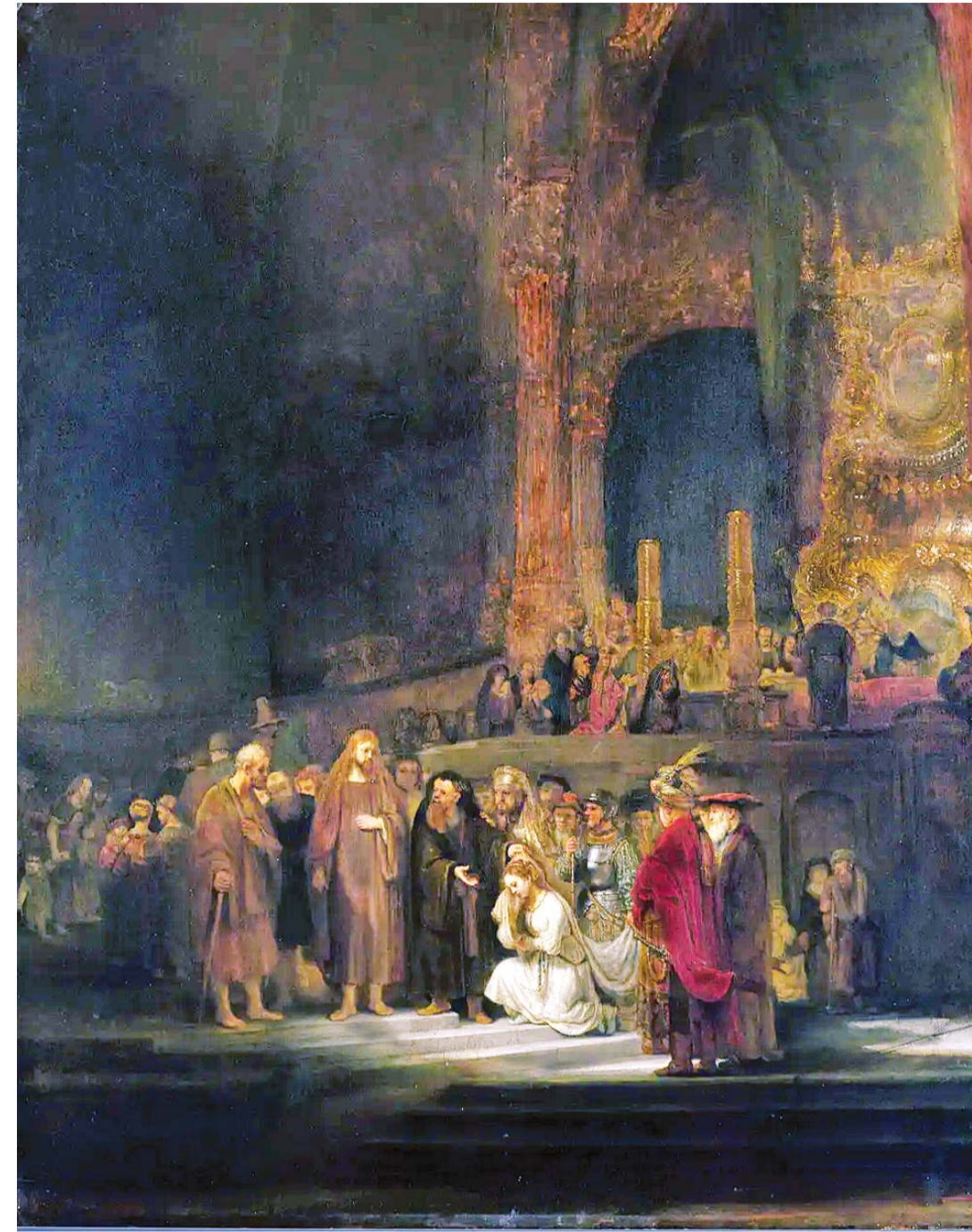




National Grilled Cheese Sandwich Day: Celebrating A Timeless Comfort Food

Observed every year on April 12, National Grilled Cheese Sandwich Day celebrates one of the world's most beloved comfort foods. Known for its simple yet satisfying combination of crispy toasted bread and melted cheese, the grilled cheese sandwich has remained a popular snack and meal for generations. The dish is enjoyed