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**Proceedings  
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on Earlier British Literature**

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## *Introduction and Acknowledgements*

This volume presents sixteen papers originally delivered at the Sixth Annual Northern Plains Conference on Earlier British Literature, which was held at Wayne State College on April 24-25, 1998. The order of papers here is not as they were presented, and is chronological only in that it moves from the Renaissance to the eighteenth century. The six essays that deal with only Shakespearian drama seem to invite their own category, with which we lead off. They are followed by four papers on other Renaissance topics, and then by six papers on Restoration and eighteenth-century topics.

In addition to the papers included in this volume, the 1998 conference featured a keynote address by David Bevington, Professor in the Humanities at the University of Chicago and editor of *The Complete Works of Shakespeare*. Professor Bevington's presentation was entitled "Editing Informed by Performance History: the Double-Ending of *Troilus and Cressida*." We were pleased that Professor Bevington attended this year's conference, and we appreciate his active and enthusiastic participation in it.

We also would like to thank several others: David Lawrence and the Wayne State College Madrigal Singers for their performance at the banquet; Janet Gilligan, Katherine Butler, and Robert DeSmith for their help in moderating sessions; the staffs of the WSC student center and Chartwells for providing the facilities and food; and Wayne State College for its generous financial support of this project.

Finally, one will note that the name of this conference has evolved over the years. This reflects the growing geographic diversity of both the conference sites and its participants. For several years (1992-1995) the conference was called The Dakotas Conference. It then became the Dakotas-Nebraska Conference when Peru State College in Peru, Nebraska hosted it in 1996. At the 1997 conference at Jamestown College, participants chose a new name - the Northern Plains Conference on Earlier British Literature - one which more accurately reflects the real nature of our group.

One important purpose of this event has been to foster a sense of community among the scholars of earlier British Literature in the northern plains region. That purpose has been amply fulfilled so far. Every conference has drawn significant participation from around the region, including a growing group of regular attendees who are not all affiliated with institutions in the Dakotas or Nebraska, but who are very committed to continuing the annual exchange of insights, ideas, and scholarship. We were privileged to host the 1998 conference, and we look forward to its continued success.

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## *Love's Labor's Lost* but Courtesy's Labor's Won

Douglas A. Northrop  
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The four part division of Baldassare Castiglione's *The Courtier* reflects the four evenings on which the discussion and definition of a courtier took place at the court of Urbino. It also reflects the four part causal definition established by Aristotle and used widely in the Renaissance.<sup>1</sup> There is little doubt that book four presents the final cause or the end of the courtier; that function is declared many times. It is only slightly less obvious that the third book, defining the woman courtier, presents the instrumental or efficient cause of the courtier. Lord Cesar Gonzaga establishes the place of that definition in the larger argument as he points out at the beginning that there can be no court, no courtier, no mirth, no grace, no chivalry "onlesse [the courtier] be stirred wyth the conversacion and with the love and contentacion of women" (III, iii, p. 212). And at the end he says, "Do you not see that of all comelye exercises and whiche delite the worlde, the cause is to be referred to no earthlye thyng but to women?" (III, iii, p. 264). Lady Emilia and the Duchess of Urbino certainly perform this function in the dialogues—often by witticisms, sometimes by ridicule—as they shape the discussions and guide the men in their arguments.

There are two difficulties in exploring Shakespeare's plays with this role for women in mind. First, while Shakespeare is noted and often admired for his spirited heroines who demonstrate such an instrumental ability, their guidance of their prospective mates and others is to an understanding of themselves, of the one they would love, and of the nature of love itself. Juliet has something of that role in *Romeo and Juliet*, and in the comedies it is even more definitively part of Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*, of Viola in *Twelfth Night*, and consummately of Rosalind in *As You Like It*. While one could argue that love and courtesy are closely linked in Renaissance thought, they should not simply merge. Second, I have argued for the past two years at this conference that the English reception of Castiglione and the new courtesy associated with his name often emphasized the artificial and superficial qualities of these newly minted courtiers. Shakespeare, I have argued, sees more of the new courtesy in Oswald than in Kent, in Osrice than in Hamlet, in Tybalt than in Romeo. In *As You Like It*, it is the clown, Touchstone, who is the satiric authority on books for manners and on the causes for defending one's honor. Indeed, to turn at last to the play I would like to discuss today, the character most linked to the courtesy imported from the continent is Don Armado, the butt of everyone's jokes in *Love's Labor's Lost*. He is first

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described by the King of Navarre, who is explaining what the lords will do for entertainment during their three years of study. Navarre proposes:

Our court, you know, is haunted  
With a refined traveller of Spain;  
A man in all the world's new fashion planted,  
That hath a mint of phrases in his brain;  
One who the music of his own vain tongue  
Doth ravish like enchanting harmony;  
A man of complements, whom right and wrong  
Have chose as umpire of their mutiny:  
This child of fancy, that Armado hight,  
For interim to our studies shall relate  
In high-born words the worth of many a knight  
From tawny Spain, lost in the world's debate.  
(1.1.161-72)

When Berowne is angry at the courtier, Boyet, who accompanies the Princess of France and her ladies and who has betrayed the plans of Navarre, Berowne, et al., Berowne describes him in terms that seem to define for Shakespeare much that is to be ridiculed in the manners of court. Not only does Boyet retail the wit of others,

A' can carve too, and lisp: why, this is he  
That kiss'd his hand away in courtesy;  
This is the ape of form, monsieur the nice,  
That, when he plays at tables, chides the dice  
In honourable terms: nay, he can sing  
A mean most meanly, and, in ushering,  
Mend him who can: the ladies call him sweet;  
The stairs, as he treads on them, kiss his feet.  
This is the flower that smiles on every one,  
To show his teeth as white as whale his bone;  
And consciences, that will not die in debt,  
Pay him the due of honey-tongu'd Boyet.  
(5.2.323-34)

That one sense of courtesy is almost synonymous with falseness is also shown in the ladies' use of the term. First, Rosaline corrects the Princess who has said the Russians were "Trim gallants, full of courtship and of state." Rosaline remonstrates: "Madam, speak true. It is not so, my lord:/ My lady, to the manner of the days,/ In courtesy gives undeserving praise" (5.2.363, 364-66). Near the end of the play when Navarre and the other lords claim that they have tried to declare their true love, the Princess replies:

We have receiv'd your letters full of love;  
 Your favours, the ambassadors of love;  
 And in our maiden council rated them  
 At courtship, pleasant jest, and courtesy,  
 As bombast and as lining to the time.  
 But more devout than this in our respects  
 Have we not been; and therefore met your loves  
 In their own fashion, like a merriment.  
 (5.2.767-74)

Certainly, the ladies of France are not trying to direct the lords of Navarre to adopt the courtesy of Armado or of Boyet or even that which they describe as false compliment and merriment. Their labors have a different direction. Had the lords read Castiglione as advisedly as Roger Ascham recommends, they would have learned other lessons of courtesy (55). Or had they consulted the useful list at the back of Sir Thomas Hoby's translation of Castiglione they might have discovered that they should "shon Affectation or curiosity above al thing in al things" (367). Further they would know, as Holofernes and Armado clearly do not, that they should "speake and write the language that is most in use emonge the commune people, without inventing new woords, inckhorn tearmes or straunge phrases, such as be growen out of use by long time" (368). The most important lessons, however, might have been "To consider whom he doth taunt and where: for he ought not to mocke poore seelie soules..... and "Not to become a jester or scoff to put anye man out of countenance" (369).

The structure of *Love's Labor's Lost* has been noted by Greene and others as using the secondary or local characters to present exaggerated versions of the tendencies of the lords. Thus, Holofernes and Nathaniel present the learned language and actions of the lords extended to a sterile and ludicrous extreme. Similarly, Don Armado shows the foppish extreme of courtesy in his language and actions.

Another structural characteristic of the play is the repeated impact of the ladies on the plans of the lords: first their attempt to establish an academy, second their effort to entertain the ladies as Muscovites or Russians, and thirdly, their mocking of the presentation of the nine worthies.

The king of Navarre has persuaded his three lords to take an oath that for three years they will fast, study, and avoid women so that the academy thus established will be so renowned as to make their reputations survive the ravages of "cormorant devouring Time" (1.1.4). No sooner is the oath subscribed by these lords, than Berowne reminds them of the visit of the French king's daughter. Between the scene of their oath taking and the arrival of the ladies is the scene in which Armado first appears and reveals his love for Jaquenetta, thus breaking his "promise to study three years with the duke" (1.2.35). Just as Jaquenetta has by her mere presence disrupted Armado's plans for three years of study, so the

presence of the ladies disrupts the lords and will lead them to a literary frenzy similar to the one Armado predicts for himself when he says, "Devise, wit; write, pen; for I am for whole volumes in folio" (1.2.174-75).

After the lords have abandoned their pretence of indifference and admitted to themselves and each other their love for the visiting ladies, they decide to entertain them. Berowne proposes:

In the afternoon  
 We will with some strange pastime solace them,  
 Such as the shortness of the time can shape;  
 For revels, dances, masks, and merry hours,  
 Forerun fair Love, strewing her way with flowers.  
 (4.3.373-77)

Again, the plans of the lords are immediately followed by the plans of the secondary characters with appropriate exaggeration. Armado announces to Holofernes: "Sir, it is the king's most sweet pleasure and affection to congratulate the princess at her pavilion in the posteriors of this day, which the rude multitude call the afternoon" (5.1.82-85). Holofernes proposes that they present the Nine Worthies.

The ladies, of course, learn of the lords' intentions and resolve to disrupt their efforts, as the Princess explains: "The effect of my intent is to cross theirs:/ They do it but in mockery merriment;/ And mock for mock is only my intent" (5.2.138-40). The ladies' success is indicated in Berowne's recantation to Rosaline and in Navarre's instruction by the Princess. Berowne renounces the artificiality of their efforts:

O! never will I trust to speeches penn'd,  
 Nor to the motion of a school-boy's tongue,  
 Nor never come in visor to my friend,  
 Nor woo in rhyme, like a blind harper's song!  
 Taffeta phrases, silken terms precise,  
 Three-pil'd hyperboles, spruce affection,  
 Figures pedantical; these summer flies  
 Have blown me full of maggot ostentation:  
 I do forswear them; and I here protest,  
 By this white glove (how white the hand, God knows),  
 Henceforth my wooing mind shall be express'd  
 In russet yeas and honest kersey noes:  
 And to begin: Wench—so God help me, law!-  
 My love to thee is sound, sans crack or flaw.  
 (5.2.402-15)

And Navarre's plea: "Teach us, sweet madam, for our rude transgression/  
Some fair excuse" is answered by the Princess, "The fairest is confession" (5.2.431-32). And they do confess. But their lessons are not over; they must learn that they have not only misrepresented themselves by disguise, they have judged the ladies by the favors worn and thus have addressed their statements of love to the wrong persons.

The disguise or acting of a part is now repeated by Armado and his fellow actors as they present the worthies. Navarre's concern, "they will shame us" (507), is overridden less by Berowne's advice, "'tis some policy/ To have one show worse than the king's and his company" (508-9), than by the princess's urging:

Nay, my good lord, let me o'errule you now.  
That sport best pleases that doth least know how,  
Where zeal strives to content, and the contents  
Dies in the zeal of that which it presents;  
Their form confounded makes most form in mirth,  
When great things labouring perish in their birth.  
(511-16)

Berowne applies the Princess's comment instantly to the lords' own labor: "A right description of our sport, my lord" (517). As the lords had presented themselves with more ardor than wisdom, now the other actors will exaggerate that folly by a more conspicuous disproportion. Costard, the rural bumpkin, will fare better than the others, for as he has less ego involved in his role as Pompey the Great, he will be less easily distracted from it. Costard accepts correction, changing his assertion that he is Pompey the Big to Pompey the Great and departs with his usual grace. Nathaniel as Alexander is more easily discomfited and can only repeat his lines until he becomes afraid to speak and departs. Costard's explanation seems fair:

There an't shall please you: a foolish mild man; an honest man, look you, and soon dashed! He is a marvellous good neighbour, faith, and a very good bowler; but for Alisander,—alas! you see how 'tis—a little o'er parted.  
(574-78)

The boy comes in for Hercules as a youth and quickly exits.

Holofernes presents Judas Maccabaeus and by his exchanges with the lords and Boyet draws the most jests and scoffs. Holofernes insists that he will not be put out of countenance, thus issuing a challenge to each of the lords who, against Hoby's, if not Castiglione's, injunction does "become a jester or scoffer to put anye man out of countenance." It is worth noting that, after his first speech,

Holofernes actually speaks clear and ordinary language, culminating in his parting exclamation: "This is not generous, not gentle, not humble" (621) which highlights the issue of courtesy. On the one hand the pretensions and ineptness of the presenters raise the lords' mirth as the Princess has predicted, yet the mockers may be intemperate in their joking. The Princess has expected mirth and seems to enjoy the performances. Her comments, however, in each case are rather encouraging than critical. She says to Costard, "Great thanks, great Pompey," to Nathaniel she offers support: "The conqueror is dismay'd. Proceed, good Alexander," and even to Holofernes she extends sympathy, "Alas! poor Maccabaeus, how hath he been baited" (553, 562, 623). Her greatest encouragement is saved for the finest folly: Armado, the braggart and coward, takes on the presentation of Hector to the amusement of and frequent interruption by the lords and Boyet. The Princess, however, in response to Armado's appeal, says, "Speak, brave Hector; we are much delighted" (666). Her encouragement counterpoints with the lords' laughter and mockery. While the lords may have learned to appear in their own characters and to speak in their own voices, that is (in Hoby's words) to "shon Affectation and curiosity" and to speak "the language that is most in use emonge the commune people," they have lessons yet to master on being generous, gentle, and humble.

On this occasion the order of paralleled events is reversed. First Armado's presentation of Hector is interrupted by the news of the quickness of life, then the lords' merriment is interrupted by the news of the suddenness of death. Armado's acting is stopped by Costard's announcement that Jaquenetta is pregnant: "She's quick, the child brags in her belly already. 'Tis yours" (666-67). With equal abruptness Marcade enters and reveals the death of the King of France. The apologies and explanations that follow result in the lords' spending a year in some form of waiting if not penance. Berowne's task is most specific; he is to tell jokes to the ill so that he can learn that "A jest's prosperity lies in the ear/ Of him that hears it, never in the tongue/ Of him that makes it" (851-53). He is, quite specifically, (to return to Hoby again) "[t]o consider whom he doth taunt and where." The sequence of the lords' action followed by comic exaggeration is reestablished when Armado reappears to announce that he will serve three years holding the plow for the sweet love of Jaquenetta (873-74). The play ends with two songs presented as a dialogue between spring and winter. As several critics (particularly Greene and Carroll [206-8]) have noted, not only is Armado's diction now under control, but the two learned men (apparently Holofernes and Nathaniel) who have composed the dialogue, use a level of diction quite different from their manner earlier in the play.

The ladies seem firmly in control of the action throughout the play; they have made the men aware of the foolishness of their costuming and their language and of their being misled by the tokens of love; the ladies, led by the Princess, then present a model of generous and gentle behavior; and finally the ladies, led by Rosaline, suggest practices that may bring the lords to a similar level of gentle

behavior. Cormorant devouring time has not been overcome as the lords originally wished; indeed time has been insistently present in the final actions of the play, not only in birth and death, but in the contrast between the latest minute that Navarre asks the Princess to use and the world-without-end commitment that she requires (777-79). The ladies' most important labor may have been to bring the lords to a better understanding of the uses of time, but they also have been instrumental in bringing the lords to less pretentious language and behavior, to a new sense of the proper use of wit, and to a willingness to serve rather than simply to amuse, and thus to being generous, gentle, and humble, all labors of courtesy.

### Note

<sup>1</sup>The nature of the Aristotelian four-fold causal analysis and its use by Castiglione is presented in greater detail in an article under consideration for publication by *Philological Quarterly*. Gabriel Harvey provides a convenient and particularly clear example of its use in his argument showing the four-fold causes of earthquakes in the Spenser-Harvey correspondence. "Three Proper, and wittie familiar Letters: lately passed between two Universitie men: touching the Earthquake in April last...1580." Reprinted in *The Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser*. Ed. J. C. Smith and E. de Selincourt. London: Oxford UP, 1957.

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## "A sort of naughty persons, lewdly bent": Rethinking the Role of Gender in *2 Henry VI*

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While interrogating Simpcox on the miraculous recovery of his sight and his subsequent lameness, Gloucester engages the commoner in a series of bawdy jests in which Simpcox exposes his inability to control his wife. Simpcox claims he became lame after falling from a plum tree, a slang phrase for female genitalia:

*Gloucester*: Mass, thou lov'dst plums well, that wouldst venture so.

*Simpcox*: Alas, good master, my wife desired some damsons and made me climb, with danger of my life. (2.1.104-07).

Simpcox complains his injuries result from his efforts to satisfy his wife, and the lewd use of the terms "plum tree" and "damson," a slang term for testicles, suggests that Simpcox's wife dominates her husband sexually. Gloucester eventually exposes Simpcox and his wife as frauds when he beats Simpcox and tricks him into jumping out of his chair. Gloucester restores public order by sentencing the two commoners to a public whipping, despite Simpcox's wife's plea that the couple perpetrated the fraud "for pure need" (2.1.160). Queen Margaret, perhaps one of the most humorless characters of the First Tetralogy, finds the commoners' deceit and ultimate exposure extremely funny, declaring "it made me laugh to see the villain run" (2.1.158). Yet her husband, the ineffectual King Henry, fails to find humor in Simpcox's deception, and in his exasperation asks Gloucester "O God, seest Thou this, and bearest so long?" (2.1.157). The reaction of the aristocrats to Simpcox and his demanding wife indicates a great deal about gender relationships in *2 Henry VI*; both Gloucester and Henry must deal with wives who lust for power, and both men have their authority questioned because of their seeming inability to control their wives' behavior.

Traditionally, critics and audiences alike have viewed the women characters of *2 Henry VI* as malevolent figures, evil women who intend to destroy not only their husbands, but their sovereign King as well. Margaret, in particular, has incited scathing critical assessments of her character. E. M. W. Tillyard has called Margaret a "hysterically selfish woman" (182); in her more recent assessment of Margaret, feminist critic Juliet Dusinberre views the Queen as dangerous and compares her to the Furies (300). The play's other major female character, Eleanor Cobham, the Duchess of Gloucester, has inspired limited

commentary, and more often than not readers see her character only in terms of her witchcraft. Critics have also argued that Margaret and Eleanor are not fully developed characters in their own right. Instead, they operate as “rough drafts” for future Shakespeare characters, such as Goneril or Lady Macbeth, whom critics see as more fully developed and complex. Thus these characters have traveled through the centuries as Dark Ladies—demonic forces who disrupt the political and social order of fifteenth century England. I would argue, however, that such a view fails to take into account the complexity of these characters and their function within the play. While Margaret and Eleanor challenge normative gender roles, they also complicate social and economic issues, and their presence opens up larger questions as to how political and social power is constructed and diffused through Elizabethan society.

As one of the Bard’s more colorful villains, Queen Margaret remains the most discussed woman of Shakespeare’s history plays. Much of Shakespeare’s presentation of Margaret is ahistorical, most notably her adulterous affair with Suffolk. In his exhaustive history of Henry VI’s reign, Ralph A. Griffiths relates that King Henry married Margaret despite her lack of a dowry, although he did not relinquish English claims to Maine until after their marriage. Griffiths suggests the King returned Maine to France not only to avoid more bloodshed, but also because of Margaret’s entreaties on her kinsmen’s behalf. (Griffiths 255). According to contemporary sources, Margaret did enjoy a great deal of political power. She raised a standing army, ran the government during her husband’s mental collapse, and actively campaigned to protect her son’s claims to the throne. However, Margaret’s political influence over her husband did not win her subjects’ approval, and by 1459 rumors about her fidelity and chastity began to emerge. As a Frenchwoman and a foreigner, Margaret made an easy target for the king’s enemies, who blanched at the Queen’s spendthrift habits. Griffiths documents the Queen’s total expenditures for 1452 as over 7,500, well over her allowance of around 4500 (Crawford 41), creating a deficit so large that it undermined the royal household’s budget. Given her spending habits and her unseemly influence in Henry’s return of Maine, the Yorkist faction had even more reason to undermine the Queen’s power over her husband (Lee 195).

Yet Margaret’s Tudor critics seem split on their opinions of the Queen; Pope Pius II expressed grudging admiration for the strong-will Margaret, and Polydore Vergil saw the Queen as dignified and noble, despite her intrusion into the male world of politics (207). The most shrill attacks on Margaret come in the works of English historians Hall, Grafton, and Holinshed, to which Shakespeare had access and which critics see as possible sources for *2 Henry VI*. These historians present the Queen as “evil”—a “manly woman” (209) whose ambition and pride knows no bounds. Perhaps the Tudor historians’ main difficulty with Margaret is her refusal to conform to appropriate gender norms. In 1463, for example, an anonymous political writer complained that Margaret’s exercise of power “was a gret abuson / A womman of a land to be a regent, / Qwene Margrete I mene,

that ever hathe ment / To governe all Engeland with myght and poure” (Lee 210-211). The Tudor historians did not simply contend that Margaret abused her power as regent; they questioned whether or not women generally should have access to political power. Thus these Tudor critics cement the myth of the “Dark Queen,” who had become by the end of the fifteenth century “a tyrant, a royal monster who was served out of fear” (210).

In *2 Henry VI*, Shakespeare adapts the Tudor assessment of Margaret and presents his audience with the Dark Queen. In the last three plays of the tetralogy, Margaret appears as a vicious and tyrannical woman bent on the destruction of her enemies. Shakespeare implicates her in the death of Gloucester, for example, casting her as a direct conspirator in the Duke’s death. She too readily accepts Suffolk’s argument that Gloucester should die because

... he is a fox,  
By nature proved an enemy to the flock,  
Before his chaps be stained with crimson blood,  
As Humphrey, proved by reasons, to my liege.  
(3.1.257-260)

Suffolk argues to the Queen and York that Gloucester, as the fox, poses a potential, deadly threat to the King, and in a display of twisted logic, Suffolk reasons Gloucester should die before he causes any trouble. Margaret herself has little love for Gloucester, who bitterly condemned her marriage contract in Act I, saying “She [the Queen] should have stayed in France and starved in France . . . (1.1.132-33). Margaret undoubtedly resents Gloucester’s influence over the King, and she asks Suffolk

What, shall King Henry be a pupil still  
Under the surly Gloucester’s governance?  
Am I a queen in title and style,  
And must be made subject to a duke? (1.3.46-49)

Not surprisingly, Margaret agrees to her paramour’s plan to kill Gloucester, vowing with Suffolk and York to see the matter through. Here, the Queen lives up to her Machiavellian reputation, and her willingness to murder Gloucester for political gain demonstrates her “unnaturalness” as a wife and woman.

Margaret’s adulterous affair with Suffolk provides another example of how Margaret challenges the gender roles of her time, and her obvious partiality to the Duke infuriates the play’s other aristocrats. Warwick cautions Margaret and warns her against supporting Suffolk, claiming that “For every word you [Margaret] speak in his behalf / Is slander to your royal dignity” (3.2.208-209). The Queen does not heed the warnings of her subjects, however, and she actively plots with Suffolk to gain greater influence with the King. Her affair with Suffolk

itself directly challenges Henry's position as her husband, and her adultery renders the King impotent in the domestic sphere as well as the political realm. Perhaps Margaret's ultimate challenge to her husband occurs after the Gloucester's murder. Here, the Queen has to draw upon her skills as a manipulator after Henry receives the news of the Lord Protector's death. After the King rails against Suffolk for bringing him the bad tidings, Margaret diverts his wrath by playing the role of the wronged wife:

Be woe for me, more wretched than he is.  
 What, dost thou turn away and hide thy face?  
 I am no loathsome leper. Look on me.  
 What? Art thou, like the adder, waxen deaf?  
 Be poisonous too, and kill thy forlorn queen.  
 Is all thy comfort shut in Gloucester's tomb?  
 Why, then, Dame Margaret was ne'er thy joy.  
 . . . Die Margaret!

For Henry weeps that thou dost live so long. (3.2.73-78, 120-121)

With her speech, Margaret deflects Henry's wrath from her lover Suffolk, using an effective questioning technique to prod Henry's conscience and distract him from his anger. Here, Margaret anticipates Henry's suspicions about her complicity in Gloucester murder, and she subtly preempts Henry's accusations by calling attention to her own culpability:

And for myself, foe as he was to me,  
 Might liquid tears or heart-offending groans  
 Or blood-consuming sighs recall his life,  
 I would be blind with weeping, sick with groans,  
 Look pale as primrose with blood-drinking sighs,  
 And all to have the noble Duke alive.  
 What know I how the world may deem me?  
 For it is known we were but hollow friends. (3.2.59-66)

Margaret's speech forces Henry to absolve her, even before he accuses her of the crime (Ranald 55-56). Margaret's loaded references to blood also support the notion that her pleas reflect little more than cold-hearted, cold-blooded manipulation.

