&year_end=2019&corpus=26&smoothing=3&direct_url=t1%3B%2Cnormal%3B%2Cco#t1%3B%2Cnormal%3B%2Cco, calculated 20 May 2022.
 - 8 Lister herself notes the role of Rousseau's *Confessions*: 'I read this work so attentively for the style's sake. Besides this it is a singularly unique display of character'; H. Whitbread (ed.), *The Secret Diaries of Miss Anne Lister, vol. 11: No Priest but Love* (London: Virago, 2020), p. 148. On Lister's classical and Romantic self-fashioning, see A. Clark, 'Anne Lister's Construction of Lesbian Identity', *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 7.1 (1996), 23–50. On Byronic style, see C. Tuite, 'The Byronic Woman: Anne Lister's Style, Sociability and Sexuality', in G. Russell and C. Tuite (eds.), *Romantic Sensibility: Social Networks and Literary Culture in Britain, 1770–1840* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), pp. 186–210.
 - 9 See especially S. Colclough, "'Do You Not Know the Quotation?": Reading Anne Lister, Anne Lister Reading', in J. Beynon and C. Gonda (eds.), *Lesbian Dames: Sapphism in the Long Eighteenth Century* (Farnham: Ashgate, 2010), pp. 159–72.
 - 10 On Lister and anatomy, see Clark, this volume. On Lister and dictionaries, see S. Turton, 'The Lexicographical Lesbian: Remaking the Body in Anne Lister's Erotic Glossary', *Review of English Studies* 73.310 (June 2022), 537–51.
 - 11 28 February 1823, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/E/6/0097.
 - 12 C. Roulston, 'Sexuality in Translation: Anne Lister and the Ancients', *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 30.1 (January 2021), 112–35, 130.
 - 13 28 February 1823, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/E/6/0097.
 - 14 To my knowledge, no instance has been found where Lister applies the name *tribade* or *fricatrice* to herself; she actively disidentifies with what she calls 'Sapphic regard' (discussed below).
 - 15 20 August 1823, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/E/7/0055 (quoting Rousseau's *Confessions*; emphases mine).

- 16 Rousseau, *Confessions*; www.rousseauonline.ch/Text/les-confessions-de-jj-rousseau.php/, accessed 20 May 2022 (my translation).
- 17 S. S. Lanser, ‘“Queer to Queer”: the Sapphic Body as Transgressive Text’, in K. Kittredge (ed.), *Lewd and Notorious: Female Transgression in the Eighteenth Century* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2003), pp. 21–46, p. 39; C. Gonda, ‘The Odd Women: Charlotte Charke, Sarah Scott and the Metamorphoses of Sex’, in Beynon and Gonda, *Lesbian Dames*, pp. 111–25, p. 125.
- 18 ‘Oddity’, Google Books NGram Viewer, analysing 1700–2019; www://books.google.com/ngrams/graph?content=oddity&year_start=1700&year_end=2019&corpus=26&smoothing=3, calculated 21 May 2022.
- 19 *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/142.
- 20 Alexander Pope, *An Essay on Man*, in J. Butt (ed.), *The Poems of Alexander Pope* (London: Methuen, 1963), Epistle I, line 294, p. 515. Lister cites the phrase 13 April 1834 and *passim*. On classifying Lister’s politics, see Lanser, this volume.
- 21 Whitbread’s editions of the diaries were published in 1988 and 1992; citations are to the republished volumes, *The Secret Diaries of Miss Anne Lister, vol. I: I Know My Own Heart* (London: Virago, 2018) and *The Secret Diaries of Miss Anne Lister, vol. II: No Priest but Love* (London: Virago, 2020).
- 22 ‘Gentleman Jack Series Two Review: One of the Greatest British Period Dramas of our Time’, *Guardian*, 10 April 2022, www.theguardian.com/tv-and-radio/2022/apr/10/gentleman-jack-series-two-review-one-of-the-greatest-british-period-dramas-of-our-time, accessed 10 April 2022.