in many variations, with ingredients such as tomatoes, herbs, bacon or different cheese blends adding unique flavours. The day encourages food lovers to experiment with creative recipes while appreciating the classic sandwich that continues to hold a special place in kitchens and cafés around the world.

From Biblical Punishments to Royal Mistresses



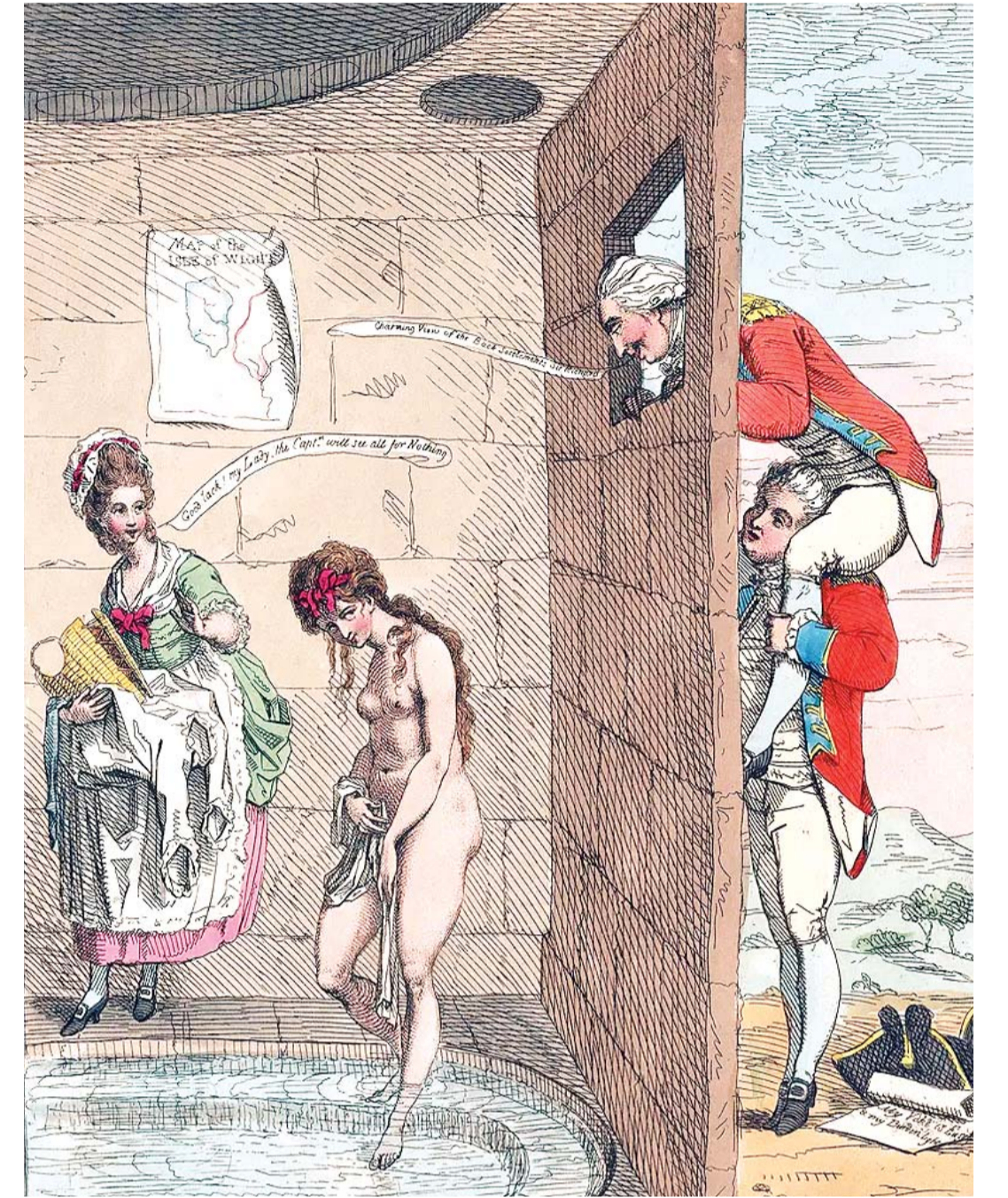
The Woman Taken in Adultery, Rembrandt, 1644.