Clearly, Margaret presents a threat to the Elizabethan understanding of gender roles. Her adulterous affair with Suffolk, her manipulation of Henry, and her complicity in Gloucester's murder demonstrate that she represents the monstrous woman, the Dark Queen. Yet if Shakespeare holds up Margaret as a disruptive force because of her masculine, Machiavellian qualities, he also offers Henry as an example of the social disruption caused by weak, effeminate leaders. There

cannot be a Margaret without a Henry, and I would argue that Henry's character offers as much fruitful material for gender examination as his wife. The Queen herself articulates the court's general sentiments about the King's ability to rule by comparing Henry to the more masculine, aggressive Suffolk:

I tell thee, Pole, when in the city Tours  
 Thou rann'st atilt in honor of my love  
 And stol'st away the ladies' hearts of France,  
 I thought King Henry had resembled thee  
 In courage, courtship, and proportion.  
 But all his mind is bent to holiness,  
 To number Ave Marys on his beads.  
 His champions are the prophets and apostles,  
 His weapons holy saws of sacred writ,  
 His study is his tiltyard, and his loves  
 Are brazen images of canonized saints. (1.3.50-60)

Here, Margaret attributes Henry's weakness to his too-consuming religious faith. He does not actively pursue the warrior path like his father, thus earning the contempt his subjects. Henry's obsessive spiritual focus prevents him from running England with a strong hand, which eventually invites the rebellion of aristocrat and commoner alike.

Certainly, the masculine Margaret challenges Henry in the domestic sphere. As previously stated, Margaret's affair with Suffolk cuckolds Henry, rendering him impotent and foolish. Henry bitterly acknowledges his wife's blatant preference after Suffolk's death, claiming "How now, madam? / Still lamenting and mourning for Suffolk's death? / I fear me, love, if that I had been dead, / Thou wouldst not have mourned so much for me" (4.4.22-23). At the end of the scene when the King learns of Jack Cade's march into London, he tries to comfort his grieving wife, saying, "God, our hope, will succor us" (4.4.55). Given Henry's pious reputation, such a remark seems completely in character. Unlike an active, aggressive York or Talbot, Henry looks to an outside power to save himself and his throne. Margaret's response that her hope, with Suffolk, has died indicates her complete lack of faith in her husband, and the couple's flight from London further symbolizes the King's weakness as a husband and a monarch.

Just as Margaret challenges Henry's authority in the home, both England's aristocrats and commoners challenge him in the political arena. The play begins with the specter of the King's incompetence hanging over the proceedings. At the end of *1 Henry VI*, the King negotiates a peace with France, losing the majority of England's possessions on the Continent in the process. York calls the King's treaty with France "effeminate" (5.4.107), and Gloucester opens *2 Henry VI* with an angry speech denouncing English losses to France and tying those losses directly to the marriage contract between Henry and Margaret. The aristocrats

receive this news badly: Warwick weeps and swears, and York expresses disgust that "our King Henry gives away his own [gold] / To match with her that brings no vantages" (1.1.128-29). The aristocrats' reaction serves to highlight Henry's ineptness at kingship and exposes him as weak, and it also suggests Henry does not have the same developed sense of masculine honor as his subjects. Suffolk complains that since Henry assumed the throne, "The commonwealth hath daily run to wrack, / The Dauphin hath prevailed beyond the seas" (1.3.124-25). Somerset takes up the litany of complaints, claiming that the King's "sumptuous buildings and thy wife's attire / Have cost a mass of public treasury" (1.3.130-31). Certainly, the nobles have lost faith in their monarch. The absence of a strong King creates a vacuum which is all-to-readily filled by York, who cynically incites the commoners to rebel in an attempt to grab power for himself.

Shakespeare fills the play with images of chaos that reflect the weakness of Henry's government. For example, the combat between apprentice Peter Thump and his master Thomas Horner demonstrates that the "natural" order of the play, where servants and subjects obey and respect their masters, is in jeopardy. Horner finds himself in the untenable position of defending himself after Peter turns in his master for treason. Horner protests his innocence to the King, claiming Peter "did vow upon his knees to be even with me" (1.3.200) after Horner "corrected his faults." Before the combat, Henry assures both parties that God will defend the right, and it seems the drunken Peter does not stand a chance against his master. Yet Peter strikes down Horner, whom the King subsequently declares a traitor:

Go, take hence that traitor from our sight;  
 For by his death we do perceive his guilt,  
 And God in justice hath revealed to us  
 The truth and innocence of this poor fellow,  
 Which he had thought to have murdered wrongfully. (2.3.100-104)

While the King piously declares Peter the victor, his words betray his fatal misunderstanding about the need for strong, centralized political power (Cox 86). The play presents other moments when subjects rebel against their position: Simpcox endangers his life to fulfill his wife's desire for "damsons"; Jack Cade ludicrously claims a right to the throne; Dame Eleanor consorts with witches to help elevate her family's status in the kingdom. These moments continually remind the audience of the King's effeminate character, and they emphasize that he does not embody the heroic, masculine characteristics of his father Henry V, his general Talbot, or even the rebel York.

Arguably, the King most resembles Gloucester in *2 Henry VI*, whom John D. Cox calls the play's "one good man" (85). Gloucester's political situation approximates that of the King; he finds himself removed of his "staff," the symbol of both his political office and his masculine power. The King, yielding to pressure

from York, Suffolk, and Margaret, had summarily dismissed the Lord Protector from his position. Nina S. Levine suggests that Gloucester's "civil impotence has its origins in his marital impotence" (111), and Shakespeare draws a firm connection between Eleanor's dabbling in witchcraft and Gloucester's downfall. Like the King, Gloucester finds himself saddled with an ambitious, and not very respectful, wife. Not content with her position as second lady in the land, Eleanor attempts to browbeat her husband into taking a more aggressive and active role in his political career:

Were I a man, a duke, and next of blood,  
 I would remove these tedious stumbling blocks,  
 And, being a woman, I will not be slack  
 To play my part in Fortune's pageant. (1.2.63-67)

As Juliet Dusinberre suggests, the women of the fifteenth century only had their words for weapons, and they had to rely on the actions of men to carry out their will (283). When Eleanor's vitriolic words fail to generate the desired response from Gloucester, she turns to witchcraft as a tool to achieve her desires.

However, while Eleanor first may seem to resemble the malevolent, masculine woman, her participation in the conjuring ceremony forces readers to resist such an interpretation. Certainly Eleanor does not match the prevailing Elizabethan stereotype of the witch, whom Reginald Scot identifies as "commonly old, lame, bleare-eied, pale, fowle, and full of wrinkles" (qt. in Barstow 16). While Eleanor does not fit this description, the woman who assists the Duchess in conjuring spirits, Margery Jordan, matches more closely. As a commoner, Margery Jordan has little access to power, and witchcraft enables her to take greater control of her own destiny. Given that the theme of disorder runs throughout *2 Henry VI*, Shakespeare's inclusion of witches is fitting, since they represent a direct challenge to both the State and to the institution of Christianity. Along with the female witch Margery Jordan, Shakespeare also presents his audience with three wizards—Hume, Southwell, and Bolingbroke—who serve to challenge the "malevolent woman" theme most critics see running through the play. In *2 Henry VI*, witchcraft is an equal-opportunity profession, and in the end, all four members of the coven are executed by the King's order. This punishment is significant, especially given the Duchess' exile—a relatively lenient sentence in light of her crime. Members of the lower orders are executed; members of the aristocracy are saved. Shakespeare does not seem to be using the practice of witchcraft to comment on gender; instead, the coven's demographics and the members' subsequent punishment suggest that witchcraft challenges social and economic distinctions in fifteenth-century England.

Surprisingly, Shakespeare limits Eleanor's role in the conjuring ceremony. Instead, the Duchess "enters aloft," or above the proceedings, where she remains silent for the rest of the session. For a woman actively plotting her husband's usurpation of King Henry, Eleanor's silence raises questions about her role as the

destructive witch. Arguably, her silence and passivity undercuts whatever authority or power she might have gained by dabbling in the black arts. The circumstances behind the conjuring session also diffuse Eleanor's status as malevolent woman. Witchcraft historian Anne Llewellyn Barstow documents how powerful men often would accuse their enemies' wives of witchcraft, in part to slander the reputation of their nemeses. (Barstow 37). In a telling address to the audience, the wizard Hume confirms that the Cardinal and Suffolk have set up the Duchess:

Dame Eleanor gives gold to bring the witch;  
Gold cannot come amiss, were she a devil.  
Yet have I gold flies from another coast-  
I dare not say, from the rich Cardinal  
And from the great and new-made Duke of Suffolk,  
Yet I do find it so; for, to be plain,  
They, knowing Dame Eleanor's aspiring humor,  
Have hired me to undermine the Duchess  
And buzz these conjurations in her brain. (1.2.91-99)

Eleanor's arrest does have a detrimental effect upon her husband's reputation: because he does not control his wife, he loses his privileged status as Lord Protector. Gloucester recognizes his wife's downfall as part of his enemies' political maneuverings, telling the court: "Ay, all of you have laid your heads together- / Myself had notice of your conventicles- / And all to make away my guiltless life" (3.1.161-167). Despite her (passive) participation in the conjuring ceremony, Eleanor does not bear resemblance to the stereotypical English witch, who seeks to topple existing gender norms. Instead, she becomes a pawn in a much larger game through which members of the aristocracy work to topple a king.

Perhaps Eleanor's activities are best read not as a challenge to gender norms, but as an example of class warfare. As an incredibly ambitious woman, Eleanor dreams of transcending her role as second lady in England and assuming the throne:

Methought I sat in seat of majesty  
In the cathedral church of Westminster,  
And in that chair where kings and queens are crowned,  
Where Henry and Dame Margaret kneeled to me  
And on my head did set the diadem. (1.2.36-40)

Gloucester meets with little success when he pleads with his wife to reign in her vaunting ambition, and Eleanor plots to outqueen the queen herself by wearing expensive clothes to court. Eleanor's attire flaunts established sumptuary laws, which dictate the style and materials members of different social classes can use

in their clothing. Eleanor's blatant challenge to social and class distinctions provokes Margaret's ire, who complains the Duchess scorns the royal couple's poverty by bearing "the Duke's revenues on her back" (1.3.79). Margaret deflates her rival violently, boxing Eleanor's ears and embarrassing her before the court. While Eleanor does threaten gender roles by participating in a demonic ceremony, her greater sin becomes her challenge to class distinctions, which manifests itself in her choice of wardrobe and her dreams of greatness. Here, she actively constructs her line of attack. At the conjuring ceremony, she passively watches the coven, relatively disengaged from the action.

Indeed, the figures of Margaret and Eleanor raise questions about the role of gender in *2 Henry VI*. Exceedingly ambitious women, Queen and Duchess alike challenge their husband's authority and attempt to wrest their own political power. Yet if these women emerge as monstrous figures in the play, Shakespeare also presents their husbands as effeminate and weak. Although they occupy the two most powerful positions in England, the men control neither their wives nor their subjects. In the end, the tetralogy's dominant forces silence the plays' monstrous gender figures: the King and Gloucester are murdered; Eleanor's enemies sentence her to life imprisonment; Margaret descends into a querulous old age, bestowing ineffectual curses on her enemies. Shakespeare creates these monstrous figures to raise larger issues in the play, and the gender conflicts help represent the fifteenth century's more dangerous political and social upheavals. The King's and Gloucester's trouble at home mirrors the trouble in the realm, and the challenges the men face from their wives previews the trouble they receive from York and Jack Cade.

In the world of *2 Henry VI*, Shakespeare creates the need for a strong, centralized government, a lesson Henry never really learns. At the end of the play, Henry passively awaits his capture by York's forces, and Margaret appeals to his manhood in order to provoke his action. Henry allows Margaret and Young Clifford to lead him offstage and into safety, ostensibly to fight another day. Thus Shakespeare leaves his readers with an open-ended play, one which does not resolve Tillyard's question as to who represents the "right kind" of king for England (185): the bloody, masculine York, or the effeminate boy-king Henry VI. By the end of the tetralogy, Shakespeare rejects both possibilities, uniting Yorkist and Lancastrian factions in the more balanced figure of the Duke of Richmond.

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## Cordelia and the Fool: Lost Identity in *King Lear*

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According to Catherine Belsey, in *The Subject of Tragedy: Identity and Difference in Renaissance Drama*, "The loss of political place . . . entails the dissolution of the self" (40). King Lear abdicates his throne, and in the process society collapses: first language loses its power and Cordelia's "nothing" means something; then, without a son to take over the throne, Lear divides his kingdom among daughters; and finally, the Fool and the King switch places in a Saturnalian Lord of Misrule pageant, where the fool attempts to maintain order for the monarch's sanity. Lear's formerly orderly kingdom descends into chaos, and his personality begins to splinter. In *Ego and Archetype*, Edward Edinger defines the Jungian "central archetype" or "archetype of wholeness" as Ego and Self:

The Self is the ordering and center of the total psyche (conscious and unconscious) just as the ego is the center of the conscious personality. Or, put in other words, the ego is the seat of subjective identity while the Self is the seat of objective identity.

For Lear, the totality of his existence had been a King—the "central authority, a symbol of the Self" (Edinger 144). Lear's inability to maintain individuation stems from his unconscious identification of Ego to Self and then subsequent alienation from his ego. Lear's ego begins in an inflated state. He attempts to force his daughters into his own way of thinking, but "intellectual rigidity which attempts to equate its own private truth or opinion with universal truth is . . . inflation" (15). Cordelia's wordless renewal of her love for her father catapults Lear from that inflated state to an ego-self alienation where Lear is like Adam and Eve or Cain—ejected from Paradise, his kingdom, and into a psychological search for "healing and restitution" (62). Throughout Lear's ordeal, the thought of Cordelia's goodness acts as a kind of divine nourishment, sustaining Lear through the difficulties. Psychologically, Cordelia acts as "the supporting aspect of the archetypal psyche" which occurs "when the ego has exhausted its own resources and is aware of its essential impotence by itself" (50). The Fool and Cordelia work through Lear's "extremity" as aids to healing his alienated state so that "some contact between ego and Self [can] be reestablished" (57).

In the originally ordered world of Lear's kingdom, Lear as father has produced three offspring—all daughters. When Lear asks these daughters to express their depth of love for him, Goneril and Regan immediately employ the kind of language that pleases Lear—words that do not equal their love. Cordelia, on the other

hand, remains silent. According to Christiane Mackward, “woman is incapable of speaking as a woman” (100). When Cordelia tries to speak her heart, she says “nothing” (1.1.88), whereas her un-womanly sisters speak lies. Josette Feral in “The Powers of Difference” says that “to deny specificity to the female unconscious means nothing else than to deny her any right to speak up” (90). When Lear refuses to hear the heart of Cordelia—instead of her word—he denies the existence of her feelings, and in essence, denies her femininity too. She becomes, to Lear, nothing. He disowns her, dividing his political kingdom between two of his daughters instead of three.

Because of his abdication, Lear creates a world in which he no longer operates properly, and a world in which identity becomes difficult to determine. Lear’s personality begins to disintegrate, and soon “old fools are babes again” (1.3-19). Lear’s consciousness undergoes a split when he abdicates his essence as King and enthrones his “daughters [as] mothers” (1.4.164). He becomes foolish—and “he ha[d] ever but slenderly known himself” (1.1.292-3). Split personalities occur often in Shakespeare’s plays: “he employs a single device to enhance the irony or tragedy of the hero’s situation: he gives him an alter ego, a Familiar spirit” (Connolly 30). In the case of *King Lear*, Cordelia and the Fool, as splintered parts of Lear’s Self, represent the embodiment of the wisdom and gentleness Lear surrendered and act as a slave to the King’s madness as well as a prod to the King’s conscience.

Although it has been little suggested that Cordelia and the Fool are one in the same, it has been liberally suggested that similarities exist between the Fool’s childishness and Cordelia’s:

At the beginning of the play, the apparent folly of the ‘child’ Cordelia prepares for the child-Fool’s appearance, and later, when Lear recognizes his daughter, ‘I think this lady / To be my child Cordelia’ (IV.vii.68-9), we are prepared for the fusion of fool and child at the close in ‘my poor fool is hanged’ because the words eventually come to seem almost interchangeable (McEwan 215).

In addition, certain physical similarities exist between the Fool and Cordelia. Both are physically small, as Thomas B. Stroup has pointed out in “Cordelia and the Fool” (128). Both have soft voices—the Fool has “the voice of a nightengale” (3.6.30), and Cordelia’s “voice was ever soft, / Gentle and low—an excellent trait in a woman” (5.3.276-7). In fact, whenever the Fool speaks, he has been taken as the voice of Cordelia absent: “He speaks what Lear thinks Cordelia would or should say to him” (Stroup 129). An extremely telling indication that the two are alter-egos is that the Fool and Cordelia never appear on stage at the same time. In fact, the lines between the exit of one and the entrance of the other indicate that “time is exactly meted out for some reason, probably for the change of costume and make-up” (Stroup 127).

As a result of studying the physical similarities of the two characters, critics concede that the two may have been played by a single actor in the original

version of *King Lear*. Richard Abrams, in “The Double Casting of Cordelia and Lear’s Fool: A Theatrical View,” comments on the notion, “proposed near the turn of the past century [, that] . . . the actor playing Cordelia doubled as the Fool in early productions of *King Lear*” (354). This idea “has rarely been contested” (354). Historically, there has been the occasional casting of a woman in the part of the Fool. Dickens, who had seen such a production of *King Lear*, “assumed the Fool to be a ‘poor boy’ who ‘leaves the stage to die in his youth.’” (qtd. in McEwan 209). But the connection between these two characters seems to go beyond the merely theatrical concepts of an actor in a small company being forced to take two roles in the same play or of two characters with similar asexual natures—there are references that directly connect Cordelia with the Fool, and both connect Lear to splintered parts of his ego.

According to Thomas B. Stroup, “The Fool resembles Cordelia and is associated in Lear’s mind with her” (130). Stroup adds that “Shakespeare has achieved an unusual, if not a unique, set of identities: the Fool in that he represents Lear’s conscience to himself, . . . [the Fool’s] inner voice, thereby represents Cordelia” (130). In essence, to Lear both characters mesh into one, and—at least to Lear’s misapprehensions—the Fool appears to be Cordelia disguised. Such a claim is bolstered by the fact that the play went through changes between the Quarto and the Folio versions; that the “Folio fool is dramatically superior to his Quarto equivalent” (Kerrigan 230); and that the Folio version includes the changes made to connect the characters of Cordelia and the Fool more strongly than before.

Traditionally, the Fool embodies the opposite social position to the King. The Fool’s position is “the lowest at court” and he often “took the place of the king in ritual sacrifice as the scapegoat” (Cooper 70). Just the thought of a Fool sacrificed for the King might summon up thoughts of Cordelia’s life-sacrifice; she is the only one worthy enough to die for the sins of the father. Too, like the sacrificial lamb, Cordelia “signif[ies] innocence, meekness and purity” and thus “something we least want to kill” (234). The Fool takes a place in society below everyone else—he has nothing, earns nothing, gains nothing, and in effect is nothing without the King but a “houseless poverty” (3.4.26). Cordelia, likewise, is dispossessed. For Lear, the Fool remains as “the last vestige of [his] royalty” (Smith 37); but this King no longer holds his office, and the Fool brings only the Satarnalia of chaos with his “licence” to “say or do what he please[s]” (Cooper 71). However, the Fool cannot assume this position of authority unless the King submits to it. And Lear does submit when he brings Cordelia to nothing:

Here I disclaim all my Paternal care,  
Propinquity and property of blood,  
And as a stranger to my heart and men,  
Hold thee forever. (1.1.113-116).

Interestingly enough, after Lear vows to disown Cordelia and leave her penniless, the Fool appears. The character of the Fool allows the alter-ego Cordelia

to resume a portion of the kingdom—"Lear has no sons, only the Fool" (Seiden 204), and he gives over his kingdom to chaos, but the Fool/Cordelia throughout the disruption attempts "to save his master's sanity" (Empson 289).

The Fool has no history at all, no family, no identity apart from his position. Melvin Seiden, in "The Fool and Edmund: Kin and Kind," indicates that "all the accidents of birth, family, education, and social, economic, and political relationships have been expunged from 'the record'" (199) regarding the Fool. He is "pretty characterless" (Seiden 199). In addition, Donald M. Smith notes, in "'And I'll go to bed at noon'" that the Fool is "given no name besides Fool" (39). The power of the character comes from the elusiveness: "[h]e comes as it were out of nowhere, motherless, fatherless, unbegotten by any man and woman we might be able to imagine and goes to a nowhere, becomes, mysteriously, a nothing" (Seiden 204). Like Cordelia, the Fool has no mother to comfort him, no father to love him, and no King to provide for him. This nothing of an entity, this portion of a king-less king who begins in the middle of the play and ends in the middle, the one traditional royal luxury (Smith 40), becomes essential to the King—"Lear's teacher is the Fool" (Smith 42).

Belsay says "it is possible to hear the poignant exchange between [this] politically displaced figure, a king without a kingdom, and his fool: 'Who is it that can tell me who I am?' 'Lear's shadow'" (*Tragedy* 40). Lear's Fool differs from all of Shakespeare's other fools: this one is wise beyond his station, and "the most profound and most astonishing of Shakespearean characters" according to Coleridge (qtd. in Smith 38). But, most importantly, this Fool has the power to rule Lear:

Paradoxically, but fitting the play's depiction of disordered nature, Lear's teacher is the Fool. The Fool tells Lear the truth, that Lear has been a fool. Later the Fool becomes the object of Lear's growing compassion, compassion which will lead ultimately to the recovery of natural order (Smith 42).

He speaks not just bawdy, slanderous and provocative words, but wise words that pique Lear's conscience and help him to act the way a king should.

The loss of Lear's political power undermines the very basis of the "subjectivity" of *King Lear*—the subject, for a time, becomes indefinable; the I-other dichotomy becomes hazy, because the I-Lear becomes unable to distinguish his own ego boundaries in his newly-acquired apolitical state.

Lear occupies the home of Goneril after his division of the kingdom. Kent, in disguise, has decided to join Lear. Cordelia has disappeared, presumably gone to "a better where" (1.1.261) with the King of France, after warning her sisters that "Time shall unfold what plighted cunning hides, / Who covers faults, at last with shame derides" (1.1.280-1). In time, identity will out—not only that of the evil sisters, with their non-signifying words, but too of Cordelia, whose "nothing" really signified more than the denotation of the word. But when Goneril asks, "Did my father strike my gentleman for chiding of his fool?" (1.3.1), the

lines begin to betray an underlying emotional attachment between Lear and the Fool. Lear, early on, has been provoked to anger because of mistreatment of his Fool. If the Fool and Cordelia are alter-egos of one character, then identities are not only lost but morphing and shifting from one focus to the other. Lear, in his anger, indicates that he thinks the Fool is Cordelia—"Go you and tell my daughter I would speak with her. Go you, call hither my fool" (1.4.72-4). Here "my daughter" seems to be Cordelia. The fool, like Cordelia, has not been seen these "two days" (1.4-69). A Knight answers Lear's cries for his Fool, and tells Lear that since the King banished Cordelia "the fool hath much pined away" (1.4.71). Lear immediately dismisses this comment and tells the Knight to speak "no more of that" (1.4.72), because he has "noted it well" (1.4.72). Then Lear adds the line calling for both daughter and Fool.

The Fool arrives and greets the disguised Kent. Thus begins the first scene where the majority of characters are not who they appear to be. Lear is no longer himself, but merely "Lear's shadow" (1.4.221). Kent has changed his name to Caius, and has "razed" his "likeness" (1.4.4) to lose his identity. But each disguised character can recognize the other, even as later on Kent can recognize Edgar in disguise. The Fool tells Kent that if he, too, follows Lear, he must put on the "coxcomb" of the Fool (1.4.90), because Kent is as foolish as the Fool for "taking one's part that's out of favor" (1.4.94). In an interesting analysis of this scene, Richard Abrams links the Fool to Cordelia through a series of references to the happenings in Act 1, Scene 1, specifically the Fool's "Phrase 'out-of-favor' would indicate that the Fool recognizes Caius as the man who previously took Cordelia's part and the audience would then read the Fool's act of extending his coxcomb as a gesture of gratitude on his former mistress's behalf" (355). Even this small gesture makes a more powerful connection between Cordelia and the Fool.

Throughout the play, the audience would expect Cordelia to stay with Lear; she, after all, is the good daughter. Merely because the same actor plays both parts, the faithful Fool acts "as a person sympathetic to Cordelia who will assume her defense and also remind [the audience] of her person" (Stroup 129). But thematically, Cordelia takes upon herself the nothingness of the Fool's position, and the Fool takes upon himself the voice of Cordelia, echoing her words to Lear. All that the reader has seen of Cordelia was in her "nothing" speech. The Fool reminds the reader of this speech, with songs warning Lear to "have more than [he] showest, / [and] Speak less than [he] knowest" (1.4.112-3), as Cordelia had. Kent says, "This is nothing, fool" (1.5.122), but the Fool turns to Lear and says: "Can you make no use of nothing, nuncle?" (1.4.124-5)—a poignant question coming from the figure of a daughter who two days earlier had become "nothing" in her father's eyes, merely because her words did not please him.