- 23 S. Wainwright, quoted in E. Vincentelli, ‘In Vigil, Suranne Jones Sounds the Murky Depths’, *New York Times*, 21 December 2021, accessed 12 June 2022 (my italics).
- 24 J. Lea, *The Gentleman Jack Effect* (Santa Fe: Laurel House Press, 2021); ‘BBC Factual Announces New BBC One Documentary, Gentleman Jack Changed My Life’, 9 May 2022, www.bbc.com/mediacentre/2022/gentleman-jack-changed-my-life, accessed 12 June 2022.
- 25 WYAS, Anne Lister Transcription Project, www.wyascatablogue.wordpress.com/exhibitions/anne-lister/anne-lister-diary-transcription-project/.
- 26 ‘Statue of Anne Lister, TV’s Gentleman Jack, Unveiled in Halifax’, *Guardian*, 26 September 2021, www.theguardian.com/artanddesign/2021/sep/26/statue-of-anne-lister-tvs-gentleman-jack-unveiled-in-halifax, accessed 27 December 2021; ‘New University of York College to Be Named after Yorkshire Diarist Anne Lister’, University of York News, 24 January 2021, www.york.ac.uk/news-and-events/news/2021/campus/lister-college-naming/, accessed 27 December 2021.
- 27 Anne Lister Birthday Week, 1–10 April 2022, www.annelisterbirthdayweek.com, accessed 2 May 2022; Anne Lister Society Inaugural Meeting, 8–9 April 2022, www.english.northwestern.edu/about/anne-lister-society/als-inaugural-2022.html, accessed 2 May 2022.
- 28 Suranne Jones, in ‘Look Who’s Back! It’s Gentleman Jack’, *Diva Magazine*, 25 March 2022; *Diva* dubs Lister and spouse Ann Walker ‘our favourite historical WLW icons’.

- 29 'Gentleman Jack: the BBC/HBO Series about a 19th-Century Lesbian Landowner is a sparkling Delight', *Financial Times*, 31 May 2019, www.ft.com/content/32732f40-81fb-11e9-9935-ad75bb96c849, accessed 4 May 2022.
- 30 Wainwright made diary digitisation possible, in an incalculable boon to research that also enabled the diary transcription project to proceed.
- 31 Whitbread, *Secret Diaries, vol. I*, p. 317.
- 32 Jones concisely described the shock of first encounter: 'It was like seeing someone's brain on the page': 'I put all the bad stuff to one side, and worked and worked', *Guardian*, 11 May 2019, accessed 18 January 2021.
- 33 E. Donoghue, cover citation for Whitbread's *I Know My Own Heart*, republished as *The Secret Diaries of Miss Anne Lister* (London: Virago, 2012): 'The Lister diaries are the Dead Sea Scrolls of lesbian history; they changed everything.'
- 34 I am (so far) unaware of Lister using the term 'diary'. She consistently refers to 'my journal', occasionally capitalising it (e.g. 20 May 1835, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/E/18/0037).
- 35 26 July 1825, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/E/8/0171. See also 17 September 1823: with 'éclat', she 'could do with impunity what I could not do now'. Whitbread, *Secret Diaries, vol. I*, p. 321.
- 36 1 October 1819, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/E/3/0099. John Lister and Arthur Burrell cracked Lister's code in the 1890s. Arthur Burrell, Letter to Halifax Librarian, 12 December 1936, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/JN/B/74/6.
- 37 *Historia Naturalis*, II.6, in M. Beagon, *Roman Nature: the Thought of Pliny the Elder* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p. 9.
- 38 26 October 1822, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/E/6/0063.
- 39 Whitbread, *Secret Diaries, vol. I*, p. 252 ('Thought I myself would fit myself to translate Pliny').
- 40 For the early modern development of this syncretic vision, see my *The Accommodated Animal: Cosmopolity in Shakespearean Locales* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).
- 41 'On Good Order, and Obedience to Rulers', in R. B. Bond (ed.), *Certain Sermons or Homilies (1547) and A Homily against Disobedience and Wilful Rebellion (1570)* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1987), p. 161.