Caricaturists including James Gillray and Thomas Rowlandson chose very different devices to critique laws concerning adultery when they ridiculed 'criminal conversation,' a tort, or wrongful civil act, that was introduced in the late 17th century and only ended with the 1857 act.



The Stolen Kiss, Jean-Honoré Fragonard, 1787.

Abbreviated as 'crim. con.,' the tort allowed a man to sue his wife's lover for robbing him of her affections and domestic support. If his suit was successful, the husband could claim financial compensation from his rival, sometimes to the tune of £10,000 or more.



A satirical print of Sir Richard Worsley hoisting his wife's lover, George Bisset, onto his shoulders so Bisset can peer into the bathhouse where Lady Worsley is changing.

• Kshema Jatuhkarna
A stolen glance across a crowded room, a shadowy figure slipping through a doorway, a lover hidden behind a curtain, adultery has long been a drama of secrecy. From Renaissance masterpieces to tabloid snapshots, the act of romantic betrayal has not only shaped personal

lives but also left its mark on art history. Painters across the centuries have turned this most intimate of transgressions into art, inviting viewers to become voyeurs of passion, guilt and desire. Historically, artistic representations of adultery have been used to raise questions about the importance of love and sexual desire in marriage. Artists have also used their works to explore themes of culpability and punish-

ment, and to demonstrate the consequences of infidelity for the families of the adulterers. Renaissance and Baroque artists picked up on the theme of adultery by depicting episodes from the Bible. Portraying scenes that were set in eras during which the punishment women faced for adultery was death, artists including Rembrandt, Peter Paul Rubens and Tintoretto explored religious disciplinary processes and the difficulties of pronounc-

ing moral judgments. Rembrandt's *The Woman Taken in Adultery* (1644) tells the story of how Jesus's compliance with Jewish law was put to the test by a council of Pharisees (members of a biblical Jewish sect that was fanatical about obeying religious laws), who bring an adulteress before him. The punishment for her crime, according to Mosaic law, was to be stoned to death. Jesus's response, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her," emphasized the moral hypocrisy of the men who stood as judges.

Although the figure of Jesus is prominent in the painting, the adulteress is central. She appears penitent, dressed in white and bathed in light, a striking contrast to the dark male figures who surround her.

That is not to say women were always portrayed as vulnerable. Throughout early modern Europe (circa 1450 to 1800), perceptions of women were heavily influenced by biblical figures such as Eve.

Women were largely believed to be the more lustful sex, weaker and more likely to succumb to temptation, and to be more deceptive and manipulative than men. The German Renaissance painter Lucas Cranach the Elder demonstrated this belief in *The Fable of the Mouth of Truth* (1534).

The painting depicts another married woman surrounded by men who are scrutinizing her. But in this case, she is not repentant. Instead, she is trying to trick her way out of receiving any punishment for her infidelity with the help of her lover, who is masquerading as a fool.

Certain artistic genres were employed to publicize and cri-



The Fable of the Mouth of Truth, Lucas Cranach the Elder, 1534.

tique changes to laws regarding adultery and divorce. For centuries, church courts dealt with marital disputes and adultery in Great Britain. A full divorce (that

allowed both parties to remarry) on the grounds of adultery was only possible through an act of Parliament, which made it unobtainable for all but very wealthy men.