The Fool asks Lear the difference "between a bitter fool and a sweet one" (1.4.131). The Fool indicates that the "bitter fool" is "in motley here" (1.4.139), and the "sweet fool" is "found out there" (1.4.140). This can be read in at least

two ways: either the Fool-Cordelia is in motley at the moment, and was Cordelia when she said “nothing”, and thus found out; or the Fool, dressed in motley, may look like a fool, but Lear is truly a fool because of what he has done in abdicating his position. The Fool’s words point to both, because the Fool argues that Lear should not have made his “daughters mothers” (1.4.164). The Fool next sings, once again, reminding the reader of Cordelia:

Then they for sudden joy did weep  
And I for sorrow sung,  
That such a king should play bo-peep  
And go the fools among. (1.4.166-169)

The Fool, too, complains that he has been whipped for “holding [his] peace” (1.4.175-6), which again recalls the first scene when Cordelia said nothing. Not only that, the Fool makes a direct reference to this, when he says that Lear has “pared [his] wit o’ both sides and left nothing i’ th’ middle” (1.4.178). Goneril is “one o’ the pairings” (1.4.179), Regan the other, and Cordelia the nothing in the middle.

And it is later in this scene that Lear has his only moment of regret for Cordelia, and it, too, happens while he speaks with the Fool: “I did her wrong” (1.4.21).

Critics see the concept of a disguised Cordelia/Fool as a problem, mostly because “nothing can be sacred in *King Lear* if Cordelia’s person is not” (Abrams 358). Particularly disconcerting is the Fool’s propensity to repeat jibes about castration to Lear. But if Cordelia and the Fool are meant to be alter-egos, sides of each other, male and female, to Lear while his own male subjectivity disintegrates, the references to castration would be more than appropriate to Cordelia represented in the character of the male Fool. The superficial references hint at “Lear [as] a castrated king, indeed, a self-castrated king” (Seiden 202). But the references cut deeper than this: “If, as Booth recognized, the actor playing the Fool is himself ‘a Maid no longer,’ then the double entendre in ‘unless things be cut shorter’ underscores in a distressing manner the possibility of the actor changing back to Cordelia” (Abrams 358). Not only does this refer to the actor as male playing a female part, this also refers to Cordelia’s presence in the part of the Fool. According to Abrams,

Indeed these two meanings harmonize, since, according to the infantile fantasy of woman as a castrated man, the Fool’s phallic truncation implies the curtailment of his present dramatic incarnation. Castration anxieties recur throughout the Fool’s speeches, reminding us of his secret sharing the identity of a character of opposite gender. (385)

To emphasize the mistaken (Freudian) view that the Fool as Cordelia is “a castrated man” complicates things. In order to literally play the Fool, Cordelia would have to add something, if indeed it be only a “shealed peascod” (1.4.190),

an empty codpiece, lacking the male penis but hiding Cordelia’s femininity. Significantly, this codpiece would therefore contain nothing. Shakespeare has been known to quibble about the nothing between a woman’s legs before in *Hamlet*; he may be doing something similar here. Indeed, if Cordelia did have something—had been born a boy—the whole problem would have disappeared from the start, for Lear would then have had a sole heir to the throne, one preferred above his sisters. Melvin Seiden, who speaks primarily about the relationship of the Fool and Edmund, makes an interesting point about the Fool’s hidden sexuality:

In an ideal production of the play, Edmund, almost beyond the point of anatomical credibility, will strut the stage with codpiece bulging. The Fool’s wrinkled, parti-colored leotard will be as flat at the fork as that of any little girl who is taking her first ballet lesson... the visual juxtaposition will enforce the paradox of the bawdy Fool who speaks with the ignorance of one who will never know but must imagine the mysteries of human sexuality. (Seiden 203)

Because of this lack of sexuality, the Fool retains the innocence of Cordelia; the Fool cannot sully himself by the remarks that he makes, but can use them as a signal that things are not always as they seem. For example, the many references to the fool as “no knave” (2.4.81) take on this additional aspect if Cordelia and the Fool are alter-egos of one another.

That the male Fool’s clothing suggests a psychological presence of the female Cordelia becomes evident through cracks in the armor—for instance, in the important storm scene (3.2 - 3.4), Lear sees Edgar’s bare forked body and begins to disrobe, saying “Off, off, you lendings!” He then asks the Fool: “Come, unbutton here” (3.4.103). Strangely, though the Fool has been a helper, he refuses: “Prithee, nuncle, be contented; ’tis a naughty night to swim in” (3.4.104). Of course, no one would like to see Lear, a king, as a bare, forked creature; but for the Fool seeing him thus would be an impossibility. Just as a father in his right mind does not suddenly disrobe in front of a child, this Fool cannot help him to do so. But Lear tries again, while he carries Cordelia’s body, to undress: “Pray you undo this button” (5.3.310). Lear has parallel scenes with the Fool and Cordelia, and such echoes continue until the end of the play.

During the storm scene, Lear has sunk even lower than before, relegated to fight the storm outside from the shelter in “a hovel” (3.2.61). The Fool had begged him to seek shelter, and to “ask [his] daughters blessing” (3.2.12). Later on when Cordelia and Lear celebrate their brief reunion, Lear says to Cordelia “When thou dost ask me blessing, I’ll kneel down/ And ask of thee forgiveness” (5.2.10-11). In fact, during the storm, Lear finally begins to grasp the enormity of what has happened since he dissolved the kingdom, now that his daughters have both disowned him. He learns to speak Cordelia’s language; he says “I will say nothing” (3.2.38). And he finally begins to show compassion for the one who has been faithful to him. He says, “Poor fool and knave, I have one part in my

heart / That's sorry yet for thee" (3.2.72-3). Glimpses of Cordelia begin to invade Lear's heart even more piercingly at the pinnacle of his anguish—and it is during the storm that outward appearance slips as far as it can away from inward identity. During this "dark night of the soul," Lear experiences what Jung called "defeat of the ego" (49). Because Lear has considered himself to be "everything," the one who considered herself "nothing" must help him through the first "individual experience in which the ego has its first major conscious [emphasis added] encounter with the Self"(78). Lear must begin to piece together the splinters of his consciousness.

During the storm, however, the disintegration of Lear's identity continues. That is, he has a total inability for a time to retain or recreate the ego-self connection which constitutes wholeness. It is during this time that he is accompanied by a group of characters who have consciously or subconsciously feigned a change of identity. Chaotic identities are thrown against each other. Kent is not Kent but Caius, Edgar is not Edgar, but Tom O'Bedlam, Cordelia is not Cordelia but represented by the Fool, and Lear is not the king, but a madman, Lear's shadow, forced to fight the elements in an effort to regain his own identity as "King, Man, and Father" (Intro to Lear 1062). If Lear can reintegrate his personality, then the others can also return to their own identities. Individuation creates "a state in which the ego is related to the Self without being identified with it" (96). Lear can move on to the point where there is "a more or less continuous dialogue between outer and inner experience. A twofold split is healed . . . [one] between conscious and unconscious which began at the birth of consciousness, and [the other] . . . the split between subject and object" (96). Lear's experience succeeds: "he is no longer alone in his psyche and his whole world view is altered" (104).

Lear soon falls into a deep sleep (3.6.95). From then on, characters resume their natural identities, and Cordelia quickly returns to the stage with her armies in a martial entrance. Kent questions a gentleman immediately before Cordelia arrives, and asks specifically about Cordelia's reaction to receiving a letter on the State of the King. Kent says, "Was this before the King returned?" (4.3.37); and the gentleman answers, "No, since" (4.3.37). It seems that even in her alter-ego presence in the Fool, Cordelia is not available to receive letters. It is as if she were with the King.

When Cordelia and Kent greet each other, Cordelia asks him to put off his "weeds" which to her are "memories to those worsen hours" (4.7.7-8). Although it is true that Cordelia knows what Kent has endured with Lear through the letter, the implication is of a strong connection during the former difficulties. When Lear first awakes, there is a Wizard of Oz-like hesitation at whom he is looking. Lear has that same moment of doubt-filled hesitation—he looks and sees people who have been disguised, and who have now reclaimed their former personalities, yet he still doubts:

Methinks I should know you, and know this man;  
Yet I am doubtful, for I am mainly ignorant

What place this is; and all the skill I have  
Remembers not these garments; nor I know not  
Where I did lodge last night. Do not laugh at me;  
For as I am a man, I think this lady  
To be my child Cordelia. (4.7.64-9)

His focus had become hazy during the reign of chaos; yet he regains his ability to differentiate characters, and this is a major sign that his former state of confusion and disintegration has passed.

The Fool disappears after Lear wakes up, and because of this the Fool has been equated with nothingness, a mere figment of Lear's imagination, goading him to act and preventing him from madness. According to Melvin Seiden, "the Fool is both riddle and riddler—here then is an inelegant riddle, but one such as he might have propounded: what is it that is what it is and no other thing and yet is also nothing" (208). This is the nothing of death, and to Seiden, the Fool and death are one. Stroup puts it another way: "When finally, all passion spent, the King sleeps, his personified prick of conscience is no longer necessary. So that Fool leaves appropriately without a word" (Stroup 130). But if this is true, where does Cordelia's part of the Fool's ego fit in; and what of the famous line, "And my poor fool is hang'd"? (5.3.306). Does the Fool merely "go to sleep at noon, like a shadow" (Abrams 362) when Shakespeare and Lear are through with him?

Though Dickens had no difficulty relating to one actor portraying both Cordelia and the Fool, most critics are rather contemptuous of the idea that the final reference encompasses "both Cordelia and the Fool" (Fleissner 425). But even those critics who draw a stiff line between Cordelia and the Fool allow that if one actor were playing both parts, that "the body in the King's arms may well have been that of both, and the ambiguity of the line quite intentional" (Stroup 131). Others fail to see a connection between the word "fool" and Cordelia, complaining that "it seems extraordinarily out of place to describe Cordelia" (Empson 209). Empson takes this view, and stresses the problematic nature of the line:

One must suppose, as Bradley did, that his mind has wandered so far that he no longer distinguishes the two; but he should not be softened into 'a very old man failing to distinguish two of his children' (209).

Though the Fool and Cordelia might be combined in the line, that one line itself cannot suggest that Cordelia's presence in the person of the Fool was actual. This is not a case like that of Portia's, where her disguise is intentional. Rather, Cordelia and the Fool share a mission—that of the scapegoat, the sacrificial aspect of the Fool's position. If Lear's poor fool is hanged, then the symbolism suggests that someone has died in Lear's place. In this case, that fool was Cordelia. The sacrificial aspect of the Fool impacts directly on the character of Cordelia, and in effect, legitimizes the references to her shining alter-egos with the Fool. Not

only does she play out the sacrificial part of the fool, she takes upon herself the ultimate folly. She becomes nothing, "the nothingness of Death, if not the death to which all life returns, then pre-death, so to speak, that chaos out of the darkness of which emerged light, form, and life" (Seiden 211). Cordelia and the Fool merge throughout the play as characters, and both disappear in death. If it is the "role of ideology to construct people as subjection" ("Constructing" 47), then the role of King Lear is to destroy the subject in an effort to find identity.

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## The Triple Hecate: A Key to Understanding the "Feminine Wild" in *All's Well That Ends Well*

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"In delivering my son from me, I bury a / second husband," (1.1.1-2) Countess Rossillion tells her son in the opening lines of *All's Well That Ends Well*. Thus, with the very first dialogue of the play, Shakespeare frames Bertram's journey with what Jeanne Addison Roberts has described as a mysterious "wild" (Roberts 23). This realm, Roberts explains, contains all that is not embraced or understood within "the central male vision of Culture" (23). Bertram's journey involves his search for identity apart from his mother and his difficulty in both accepting his own sexuality and reconciling three conflicting visions of womanhood. By analyzing the females and their behavior, specifically the "bed trick," in *All's Well That Ends Well*, one is able to show how their separate roles in the Triple Hecate enable Bertram to unite these concepts into a coherent whole.

Before exploring Bertram's trilemma in detail, it is useful to review the concept of the Triple Hecate. The Triple Hecate or "Great Goddess," according to the Greeks, included characteristics of Diana the virgin, Juno the mother, and Proserpina, the underworld goddess. In Elizabethan times, the Triple Hecate took on the three incarnations of maid, wife, and widow (Roberts 142). Shakespeare appears to have specifically adapted *All's Well That Ends Well* to include these three perspectives on women. As Roberts explains, "...Shakespeare has changed the name of the Giletta of Boccaccio, his source, to Helen, used the name Diana for the other woman, and given the orphaned Count Beltramo a mother" (Roberts 154). It is against this landscape of competing images of women that Bertram's journey takes shape.

In the first scene of the play, Bertram parts ways with his mother, keeping memories of his father's death still fresh in his mind. Under the command of the king, the surrogate father of whom he is now a ward, he prepares himself for war. As he leaves, he begins a quest for his identity. *All's Well That Ends Well* is unique among Shakespeare's plays in that it gives the reader a single male lover as its focus. "Bertram finds himself at the beginning of his play suddenly confronted with the reality that he is the one male upon whom hopes for a fertile future rest" (Roberts 153). This is most notable in that Bertram is pushed by both male (regal) and female (maternal) forces to marry and carry on the Rossillion title. The main problem Bertram faces, however, is that while his mother seems to be releasing him, in effect, he is pulled back home. Helena, whom his mother

has taken in after the death of Helena's father, has fallen in love with Bertram. "Twere all one / That I should love a bright particular star / And think to wed it, he is so above me," (1.1.87-89) Helena says as she painfully considers the dim possibility of their union. Yet, she determines to elevate her status by saving the King's life. It is the Countess Rossillion's complicity in this plot, which she affirms by giving Helena her "leave...love...[and] God's blessing" (1.3.250-253), that unites the Countess with Helena as a domesticating force. In outlining Bertram's journey through the feminine "wild," we can separate the feminine influences in Bertram's life into two camps:

Bertram is faced with two solid phalanxes of women, both of which threaten his virility. The younger ones endanger his independence and even his longevity...The older mother figures expose him to both shame and the fear of engulfment. Having escaped the maternal bonds, he senses the danger of being sucked back into childish dependency. (Roberts 157-158).

Compounding this problem is the fact that both groups of women are in league as they influence Bertram. This is especially important to consider in light of maternal pressures, since "The Countess, Helena, the Widow, Diana: all force Bertram's return to Rossillion and the identity he had attempted to leave behind" (Adelman 80). Essentially, Bertram must learn to reconcile the pressures of both the younger and older females in order to unite the feminine "wild" with male culture and to be comfortable with his own identity.

Helena is the chief "younger one" to consider in Bertram's transformation. Helena is not easily categorized, as she represents a synthesis of characteristics which, according to a dominant male perspective, are not usually linked. One critic summarized this viewpoint by explaining, "In snaring her husband she alternates between the roles of aggressive huntress and passive martyr" (Stauffer 119). Helena is sexually assertive, as evidenced by her active pursuit of Bertram and interchange about virginity with Parolles. She is also virtuous and beautiful, as described by Countess Rossillion and the king. When Helena leaves Rossillion, orchestrating a false suicide so that Bertram will return from his foreign war, Helena further illustrates this apparent dichotomy when she disguises herself as a pilgrim. Shakespeare thus gives Helena a confusing costume, "[forcing] a showdown between holiness and lust" (Berggren 22). Helena also represents a threat to Bertram because she pulls him back toward his family, considering that she is already a unofficial part of it. Janet Adelman has explained this scenario in detail:

This marriage is intolerable to him partly because it collapses the distinctions that would enable Bertram's individuated manhood, the distinctions preserved and reinforced by the incest taboo. Even as the king asserts his power to make and unmake distinctions of class, he

inadvertently invokes the loss of the distinction that is at the root of Bertram's psychic as well as his social panic. (Adelman 80)

All in all, Helena is a particular challenge for Bertram to accept and integrate into his vision of what women should be. Therefore, Helena represents a triple threat to Bertram, consistent with that of the Triple Hecate. After leaving Helena for the military, Bertram sends her a letter prophesying the conditions under which he will come to accept her. While he maintains that he will never actually claim her as a wife, he writes, "When thou canst get the ring upon my / finger, which never shall come off, and show me a / child begotten of thy body that I am father to, then call / me husband" (3.2.57-60). From that point forward, aggressive Helena takes matters into her own hands by arranging a way to meet these seemingly impossible demands.

After separately analyzing Helena and her interrelation with the Countess Rossillion and Bertram, one must then consider her famous caper, or "bed trick." It is through this "bed trick" that the roles of the Triple Hecate are made most clear. Diana, the object of Bertram's desires while he is fighting in Italy, tells Bertram, "When midnight comes, knock at my chamber / window... When you have conquered my yet maiden bed, / Remain there but an hour, nor speak to me. / My reasons are most strong, and you shall know / them, / When back again this ring shall be delivered" (4.2.53-60). Unbeknownst to Bertram, however, Helena intervenes so that Bertram beds not the maid, but rather his wife, and exchanges rings with her. Since Bertram had previously fled the domestic sphere for the safe outlet of the military, it is strange indeed that he was so overwhelmed with desire for Diana that he was willing to give her his ancestral ring. However, in contrast to Helena, Diana represents virginity, the maid in the Elizabethan Triple Hecate. Bedding Diana also serves a psychological purpose for Bertram:

Bertram...negotiate[s] [his] sexual desire between two women, one of whom [Diana] is apparently violated and shamed, becoming the repository of sexual soiling, the other of whom [Helena] mysteriously remains unsoiled and hence - eventually - available for marriage. Split apart and then violently yoked together through the device of the bed trick, the women...simultaneously illustrate the fundamental incompatibility between marriage and male desire and provide a magical solution to it.

(Adelman 77)

Ironically, Bertram mistakenly believes that Diana is actually named "Fontibell," a name which connotes both fertility and Venus-like beauty (Roberts 156). Norman Holland has applied psychoanalysis to the general incident of the "bed trick" that links the Venus and the Diana to the mother. He contends that "the woman in the dark is taboo, her forbidden quality represented by the dark

and the subterfuge; like tabooed women in general, she stands ultimately for the mother" (Holland 154). While some critics have argued that the impersonal nature of Bertram's encounter with Helena reduces the "bed trick" to a "mechanical" process (Bean 75), it remains true that Bertram would likely not have synthesized maid and wife in any other way. Bertram's war adventures are clearly escapist, as are his desires for Diana. The "bed trick," then, remains a psychological catalyst within the play.

The central action during the incident, however, is not the sexual union, but rather the exchange of rings, which symbolizes virginal union. When Bertram, however unaware, trades rings with Helena, he is adding to his name-only marriage the element which it was missing: "For the moment Bertram has merged, unknowingly, the virgin and the whore - the coldly distant Diana and his frighteningly eager wife" (Roberts 156). The bed trick thereby enables Bertram to merge the Venus and the Diana, or the wife and the maid, of the Triple Hecate. Thus, the first stipulation of Bertram's letter, Helena's capture of his ancestral ring "which shall never come off," (3.2.58) has been completed.

Once Bertram has integrated the wife and the maid, he must bring the widow/mother into his concept of woman. Again, this task is foreshadowed by Bertram's letter to Helena, its second stipulation being, "...[S]how me a / child begotten of thy body that I am father to, then call / me husband" (3.2.58-60). Bertram returns from his war decorated yet disillusioned. He witnesses his closest friend, Parolles, selfishly betraying him in regards to both his efforts in the war and his efforts with Diana. Bertram's escape from Helena was therefore incomplete. Immediately upon his return, Bertram's mother and the king once again pull him toward the domestic sphere. Before he has even arrived, the king, his mother, and Lafew are already gathered at Rossillion, planning Bertram's marriage to Lafew's daughter, Maudlin. Bertram is willing to accept this new domestication to keep the king's forgiveness and, interestingly enough, to honor a love he once had for Maudlin. Bertram's prior love for her illustrates that he had a lustful capacity but did not - or rather could not - act upon it. In any case, in the final scene of the play, Bertram is willing to commit to another marriage; still, it is doubtful that in the absence of his synthesis of the widow/mother role into his view of Maudlin, he could have entered into anything more than another name-only marriage.

When Bertram offers Maudlin the ring that Helena has given him, the plot unravels because the king recognizes the ring as his own. When Diana and her widowed mother enter, telling the king that Bertram stole Diana's virginity and abandoned her, the king, the Countess, and Lafew are deeply displeased with Bertram. In effect, Bertram's father, mother, and remaining friend detach from him. Even his mother exclaims "Now, justice on the doers!" (5.3.154), siding more with Helena and Diana than with her own son. Diana also proves Bertram a liar about Helena's ring, illustrating negative characteristics that align Bertram with Parolles. Bertram, then, is a disappointment both in terms of domestic and

male cultural expectations. Moreover, when Diana confronts Bertram, he calls her a whore, showing that his conversion is incomplete; he has not yet unified the Triple Hecate. The decisive moment occurs when Helena returns to Rossillion bearing the proof of their encounter: pregnancy. It is in this maternal form that Helena is finally acceptable to Bertram, at least conditionally. Helena enters "...but the shadow of a wife... / The name and not the thing," (5.3.309-310). However, after revealing the intricacies of the "bed trick," Helena gains Bertram's acceptance. These events, bringing Bertram from rejection of Diana to acceptance of Helena, have been described as nothing less than "theatrical exorcism" through which "sexual contamination is first attached to the supposedly violated virgins and then banished as the virtual wives return and the truth is revealed" (Adelman 77). Bertram is thus finally able to legitimize his sexuality and embrace Helena in the roles of not only maid and wife, but also mother.

By uniting the seemingly opposing visions of women within the Triple Hecate, Bertram has completed his journey through the feminine "wild." Bertram's search for an identity apart from his domestic influences and acceptance of his own sexuality are made possible by his disillusionment with male culture and his unfragmented views of female culture. *All's Well That Ends Well*, framed deliberately by Shakespeare to address the Elizabethan concepts of maid, wife, and widow, succeeds in revealing that segregating women into such roles hampers gender relations and almost paralyzes males like Bertram. By the end of the play, regarding Bertram's acceptance of domestic life, one at least knows that he consents with understanding.

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## The Rogue Warrior Archetype in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*

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Ambivalence, archetype, and ambiguity abound in Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, and these interdependent factors make it one of Shakespeare's most enigmatic plays. Shakespeare's brevity in dialogue and soliloquy accounts for the fast-paced action of the play. Long winded, soul searching analysis of evil deeds, which is the fabric of *Hamlet* and *Julius Caesar*, is notably absent in Macbeth's monologues. Following his encounter with the witches, who prophetically proclaim his impending kingship, Macbeth minces few words. He intones, "This supernatural soliciting cannot be ill, cannot be good." Macbeth imagines and ponders his murderous schemes for regicide. Macbeth fears the loss of honor more than the loss of his soul if he murders his king. His brief ruminations about murder and evil do not fully explain the motives for his crimes, and this heightens the ambiguity and ambivalence of Macbeth's archetypal evil as the "rogue warrior."

The ambivalence and ambiguity which we experience while attempting to fathom Macbeth's murderous behavior are characteristic of humankind's bewilderment about the nature of evil. C. G. Jung contends, "Recognition of the reality of evil necessarily realitivizes the good, and the evil likewise, converting both into halves of a paradoxical whole" (171). However, Jung also bluntly states: "Touching evil brings with it the grave peril of succumbing to it" (171). We can assume, then, that Macbeth did indeed touch evil and succumbed to his dark obsession for power which led him to murder Duncan. However, we still ask how could he kick over the traces of his personal code of honor and turn to the absolute evil of murder. H. Sommerville suggests we look into the depths of our own souls, and collective shadow, to answer these questions. He contends "It may be that there is something of the Macbeth latent, deeply hidden, more or less strongly repressed in the unconscious minds of us—if not of all of us—far more than we think" (68).

Early on in the play Shakespeare's readers catch a glimpse of Macbeth's growing resentment toward Duncan and Malcolm. Duncan has just informed one and all that his oldest son Malcolm will inherit the kingship. Macbeth then appoints "himself the humble harbinger" who rides home and informs Lady Macbeth to prepare Duncan's welcome. We get a revealing glimpse of this humble harbinger's resentment and evil ambition as he ominously declares Malcolm's future kingship as an obstacle for Macbeth to "o'erleap... Let not light see my black and deep desires." Calderwood's theory that "libidinous energies are being rechanneled in violence" by Macbeth and Lady Macbeth is certainly borne out

when Macbeth arrives home (44). He informs Lady Macbeth, "his dearest partner of greatness," of Duncan's arrival, and she becomes his foremost instigator and partner in crime. The Macbeths passionately bicker and conspire about Duncan's murder.

Calderwood notes that as Macbeth moves with murderous intent toward Duncan's bedchamber, he makes an unlikely comparison of himself to Tarquin, who premeditatively stalked toward Lucrece's bedroom to rape her (42). Macbeth's comparison suggests that the murder is a metaphoric substitute for the sexual act, which makes it an uncreating deed of darkness (45). Jungian theory states that the libido normally floods the dry ravines of archetype in the unconscious and releases a torrent of energy into the conscious, which triggers sexual desire and normally results in erotic activity. Perhaps the sexual energy that flooded Macbeth's unconscious was transformed into a torrent of archetypal bloodlust for murder and power. Thus, Macbeth, the warrior hero who swore allegiances and protection to his king, has become Macbeth, the anti-hero.