- 42 Item 19, Catalogue of the Shibden Hall Library sold by auction at Northgate Hotel, 1846, *Lister Papers*, SH:3/L/92. One of the few books remaining at Shibden Hall from Lister's great library is an 1829 Clarendon Press imprint of the *Book of Common Prayer*, a gift from another of Lister's love interests, Vere Hobart – testifying not only to the quotidian importance of liturgical material in Lister's life, but also to the powerful resonance of books as gifts in her circle.
- 43 R. Hooker, in A. S. McGrade (ed.), *Of the Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), pp. 54, 60. See also J. Keble (ed.), *The Works of the Learned and Judicious Divine, Mr Richard Hooker ... A New Edition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1836). On Hooker's influence, see D. McCullough, 'Richard Hooker's Reputation,' *English Historical Review*, 117.473 (September 2002), 773–812.

- 44 T. M. Harris, *A Dictionary of the Natural History of the Bible* (London: Thomas Tegg, 1824), Preface, pp. ii–iii.
- 45 I explored these early modern logics in ‘“Nature’s Bias”: Renaissance Homonormativity and Elizabethan Comic Likeness’, in *Religion, Gender, and the Writing of Women: Historicist Essays in Honor of Janel Mueller* (a special issue), *Modern Philology* 98.2 (2000), pp. 183–210. References to Shakespeare are to D. Bevington, (ed.), *The Complete Works of William Shakespeare* (New York: Pearson, 2012).
- 46 *Twelfth Night*, 5.1.272.
- 47 Whitbread, *Secret Diaries*, vol. 1, p. 243.
- 48 Whitbread, *Secret Diaries*, vol. 1, p. 402, n.2; vol. II, p. 50.
- 49 16 December 1832, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/E/15/0164.
- 50 Whitbread, *Secret Diaries*, vol. 1, p. 172.
- 51 *Ibid.*, p. 82.
- 52 Whitbread, *Secret Diaries*, vol. II, p. 36.
- 53 Whitbread, *Secret Diaries*, vol. 1, p. 181.
- 54 Whitbread *Secret Diaries*, vol. II, p. 69.
- 55 All quotations for this episode are from Whitbread, *Secret Diaries*, vol. 1, pp. 2–5.
- 56 On the unorthodox theology of Lister’s rereading of Eve, see my ‘Apples and Etymologies: Anne Lister Reading Genesis’, unpublished paper delivered at the Anne Lister Society Meeting, 8 April 2022.
- 57 Whitbread, *Secret Diaries*, vol. 1, p. 296.
- 58 29 January 1821, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/E/4/0122 (my emphasis).
- 59 On the pivotal importance of later commentaries like those Lister analysed closely in her extract books, see M. Schachter, ‘Lesbian Philology in Early Print Commentaries on Juvenal and Martial’, in J. Ingleheart (ed.), *Ancient Rome and the Construction of Modern Homosexual Identities* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015), pp. 39–55.
- 60 Whitbread, *Secret Diaries*, vol. II, p. 68.
- 61 27 November 1832, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/E/15/0155.
- 62 Whitbread, *Secret Diaries*, vol. II, p. 50.
- 63 Epictetus, *The Encheiridion*, ed. N. White (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1983), Introduction, pp. 1–11, p. 1.
- 64 Lister, citing ‘Hor. Lib. 1. Epist. 10’, 9 June 1824, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/EX/5, flyleaf.
- 65 Whitbread, *Secret Diaries*, vol. 1, p. 374.
- 66 Whitbread, *Secret Diaries*, vol. II, p. 68.
- 67 I am very grateful to Anne Choma for pointing me to this exchange.
- 68 18 January 1824, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/E/7/0099 (my italics).
- 69 Whitbread, *Secret Diaries*, vol. II, p. 44.
- 70 Lister, letter to Maclean, 10 July 1824, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/142.
- 71 Lister, letter to Maclean, 21–22 June 1824, *Lister Papers*, SH:7/ML/140.