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**“Why tho cham a Zomerzetshire wanch che know a leet manners too”:  
Dialect representations in the work of Thomas D’Urfey (c. 1653-1723)**

Thomas D’Urfey, born in Exeter c. 1653, wrote more than 30 plays for the London stage in the late 17<sup>th</sup> and early 18<sup>th</sup> century, and also published hundreds of songs and several collections of poetry. After his death, his dramatic work – while never looked on with the greatest esteem – languished, with no editions of his plays published between 1729 and 1917, and little literary criticism or notice. Recently, there has been a flurry of interest in his work (notably, McVeagh 2000), and a new edition of one play (Fisk 2005), but there has been no mention of his use of dialect representations. A prolific playwright, D’Urfey also provided the most representations of English and Scottish dialects in restoration drama, with 15 plays featuring dialect representation between 1677 and 1709. These include *The Bath, or The Western Lass* (1701), with several speakers speaking in a southwestern dialect, including Gillian, the Somersetshire wench providing my titular quotation.

In this paper, I will present dialectal data from these 15 plays, with additional representations from D’Urfey’s collections of popular songs. I will provide a phonological, morphological, and lexical analysis, and place these representations in the context of a more general discussion of the forms and functions of literary dialect.

#### Works Cited

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