Macbeth fails to resist the temptation of plotted evil deeds which remains implanted in his imagination. He succumbs to Lady Macbeth's tempting designs for Duncan's murder, which will lead the nefarious couple to Scotland's throne. Shakespeare's readers may also question Banquo's ambitions. Why didn't Banquo usurp Duncan's rule and gain power for himself? Roman Polanski's film version of *Macbeth* provides audiences with an answer to this. Viewers see a thesis-antithesis comparison between the two military men. Macbeth for the most part looks and acts ruthless, while Banquo portrays a man of honor and integrity. Banquo is Macbeth's alter-ego, and he can be regarded as the positive side or light side of Macbeth's shadow.

Brian Morris analyzes the transformation from hero to antihero. He writes that Macbeth went "from simple exemplar of heroic virtue to the complex tragic protagonist who is both servant and victim of violence" (44). Morris argues that Macbeth's chief motivating force is his pursuit of status and honor, and ambition for power was a secondary motivating force in Macbeth's evil design for the kingship (44). R. A. Foakes contends that Macbeth was a captive audience of, and was ruled by, his dark imaginings (11). Foakes adamantly states:

In daring to do all that may become a man, he destroys the best part of himself; and in showing the process by which Macbeth comes to realise this, Shakespeare makes his most searching analysis of the effect of ambition. (27)

Foakes contends that Macbeth takes a blase attitude toward killing on the battlefield. Slaughter comes easy for him, and his brutal ripping apart of MacDonwald lessens his image of bravery and makes him appear sadistic in nature (12). Morris succinctly states, "killing the enemy is what Macbeth does best" (45). Paul A. Jorgensen writes that the battle scenes in *Macbeth* give the reader a sense of "the terrible, raw nature of the play's evil" (10). However, it is interesting

to note that battlefield slaughter is staged the same way that Duncan's murder is staged. Both scenes of carnage are out of sight of the viewer and reader, but never out of our imaginations. The effect of this off-stage activity gives us the composite picture of Macbeth as a ruthless warrior and killer. Modern readers and viewers of the play may ponder whether there is a fine line separating battlefield slaughter from murder on the home front.

This is apparent as the play progresses because Macbeth kills Duncan's servants just as quickly and efficiently in the confines of his castle as he previously killed on the battlefield. Macbeth's behavior can best be described as archetypally living by the sword and dying by the sword. Killing has been his main occupation in life. Thus, when Macbeth resentfully and ominously mutters "Let not light see my black and deep desires" he is in the process of becoming the antihero or rogue warrior in the play. Archetypally the role of rogue warrior has been in the collective unconscious of soldiers since the beginning of recorded history. King Herod and his genocidal troops of Biblical fame could certainly be classified as rogue warriors. Rogue warriors have also made their appearance in American history. General Quantrill's Civil War raiders are also examples of rogue warriors. They became bloody mercenaries who were paid for their dark deeds as they raped and murdered their way across the ravaged heartland of post Civil War America.

Macbeth continues to plot dark deeds during his short-lived reign as Scotland's demented ruler. Friend and foe alike are murdered by Macbeth's mercenaries. This reign of assassination and terror begins with Banquo's murder. It ends when Macbeth's hired killers turn MacDuff's castle into a wasteland of death as they slaughter MacDuff's wife, children, and servants. Suffice to say that Macbeth lived to kill.

Alex Aronson writes "Macbeth's most characteristic explanation after Duncan's murder is 'to know my deed, twere best not to know myself'" (17). Macbeth does not know himself and must above all else maintain an artificial mask and false personaiity. However, Aronson adds, this can be psychologically dangerous and can cause "backsliding into the collective unconscious flooding the personality until the dividing line between the self and the archetype is abolished. . . . And the dualism of face and mask is finally dissolved in the darkness that reflects its own amibiguity" (61).

The protagonist's archetypal descent into his "own reflected ambiguity" transforms Macbeth into one of Shakespeare's most enigmatic characters. Shakespeare's most infamous couple seemingly had the potential for greatness and leadership in their respective personalities. Somerville pays tribute to Lady Macbeth's ability to display courage and poise while her husband is unraveled by guilt and ghost. He observes that she adroitly manages to play the ever-gracious and regal hostess to a roomful of Macbeth's comrades-in-arms as she deals with Macbeth's momentary madness resulting from his murders of Duncan and Banquo (154). Somerville writes that Lady Macbeth's conscience leads to her demented

condition and untimely death. However, he is definitely impressed with her strength and poise, as he states: "She was a great woman, was Lady Macbeth" (155).

Jorgensen is of the opinion that we participate in the murder of Duncan indirectly through the emotional experiences that are relayed to us by the perpetrators (69). Jorgensen states "The psychology of this identification, and its subsequent recoil, has been classically analyzed by Thomas De Quincey", who wrote:

Our sympathy must be with him; of course I mean a sympathy of comprehension, a sympathy by which we enter into his feelings, and are made to understand them—not a sympathy of pity or approbation. (69)

Perhaps after the initial shock and horror of Duncan's murder subsides in our minds, we find ourselves perversely wondering if Macbeth can get away with it. This, perhaps, is one of the ambivalences of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. We hate the evil nature of the crime, but on the other hand is there a dark side of us that might be rooting for the protagonist? Might we not rationalize a bit and tell ourselves as we read or watch the play that political ambition drove him to murder Duncan? And if he cleans up his act and doesn't get caught or doesn't murder the whole neighborhood, he might get away with it.

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## Caliban As Taig: *The Tempest* and British Colonialism in Ireland

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In recent years, many critics of *The Tempest* have persuasively drawn parallels between Prospero's occupation of the enchanted island and the European colonization of the so-called New World. These are valid approaches, and ones that should be explored further. However, the New World was not the only place in which England was engaged in wars of conquest and colonization. Ireland also being invaded by the same profiteers who held shares in such ventures as those sponsored by the Virginia Company, and their numbers included aristocrats, soldiers, pirates, and poets. In fact, Ireland was the place where England composed and perfected the techniques whereby great destruction was brought to the indigenous nations of the Americas. Elizabeth's wars with Ireland provided the testing ground not only for the foundation of plantations, but they also established the philosophical framework by which all subsequent British colonial encounters would be governed. For the conflict between Ireland and England was (some would say still is) a conflict between two ways of life almost diametrically opposed to one another. Elizabethan England found the same faults within the communal Irish Gaelic culture as it would within the communal societies of North America, and the "other" would be defined as a savage, pagan race that in its failure to accept English rule and civilization proved itself worthy of the harshest cruelties of the sovereign.

In *The Tempest*, we see in the actions of Prospero the very embodiment of Elizabethan colonial theory through his utilization of tactics of demonization, starvation, and severe punishment. In this fashion, Prospero is the flower of sixteenth-century English royalty. Conversely, in the character of Caliban we see—through the oppressor's eyes—the victim of colonization. Like the Irish, he is portrayed as an inhuman creature, in the end worthy of our scorn and ridicule.

Indigenous Gaelic culture was defined as savage by the English from the outset of colonization. Holinshed's *Chronicles*, for example, describes the inhabitants of Erin as "wicked, effrenated, barbarous... constant in that they be always inconstant... their mouths are full of unrighteousness, and their tongues speak nothing but cursedness," and maintains that "God is not known in their land" (Holinshed 57). That a historical treatise would argue such untruths is unfortunate; that such a work would be one of the most widely studied and famed tracts of the sixteenth-century is even more so, but the fact that such racist stereotypes may have informed Shakespeare's characterization of Caliban turns both the *Chronicles* and the play tragic.

The reader of *The Tempest* is first introduced to Caliban in an allusion made by Prospero to the “freckled whelp, hagborn” (I. ii. 284) that inhabited the island before his arrival with Miranda. In the exchanges that follow, between Prospero, Miranda, and Caliban, something of the manner by which colonization demonizes the indigenous it encounters is learned. It is revealed, for instance, that Miranda taught Caliban how to speak her language. Miranda rails at him, stating that:

When thou didst not, savage,  
Know, thine own meaning, but wouldst gabble like  
A thing most brutish, I endowed thy purposes  
With words that made them known. (I. ii. 355-8)

Despite Miranda’s protestations otherwise, it is far from clear that Caliban’s “gabble” is not in fact a language in its own right. It is possible that Caliban might speak another tongue, that of Sycorax, for example. When he replies to Miranda’s tirade, he refers to the speech he learned as “your language” (I. ii. 364), possibly implying that the colonizer’s language is merely not his primary means of communication. That Caliban spoke only in sounds that were brutish and meaningless to Prospero and Miranda reveals more about the prejudices of the oppressor than about Caliban’s supposed savagery.<sup>1</sup> If he were as base as they try to portray him, he probably would never have been able to learn to speak at all.

Caliban’s speech is more indicative of power relations than anything else. If Miranda’s language is indeed not Caliban’s primary one, it fits the colonial paradigm: he was forced to learn the language of those who enslaved him. In writing on this very topic with regard to Ireland, the poet Edmund Spenser (obviously a man keenly aware of the power of language) observes in his work “A View of the Prescnt Statc of Ireland,” published in 1596, that “it hath been ever the use of the conqueror to despise the language of the conquered, and to force him by all means to learn his” (Spenser 96). Spenser was concerned that English colonists in Ireland were starting to forsake their mother tongue, instead using Irish as their primary means of communication. This, to him, was a sign of “dangerous infections” within the colonies, which if left unchecked could “bring forth an evil race” (Spenser 97), more Irish (and thus barbaric) than English.<sup>2</sup> Such a concern mirrors that of Prospero for Miranda’s “honor” in the scene referred to previously. Caliban’s mocking words that he would have “peopled else/ This Isle with Calibans” (I. ii. 350-1) read in the context of Spenser carry not only a sexual threat against Miranda’s virtue, but one against her language and civilization as well—the same threat faced by the English in their Irish colonies.

Another issue raised by Spenser in his essay is that of appearance. Not only were the Irish barbarous in their speech, but in their dress as well; and their style of clothing encouraged their savagery. Spenser complains of the Irish monster who “maketh his mantle his house, and under it covereth himself from the wrath of heaven, from the offense of the earth and from the sight of men” (Spenser 82).

Because of its size, the Irish mantle is useful to “the outlaw,” “the rebel,” and “the thief,” for under its voluminous fabric all sorts of bootie, weapons, and even the savage himself might be hid from the eyes of civilization. With this in mind, it thus can be seen that when Trinculo “creeps under Caliban’s garment” in Act II, Scene ii, he is joining the company of a proper Irish rebel, hidden in the woods with only his mantle to hide him from the elements and the forces of law and order.

To a modern reader, perhaps, such concern as clothing may seem trivial. However, to the English Crown these were weighty matters indeed when the security of colonies in Ireland was at stake. This is evidenced by the laws known as the Statutes of Kilkenny which were kept in effect throughout the colonial period. This legislation was intended to prevent English colonists from “going native” by forbidding them to wear Irish clothes, have Irish hairstyles, or speak the language. It sought to eliminate Irish cultural activities like music, games, and poetry. In addition (according to historian James P. Myers Jr.), under these laws, marriage between the native Irish and English settlers “was defined as high treason” (Myers 4). In the context of the Statutes of Kilkenny, Caliban’s actions, attitudes, and dress can be seen as more dangerous and savagely Irish than they first appeared.

Religion also was a realm in which the Irish proved themselves to be dangerous and barbaric. Indeed, some sixteenth-century English authors traced all of the iniquities of their island neighbors to the practice of Catholicism: one of the most forgiving of them was Barnabe Rich, who provided source material for Shakespeare’s *Twelfth Night*. He wrote in 1610 that “popery in Ireland is the original of a number of imperfections that otherwise would be reformed” (Rich 144). Most of Rich’s contemporaries were not so open-minded. Sir Phillip Sidney, for example (in the words of Nicholas P. Canny) “considered himself to be dealing with people who were essentially pagan” when the people in question were the Irish (Canny 585). Canny offers an accurate assessment of why these English colonists felt such a need to classify the Irish as infidels. He maintains that on a certain level to admit that the native Irish were Christian would . . . have been to acknowledge them as civilized also. By declaring the Irish to be pagan, however, the English were decreeing that they were culpable since their heathenism was owing not to a lack of opportunity but rather to the fact that their system of government was antithetical to Christianity. (Canny 586)

Condemnation of Irish culture, then, was a stepping-stone toward declaring the Irish to be wholesale barbarians of the worst possible kind: barbarians both by nature and by choice.

For the same reasons, accusations of heathenism also plague Caliban. Prospero variously describes him as “poisonous slave, got by the devil himself” (I. ii. 319), “a devil, a born devil” (IV. i. 189), and a “thing of darkness,” a bastard “demi-devil,” whose “mother was a witch” (V. i. 269-275). Although *The Tempest* is not an overtly Christian play, it is interesting to note that when such Christian

references do slip in, they are most often employed to exemplify moral worth—usually negative moral worth. Caliban is thus consistently linked with the most pagan forces of darkness, symbolized by the devil and his mother's god, Setebos. As a result, the reader is encouraged to dismiss Caliban out of hand as a savage creature, and give no more thought to his claim to the island.

To gain a more complete understanding of the colonial wars waged by the British against the Irish, we must move into the sphere suggested earlier, and also examine the nature of Irish Gaelic political society during the Renaissance. This is of critical importance, for the words of historian Francis Jennings, to the Elizabethan colonists, the greater part of "what made Irishmen morally inferior to Englishmen, and thus imposed a duty on England's kings to conquer the 'other island,' was the government of most of Ireland by independent tribes and clans instead of subject vassal lords" (Jennings 8).

Gaelic society traditionally functioned by means of an electoral system known as *tanaistry*. According to Gaelic law, not only was the *taoiseach* (chieftain) elected by the clan, but the *tanaiste* (successor) as well.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, the *tanaiste* was chosen during the lifetime of the *taoiseach*. To the English, *tanaistry* was little more than anarchy, for (in the words of Sir John Davics' memorable 1612 essay entitled "A Discovery of the True Causes Why Ireland Was Never Entirely Subdued, Nor Brought Under Obedience of the Crown of England, Until the Beginning of His Majesty's Happy Reign") it made "all their [those of the Irish] possessions uncertain and brings confusion, barbarism, and incivility" to their world (Davies 152-3). Because they were without a proper—i.e. English—system of succession, the Irish could be labeled as savages.

With this conflict between Gaelic and English definitions of proper succession in mind, new light can be shed on Shakespeare's exploration of legitimacy in *The Tempest*. The most obvious reference made to issues of succession in colonial settings occurs in Act II, Scene i, during Gonzalo's rhapsody on what he would do if he had "plantation" of the enchanted isle. "I would by contraries/ Execute all things," he proposes,

Letters should not be known; riches, poverty,  
And use of service, none; contract, succession,  
Bourne, bound of land, tilth, vineyard, none...  
No sovereignty. (II. i. 152-61)

In these lines, Gonzalo lightheartedly challenges the very foundations of the Elizabethan world: private property and primogeniture. The response that his speech elicits from his royal auditors ranges from the mockery of Antonio and Sebastian to the affectionately dismissive "Thou dost talk nothing to me" (II. i. 174) of Alonso. Such communal values, it is implied, cannot be taken seriously for a moment for they are at best ridiculous.

At worst, however, they can be treasonous. When Sebastian first considers

usurping his brother's throne, he is initially held back by his English view of succession, stating that "hereditary sloth" (II. i. 227) instructs him not to even think of himself in power. Antonio replies to this with the argument that true leadership is determined by ability, not by primogeniture: "There be those that can rule Naples/ As well as he that sleeps" (II. i. 266-7). This notion is at the heart of the *tanaistry*. Furthermore, Gaelic tradition allowed women to be elected *taoiseach* as well. Thus, from the English point of view, when the precepts of primogeniture are forgotten and those of *tanaistry* are adopted, the danger of insurrection is far greater for succession is legally permissible to a wider number of candidates. Sebastian's first act of rebellion was his acceptance of the Gaelic system itself.

Returning again to Gonzalo's speech, in his reference to a "bound of land," we discover another point on which the Irish and English points of view differed sharply: that of land ownership. Irish clans held their territories in a communal fashion. Similarly, in some areas of sixteenth-century Gaelic Ireland, it is clear that some Irish people led a semi-nomadic life in *buailte*, companies of herders and their cattle that moved from common pasture to common pasture in the summer months. Englishmen like Spenser abhorred this practice, believing that such a lifestyle encouraged the Irish "to grow more barbarous and live more licentiously than they could in towns . . . for there they think themselves half-exempted from law and obedience" (Spenser 80). Such Irish people were, according to this point of view, following their savage natures away from the virtues of civilization.<sup>4</sup>

It was these fundamental differences in world-view that would bring the colonial crisis to brutal extremes in Ireland. Because the Gaelic Irish were such a communal society, a treaty made between the Crown and an Irish *taoiseach* could not last. "Simply put," explains James Myers, "treaties with the chieftains, could not, in clan law and custom, bind their successors," nor could the English sovereign demand the surrender of tribally held land-problems which would also plague English negotiations with Native American Nations (Myers 6). So, one by one, as *tanaiste* followed *taoiseach*, the Irish tribes that the English had thought were "pacified" either by treaty or plantation became "hostile" again, reclaiming temporarily lost territory.

To the English, this reclamation was a rebellion, a rebellion made worse because the Irish were rejecting the civilization that had been offered them. Colonial theorists like Thomas Smith had hoped that by reducing the Irish to the status of bondsmen to English overlords, the barbaric Celts would eventually be enlightened. By learning obedience and humility, the Irish would acquire civilized habits as well (Canny 589). That they rejected this was a sign to Queen Elizabeth that the Irish lacked "any sense of Religion, duetie, or common humanitie," a belief which she voiced in the "Proclamation on Sending Over the Army into Ireland" in 1599. Because their bondage had not taught them any of these virtues, Elizabeth was

compelled to take resolution, to reduce that Kingdome to obedience (which by the Lawes of God and Nature is due unto us) by using an extraordinary power and force against them; Assuring ourselves so much in the justice of our cause, as we shall finde the same success (whichever it is the pleasure of God to give to Prince's rights) against unnaturall rebellions. (Tudor 315)

If her subjects would not be moved by natural obedience to civilized laws, Elizabeth would force their compliance. To the sovereign, her legal right to use force against her rebellious, savage subjects was clear. In fact, it was the "right of conquest" more than any other argument that assured the Renaissance monarchs of England of their ownership of Ireland. Edmund Spenser justified his colonialism in precisely those terms. With regard to the claims of the native Irish to their lands, he asks angrily,

what need afterwards to enter into any such idle terms with them (the Irish) to be called their king whenas it is in the power of the conqueror to take upon himself what title he will over his dominions conquered? For all is the conqueror's, as Tully to Brutus saith. (Spenser 67)

Power justifies the use of power.

Similarly, in *The Tempest*, the right of conquest is what ultimately gives Prospero the "legal" dominion over the island. In the final scene of the play, immediately before he "discovers Ferdinand and Miranda playing chess" to the assembled throng, he explains his presence on the island not in terms of fortunate deliverance from danger, but in those of a divinely appointed colonial power taking what is rightfully his. He describes himself as

... Prospero, and that very duke  
Which was thrust forth of Milan, who most strangely  
Upon this shore, where you were wracked, was landed  
To be lord on't. (V. i. 159-62)

Like Thomas Smith and Queen Elizabeth, Prospero creates bondsmen for himself in his new plantation, in order to teach them civility. Ultimately, Prospero commands obedience by threat of force: not by kindness, not by right of succession, but by military might.

Caliban, Ariel, and Ferdinand each are forced to submit to his will, and the treatment that they receive depends upon how well they fulfill their duties and how obedient they are to Prospero. Ferdinand fares the best, for he cheerfully serves his lord for the sake of Miranda. His trial is brief and reasonable: he must move the firewood logs outside of Prospero's cell. In the end, Ferdinand is rewarded with the hand of his beloved, for Prospero reveals that "All thy vexations/  
Were but my trials of thy love, and thou/ Hast strangely stood the test" (IV. i. 5-7).

In contrast, as a result of his hesitance, Ariel must undergo a more difficult series of trials than Ferdinand. Prospero reveals that he must remind Ariel of his obligations "once in a month" (I. ii. 262), and it is not until the wizard threatens to use force against Ariel (to trap him again for twelve years inside an oak tree) that the airy spirit apologizes and complies with his wishes. Playing the role of the ideal bondsman in Smith's colonial theory, Ariel learns that he must be subservient in order to be set free. In this fashion, Ariel can be viewed as representative of the "Old English," the descendants of the earlier Anglo-Norman invaders who very often adopted Gaelic ways, but who (because of their British ancestry) but were viewed by the Crown as potentially loyal subjects that would respond to "reason" with only a minimal use of force.

In contrast to Ariel, much like the Irish, Caliban loves his savage freedom too much to escape unscathed from Prospero's plantation. "If thou neglect'st or dost unwillingly/ What I command," warns Prospero, "I'll rack thee with old cramps,/ Fill all thy bones with aches, make thee roar/ That beasts shall tremble at thy din" (I. ii. 368-71). These punishments may seem harsh, but colonial theory has determined that such cruel treatment is unavoidable: since kindness will not move Caliban, physical force must be used—and we are sure that Prospero does not spare him any "stripes."

Ultimately, Caliban and the Irish alike prove to be hopeless cases. Contact with civilization has had no effect upon either: both are irredeemably pagan and barbaric, refusing to submit silently or joyfully to the yoke of the conqueror. They are creatures, in the view of all colonizers like Prospero, "on whose nature/ Nurture can never stick; on whom my pains,/ Humanely taken, all, all lost, quite lost" (IV. i. 188-90)!

Prospero is willing to go to quite inhuman extremes in order to punish rebellion, including depriving his subjects of food. While the image of "Shapes" carrying away the food-laden table in Act III, Scene iii may appear innocent enough, when one considers the tactics that colonizers advocated against the Irish, the charm of Prospero's "ministers of Fate" (III. ii. 61) quickly ebbs. These colonial overlords believed that Ireland needed reformation not through "laws and ordinances," but, as Spenser argues, by the power of "the sword, for all those evils must first be cut away by a strong hand before any good may be planted" (Spenser 108). Even non-combatants needed to suffer, for Irish civilians were known to support the rebels and give them "secret relief." The only solution, reasons Spenser, is to wage total warfare, to bring indiscriminate destruction to Ireland so that the rebellious population is quelled by famine and the sword. The Irish citizen will:

findeth then succor in no place: towns there are none where he may get spoil—  
they are all burnt; country houses and farmers there be none—they be all  
fled; bread he hath none... [and as a result, he will] shortly want life... (Spenser  
113)

Deliberately caused famines like the ones that Spenser proposes would be used against the Irish people for centuries to come. In fact, last year marked the one-hundred fiftieth anniversary of Black 47, the worst year of An Gorta Mor—the Great Hunger—which, because of a deliberate British policy of exportation of food, left over one million Irish dead (Saoirse 1).

Unfortunately, Spenser's theories were put into practice, for in the end, there are few options left open for a proper, civilizing colonial power. Two examples from the military career of the Earl of Essex provide grim evidence of the lengths to which the English would go to pacify Ireland. In 1574 he launched a night-time raid against the inhabitants of Rathlin Island in Ulster, butchering the entire population of six hundred. That same year, Essex slaughtered Sir Brian McPhelim O'Neill, his wife, and two hundred followers at a Christmas feast. Queen Elizabeth's response to Essex's murderous Ulster campaign was to send him a message commending his service to England "because," she said,

we do perceive that when occasion doth present you do rather allure and bring in that rude and barbarous nation to civility and acknowledging of their duty to God and to us by wisdom and discreet handling than by force and shedding of blood; and yet when necessity requireth you are ready also to oppose yourself and your forces to them whom reason and duty cannot bridle. (quoted in Canny 121)

There is, after all, only so much you can do with a pagan.

The history of English colonialism is one that is written in the blood of its victims. Millions of lives were lost as a direct result of the attitudes that informed colonizing peoples, attitudes which were espoused alike in literature and in war. The unfortunate reality is that such attitudes continue to inform British imperial policy in the Six Counties of Ireland that remain under direct rule by Westminster. On 27 September, 1995, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that England's "shoot-to-kill" policy in the Six Counties is in clear violation of Article 2 of the 1950 European Convention on Human Rights. Nor is this an isolated case: in 1978 both Amnesty International and the European Court found Britain guilty of torturing Irish internees. Every year, England is condemned by the European Court for "antiterrorist legislation" like the Emergency Provisions Act, which allows officials to hold persons without charge for up to seven days. The list goes on and on (Saoirse Oct. 1). Prospero still reigns over his island kingdom of Ireland.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Holinshed's description of the people "whose mouths are full of unrighteousness" should be kept in mind while reading Caliban's colorful curses.

<sup>2</sup>Nor were Spenser's philosophies disinterested, for he had a 3,000 acre holding in the second Munster Plantation (Spenser 60).

<sup>3</sup>The Republic of Ireland preserves these terms today: the prime minister is referred to as the Taoiseach, and the deputy prime minister as the *Tánaiste*.

<sup>4</sup>Some scholars have questioned how widespread the *buailles* were during this time. Canny, for example, believes that English writers overstated the number of Irish engaged in a migratory life. He cites anecdotal evidence from the accounts of English soldiers on campaign in the Gaelic areas as evidence that except for regions where mountains and bogs made it impossible (much of the Gaelic areas) "every piece of land that was suitable for tillage was, in fact, under cultivation...unless the area was particularly open to attack from a neighboring lord" (Canny 14).