The art of divorce

After Parliament passed the Matrimonial Causes Act in 1857, divorce became a matter for the

civil courts, and therefore, a viable option for a greater proportion of British society. Several Pre-Raphaelite artworks, including Augustus Leopold Egg's *Past and*

Present series, depicted the damage that infidelity and subsequent divorce could have on the family unit. Egg's work emphasized that women, who were often ostracized and cut off from their social and familial networks after divorce, were punished more severely than men for their transgressions.

Caricaturists including James Gillray and Thomas Rowlandson chose very different devices to critique laws concerning adultery when they ridiculed 'criminal conversation,' a tort, or wrongful civil act, that was introduced in the late 17th century and only ended with the 1857 act. Abbreviated as 'crim. con.,' the tort allowed a man to sue his wife's lover for robbing him of her affections and domestic support. If his suit was successful, the husband could claim financial compensation from his rival, sometimes to the tune of £10,000 or more.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, such suits were most often pursued by members of the landed gentry and the aristocracy. Moreover, as they were heard in the Court of King's Bench, which was open to journalists and the public, the salacious details of the affairs were published in newspapers and pamphlets.

Crim. con. suits were much deplored by contemporary moralists. They emphasized the impropriety of a man receiving money from another man for the sexual services of his wife, as well as the debauchery of some elite husbands, who were viewed as being culpable and complicit in their wives' affairs.

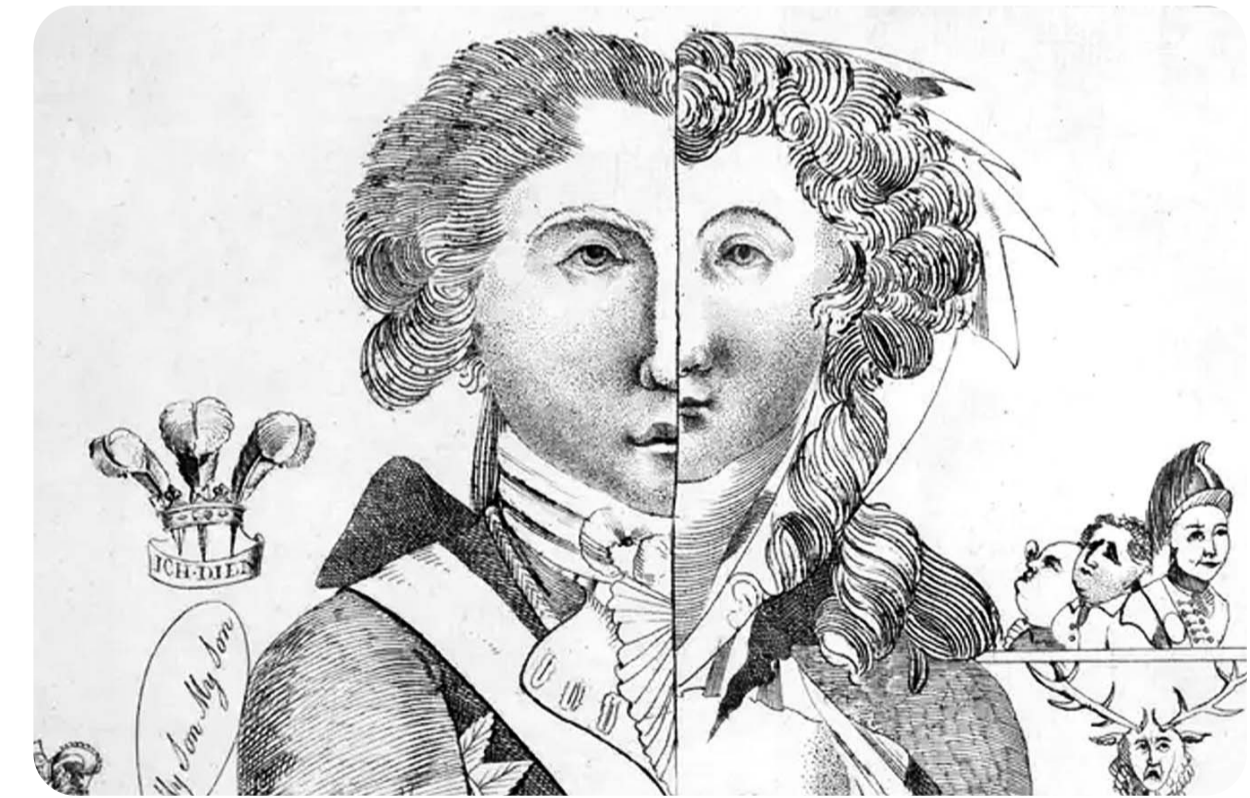
The trial of Richard Worsley versus George Bisset in February 1782 attracted a considerable amount of publicity and was depicted by several of London's best satirists. A story about the