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## Transformations: The Interplay of Source and Text in Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* and *Dido, Queen of Carthage*

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In this paper I wish first to reflect generally on the ways in which a text may be indebted to an earlier work of literature and then to look at the problem posed by two of Marlowe's works: *Hero and Leander* and *Dido, Queen of Carthage*. Literary works frequently refer to other works of literature. Most such references are allusions, and the writer alluding to another literary work relies on the reader to recognize the allusion. Indeed, with good writers, for whom such allusions are not merely decorative, the text will unfold itself fully only to those who do perceive the allusions. This need not mean that the text will be opaque or unintelligible to readers who fail to recognize an allusion. For example, the reader of Keats' "On First Looking into Chapman's Homer" who does not recognize that "deep-browed" mimics a characteristic feature of Homeric writing will still be able to appreciate Keats' excitement at finding a translation that brought Homer to life for him. Nonetheless, some part of Keats' engagement with Homer (via Chapman) will be missed. For those who recognize it as Homeric, the adjective both illustrates and validates Keats' claim.

Notoriously, this same poem illustrates an allusion that misfires. Seeking a simile for his excitement, Keats refers to "stout Cortez's" sighting of the Pacific Ocean when traversing the Isthmus of Panama. The explorer intended was, of course, Balboa. "Chapman's Homer" is something of a staple item in Introduction to Literature texts, and one of the discussion questions that such texts append will typically ask if the mistake matters. On some level one feels that it must matter, that the level of communication that relies on observing that the choice of an adjective like "deep-browed" reflects the poem's Homeric context is betrayed by the historical lapse. Many of my students, on the other hand, will argue that the error does not really matter, and it would be hard to fully disagree. The poem does succeed in its celebration of literature, and of Homer in particular, and we are led to share in Keats' sense of discovery. Is this merely the case of a good poem transcending one bad error? Perhaps. But perhaps also for my students the error does not matter because the allusion is no longer alive—the distinction between Cortez and Balboa is esoteric knowledge. Had Keats not bungled, the poem would seem better to some readers, but not to all.

This is not to suggest that every allusion will provoke or require the same depth of recall of the original on the reader's part, but some will indeed demand a detailed recollection of the original to be effective. Think for a moment of the

passage from Dante's *Inferno* which T.S. Eliot used as an epigraph to "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock":

S'io credese che mia risposta fosse  
A persona che mai tornasse al mondo,  
Questa fiamma staria senza pi• scosse.  
Ma per c\_o che giammai di questo fondo  
Non torno vivo alcun, s'i'odo il vero,  
Senza tema d'infamia ti rispondo.

Can the reader who has not read Dante truly appreciate the epigraph's relevance to Eliot's poem? The description of a vain man who would prefer not to reveal his hellish torments to the living is certainly a telling context for understanding Prufrock, but within itself the passage does not contain enough to make the allusion fully work. It is not just the language of the epigraph that is apposite, but its context. The reader must recall the nature of this journey through the underworld, must know that this flame is a soul in torment, must understand the reasons for Guido da Montefeltro's reticence, and must supply the irony that Dante the pilgrim is in fact one of the living to whom Guido does not wish to reveal himself.

Familiarity with the original can work in other ways. In *As You Like It*, Phoebe expresses her sudden infatuation with Ganymede (the disguised Rosalind) through a quotation: "Dead shepherd, now I find thy saw of might / 'Whoever loved that loved not at first sight?'" (3.5.81-2). The allusion to Marlowe's *Hero and Leander* is clear, and the reader who recalls the original context will remember a very sweeping assertion of love's instantaneous and implacable power:

It lies not in our power to love, or hate,  
For will in us is over-rul'd by fate.  
When two are stript, long ere the course begin  
We wish that one should loose, the other win.  
And one especiallie doe we affect,  
Of two gold Ingots, like in each respect,  
The reason no man knowes, let it suffice,  
What we behold is censur'd by our eies.  
Who ever lov'd, that lov'd not at first sight? (lines 167-76)

Marlowe thus offers us a conception of human life that offers scant room for individual choice or free will. Does Phoebe intend such a broad denial of choice? I think not. She is meditating not on free will, but on how strongly she is attracted to Ganymede. The quotation allows her to powerfully express those feelings, and moreover, it simultaneously allows Shakespeare to respond to Marlowe. Phoebe's eyes have not served her well. She has fallen for the image of a man, and not for a lover who could satisfy her thoroughly heterosexual desires. This is

a theme that Shakespeare has explored elsewhere, perhaps most thoroughly in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. "I would my father looked but with my eyes" (1.1.56), says Hermia, convinced that her love is both rational and objective, that if one looked at the facts correctly (that is, as she does), then one would have no choice but to agree with her choice of Lysander. The play ultimately rewards our romantic inclinations and provides a happy ending in which every Jack finds his Jill, but not before asking us to think about love's illusions. In the moonlight, love's magic finds its objects to be remarkably interchangeable, as we find in the ever fluctuating pairings of Hermia, Helena, Lysander, and Demetrius. Similarly, Titania shows that love's eye can find wisdom and beauty in a foolish and hideous creature.

The reader who can not bring the original context of Phoebe's quotation to bear on her remark will not misunderstand *As You Like It*. The language of the quotation tells us what we need to know to understand Phoebe's feelings, but the reader who does know the original context will perceive a kind of interplay between the line in Shakespeare's text and its source in Marlowe's poem. It is part of an ongoing engagement, or competition, with Marlowe that occupied Shakespeare long after Marlowe's death. Neither sees love as rational, but Shakespeare responds to Marlowe's vision with one that is more evanescent and fragile.

In addition to brief references and quotations, there are other kinds of interplay between texts. Any imitation or parody demands familiarity with the original. A poem such as Anthony Hecht's "The Dover Bitch" tells a comprehensible story, but the thrust of its attack must remain incomprehensible to one who had not read Matthew Arnold's "Dover Beach." The most interesting of these textual relationships are those texts which do not merely mimic and burlesque their original, but engage and answer it in kind. I can think of no poem which has inspired more such answers than Marlowe's "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love," which has been answered by dozens and dozens of poets. Many of these responses, like Corrine Rockwell Swain's "The Passionate Paleontologist," are merely amusing. Others more profoundly react to the original. In the first of such answers, Raleigh's nymph challenges the materialism and temporal perspective of Marlowe's shepherd. In our day, C. Day Lewis's "Song" measured the plight of the modern working class against the privileges of Renaissance aristocracy, Ogden Nash's "Love Under the Republicans (or Democrats)" queried the effects of poverty on love, and Peter De Vries' "Bacchanal" suggested both that the dreams before marriage differ from the reality afterwards and that, in our culture, the rewards of living together and being one's love are more satisfying to men than to women. None of these are mere debunkings of Marlowe's vision. They are coherent, self-contained works of cultural criticism, but they play against and require our knowledge of Marlowe's poem if they are to be fully effective.

A final type of interplay between texts exists between a text and its source. This is still an occasional feature of modern literature, as for example, with Derek

Walcott's *Omeros*, a work which assumes the reader's familiarity with Homer. However, the most common place for us to experience such interplay between text and source is in film, which has often found its source material in literature, especially the novel. However, with film there is usually no presumption that the audience will know the original novel, and never an assumption that the moviegoer's experience will be richer for such knowledge. Occasionally there are works that significant parts of the audience does know and care about, and expectations may clash. One imagines, for example, that the makers of the recent *The Scarlet Letter* were surprised by the objections to what they must have perceived as a routine adaptation of a source.

In some ways, Renaissance literary practices may remind us of our own movie practices: works based on other works are commonplace. The creativity inherent in refashioning and adapting a prior work was valued and appreciated. Sources could be obscure, of course, resulting in a work analogous to a movie based on a novel that few had read. However, given the smaller and more homogenous literary world of the Renaissance, the curriculum shared by all educated readers, and the real possibility of being up-to-date in all aspects of intellectual life, writers could expect that readers and a significant number of playgoers would know and recognize the sources for a work and appreciate the current writer's engagement with an earlier text. Some texts would be well-known to most readers, and the writer could count on an audience's ability to read or view a current work against the backdrop of that original.

Two of Marlowe's works, *Hero and Leander* and *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, are based on classical literature that virtually any reader would have been familiar with. Even if one did not know Musaeus directly, one would surely know the story of Hero and Leander from Ovid and other Latin authors, and no literate person would not have known the story of Dido and Aeneas from Virgil's *Aeneid*. Modern perceptions of the relationships of these two works to their sources have varied interestingly. *Hero and Leander* was long felt to be based on the totality of the myth, and was read against a tragic ending which it did not actually present. The common assumption was simply that Marlowe's work was incomplete. More recent criticism has argued that Marlowe's work is complete, ending with the consummation of Hero and Leander's love.

In essence, Marlowe is seen as having extracted the love story out of the larger tragedy. What might be seen as the larger implications of the myth are now, by and large, seen as irrelevant to Marlowe's achievement. Knowledge of the source myth has thus come to be seen as something of an impediment, blinding the reader to the real nature of Marlowe's achievement. With *Dido, Queen of Carthage*, on the other hand, Marlowe is frequently seen as no more than a translator, albeit one with the freedom normally accorded to Elizabethan translators. In short, the Marlowe who is seen as radically reinterpreting the myth of Hero and Leander is seen as having nothing of his own to tell us about the love of Dido and Aeneas.

The notion that *Hero and Leander* is fragmentary is as old as the published poem, for Edward Blunt's dedication to Sir Thomas Walsingham in the poem's first edition (1598) describes it as an "unfinished tragedy," and two contemporaries, George Chapman and Henry Petowe, saw fit to publish endings for the poem. This idea was not challenged until modern times, particularly by Louis Martz in 1972, although his position was briefly anticipated by Muriel Bradbrook in 1951. More recently the position has been championed by William Godshalk and Roma Gill. As one would expect, these vastly different understandings of the poem as we have it involve two very different senses of the poem's relationship to its source. If one sees the poem as incomplete but aiming at the conclusion of the classical narrative, one must ask how it would have arrived there from where it was. Hence, critics sought foreshadowings of the tragic ending in the extant text. For example, could Neptune's anger at his rejection by Leander somehow relate to Leander's later death by drowning? Most such suggestions are not convincing, but we can see where they arise. Knowledge of the source controls the reading of the poem. The more radical of the assertions that the poem is complete tend to divorce the poem wholly from its tragic context. Certainly, as Bradbrook reminds us, "There was never any need to take the whole of a classical story for literary purposes" (60), but has Marlowe found in Musaeus's tale only the story of a couple who fall in love and then make love? What does he benefit from identifying them as Leander and Hero rather than two ordinary lovers? In fact, as Gill notes, Marlowe is careful to remind us of the tragic ending (185-6). When he first introduces Leander, it is as "Amorous Leander, beautifull and yoong, / (Whose tragedie divine Musaeus soong)" (51-2). Later, when Cupid begs the fates that Leander and Hero "Both might enjoy ech other, and be blest," they will not vouchsafe him "so much / As one poore word" (380-4). Their fate is certain, and Marlowe depends upon our knowledge of their fate. His focus on the growth of love and loss of innocence, of shame and triumph, is a tale complete within itself, but one rendered poignant by our knowledge of what lies ahead. The source does not dictate the nature of the retelling, but once alluded to, it colors our understanding of the new work.

As noted, *Dido, Queen of Carthage* poses a different problem concerning the interplay of text and source. With large portions of the play closely following or paraphrasing the language of the *Aeneid*, critics have often failed to respond to the originality of Marlowe's version. However, Marlowe's story is not Virgil's, and even where the linguistic indebtedness is at its greatest, Marlowe makes this tale his own. A good example is a scene analyzed in my *Christopher Marlowe and the Metaphysical Problem Play*, the scene where Venus takes leave of Aeneas (25-7). In Marlowe's text the passage comes after some two hundred lines of relatively close translation or paraphrase of the *Aeneid*, so if our response to Dido is ever parallel to our response to the *Aeneid*, it should be at a moment like this. Here is Virgil's description:

Dixit et avertens cervice refulsit,  
ambrosiaque comae divinum vertice odorem  
spiravere; pedes vestis defluxit as imos,  
et vera incessu patuit dea. Ille ubi matrem  
adgnovit, tali fugientem est voce secutus:  
"Quid natum totiens, crudelis tu quoque, falsis  
ludis imaginibus? Cur dextrae iungere dextram  
non datur ac veras audire at reddere voces?" (Bk 1.402-409)

Marlowe renders the Latin thus:

Achates, tis my mother that is fled,  
I know her by the movings of her feete:  
Stay gentle Venus, flye not from thy sonne,  
Too cruell, why wilt thou forsake me thus?  
Or in these shades deceiv'st mine eye so oft?  
Why talk we not together hand in hand?  
And tell our griefes in more familiar termes:  
But thou art gone and leav'st me here alone,  
To dull the ayre with my discursive moane. (1.2.240-8)

Marlowe's fidelity to his source is obvious. Operating under the necessity of rendering Virgil's third-person description as dialogue, Marlowe has omitted the goddess's rosy neck and celestially scented hair, but in the detail of her gait (something which could be acted on stage) he captures the essence of Venus's revelation of her true self and the manner of Aeneas's recognition of her. However, despite this verbal closeness, our reaction to Aeneas's suffering and to Venus's divinity differs radically from our experience of the *Aeneid*.

Virgil does not minimize his hero's suffering, and at this point in the *Aeneid* one sympathizes strongly with Aeneas's desire for a closer relationship with his mother Venus, but we do not feel that he has been cheated. Rather, we see that he has been granted something beyond what is given to lesser men. Divinity has not descended to him on equal terms, but it is a wonder that it should descend at all. With Marlowe, the distance between man and goddess is not elevating, but alienating. Marlowe could have striven for Virgil's effect, but he does not. His Venus sneaks and skulks about the stage, emphasizing her manipulation of her son and the other mortals. Here, as throughout the play, the contrast with human love makes divine love seem petty and sordid. The forces that determine the direction, nature, and quality of human life have no real concern for human beings. Perhaps this contrast is easier to see in Marlowe's additions to his source, such as the opening with Jove dandling Ganymede on his knee or Cupid toying with the emotions of the elderly nurse. However, even at its most Virgilian, Marlowe has made this story his own. Nonetheless, Marlowe depends upon our knowledge

of the *Aeneid*. Roma Gill has described the relationship as replacing “Virgilian high seriousness with deflationary satire” (119), but it is more than this. He does not simply debunk Virgil through comic parody. Virgil’s characters inhabit a world in which suffering and sacrifice are ultimately meaningful. In Marlowe’s universe, humanity suffers for the ends ordained by the gods, but it is pointless from the perspective of human values and meaning. It is a different and darker vision of life, and it is made more pointed because we are forced to read it against the Virgilian vision.

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## Reading Glasses in *The Duchess of Malfi*

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The world depicted in John Webster’s *The Duchess of Malfi*, first performed in 1613, is a dark and hellish one, full of spies, murders, and madness. However, Webster also provides his characters and his audience with a vision of a world outside the one on the stage and suggests that the correct kind of vision gives us access to a more heavenly realm. In the course of the drama, the audience hears several references to glass devices related to vision and simultaneously to the soul or to heaven or hell. These include references to looking glasses, telescopes, and to glasses of other varieties, all of which convey views of qualities beyond the merely physical characteristics of others. And though some of the characters are more cynical about the ability to gain access to a world beyond the immediate physical world, they nevertheless refer to glasses in similar, fantastical terms. These characters less confident about mankind’s potential to reach up to this celestial realm—or less fearful about the potential danger of relegating themselves to this realm’s hellish counterpart—ultimately desire a medium such as they refer to in order to reach the heavenly world beyond this one. The corruption of the characters of the Duke, the Cardinal, and Bosola makes them vulnerable to the influence of evil; all of them are aware of this and try to avoid the “perspective / That shows us hell,” the way Bosola describes a guilty conscience in the last of the group of references to glasses in this play (4.2.358-59). This perspective—a magnifying device or telescope—and the other glasses made reference to in this play provide signals to the audience of a connection Webster makes between optical devices and metaphysical intelligence in a world where characters are devoted to divining the secrets of others. These metaphorical glasses are capable of providing moral insight to those who employ them, but only if they are used properly.

In the first scene of *The Duchess of Malfi*, the Duchess’ steward Antonio refers to her and her brothers as “three fair medals, / Cast in one figure, of so different temper” (1.1.188-89). Antonio’s statement indicates the public nature of their existence in this reference to medals which display the faces of noble personages and expresses the idea that though they appear alike in outward form and public reputation, their inner qualities differ significantly. His characterization signals the audience that they must evaluate these figures in a different way to calculate their true worth, and the treasurer Antonio provides such a method of valuation when he expresses his estimate of the Duchess a few lines later in the first use of glass imagery in the play:

Her days are practis'd in such noble virtue  
 That sure her nights—nay more, her very sleeps-  
 Are more in heaven, than other ladies' shrifts.  
 Let all sweet ladies break their flatt'ring glasses,  
 And dress themselves in her. (1.1.201-205)

To Antonio, the Duchess is a literal mirror of noble virtue. This is of course the exaggerated praise of the admirer and soon to be lover and secret husband of the Duchess, and that he praises her this way indicates his susceptibility to her upcoming suit. Given what he has just said about appearances and the three siblings, it is odd that he would have others look at her as at a glass, which shows only the superficial, physical qualities. The type of glass she represents apparently presents a picture of her virtue as well as her beauty, the moral as well as the physical, and this visualization indicates more fully his idealization of her, but it also signals us that when glass images appear there will be a moral significance to them.

The juxtaposition shortly some thirty-five lines later of Bosola's comment that "There's no more credit to be given to th' face / Than to a sick man's urine" (1.1.236-37) presents the audience with the more practical, less idealistic view of this cynical melancholic. Bosola denies that one's outward looks can denote one truly, and he will use an outward appearance of loyalty to his advantage when he spies on the Duchess for her brother Ferdinand, the Duke of Calabria. In Bosola's estimation of the value of others, there is no correlation between the outside and the inside as there is for Antonio; to Bosola, one's inner virtues and defects cannot be identified through visual means.

Bosola's use of glass imagery likewise contrasts with Antonio's in that the two men's attitudes toward women expressed through these images differ markedly. Both use such images to indicate moral judgments, but Bosola's metaphors convey his cynicism. Seeking to hear of the pain he has caused the Duchess by feeding her apricots to induce labor so that he might know whether she is hiding a pregnancy, Bosola uses imagery involving glasses and women, implicitly attacking the Duchess in a coarse manner while speaking to one of her servants:

Bos. There was a young waiting-woman had a monstrous  
 desire to see the glass-house.  
 Old Lady. Nay, pray let me go:—  
 Bos. And it was only to know what strange instrument it was  
 should swell up a glass to the fashion of a woman's belly.  
 Old Lady. I will hear no more of the glass-house—you are  
 still abusing women!  
 Bos. Who I? no, only (by the way now and then) mention  
 your frailties. (2.2.6-14)

Bosola equates women and by implication the Duchess and her pregnancy with lechery, speaking of her "monstruous desire." The young waiting woman whom Bosola imagines wanting to see the "strange instrument" at the glass house (with its sexual connotation) compares favorably with the older Duchess, who is of noble rank but has not merely observed but has gone through the swelling process that Bosola describes. Bosola also implies in his story about the waiting woman that the Duchess' example corrupts others. Now the glass Antonio referred to when he advised ladies to "break their flatt'ring glasses, / And dress themselves in her" (1.1.204-205) has become distorted, and other women are guided by the Duchess' lechery rather than her virtue.

Further references to glass objects which succeed in denigrating women anticipate the revelation to the Duchess' brothers of her pregnancy. In scene four of Act 2, the Cardinal is engaged in a conversation with Julia, the wife of the lord Castruccio and also the Cardinal's mistress. She is an example of inconstancy, and the Cardinal less than tactfully points this out to her:

Card. A man might strive to make glass malleable,  
 Ere he should make [women] fixed.  
 Julia. So, my lord-  
 Card. We had need go borrow that fantastic glass  
 Invented by Galileo the Florentine,  
 To view another spacious world i' th' moon,  
 And look to find a constant woman there. (2.4.14-19)

The Cardinal associates all women with inconstancy; he fears his sister will be unfaithful to her late husband and to her pledge not to remarry, as indeed she has been. It is easier to mold glass than to make women constant, he says, reminding the audience of Bosola's glass-house metaphor and the lust associated with it. The fragility of glass and therefore of women and their faith are also implied by the Cardinal's words. The combination of this speech and the presence of the adulterous Julia serves to injure further the Duchess' reputation for virtue, as we know that it is his sister whom the Cardinal is most concerned about and that she has disobeyed his wishes in marrying Antonio.

The Cardinal's second image makes his point more complete. Galileo's "fantastic glass," the telescope, capable of viewing objects far way in the heavens, might be able to show this world a constant woman, according to the Cardinal. Here we have another image like that of Antonio's glass which can show us something which resembles the perfection of heaven, and again it is connected with the search for a woman who can be an exemplar of virtue. The moon was associated with Diana, the goddess of chastity, and therefore represents a goddess-like virtue in this speech. However, the reference to Galileo's "fantastic glass" brings this virtue into question. One of the major points Galileo made in his 1610 work *Sidereus Nuncius* ("The Starry Messenger") was that he had discovered

that the moon's surface was not smooth, that it had mountains and crevices similar to those on earth (Galilei 36 and *passim*). This discovery implied that the heavens are not perfect, as was generally believed. The Cardinal's cynicism is therefore even more pronounced, as his reference to Galileo even undercuts the possibility of finding a woman of fidelity in the heavens. As the heavens have been found to be corrupt, the Duchess' reputation for virtue is also likely to prove untrue, as far as Bosola and her brothers are concerned, and the Cardinal is shortly to discover that his skepticism is justified, because his glass to spy into distant sights, Bosola, has reported his findings concerning the Duchess' imperfections to their brother Ferdinand.

At this point the play becomes a conflict primarily between the twins, the Duke and the Duchess, and their views of her marriage and her virtue, and glasses continue to be a focal point in this conflict. When Bosola tells Ferdinand, "'Tis rumour'd she hath had three bastards, but / By whom, we may go read I' th' stars," Ferdinand replies, "Why some / Hold opinion, all things are written there." Bosola answers, "Yes, if we could find spectacles to read them . . ." (3.1.59-62). As the Cardinal did earlier in talking about Galileo's glass, Bosola mentions the need for a device—"spectacles"—to read the stars. Like the Cardinal's reference, it seems to be a cynical statement, in this case a sarcastic response to Ferdinand's suggestion that something could be learned by looking at the stars. Ferdinand indicates more belief in gaining knowledge in this fashion; if "all things are written" in the stars, having the proper spectacles to read them would reveal heavenly truths.

Ferdinand, like Antonio, seems to believe that there is something resembling the heavens inside of one. He seeks an indication of his sister's heavenly merits when he confronts her, saying, "Virtue, where art thou hid? What hideous thing / Is it that doth eclipse thee?" (3.2.72-73). Virtue again becomes something celestial which resides within a person and can be seen, but which is vulnerable to being "eclipsed" by some "hideous thing" which also resides within; the inner battle between heaven and hell becomes a microcosm of the workings of the universe. Ferdinand seems to be attempting to prevent something hideous within himself from eclipsing his own virtue when he announces to the Duchess' unseen lover that he should not reveal himself lest "it beget such violent effects / As would damn us both" (3.2.92-95).

The subsequent discovery of this lover's identity destroys what restraint—it cannot be called virtue—Ferdinand has, and his main goal while she remains alive is to torment her. One spectacle he exposes her to in achieving this is the procession of madmen, and the audience sees in this the extent of Ferdinand's cruelty as he seeks to make his sister mad. Webster also extends in this scene the imagery of glasses and its relationship in this play to women, their souls, and the metaphysical world. The madmen's speeches contain four references to glasses, two of them in connection with the end of the world and two which reflect on women:

- 1st. Madman. Doomsday not come yet? I'll draw it nearer  
by a perspective, or make a glass that shall set all the  
world on fire upon an instant . . . .
- 2nd. Madman. Hell is a mere glass-house, where the devils  
are continually blowing up women's souls, on hollow  
irons, and the fire never goes out.  
.....
- 4th. Madman. If I had my glass here, I would show a sight  
should make all the women here call me mad doctor.  
(4.2.73-83,98-103)

The 1st Madman attributes fantastic qualities to the perspective or telescope, imagining that he can see doomsday with it and then, apparently through the enlargement of the image which the telescope provides, bring doomsday closer; in his madness he conflates matters of time and space. His other option is to cause doomsday himself with a burning glass, a glass which would focus and intensify the sun's rays, one large enough to set the world on fire. The distinction made here is between the celestial and the threatening aspects of the heavens, the latter of which will purge the earth of its corruption. The 1st Madman believes he can predict and even control the occurrence of doomsday through his astronomical knowledge and devices. Ferdinand likewise thinks he can control the Duchess' day of doom, just as she thought she could control her brothers and keep them from harming her and Antonio. Ferdinand's procession of madmen is designed to destroy his sister, as the 1st Madman's devices are designed to destroy the world. The associations between the madmen and Ferdinand foreshadow his descent into madness.

The 2nd Madman brings women into the picture and reminds us of the other main figure in the conflict being played out, the Duchess. As with Bosola's earlier reference to glass being blown into shapes like women's pregnant stomachs, here we have devils blowing women's souls into shapes. The connection between the glass and the soul is again made here, as is the link between women and sinfulness, which is present in both Bosola's and the 2nd Madman's metaphors. Women consist of both divinity and corruption, according to this view. The glass-like soul of a woman may have heavenly attributes, but it is malleable as well; sins can alter its condition, which results in the devils being able to torment it continually when the woman and her soul are taken into. This madman gives the Duchess matter to reflect upon, as her moral condition, which has been a concern throughout the play, is critical as her death approaches.

People's sexual natures concern the 4th Madman. The type of glass he refers to which he says will make the women call him "mad doctor" is uncertain; it could be a looking glass or another type of glass, such as a telescope, which could show things not immediately apparent. An earlier comment of his about being a cuckold suggests that his focus is sexual, and his speech again unites a

glass device, women, and apparent sexual connotations, reminding us of Bosola's and the Cardinal's earlier criticisms of women.

The madmen's speeches in this scene relate to and build upon previous images presented in the play. That madmen also use these images perhaps serves to criticize the views of women that they and others in this play express. But the madmen's speeches also focus the audience's and the Duchess' attention on the approach of her death and the necessity for her to prepare herself spiritually so that she may avoid the fate the 2nd Madman envisions of women suffering in hell. Though she has been presented more favorably than her brothers, the Duchess has also been chastised by other characters, even her own waiting woman, for lustfulness in remarrying, pride in defying her brothers, and for self-concern and lack of judgment in marrying someone below her station and attempting to keep it secret. The Duchess' soul, which Antonio saw as a glass reflecting pure virtue in Act 1, is in jeopardy by the end of the play, and the glass references of the madmen may help her to see this.

Bosola uses another glass image as he seeks to help the Duchess prepare for her death after the madmen exit. Disguised, he philosophizes to the Duchess about death and the soul:

. . . Didst  
thou ever see a lark in a cage? such is the soul in the  
body: this world is like her little turf of grass, and the  
heaven o'er our heads, like her looking-glass, only gives  
us a miserable knowledge of the small compass of our  
prison. (4.2.128-33)

Bosola's metaphor expresses the idea that no one is truly free; everyone's soul is caught in a prison, and death is a release in that sense. Therefore the Duchess should be happy to die, which will free her from two prisons, as the earthly one is a figure for the bodily imprisonment that all people suffer. The looking glass by which the lark sees the world it is denied access to, in the same way people are denied access to heaven, is a gateway to heaven in this metaphor. The glass turns once more into an image of spiritual hope.

Bosola seems to abandon in the later stages of the drama his cynical attitude toward heaven and the possibility of redemption, signalled by his altered use of imagery to express holy rather than earthly desires. The end of this murder scene contains a telling juxtaposition of Ferdinand, Bosola, and the Duchess. After Bosola succeeds in getting the Duchess to look to heaven as she dies, she comes to represent heaven to Bosola; when she momentarily revives, he remarks, "her eye opes, / And heaven in it seems to ope, that late was shut, / To take me up to mercy" (4.2.347-49). Fittingly, Ferdinand has gone off by this time in a state much like that of the madmen. The sight of her only caused him to remark "mine eyes dazzle" (4.2.264); he cannot stand to look upon heavenly visions.

It is also too late for Bosola, however, and he expresses this by using one last glass image in his speech after the Duchess expires, saying, "a guilty conscience / Is a black register, wherein is writ / All our good deeds and bad; a perspective / That shows us hell!" (4.2.356-59). A bad conscience is a "register," but also a "perspective"; the good conscience would presumably be a perspective with which to see heaven. Bosola's conscience, sickened by his deeds of murder and betrayal, brings hell closer to him, rather than the heaven he seeks, as if shortening the distance like a perspective glass. As the 2nd Madman's perspective device brought doomsday nearer, Bosola sees his own doomsday approaching, which heightens the urgency he feels to remedy what he has done in serving the Duke and the Cardinal rather than the Duchess, whose sins were far less destructive than those of her brothers and who was capable of regaining the virtue Antonio praised her for at the start of the play. Bosola seems to know, however, that his "is another journey" from that of a virtuous person, as he puts it at his death (5.5.105)

The glasses used as images in this play direct the characters to views of heavenly virtue and hellish vice, but they must be seen (or read) correctly. The connections expressed between glasses and the status of the soul indicate the characters' attempts to see beyond the physical level by means of these visual devices, but their attempts only succeed when they use glasses to direct them to the heavenly qualities within themselves and others, not the worldly, carnal natures these characters also contain. Those who can read the heavenly virtues that all people contain within can overcome the vice also inherent in them. Those who see through these glasses only extensions of this world's vice seem doomed to the hell their perspectives show them.

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## The Importance of Community to Arthur's Temperance in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Book 2

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In Book 2, Canto 10 of *The Faerie Queene*, Arthur and Guyon visit the room of Eumnestes in Alma's castle. Interestingly, however, in the books they read within the room of memory, neither knight encounters any individual memories; instead, each reads a history of his respective nation: *Briton monuments* for Arthur and *Antiquitie of Faerie lond* for Guyon. The emphasis on good and bad government in *Briton monuments*, coupled with Arthur's destiny to be King, supports Ruth Pryor's contention that the British history functions as a "case-book" to teach Arthur the value of temperance in a ruler (161). Though we are not given the opportunity to see him as a king in the poem as we have it, Arthur's victory in Canto 11 over Maleger, who is connected in some way to intemperance, suggests that his time in Eumnestes' room has further developed in him the virtue of temperance. Arthur's work with memory seems to purify him for battle against the forces of intemperance. This memory's focus on national history, rather than the individual past, suggests a connection between society and the virtue of temperance.

Obviously, Arthur cannot learn temperance by modeling himself on the rulers presented in *Briton monuments*: though the chronicle includes many virtuous rulers, the overall pattern of the history is of "intemperance followed and repaid by sterility" (Mills 98). Thus, the stories of particular rulers can only have educational value for Arthur as negative examples. The negative consequences of intemperance support the connection between temperance and proper communal bonds by emphasizing betrayal of others as the result of intemperance. Within this history, any time a ruler places his desires above the good of the community, it involves the betrayal of a family member. The emphasis on family betrayal clarifies the social implications of intemperance, making it easier to see the resulting damage to the nation as a whole as also caused by the intemperance of the ruler.

Whether the ruler's intemperate desire is private or public, the same pattern applies: transgressions begin by harming the family, and then the damage spreads to the entire nation, through sterility or a lack of male heirs, interregna, and wars of succession. Though most of the bad kings in the chronicle are guilty of the public vice of an intemperate desire for power, Spenser makes the first vicious king, Loocrine, guilty of a private and sexual sin, presumably because such a sin is more easily recognized as intemperance.

By choosing to indulge his adulterous desire for Estrild, Loocrine places his individual desire above the needs of the nation. He betrays his faithful wife Guendolene, but the "vaine voluptuous disease" (17.5) of Loocrine's intemperate passion also infects the entire nation, because his early death at the hands of his wife leads to two generations of "unworthy" rule (21.1,3).

Following the episode of Loocrine, the examples of betraying a family member in order to gain political power are too numerous to detail. These individuals see their own political advancement as more important than their ties to family, suggesting that their concern for the good of the nation is even less. A particularly unattractive exponent of this view is Androgeus, who brings about Britain's subjection to Rome in order to advance his own power at the expense of his uncle Cassibalane: "*Androgeus, false to natiue soyle, / And enuious of Vncles soueraintie, / Betrayd his contrey vnto forreine spoyle*" (48.6-8). By betraying his uncle, he also betrays his country. The pattern recurs throughout the entire history: first disloyalty and competition between father and child, brother and brother, uncle and nephew, and then war and anarchy in the nation.

Given this generally negative shape to the history, it is surprising that Arthur comes away from reading it with such a positive, awed response. I attribute much of Arthur's response to the fact that he, like the reader of *The Faerie Queene*, receives not a historian's account of Britain, but a story shaped by a historical poet. In history, the necessity of accuracy makes moral lessons more difficult to draw: sometimes historical facts do not allow for an optimistic reading. Michael O'Connell, referring to Sidney's discussion of the difference between poetry and history, asserts that while an understanding of history is necessary, "a man must not trust his moral understanding to the 'lessons of history'" (74). The need to draw moral conclusions from history is fulfilled not by the historian, but by the poet, who is given the license to order and shape his material in such a way as to make a true story, if not an accurate history. Harold Toliver alludes to this disjunction between accuracy and truth in his discussion of historical poetry:

"[The poet's] invented ideals are not really fictions at all but restorations of essence. In fact, the reality of ideas and essences must be perceived in feigned images" (129). Spenser's interventions in British history give Arthur a sense of order within the history, and also a sense of his proper role in relation to his nation. Only this poeticized account could end with Arthur's recognizing his relationship to his country as primarily a familial relation.

Numerous critics have identified patterns that Spenser has superimposed upon his historical material to order it into a story. *Briton monuments* suggests a view of history as "Providential" and "fraught with purposiveness" (Stambler 84). The patterns that have been identified in the history tend to point to the idea that, however intractable historical data may seem to moral conclusions, God nevertheless has a plan for history's upward progress. Harry Berger, Jr. identifies three distinct patterns within the history of Britain, patterns on the level of nature—four sequences of reigns separated by three interregna, paganism—the disruptive

influence of Fortune, and Christianity—the conversion of Britain to Christianity (92). The vagaries of Fortune are all that prevents an interrupted pattern of upward mobility, from the brutish state of nature to natural law to Christian law.

Only by having this sense of an overall order to the chronicle can Arthur perceive the particular plan that the providential history reveals for himself. Jerry Leath Mills sees within the four sequences of reigns a pattern of one ruler's choice of intemperance leading to the downfall of the entire dynasty (96). From this perspective, Arthur's secular duty is clear: as a member of a still-unspotted dynastic line, he must "preserve this innocence into the future" (98). Joan Warchol Rossi sees an additional, spiritual role for Arthur based on the patterns within the chronicle. For Rossi, the juxtaposition of Arthur's redeeming role in Britain with Christ's and Lucius' roles as spiritual redeemers "makes Arthur's role part of a divine plan" (56). The fulfillment of both of these roles depends on Arthur's recognition of a bond linking him to the people he reads about in the history, either the familial bond that ties him to his dynasty or the connections to Christ and Lucius that arise from their common membership in larger communities.

Arthur's response to *Briton monuments* suggests that he sees the connections between himself and the communities to which he belongs. Unlike the rulers of whom he read in the history, who treat family members with the same lack of respect they show to the members of the larger community, Arthur extends the family relationship to define his connection to the entire British nation. This familial imagery suggests that Eumnestes' book has taught Arthur humility by teaching him the proper role of the individual ruler in relation to the country as a whole. His humility is exemplified by the fact that he sees himself as a child of his nation; this is a very different conception of monarchy than James I would show when he imaged himself as the father of the nation. After finishing his reading of *Briton monuments* in Canto 10, Arthur twice refers to Britain as though the nation were a mother, and mother not just to himself, but to all of her inhabitants. He speaks of her "royall Ofspring" (69.2) and then refers to himself as her "foster Childe" (69.5). Arthur finishes his response to the history by exclaiming, "How much to her we owe, that all vs gaue, / That gaue vnto vs all, what euer good we haue" (69.8-9). The repetitive chiasmus of "all us gave / gave us all" reinforces the sense of indebtedness, and widens the circle of debtors to include even the reader. The conflation of familial with national relationships suggests that Arthur has acquired a stronger sense of communal obligations as a result of having read this history.

The communal sense he gains from reading the chronicle serves Arthur in defeating Maleger in Canto 11. The defeat of Maleger is presumably dependent on Arthur's temperate qualities; this fact, in conjunction with the emphasis on community throughout the canto, suggests that the connection to society is an important part of temperance. John C. Bean, in a comparison of the virtues of temperance and chastity, notes that "[w]ithin the context of temperance man is self-sufficient" (67). However, while man is self-sufficient as regards romantic

love, Canto 11 repeatedly emphasizes the importance of community in defeating intemperance in the form of Maleger. Without the assistance of others, Arthur could not have won the battle, and he also could not have survived the battle. He defeats Maleger not just by being a temperate man, but by being a temperate man who is intimately connected with a larger community.

At two points in the battle, Arthur receives crucial help from another. Midway through the battle, Arthur's squire Timias saves him from the combined forces of Maleger and the hags Impotence and Impatience. Spenser carefully notes that without this assistance, the three foes would undoubtedly have killed Arthur (29.6-9). Lest we should ignore the allegorical significance of this moment, Spenser stops the action for half a stanza in order to make explicit the lesson we are to learn from this action:

So greatest and most glorious thing on ground  
May often need the helpe of weaker hand;  
So feeble is mans state, and life vnsound,  
That in assurance it may neuer stand,  
Till it dissolved be from earthly band. (30.1-5)

Timias' help to Arthur is described as "grace" (30.9), further reinforcing the value of the weak to the strong.

Timias saves Arthur's life so that he can continue the battle, and for success in battle, Arthur must rely on another resource of his community: the wisdom of the people, or folk wisdom. After repeated attempts to kill the invincible Maleger, Arthur "remembred well, that had bene sayd" regarding Maleger's ability to be resurrected by contact with the earth (45.1). The word "remembred" suggests that Arthur's ability to defeat Maleger springs from his time in the room of Memory (Walker 38), but the somewhat vague "that had bene sayd" leaves the source of this memory unclear. Arthur's memory seems to come from a generalized store of folk wisdom, and only by tapping into this communal store of memory can he kill Maleger thoroughly. In opposition to stereotypical knightly behavior, Arthur wins this battle not principally through his own physical strength, or even through his own ingenuity, but through the timely assistance of his squire, coupled with his memory of what he has heard from others about Maleger.

Spenser offers an ironic reinforcement of this emphasis on community in the last two stanzas of the canto. The first line of stanza 48 presents Arthur as a stereotypically self-sufficient knight: "Thus now alone he conquerour remaines." The rest of the canto, however, goes on to undermine this view of Arthur's victory, which could not have been achieved without help from others, and which cannot be survived without additional assistance. In the very next line, we see Arthur "comming to his Squire" (48.2). He has lost so much blood that "he began to faint, and life decay" (48.6). Once again, Timias saves Arthur's life: Arthur is not

even capable of mounting his horse, and he must depend on Timias' help both to get on the horse and to go back to Alma's castle of temperance.

The trip to the castle provides a transition between Arthur's close, dyadic relationship with his squire and the more communal relationship with the larger society represented by the people in Alma's castle. Arthur and Timias return to the castle by "the beaten way" that has been trod by many before them (48.9), and upon their arrival at the castle, "many Groomes and Squiers" are ready to assist Arthur in dismounting from his horse (49.1-2). Next Alma comes to meet him, "With balme and wine and costly spicery, / To comfort him in his infirmity" (49.4-5). She stays with him until the end of the canto, while other people come to dress his wounds. Arthur ends his appearance in this book, not as a powerful, self-sufficient knight, but as a child sick in bed, attended by a loving Alma Mater.

Arthur prepares for his battle with the forces of intemperance in Alma's castle of temperance, and the canto of the battle closes with him in the same place, but changed. His time in Eumnestes' room does more than just give Arthur a series of negative examples of kings betraying others by giving in to their own intemperate desires. Spenser's poetic license in shaping and altering his historical sources creates an orderly, patterned story that enables Arthur to recognize his proper role in relationship to his history and his nation. The realization that his individual desires are less important than the needs of larger communities increases Arthur's humility. Without this humility, Arthur would not be able to defeat intemperance, because only his humility makes it possible for him to accept the assistance of others, even from weaker and apparently less significant members of the community. In this episode, Spenser suggests that temperance is more complicated than the simple use of reason to restrain oneself from sins of the flesh. Temperance plays a role in every part of a person's life, because temperance as an active virtue involves not just restraint, but the achievement of a proper balance in all things. This lesson is especially important for a ruler to learn, because the ruler's sense of his relationship to his community has so much potential to affect that community. Though we do not see Arthur's reign within this poem, his ability to strike a balance between depending on his own resources and the help of others in his encounter with Maleger suggests that his will be a temperate kingdom.

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## Pornographic Mind, Metaphysical Mind: John Donne's Theology of "Nature"

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Secrecy. Striptease. Submission. Violence.

These and other tropes of pornography thread themselves through the verbal landscape of the poetry of John Donne, broaching not only the thematic gully between his two main subjects, lusty seduction and Christian piety, but also the philosophic sea separating the notions of "nature" and "culture." For comparative purposes, I've selected two poems, a "love poem" and a holy sonnet, to illustrate the pervasiveness of pornographic imagery over the course of Donne's transformation from rake to deacon; the theology offered in both poems grounds itself in the pornographic image of rape. Donne maps this metaphor beyond the immediate sphere of the subjugation of women to the spheres of exploration, colonization, and nature in general, always within the context of Christianity. Contemporary feminist critics Annette Kolodny and Susan Griffin<sup>1</sup> both posit that such mappings are culturally received conceptual systems which have often unrecognized, yet devastating, effects on both nature and women. As it may be argued that applying the work of these critics to poems written three hundred years previous is either anachronistic or irresponsible, I should make clear that feminist ideology was in fact burgeoning in England at the time of Donne's writing (c.f. Smith); further, the published writings of male theologians during the period promoted the same ideals of misogyny and the taming of nature (albeit in a favorable light) that I will rename the pornographic impulse in Donne's works, "Elegie: To his Mistris Going to Bed" and Holy Sonnet XIV ("Batter my heart, three person'd God").

Referring to "Elegie: To his Mistris Going to Bed," critic Judah Stampfer calls Donne "a dandy and an aristocrat, of strong, precise reserve, [who] never wallowed or dissolved in Dionysiac pleasures, but forged out a structure with Apollonian clarity, while rendering its grotesque underpinning" (40). Perhaps more poetically than the poem itself, Stampfer paints a telling portrait of Donne, or the speaker of the poem: he is a member of a powerful class, "strong," reserved, and at all times in control of the poem, as well as (I'd argue) the woman in the poem. The grammatical structure of the poem is imperative; a series of commands punctuates the speaker's rhetoric of cajoling: "Come, Madame, come," the poem begins. Then, "Off with that girdle" (5); "Unlace your self" (9); "Off with that happy buske" (11); "Off with your wyrie coronet" (15); "Off with those shoes"

(17); "License my roving hands" (25). Pornography, Griffin asserts, is exactly the "mythology of the [chauvinist] mind; it is, to use a phrase of the poet Judy Grahn, 'the poetry of oppression'" (2).

In addition to the form of the poem, the central image as well, that of a striptease, is a defining characteristic of pornography and the oppression it purports. Griffin explains that woman is culturally regarded as "naturally modest," so the revelation of her body is both an act of shame and an act of empowerment over men, who will be overcome with desire and pushed to succumb to their animal natures: "the sight of a woman's body reminds him of the power of his own body, which is nature, over his mind, which is culture. Thus, for a few moments, his self-image dies and he is humiliated" (32). The pornographic mind retaliates against this humiliation by subjugating both woman and "nature" (both hers and his) to "culture" and the cultural standard of male ownership of women's lives. The passage, now famous, where this image is most powerful occurs about midway through the poem:

License my roving hands, and let them goe  
Behind, before, above, between, and below,  
Oh my America, my new found lande,  
My kingdome, safliest when one man man'd,  
My myne of precious stones, my Empiree,  
How blest am I in this discovering thee,  
To enter in these bonds is to be free  
Then where my hand is set my seal shall be. (25-32)

The conceit developed here equates the "discovery" of the mistress' naked body under her gowns and linens to the discovery of America. The speaker seeks to "rove" her body as an explorer might a new continent; he calls her his "kingdom" and "empire," invoking the purely male prerogative to name and possess; he alone ("one man man'd") will convert her from virgin to whore, then resanctify his ownership of her treasures, which he alone can mine. He enslaves her with the imposition of his masculine "culture" of imperialism, even as he "frees" himself in the context of her wild, yet subdued, "nature." As a slave is branded, or a cornerstone on a new building sealed, he "seals" her with his hand. The poem ends, not in mutual celebration of beauty and nakedness, but with the speaker rhetorically asking, "what need'st thou have more covering than a man" (48). This line is ironic in that it yields at least two interpretations: First, that the man is already naked, so the mistress should not need more cover than he does; secondly, that he will "cover" her, consummating the foreplay of the striptease, (porno)graphically completing the invasion and colonization of her body.

As this ending (indeed, the woman's response to the man's persuasions) is not revealed in the poem, Lacanian critic Rodrigo Lazo concludes that "desire" for Donne is perpetually deferred. Like Sir Walter Raleigh searching in vain for

El Dorado, the city of gold, Donne's desire is largely unsatisfied: "the language of colonial conquest and sexual lust merge on that metonymic rail, but Donne never clarifies what he wants" (274). Lazo suggests Donne's language of colonization—specifically as it relates to his apparent fear of achieving what he desires and his constant displacement of desire onto something just beyond his reach—marks an "intersection of historical specificity and a seemingly universal psychoanalytic model" (271). Thus, the poem is as much about the historical and political context in which it was written as it is the story of two individuals; further, the colonial trope was a prevalent one in seventeenth-century literature and thought. In her chapter entitled, "Surveying the Virgin Land," Kolodny cites several examples of colonial documents that were published and circulated widely during this time in England: "Typical of the 'big sell' approach were the enormous Hakluyt collections, comprised of thousands of voyages to the New World—some planned, some already executed, some wholly imaginary, and some a confusing combination of the three, but all cohered to justify John Ribault's assertion that the New World was 'the fairest, frutefullest, and pleasauntest of all the worlde, aboundinge' in *everything needful and desired by man*" (11; italics mine).

Clearly, the historical interest in the New World was not simply in its promise of abundance, but in the mystery and the ethos of the "new" surrounding it; according to Kolodny above, the New World was so mysterious and mystified that made-up stories about it were as believable as true ones. Lazo sees these elements of mystery and fantasy in Donne's poetry: "Donne's association of religion and woman with colonial territories intertwines a psychological dynamic of desire, and the historical contingency of the drive for colonies in the early seventeenth century. Colonization is an attractive metaphor for Donne because it involves possessing a mysterious and unknown realm" (270). Indeed, the infusion of religious imagery in such a poem as "Elegie: To his Mistris Going to Bed" is both subtle and striking for its incongruity. In the poem, the speaker calls the bed "loves hallow'd temple" (18) where white-robed angels (of which the mistress is one) create "a heaven like Mahomets Paradise" (21) and chase away those "evill sprites" that would defile this heavenly bed. The speaker considers himself "blest" to have an otherwise illicit affair with this mistress. He argues, by an interesting turn of phrase, that "as soules unbodied, bodies unclothed must bee / To taste whole joyes" (34-35), likening the removal of clothes for a very bodily, very lusty purpose to the act of the soul (which is conventionally considered Godly and pure) casting off the body (which would be the soul's profane and sinful counterpart). The irony is apparent: the speaker sanctifies the sin by suggesting that their bodies are no longer "bodily" at all.

The religious imagery thus perhaps counterintuitively complements the pornographic imagery in the poem. For Griffin as well, pornography and Christianity share similar themes: "For the desire which runs through pornographic literature, to see the naked body of a woman, has about it the quality of the desire to see a miracle performed" (29). The shared metaphorical realm of pornographic

sex, religion, and the colonization of new and mysterious lands is illustrated even more strikingly in Donne's Holy Sonnet XIV. Here, Donne again uses the imperative tense, but his subject is not a woman; it is God. The speaker in the poem does not cast himself as a possessor, humilator, and colonizer; rather, he assumes the role of the "woman" in the pornographic model.

"Batter my heart, three person'd God" (1), the poem begins. This very dramatic invocation sets in motion the violent trajectory of the poem. At once with this abuse, God will "knocke, breathe, shine, and seeke to mend" what he has injured; for his part, the speaker will "rise," only to be "overthrown" and made anew by God (3-4). This imagery parallels the pattern of humiliation in the pornographic model we saw at work in "Elegie: To his Mistris Going to Bed": the speaker here may seem to take on the role of humiliated rather than humiliator, but on second glance, we see that he is very much in control of the poem, demanding rather than beseeching God. Applying a bit of John Austin's speech-act theory, it is clear that the illocutionary force of the poem comes from the speaker, not from God. We are again witnessing the speaker's projection of violence, and indeed another striptease of sorts, this time the violent stripping away of sins. The poem concludes, like the implied conclusion of the elegy, with a graphic sex scene contingent on the paradox that sexual torture and "imprisonment" translate into ecstasy and freedom.