affair that inspired many satirical prints had been discussed at length in court. Lady Worsley had been enjoying a dip at the Maidstone bathhouse when her husband allegedly hoisted her lover, Bisset, onto his shoulders so that he could see her naked body.

The notion that Worsley was a voyeur who had pimped his wife out for his own delectation was so popular that it even influenced the judge, who awarded him a humiliating one shilling in damages.

The satires were meant to entertain and titillate their audiences, but they also raised awareness of the apparent profligacy of the ruling elite. Representations of the adulterous liaisons of celebrities, including military heroes like Admiral Horatio Nelson, politicians like Charles James Fox, actresses like Mary Robinson and even royals such as George IV, were used to highlight their moral corruption, and they provided much fodder for activists demanding political reform. The his-

tory of adultery in art draws attention to the intersections between personal relationships and the public realm. Even today, when consensual relationships between adults are not formally policed, affairs continue to prompt public discussions about private morality, ideal marriages and the suitability of casting judgment. We continue to enjoy the opportunity to moralize while being entertained by the salacious portrayals of other people's affairs. rajeshsharma1049@gmail.com



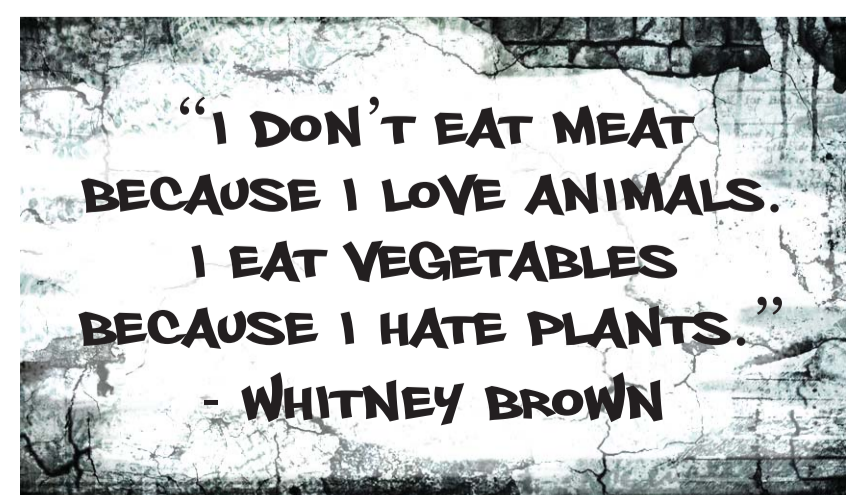
An etching of the future George IV and his mistress Mary Robinson as Florizel and Perdita from Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*.



Past and Present, No. 2, Augustus Leopold Egg, 1858.



THE WALL



BABY BLUES



By Rick Kirkman & Jerry Scott



ZITS



By Jerry Scott & Jim Borgman