This pornographic delight in sexual violence may seem inappropriate in a religious context, but Griffin points out that the decisive image of Christianity provides an ironic basis for such associations: "Cruelty, the most numinous transgression of pornography, is identical to that transgression which men played out against the body of a god who was to have redeemed the human soul from the original sin of carnality. This is the sadomasochistic ordeal" (46). In this paradigm, the commission of violence leads not just to glory but to salvation; the speaker in Donne's sonnet describes this result as a feeling of being "ravished" (14) by God. This word, which concludes the poem, is fraught with *entendre*: it may signify simply strong emotion or joy, the fact of being "seized" or carried off by force, or the fact of being raped. The images of "seizure" and rape are evident in this poem in the context of colonization as well. The speaker offers the following simile:

I, like an usurpt towne, to another due,  
Labour to admit you, but Oh, to no end,  
Reason your viceroy in mee, mee should defend,  
But is captived, and proves weake or untrue. (5-8)

Thus, as Griffin posits the usurpation of "nature" by "culture," so does the speaker expect his sins to be conquered and held captive by the "viceroy" of reason. He likens himself this time to the "America" of the pornographic elegy, rendered weak and submissive by the imperial force of God. For Donne, as Lazo points out, colonization and religion were not only connected metaphorically but

historically: "Donne was well aware of the religious impetus behind the colonial projects of European nations. 'God taught us to make ships, not to transport our selves, but to transport him,' Donne said in a sermon to the Virginia Plantation Company in November, 1622" (Lazo 282). In an *Essay on Divinity* as well, Donne "compares the way faith, superseding reason, had enabled men to attain God's essence with the way the compass had enabled navigators to find a 'new world richer than the old'" (Rugoff 139). Colonization then substitutes metonymically for the power of God, just as the speaker's body substitutes for the land, or "nature" to be colonized. The illocution of forceful seizure or "rape" in the poem alternates between these literal and figurative realms: the poem opens and closes with violence to the literal body of the speaker; between this frame we find the body-as-land metaphorical mapping.

In the final lines, the speaker contextualizes the "rape" he has implored within the context of a marriage, only we learn then that he feels himself wed not to God, but to Satan:

But I am betroth'd unto youremie.  
Divorce mee, untie, breake that knot again,  
Take mee to you, imprison mee, for I  
Except you enthrall mee, never shall be free,  
Nor ever chaste, except you ravish mee. (10-14)

He begs God to divorce him from his own weakness and willingness to succumb to the draw of sin, symbolized by his sexual coupling with Satan, saying he will never be "free" until God "imprisons" him, and never "chaste" unless it is God who ravishes him. These ironic reversals, according to Basil Willey, are indicative of the "metaphysical mind" and the expansive curiosity of the Renaissance: "Many different worlds or countries of the mind then lay close together—the world of scholastic learning, the world of scientific experiment, the worlds of classical mythology and of Biblical history, of fable and fact, of theology and demonology, of sacred and profane love, of pagan and christian morals, or activity and contemplation; and a cultivated man had the freedom of them all" (50). Even in this quotation, the spatial metaphor of "worlds or countries" to represent various thoughts or experiences harkens back to Donne's imagery of colonization, suggesting that the trope was a prevalent one in the period.

Indeed, in his chapter on Sir Thomas Browne, a seventeenth-century theologian who clung to religion as the marker of "Truth" despite the increasing historical move toward confidence in science, Willey explains: "When 'God' became a scientific hypothesis, almost identifiable with absolute space, it is not surprising that the religious consciousness should express itself through 'Satan'. It is probably for this reason that those who, as the scientific philosophy strengthened its hold, adhered tenaciously to a supernatural world-view, felt that they must cling to Satan in order to keep God" (61). Here we see a philosophical

foundation both for Donne's shocking metaphor of marriage to Satan and for the repeated imagery of colonization: if God is "absolute space," humans may near God by "filling" spaces. Natural spaces, however, were considered evil; the physical world had a traditional association with Satan, while intellectual worlds were tamed and "cultivated" by God and man. By association, then, women (who were excluded from the intellectual realm) were condemned along with nature: "Even the female sex was held by some theologians to belong to the Satanic order, Chrysostom calling woman a 'desirable calamity'. How much more sinful, then, to interest oneself in Nature's ungodly secrets!" (Willey 39).

Like Browne, Francis Bacon valued religion over science; he argued contrarily, however, that nature (a main focus of scientific inquiry) should remain a spiritual realm rather than a scientific one. His purpose, Willey tells us, "require[d] that Nature should be established as divine instead of Satanic, and this he secures by arguing that God has revealed himself to man by means of two scriptures: first, of course, through the written word, but also secondly, though his handiwork, the created universe" (42). This change in perspective held promise for cultural representations of women as part of God's holy handiwork, but it is not evidenced in Donne's poetry, other than in his associations of women with a mystical power that rivals God's. Griffin attributes this pattern of thought to scriptures which cast women as spiritually insolvent or suspicious: "Participating in the church's fantasy that it is a woman's body which destroys a man's soul, now the pornographic mind takes out its revenge against the same body which has humbled it. For this is the underside and the secret message in the pornographic revelation of beauty: its purpose is to rob the female body of both its natural power and its spiritual presence" (33).

Interestingly, although women and images of women appear often, critic Milton Rugoff points out that nature as a theme throughout Donne's writing is "obviously unimpressive" (194). When it does appear, it is largely "as cultivated by man, from farm and orchard and vineyard" (192). These highly conventional subjects, Rugoff suggests, would have been widely written about and circulated during the period and "Donne glancing through such volumes would be more in his element than Donne wandering among the cows, the sheep, and the dandelions" (194). This flip presumption provides some interesting biographical insight into the origin of Donne's "theology of women" and "theology of colonization" as developed in relation to "nature" in both secular and sacred poems. Further, Rugoff defines Donne's parallel mappings as "a fusion—or perhaps a confusion—between two worlds of feeling, the erotic and the religious, an interchange whereby Donne worships his mistress with all the ritual of religious devotion and woos God with all the fervor of erotic passion" (222). Rugoff concludes finally that, "the tendency of the young poet may be explained in some cases as a sincere attempt to spiritualize his open expression of sexual interest, in others as simply a cynical arrogation of sacred language and ideas to intensify profane avowals" (223).

The irony of the metaphysical mind thus takes its hold on the poetry from within and from without. Donne inspires in his readers the same questions to which he may have been seeking the answers as he wrote. Doniphan Louthan, responding to Rugoff's commentary above, argues that Donne's poems are not devoid of nature; rather, they are as sensually stimulating as they are intellectually challenging. Regarding "Love's Progress" (which intimates many of the themes explored in this paper), for example, Louthan writes, "the reader who cannot stomach the imagery in its crude implications will hardly consider the poem a success—but neither will the reader who cannot appreciate the play of wit in the extended geographical metaphor" (69). Louthan's description of "stomaching" some of Donne's cruder imagery is apt; Donne is inarguably a "maker" of poetry; that type of visceral response is part of the artifice. Pornography for Donne may not be so much a dangerous psychological state as a trope which he knows makes for provocative poetry. Within the context of pornography, Donne moves from romance to rape, from cavalier philanderer to devout evangelist, from wild nature to viceroy of culture—always playing off the disparate relations of power inherent in pornography to his poetic, witty or not, advantage.

### Note

<sup>1</sup>The word enters English from the Middle French *raviss* and *ravir*, to seize, which stemmed from the Latin *rapere*, also meaning to seize or snatch. From *Webster's Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language*, 1989 ed.

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## OROONOKO, RACE, AND SLAVERY

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Over the past decade Aphra Behn has been transformed from a curiosity into a figure of some importance. Her novella *Oroonoko* is now available in three paperback editions and her most important play, *The Rover*, has been revived. Behn's reputation has risen so greatly that one critic has declared that a proper evaluation of Alpha Behn should lead to a reconsideration of the whole of English Restoration literature.<sup>1</sup> Whether this currently keen interest is a passing fad or not remains to be seen, but it does necessitate a reconsideration of Behn's *Oroonoko* and its place in the literature of anti-slavery.

*Oroonoko* is the story of an African prince, captured and transported as a slave to Surinam, who leads an abortive slave rebellion, takes the life of his wife (who prefers death to slavery), and stoically endures a sadistic execution. Written "in a few Hours" and published in 1688, it was a popular success.<sup>2</sup> There is no false modesty (at least on my part) involved in asserting that *Oroonoko* is a puzzling work. William C. Spengemann remarks on how we are "scratching our heads over it today."<sup>3</sup> This head-scratching results from the three types of difficulty that arise in comprehending *Oroonoko*. The first difficulty arises from the fact that, as Katherine M. Rogers has said, *Oroonoko* is "the first treatment of black slavery in English literature."<sup>4</sup> That means there is no simple categorizing of *Oroonoko* by genre to provide guidelines for interpretation or to provide appropriate comparisons or to illuminate Behn's intentions. Janet Todd truly captures the oddity of *Oroonoko* in her description of how "genres wobble as romance collides with violent reality and heroics jostle farce."<sup>5</sup>

A second difficulty is that critics are quite divided on how *Oroonoko* treats slavery. More than fifty years ago B.G. Mac Carthy concluded that "Mrs. Behn's feelings are entirely centered in her hero, that it is, primarily, his enslavement which arouses her sympathy. Then the depth of her feeling for her own creation leads her, in denouncing his oppressors, to denounce the entire abomination of slavery." For Mac Carthy, *Oroonoko* was an anti-slavery work "in effect, but...not in intention."<sup>6</sup>

More recent critics have been unwilling to go even this far. Jeremy C. Beasley has concluded that "there is no justification for viewing the story as an emancipation treatise."<sup>7</sup> Janet Todd finds Behn untroubled by slavery and simply employing a heroic royal slave as a representative of the embattled James II.<sup>8</sup> Moira Ferguson finds *Oroonoko*'s declamation the only anti-slavery element in the novella, concluding that the rest of the work is pro-slavery. Ferguson suggests that Mrs. Behn's story of the troubles resulting from enslaving an African prince served, in the context of the day, as a defense of the Royal Africa Company

monopoly on the slave trade.<sup>9</sup> Given this range of responses, we must agree with Margaret W. Ferguson that there is an "utter lack of critical consensus about whether Behn's book supports or attacks the institution of slavery."<sup>10</sup>

The third type of difficulty is this. Does *Oroonoko* have enough realistic detail and believable character development to be read as a serious work on slavery? Does it reveal the complex tragedy of slavery or is slavery merely the exotic scenery for another heroic Romance? Do the contradictions in *Oroonoko* reflect the contradictions in Aphra Behn's viewpoint or result from her haste and superficiality?

In order to make some progress in comprehending *Oroonoko*, some account of its production is necessary. Behn's motive was in the first place financial. In 1688 she found it hard to earn a living from writing plays and, forced to support herself entirely by her writing, was writing—at a very swift pace indeed—prose works. She decided to compose a novella developing upon an incident from her brief stay in Surinam twenty-five years earlier. While in Surinam - apparently for only a few months - she had seen something of slavery and had heard of an abortive slave rebellion whose leader was of royal lineage, a prince in his West African homeland.<sup>11</sup>

Writing as quickly as possible, Mrs. Behn created the history of a captive African prince, whom she named Oroonoko, by setting a heroic romance in West Africa. Oroonoko, dashing and courageous, loves Imoinda, but his grandfather, the King, takes her as his wife. By means of palace intrigue, the young lovers meet; in revenge the King sells Imoinda into slavery. Subsequently a British slave trader with whom Oroonoko deals tricks him into captivity and transports him to Surinam. There Oroonoko and Imoinda are reunited and wed.

All of this strikes me as utterly improbable, although pieces of realistic detail do make their way into Behn's account of the West African slave trade and life in Surinam. But it would be wrong to write this off as entirely irrelevant, for it does contain a profound difficulty - there can be no rational and convincing critique of slavery or slave-trading from Oroonoko since his livelihood, as well as that of his society as a whole, was built on capturing and selling other Africans. Nevertheless, it is true that the West African episode is stage-setting—had Oroonoko been defeated in battle and sold to an English slave trader by his rival, it would make no difference to the essence of the story which lies in and concerns Surinam.

Oroonoko's position in Surinam is quite inconsistent with his slave status. Oroonoko endures the horrific Middle Passage without incident, arriving with his attire still resplendent and his princely mien unaltered. Slaveholders recognize his nobility, spare him any physical exertion, and take him into their confidence. Surinam's slaves, some of whom he sold into captivity and all of whom toil under the lash, feel no resentment and instead hail him as their ruler.

Against these conditions Oroonoko makes not a murmur. Only when Imoinda is pregnant with his child does he turn rebel. The rebellion that Oroonoko sparks

quickly fizzles out; slave women implore their husbands to drop their weapons and surrender. Oroonoko is placed under house arrest.

Treachery in the planter class pushes events forward. The Lieutenant-governor, Byam, and his militia never intended to honor the terms of the surrender negotiated with Oroonoko. At the end of the day they seize Oroonoko, tie him to a stake, deliver a ferocious whipping, rub pepper in his wounds, and leave him staked to the ground. One of the English planters, too honorable to have been involved in the duplicity, rescues Oroonoko and delivers him to the governor's estate. The narrator hastens to the estate to convince Oroonoko that she had no part in the deceit and to offer her assistance to him.<sup>12</sup>

Oroonoko plots to revenge the insult to his princely personage of this whipping. He determines to murder his chief tormentor, Lieutenant Governor Byam. Knowing that his action makes his execution certain, he despairs at the fate Imoinda will then face. He concludes, and Imoinda passionately agrees, that he must take her life to spare her a worse fate at the hands of the planters. But having taken her life, Oroonoko falls grief-stricken at her side and is easily captured by the militia. Chained to a stake, tortured, and emasculated, Oroonoko dies with stoic dignity.

As modern commentators have observed, Oroonoko is incensed at being treated as a common slave but has no objections to slavery or slave trading.<sup>13</sup>

Oroonoko is not really credible as a heroic figure. Moping beside Imoinda's corpse, living in the master's house rather than the slave quarter, and misjudging entirely the resolve of his followers are not heroic actions but evidence of weakness and irresolution. To accept his heroic status we must in the first place believe that he is repeatedly hoodwinked because as a nobleman he is required to take others at their word.<sup>14</sup> We have to ask if within the novella the case is made that such gullibility is really noble. The answer—at least for this reader—is that the evidence is not there.

A very serious objection to viewing *Oroonoko* as an anti-slavery work is the virtual absence of realistic detail about slavery in the work. Oroonoko lives as a guest in the plantation house, and nothing of the real life of a slave is introduced by way of his privileged existence. Life in the slave quarter is never examined. Only one field slave, Tuscan, even receives a name; the rest are an unidentified mass. The life of slaves - work, family, religion, escape, sale, punishment - is ignored. With so little of slavery in the work, there can be little that is directly and intentionally anti-slavery in the work.

Nevertheless, I would argue, the unintended anti-slavery elements of *Oroonoko* are significant. In the first place, *Oroonoko* is indirectly anti-slavery because of the way it treats race. There is an anti-slavery message in *Oroonoko* because Behn repeatedly breaks down the social distance between slave and master.<sup>15</sup>

There is a trivial sense in which the creation of a prince among slaves destroys the hierarchy of slave society, but much more is involved. The narrator not only admires Oroonoko but deals with him as an equal in their conversations. The

narrator was widely understood to be Alpha Behn herself, and some of her detractors gossiped that the close fictional bond between narrator and Oroonoko disguised actual sexual intimacy between Behn and Oroonoko.<sup>16</sup> This is most improbable, but the narrator is clearly treating Oroonoko as a social equal. And, in fact, others are as well.

Trefry, a plantation manager, informs Oroonoko of his attraction to Imoinda. Even as an open admission of sexual attraction this would be significant, but there are two further notable features of Trefry's declaration. As a personal and intimate revelation to a slave, this statement breaks down the barriers between slave and free. And when Trefry explains that Imoinda's dignity prevents him from forcing himself upon her by violence, he shows he is treating Imoinda in the same way he would a white woman.<sup>17</sup>

Sexual attraction is not the point; inter-racial sex never endangered slavery. The point is that the racial distinction necessary to racial slavery gives way several times to honest, open contact and communication. Without directly attacking the institution of slavery, Alpha Behn had shaken one of the pillars of racial slavery. In this sense *Oroonoko* is a morally serious work that should continue to engage and reward readers. But the value of the work in this respect is less inherent than fortuitous.<sup>18</sup>

It may be the case that Behn accepted slavery but not racism. British colonial history since her day, and our own history, has been that of racial slavery. Because of that history we can read *Oroonoko* as a critique of racism and therefore a critique of racial slavery. Perhaps it would be better to say that *Oroonoko* has become a critique of racial slavery. It is harder to say that Behn intended it to be that way. History has brought a relevance and a moral import to a work that did not originally have it.

To appreciate the second way in which *Oroonoko* is indirectly an anti-slavery work, we must return to the royal slave himself.

Feminist critics have pointed out that Oroonoko decides to lead a slave rebellion in order to maintain control over Imoinda and to ensure his control over the child that will be born to them.<sup>19</sup> Possessiveness, not a principled opposition to slavery, must certainly be recognized as part of Oroonoko's motivation, but he also yearns to be at the center of action, exercising power, making decisions, and commanding others. Hunting jaguars in the jungle tests his courage and earns applause, but it soon pales as a substitute for command of an army in the field. This element of Oroonoko's motivation is as selfish, and as far removed from principled opposition to slavery, as his desire to possess and control Imoinda.

"He assur'd me," the narrator says, "that whatsoever Resolutions he shou'd take, he wou'd Act nothing upon the White-People; and as for my self, and those upon that Plantation where he was, he wou'd sooner forfeit his eternal

Liberty, and Life it self, than lift his Hand against his greatest Enemy on that Placea."<sup>20</sup>

Feminist critics have been content to unveil Oroonoko's real motives, and have not scrutinized his conduct as a leader. Attending to his conduct reveals further problems with Oroonoko's status as an anti-slavery hero.

Oroonoko declares to the narrator his determination to escape from slavery and to bring no harm to her and those on the Parham plantation where they are living. No such promise would be necessary if escape was really what Oroonoko intended; his talk of simple escape must be self-deception. The narrator, in the passage already quoted, has recognized his thirst for "more renown'd Action" and certainly simple escape could not be "renown'd Action."<sup>21</sup>

Oroonoko in fact breaks his promise twice over. In the first place he ignores simple escape by himself and Imoinda and organizes a massive escape of slaves that must inevitably lead to violence. In the second place his fiery speech to the slave gathering includes a specific demand for revenge. He argues that

"Whether they work'd or not, whether they were Faulty or Meriting, they promiscuously, the Innocent with the Guilty, suffer'd the infamous Whip, the sordid Stripes, from their Fellow Slaves till their Blood trickled from all Parts of their Body; Blood whose every drop ought to be Reveng'd with a Life of some of those Tyrants, that impose it."<sup>22</sup>

Although his rhetoric can incite a crowd, Oroonoko cannot provide effective leadership. When asked how a slave escape could succeed, his reply is deception. First, he minimizes the practical difficulties of traversing mountains, jungles, and rivers, creating and defending a community on the coast, and commandeering and sailing a ship back to Africa. Then he declares that these practical difficulties are irrelevant to "Men resolv'd to die, or overcome." Finally he declares that "if they Dy'd in the attempt it wou'd be more brave, than to Live in perpetual Slavery."<sup>23</sup> Successfully liberating Surinam's slaves is clearly not Oroonoko's goal, and the slaves who join him are no more than the means to his own ends. This should not be surprising since Oroonoko has never, except rhetorically, identified with the Africans enslaved in Surinam. His real attitude toward them appears in his remark that the slave girl Clemene (whom he does not yet know to be Imoinda), if as beautiful as she is reputed to be, would refuse to have a slave for a lover.<sup>24</sup>

Mrs. Behn created in Oroonoko a figure who is neither a principled nor an effective opponent of slavery. But we may see in the falseness of his situation and the futility of his action the means by which *Oroonoko* provides an anti-slavery message. In the conditions of Surinam during the 1660's, slaves could

hope neither to escape individually nor to orchestrate a successful rebellion.<sup>25</sup> Preferential treatment, even for the slaves who received it, led nowhere. The promises of neither slave-holders nor slaves, however sincere, could be trusted to endure. The only collective action, either of slaveholders or of slaves, was violence. *Oroonoko* forces the attentive reader to begin to discover the real evils of British slavery in Surinam, not because Behn understood them herself, but because the flaws and improbabilities and contradictions of *Oroonoko* force conscientious readers today to envision the realities of the situation.

*Oroonoko* is unintentionally a powerful anti-slavery work. Once we are committed to the serious reading of *Oroonoko*, we cannot be satisfied to remain within the text. To understand *Oroonoko* we are driven beyond it. We are forced to consider the genesis and dynamics of the racial slavery of colonial America; we are forced to consider the reality of slavery in Surinam. The flaws of *Oroonoko* force us as responsible readers to probe into slavery and, paradoxically, the number and severity of those flaws make *Oroonoko* by its effect on the reader a serious work in the literature of anti-slavery.

### Endnotes

<sup>1</sup>Heidi Hutner, "Rereading Aphra Behn: An Introduction," pp.1-16 in Heidi Hutner, ed., *Rereading Aphra Behn: History, Theory, and Criticism* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1993).

<sup>2</sup>Aphra Behn, *Oroonoko*. Ed. by Joanna Lipking. Norton Critical Edition (New York: W.W. Norton, 1997 [1st ed., 1688]) p. 7.

<sup>3</sup>William C. Spengemann, "The Earliest American Novel: Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*" pp. 199-208 in Behn, *Oroonoko*, quoting p. 201. The Critical Edition provides the publication data on this and other modern critical works excerpted therein. An example of earlier criticism that found Behn to be second-rate rather than puzzling or important is James Sutherland, *English Literature in the Late Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969) pp. 132-7, 213-15.

<sup>4</sup>Katherine M. Rogers, "Aphra Behn", pp. 14-28, quoting p. 24, in Paula R. Backscheider, ed., *Dictionary of Literary Biography*. Vol. 80 - Restoration and Eighteenth Century Dramatists, First Series (Detroit: Gale Research, 1989).

<sup>5</sup>Janet Todd, *The Secret Life of Aphra Behn* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1997) p. 420.

<sup>6</sup>B.G. MacCarthy, *The Female Pen: Women Writers and Novelists, 1621-1818* (New York: New York University Press, 1994 [1st ed., 1946-1947]) pp. 162, 160.

<sup>7</sup>James C. Beasley, "Aphra Behn", pp. 48-58, quoting p. 55, in Martin C. Battestin, ed., *Dictionary of Literary Biography*. Vol. 39 - British Novelists, 1660 - 1800. Part One (Detroit: Gale Research, 1985).

<sup>8</sup>Janet Todd, *The Secret Life of Aphra Behn*, p. 418.

<sup>9</sup>Moira Ferguson, *Subject to Others: British Women Writers and Colonial Slavery, 1670-1834* (London: Routledge, 1992) pp.28-30.

<sup>10</sup>Margaret W. Ferguson, "Juggling the Categories of Race, Class, and Gender: Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*," pp. 209-24, quoting p. 217, in Margo Hendricks and Patricia Parker, eds., *Women. "Race," and Writing in the Early Modern Period* (London: Routledge, 1994).

<sup>11</sup>Angeline Goreau, *Reconstructing Aphra: A Social Biography of Aphra Behn* (New York: Dial Press, 1980) pp. 45-66 argues for the factual accuracy of *Oroonoko* and amounts to the claim that the work is a thinly veiled autobiography.

<sup>12</sup>The conflicting motives of the narrator are examined in Ann Fogarty, "Looks that Kill: Violence and Representation in Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*," pp. 1-17 in Carl Plaza and Betty J. Ring, eds., *The Discourse of Slavery: Aphra Behn to Toni Morrison* (London: Routledge, 1994) and in Margaret W. Ferguson, "Juggling the Categories of Race, Class, and Gender: Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*," op. cit., pp. 209-24, and in Mary Beth Rose "Gender and the Heroics of Endurance in *Oroonoko*," pp. 256-64 in Behn, *Oroonoko*.

<sup>13</sup>Charlotte Sussman, "The Other Problem with Women: Reproduction and Slave Culture in Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*," pp. 212-33 in Hutner, ed., *Rereading Aphra Behn*.

<sup>14</sup>Robert L. Chibka, "Truth, Falsehood, and Fiction in *Oroonoko*," pp. 220-31 in Behn, *Oroonoko*.

<sup>15</sup>Racial thinking in this period is examined in David Brian Davis, *The Problem of Slavery in Western Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966); Ivan Hannaford, *Race: The History of an Idea in the West* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1996); Winthrop D. Jordan, *White Over Black* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1968). A brief recent work is Betty Wood, *The Origins of American Slavery* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1997).

<sup>16</sup>The charge was denied in the 1696 "Memoirs on the Life of Mrs. Behn" by "a Gentlewoman of Her Acquaintance" which is excerpted in Behn, *Oroonoko*, pp. 191-92. This was written, in fact, by Charles Gildon.

<sup>17</sup>Works noting how *Oroonoko* challenges racial stereotypes include Catherine Gallagher, "Oroonoko's Blackness," pp. 235-58 in Janet Todd, ed., *Aphra Behn Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1996) and Jacqueline Pearson, "Slave Princes and Lady Monsters: gender and ethnic difference in the Work of Aphra Behn," pp. 219-34 in *ibid.*

<sup>18</sup>Janet Todd, *The Secret Life of Aphra Behn*, pp 62-3, argues that Behn was free of racism but accepted slavery, a compromise that today seems inconceivable.

<sup>19</sup>Charlotte Sussman, "The Other Problem with Women: Reproduction and Slave Culture in Aphra Behn's *Oroonoko*," pp. 212-33, in Hutner, ed., *Rereading Aphra Behn*.

<sup>20</sup>Behn, *Oroonoko*, pp. 41-2.

<sup>21</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 42.

<sup>22</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 52.

<sup>23</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 53-4.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>25</sup>The distinct characteristics of slavery in the English colonies are summarized in Philip D. Morgan, "British Encounters with Africans and African-Americans, circa 1600-1780," pp. 157-219 in Bernard Bailyn and Philip D. Morgan, eds., *Strangers Within the Realm: Cultural Margins of the First British Empire* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991).

## "Angels call'd, and Angel-like ador'd": Male Incursions upon the Female Body in Swift's "The Lady's Dressing Room" and Pope's *Rape of the Lock*

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When truth or Virtue an Affront endures,  
Th' Affront is mine, my Friend, and should be yours.

Pope

I was recently asked to write upon the topic "It has been said of the Medieval period that women were perceived as either saints or whores, comment." While female/male relationships appear to have progressed beyond that cliché by the eighteenth century, it is also apparent that much the same question might still have reasonably been asked of it. In both "The Lady's Dressing Room"<sup>1</sup> and *The Rape of the Lock*<sup>2</sup> I would argue that it is fair to speculate women are held to far more exacting social standards than are men. What is interesting, however, is not so much the standards to which Celia, in "A Lady's Dressing Room," and Belinda, in *Rape of the Lock* are held, but the intent of the authors in perhaps presenting them in such an unattractive light.

In both "A Lady's Dressing Room" and *Rape of the Lock* there is a male advance upon the female body. A reading of both the texts may appear to suggest, at first, that failure to submit to a man's attentions (wanted or not) is an acceptable criterion for verbal abuse. However, despite the long-standing critical discourse on Swift's "boudoir" poems and his known views on slovenly personal habits, I suggest that it is possible to read "A Lady's Dressing Room" as an attack not on Celia but on Strephon, and that Swift understands how easy it is to turn a "saint" into a "whore" via the medium of vicious gossip. In contrast, although Pope initially appears to be far more even-handed in his treatment of Belinda and the Baron I would further suggest Pope's poem is, in fact, more sympathetic to the male intrusion upon the female body. Pope, in fact, invites the reader to join in with his own slander of Belinda, and punish her for refusing a man's advance.

Reputation, in the eighteenth century, was a prized possession, the loss of which had far reaching implications in terms of not only loss of honour but also future marriage prospects. As contemporary moral books frequently informed their readers, "Especially is this true of the fair sex, many of whom have, from this cause, withered and melted in their youth like snow in the spring."<sup>3</sup> Gossip,

a pastime traditionally associated with females, was one of the surest methods of destroying a reputation. In her book, *Gossip*<sup>4</sup>, Patricia Meyer Spacks suggests several reasons for the spreading of gossip including malice, the furthering or damaging of reputations, envy, rage and the generation of a sense of power on the part of the speaker. It places the victim on the outside and may temporarily solidify a group's sense of itself (Spacks 4-5).

Although it would be foolish on my part to suggest Swift was not a misogynist, careful examination of the poem "The Lady's Dressing Room" may indicate that he was attempting to expose both the (male) narrative voice, Strephon, and perhaps even the reader as complicit in the destruction of a woman's reputation via the medium of viscous gossip. It is important, I believe, first to carefully separate the narrative voice from the voice of Strephon, and then consider Swift's motivation in creating the frame that he does for the poem. Setting aside the descriptive element of the poem, the audience is left with two men (the narrator and Strephon) telling rather snide and dirty tales about a female. The narrator starts with the universal male lament—women take too long dressing. This places the reader in the position of being able to snigger, relate to the men in the poem, and see the woman involved as less of a human being and more of a cliché. Spacks cites Freud's analysis of what a joke actually entails as it relates to her subject, gossip:

...a joke is either a hostile joke (serving the purpose of aggressiveness, satire, or defense) or an obscene joke (serving the purpose of exposure)." Civilization demands that we "renounce the expression of hostility by deeds," but allows indirect expression in words. "By making our enemy small, inferior, despicable or comic, we achieve in a roundabout way the enjoyment of overcoming him—to which the third person, who has made no effort, bears witness by his laughter .... A joke will allow us to exploit something ridiculous in our enemy which we could not, on account of obstruction in the way, bring forward openly or consciously; once again, then, *the joke will evade restrictions and open sources of pleasure that have become inaccessible*. It will further bribe the hearer, with its yield of pleasure into taking sides with us without any very close investigation. (49-50, emphasis mine)

In the first lines of "A Lady's Dressing Room," then, the reader is asked to become one of a community of listeners; our laughter both confirms Strephon as "one of us" and gives him the authority to continue.

The result of Strephon's waiting, Celia's appearance, is judged to be spectacular. In the eyes of the narrator Celia is not an attractive woman but a Goddess. Once more the male narrator denies Celia for what she is—merely a human being. The effect of the introduction allows the reader to understand, upon reflection, that the narrator is in all probability the same kind of character as Strephon; someone who will affirm his ideas, humor and stereotypes. Be she a

Goddess or a slut, what is important to both the narrator and Strephon is the male gaze, their desire and their authority. The female, lacking humanity, need not be considered in any other light than that of the projection of a male fantasy; she is sacrificed to the male alliance.

The vision Celia presents, decked out in "Lace, Brocades and Tissues."<sup>(4)</sup> is obviously enough to have attracted the attention of Strephon, who is visiting her house. He is clearly her guest, and she is presumably unaware of his intentions. The reader might speculate here as to Strephon's motives for entering Celia's room uninvited. At the very least he appears to have broached the boundaries of good taste. Strephon has no reasonable motives for intruding into a lady's private room uninvited. Indeed, he has taken care to ascertain that both Celia and the maid are elsewhere. What can he be looking for? A love trophy, or is he looking to discredit her? Has she in some way displeased him, failed to respond to his advances? Whatever he is there for, nothing suggests he has any regard for Celia's own feelings. Strephon claims to be shocked and repulsed by what he finds, but his subsequent actions (he is, after all, spreading gossip about what he finds to one or more of his friends) suggests an attitude of spite rather than distress.

At first the narrator attempts to locate some kind of authority in Strephon's prying. Spacks suggests most narrators prefer a more "dignified form of interpretation" to gossip (206). He "took a strict Survey .... An Inventory follows here." (7-10), but the reporting voice soon degenerates into a more casual tone, calling Strephon, with jocular familiarity, a "Rogue"<sup>(13)</sup>. Far from expressing surprise or disapproval of Strephon's actions, the narrator urges him on. His tone suggests the atmosphere of a club or locker room. There is no possibility, at this point, that an observant reader can continue on without either becoming an "insider" or consciously rejecting the narrator's stance.

No less than in *The Rape of the Lock* does a rape occur in "The Lady's Dressing Room"—the rape that takes place is of that of Celia's reputation. In her absence Celia's privacy is violated and she is exposed to public view and ridicule. While she may not be the cleanest of women it is, perhaps, not unfair to say she was not too far removed from the norm for women of her day. What, in fact, do we really see? For the most part nothing except a bathing and dressing area that has not as yet been cleaned, and speculation and gossip run rampant. Rationally speaking, cleaning up was the maid's work. "Scrapings of her Teeth and Gums"<sup>(4)</sup> may sound unpleasant, but not as unpleasant as Celia's teeth and breath if she did not commit those dire acts. Dirty towels, though distasteful to the eye, at least indicate she washes. How much more unpleasant would Celia be if she did not wash? The narrator rhetorically asks the reader "The stockings, why should I expose"<sup>(51)</sup>? Why indeed, except for the reason that he is enjoying the tearing down of a female he probably helped place on a pedestal, then resented for being there? By line 71 Celia has been slandered, first by Strephon then by the narrator to such an extent that she is now no more a Goddess but a "careless Wench."

The highlight of the "jest" is the examination of the chamber pot. Too good a joke not to share with his cronies, Strephon finishes his rape of Celia's dignity with a description of what he finds within. The narrator delights in using language that ranges from the grandiose to the most vulgar:

Thus finishing his grand Survey,  
Disgusted Strephon stole away  
Repeating in his amorous Fits,  
Celia, Celia, Celia shits! (114-18)

Since we may, surely, safely assume there was no eighteenth century reader naive enough to believe that women did not perform physical functions, this can be no more than a silly joke by a small minded, vindictive, immature mind.

Celia's reputation, if we believe Strephon's story, is destroyed before we even meet her. Surely the narrator will repeat the incident, as reported to him, with perhaps further exaggerations, to his friends and the gossip will spread with potentially disastrous consequences for Celia. Strephon, the instigator of the rumours, will be the hero of the boys' clubs, while Celia surveys the ruined tatters of her reputation.

Far from approving of Strephon's actions I believe Swift appears to vehemently disapprove of them; it is after all Strephon who is punished at the end. Vengeance, the real Goddess, punishes Strephon. Once more it is necessary to step away from the gossipy voice of the narrator, who apparently recognizes the spite behind Strephon's tale even while he enjoys it, and examine what actually happens. Strephon, carried away by his imagination, falls victim to it. But what is Swift, the author, punishing his character for if not for his creative speculations about Celia's room and the subsequent damage to her name? Only thus is the punishment suitable to the crime.

In "To a Lady" and *Rape of the Lock* Alexander Pope makes use of some of the conventions of the "boudoir" poems. In "Lady" his narrator attacks Sappho (an allusion to Lady Mary Whortley Montagu), one of the negative female characters, through her personal habits. Although he does not attack Belinda's personal habits in *The Rape of the Lock*, Pope describes, in detail, the contents of her dresser, to establish not her slovenly nature but her trivial one:

This casket India's glowing Gems unlocks,  
And all Arabia breathes from yonder Box.  
The Tortoise here and Elephant unite,  
Transform'd to Combs, the speckled and the white.  
Here Files of Pins extend their shining Rows,  
Puffs, Powders, Patches, Bibles, Billet-doux. (133-38).

The atmosphere produced, once more, suggests an invasion of privacy. In

return for not submitting to the Baron's attack on her body, Belinda's personal life is subject to public scrutiny and discussion.

In his introduction to *Rape of the Lock* Pope claims to Arabella Fermor, "If this poem had as many Graces as there are in Your Person, or in Your Mind, yet I could never hope it should pass thro' the World so Uncensured as You have done." Although the statement is ostensibly a positive one, it can be read in a more dubious light; the introduction also carries the rather dire warning that the Sylphs can only protect those who are dedicated to "an inviolate Preservation of Chastity." Once more, the reader needs to step back from the poem and examine what actually happens, and perhaps conclude that Pope rather meant "an inviolate Preservation of Coquetry." The author, having pointed out the importance of a female being uncensured and preserving her reputation, then censures Belinda for having "fits" because the Baron cuts off one of her locks. Belinda, the victim, is subject to a male attack.

In *Satire and the Transformation of Genre*, Leon Guilhamet suggests the object of Pope's poem (in direct contrast to Swift's concern for the female victims of gossip) is his own glorification, and the subject of the poem only incidental. Indeed, despite its title, it is not at all clear that Pope sees the episode as a rape, either of Belinda's person or, potentially, her reputation. Belinda the coquette, according to the narrative voice, is an unnatural construct. It is her failure to respond to her admirer's advances that annoys the Baron (as well, apparently, as the narrator). In a move similar to Strephon's, the Baron decides to invade the female body in retribution.

The reader may well ask if "coquette" in *Rape of the Lock* does not serve the same function that "Goddess" does in "A Lady's Dressing Room," that of dehumanizing the victim and rendering her open to attack. In this light the narrator's "sylphs" become no more than a tool, a device to empower and justify the Baron's attack on a female that has, in reality, committed no crime except fail to respond to his masculine advances. It is not their fault they cannot protect Belinda, but her own. No less than the Baron do they advance the process of victimization.

Although, as Pope intimates, justifiably, at the start to Canto III, there are more important things in life than the cutting of a curl, it might just as easily be argued that no, there is not, to Belinda. What the cutting of the curl can potentially mean is the destruction of Belinda's reputation. Pope has already acknowledged the importance of the preservation of chastity and reputation as essentially important to a female in his introduction. It appears, then, to be at the least rather disingenuous to allow his narrative voice to suggest the cutting of the lock is of little importance. Why does Ariel, a male or at least a male construct, abandon Belinda to her Fate, after all? Has she really committed a heinous crime? No, merely felt the spark of affection for one particular male rather than play coquette (or Goddess) to all, "An Earthly Lover lurking at her Heart"(46). Because she has committed the dire act of allowing herself to respond as a human being to

one particular male, instead of remaining both aloof and (potentially) accessible to all, Belinda is instantly abandoned by her protector and subjected to male intrusion.

"All" the Baron took was a lock of hair, but the potential for the destruction of Belinda's character, given what we have just seen Strepson do with a messy room, some fecal matter, and his imagination, is enormous. Will the boys in the locker room give Belinda the same respect after they hear the Baron's stories (which he is, after all, free to embellish in whatever manner he pleases) and see the lock? Evidence, indeed, that Belinda must be no better than she should be! Pope mocks Belinda about what the "Ravisher" might do with the Lock, but since what he predicts in jest may well come true, there is every reason for Belinda's distress. Pope gives this speech to Thalestris, mocking Belinda through the lips of another "pushy" female who, apparently is all emotion and no mind:

Gods! shall the ravisher display your Hair,  
While the Fops envy, and the Ladies stare!  
Honour forbid! at whose unrival'd shrine  
ease, Pleasure, Virtue, All, our Sex resign.  
Methinks already I your Tears survey,  
Already hear the horrid things they say,  
Already see you a degraded Toast,  
And all your Honour in a Whisper lost!  
How shall I, then, your helpless Fame defend?  
'Twill then be Infamy to seem your friend!  
And shall this Prize, th' inestimable Prize,  
Expos'd thro' Crystal to the gazing Eyes (104-15)

Mocking Belinda, Pope apparently fails to see he has accurately predicted what might well occur. Using only female voices, Pope shows, first through Thalestris, then through Clarissa, the results of spreading rumours; Clarissa also responds not to the rape, with Belinda as victim, but to Belinda as coquette and fallen woman.

The narrator fails to defend Belinda's rage, but instead, and in his turn, attacks her and her (female) defenders, calling them Viragos (37). That the Baron is punished at all is only due to Belinda's refusal, in the end, to submit to the chastisement of the female community which prefers to attack her character as morally dubious rather than confront the real villain of the piece.

Ironically Belinda, by her reaction to the "rape," incurs the displeasure of the narrative voice, but may have saved her reputation. Arabella Fermor may have incurred the wrath of men like Pope who felt she was blowing the whole event out of proportion, but at least she was spared the whispering campaign of innuendo that Celia is subject to. The whole story being made so public is, in fact, Belinda (and Arabella's) only possible protection. The insinuation that a woman can always prevent an assault upon her body if she chooses to do so by remaining

pure in mind and not "inviting" attack was apparently alive and well in the eighteenth century. Belinda intuitively counters the attack by the only method at her disposal—refusing to submit in silence to her attacker she protests until the matter is dealt with. She will not allow her attacker to walk away unscathed.

At the end of "A Lady's Dressing Room" the Goddess punishes Strepson for his violation of Celia's dressing room and over active imagination by condemning him to be unable to view a woman except by the light in which he has unfairly slandered her. In *Rape of the Lock*, instead of punishing the Baron, Pope chooses to punish not the Baron but Belinda, not with Strepson's "amorous Fit" but an "hysterical" one. Pope not only chastises Belinda, but allows the victim to feel she must in some way be at fault for what she has done, thus "warranting" the attack upon her person, as have, she says, other females before her. She has apparently done the equivalent of wearing short skirts in the twentieth century, and is even given a speech in which she at least partially blames herself for the Baron's attack.

Under the facade of a neutral presentation of the facts, Pope condemns Belinda for what he sees as, essentially, much ado about nothing. There are far more grievous injustices in the world, he tells her, far more important events. There may be, but arguably not to her.

In his conclusion, as throughout the poem, Pope fails to show that he either understands or is capable of responding to an attack upon a virtuous woman as anything other than a trivial but excusable joke. With his attack centered upon Belinda rather than the Baron, he has apparently chosen to join the boys' club, enjoy the joke, and blame the victim. Read in this light, it is eminently possible to believe he would have laughed along with (and believed) Strepson. Criticism has long condemned Swift as being derogatory to the female sex, while Pope is more often than not represented as trying to present an impartial view of the circumstances under which Arabella Fermor lost her lock of hair. I suggest that in this instance Swift suggests a far greater understanding of the consequences of intrusion upon the female body and reputation than Pope manages to achieve in *Rape of the Lock*.

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Jonathan Swift. "A Lady's Dressing Room" *Poems of Jonathan Swift*. Ed Harold Williams. Oxford: Clarendon, 1937.

<sup>2</sup>All works of Alexander Pope referred to in this paper are from *Poetry and Prose of Alexander Pope*. Riverside edition, ed. Aubrey Williams. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1969.

<sup>3</sup>T.L. Haines and L.W. Yaggy. *The Royal Path of Life*. 1880. (313)

<sup>4</sup>Patricia Meyer Spacks. *Gossip*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985.

## Allegorical Defoe?

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There occurs on nearly the last page of Daniel Defoe's *Moll Flanders* (1722) a detail which convinces me that Defoe is writing a novel. The detail is stray, even gratuitous: it does not advance the plot or give insight into character. It seems to have no significance. The detail is, we might say, utterly novelistic. It is this: when Moll lists the cargo she has arranged to have sent over to her plantation in Maryland, she adds,

and all this Cargo arriv'd safe, and in good Condition, with three Women Servants, lusty Wenches, which my old governess had pick'd up for me, suitable enough to the Place, and to the Work we had for them to do; one of which the Ship, as she own'd afterwards, before the Ship got so far as *Gravesend*; so she brought us a stout Boy, about 7 Months after her Landing. (425)

We may remark upon Moll's habit of accounting (the child born to a servant seems to be just one more item on the credit side of her ledger), or we may observe the irony of another young girl who seems to be following the pattern of Moll herself. But finally, a young woman who becomes pregnant aboard ship is a detail whose meaning lies simply in its contribution to the novel's "formal realism" (to use Ian Watt's phrase): it is there simply because such things sometimes occur. Recorded by Moll as a mere fact, it is read by us, at the end of a long, circuitous reading experience when we are searching for signs of closure, somewhat whimsically as just another vivid detail from the rich texture of life.

How different this reading experience is compared to that of reading someone like John Bunyan (1628-88), who shared with Defoe (1660-1731) not only some similar life experiences (both were sons of humble tradesmen, spent some time in the military, and were imprisoned for their beliefs) but also some essential religious convictions. Both were Dissenters and as such considered themselves to be part of the true line of Reformers going back to Luther and Calvin. As witness to their affinity, both are buried in the Dissenter's cemetery, Bunhill Fields.

Here is part of the opening passage from Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* (1678):

I dreamed, and behold I saw a man clothed with rags, standing in a certain place, with his face from his own house, a book in his hand, and a great

burden upon his back. I looked, and saw him open the book, and read therein; and as he read, he wept and trembled: and not being able longer to contain, he brake out with a lamentable cry; saying, "What shall I do?" (51)

Here the narrator's dreaming signals the beginning of an allegory in which we are invited to interpret each detail of the person described. His "rags" are the "filthy rags" from Isaiah (64:6), which represent human attempts at self-righteousness; his face turned away from his home tells us he is following the Biblical injunction to forsake everything for the gospel (Luke 14:33); his heavy pack calls to mind the Psalm, "For mine iniquities are gone over mine head; as an heavy burden they are too heavy for me" (Ps. 38:4). Taken together, the details of this description tell us this person (named "Christian") represents any sinful human being—any of us, really—making his or her first steps toward responding to the call of the gospel.

In allegory, things—whether backpacks, gates, or muddy roads—and persons—whether named Christian, Evangelist, Obstinate, or Ignorance—mean something, and it is the task of the reader constantly to be aware of the significance underlying the details of the narrative. Perhaps Bunyan is a successful allegorist at least in part because the details he chooses are so realistic, even novelistic, but for him they are never gratuitous.

This essential feature of Bunyan's narrative would seem to place him miles apart from Defoe, whose *Moll Flanders* is so awash in details, in the facts and figures of Moll's life. Now, Jane Hedley (paraphrasing Morton Bloomfield) describes the difference between reading an allegory and a novel in this way:

[it is] a difference in the extent to which we are aware, as we read, that plot, imagery, tone, and characters are controlled by significance or theme. Realism more closely approximates what we feel to be true of our lives as they happen to us: we have the experience but miss the meaning. (Hedley 160)

This formulation explains quite well how reading Bunyan is different from reading Defoe and even suggests how our reading experience reflects our experience of the world.<sup>1</sup> As we read an allegory, details are the means to an end: we are always asking what this or that means. They are the surface to be penetrated, the letter to be given over to spirit. As for the novel, in a sense all we have are the details, the surface. The reward of realism is the sense that the world of the novel is like our own; the difficulty is answering the question, so what does it mean?

And Hedley's clause, "we have the experience but miss the meaning" is especially pertinent to *Moll Flanders*, where Defoe seems so committed to recording the chaotic, uncensored, rich details of Moll's life. On reading this novel, my students are first struck by its lack of chapter divisions, a fact which forces them, and me, to hunt for structure, for a pattern, in the endless stream of details and events. I suppose it could be said that Moll, in her retelling of her

story, is engaged in the same kind of search. "Does her life make sense?" is a question Moll and her readers share, and the fact that readers of this fiction are engaged in a kind of search for meaning that is not available to them as an essential part of the work's structure or form suggests that we are in the world of realism and the novel.

But despite all the evidence, both in the details of the novel and in how we read, that he is a novelist, Defoe in one crucial instance resorts to a pattern of signification that is almost allegorical. I am not trying to suggest that Defoe is at heart an allegorist any more than I would suggest that Bunyan is really the first English novelist; instead, I would like simply to observe that in the early stages of the development of the novel, things were more fluid than we may sometimes believe. It is, in any event, interesting to note that when Defoe wishes to draw attention to the significance of his main character's life—to provide some shape or pattern to it—he resorts to what we might call an older form of signification, the allegory.

The incident to which I am referring is Moll's conversion experience while she is a prisoner at Newgate Prison, "that horrid Place!" as she calls it, "where my Mother suffered so deeply, where I was brought into the World, and from whence I expected no Redemption, but by an infamous Death" (348-49). In this central incident, Defoe uses the three stages of the legal process Moll undergoes—from her arrest and imprisonment, to her trial, conviction and sentence, and then to her reprieve and eventual transportation—as an allegorical parallel to the process of Moll's conversion.

The comparison would have seemed quite natural for Defoe: based partly on the account in Acts of the Philippian jailor who asks, "What must I do to be saved?" conversion is, in many Christian traditions, described as a release from judgment and from prison. Bunyan says salvation is deliverance from the "state of thralldom and misery" (qtd. in Greaves 51). And Charles Wesley's hymn "And Can it Be" (1739) contains this stanza:

Long my imprisoned spirit lay,  
Fast bound in sin and nature's night.  
Thine eye diffused a quick'ning ray;  
I woke; the dungeon flamed with light.  
My chains fell off, my heart was free,  
I rose, went forth, and followed thee. (Jeffrey 262)

Defoe taps into this familiar association, and into the allegorical mode, in order to have us understand what happens to Moll and to emphasize its significance for her life and for the ultimate realities which underlie the peripeties of that life.

Moll herself tells us this incident is central to her story, calling it "really the best part of my Life, the most Advantageous to myself, and the most instructive to others" (368-69). She says so responding to someone who might accuse her of digressing:

This may be thought inconsistent in it self, and wide from the Business of this Book; Particularly, I reflect that many of those who may be pleas'd and diverted with the Relation of the wild and wicked part of my Story, may not relish this, which is really the best part of my Life, the most Advantageous to myself, and the most instructive to others; such however will I hope allow me the liberty to make my Story compleat: It would be a severe Satyr [satire] on such, to say they do not relish the Repentance as much as they do the Crime; and that they had rather the History were a compleat Tragedy, as it was very likely to have been. (368-69)

Here not only does Moll identify her subject—she calls it her "Repentance"—but she tells us this incident completes her story, allows it to become instructive, and gives shape (as a Tragedy might) to her experience. Her emphasis is consistent with what Defoe says in his Preface, where he calls the "Penitent part" of this work "certainly the best and brightest" of it, and he recommends his work to those who "know how to Read it, and how to make the good Uses of it" (38). Defoe even adds that his readers ought to be "much more pleas'd with the Moral than Fable, with the Application than with the Relation" (38), distinctions familiar to us from allegory.<sup>2</sup>

Thus when, in the middle of this incident, Moll is confronted by a faithful minister who asks about the condition of her soul, she tells us,

This honest friendly way of treating me unlock'd all the Sluices of my Passions: He broke into my very Soul by it; and I unravell'd all the Wickedness of my Life to him: In a word, I gave him an Abridgement of this whole History; I gave him the Picture of my conduct for 50 Years in Miniature. (366)

Moll tells us, in effect, that everything we have been reading makes sense best as an extended confession, that it comes into focus only from the perspective of her conversion.

For most Calvinists, especially in the Puritan tradition, salvation is a process—even a lifelong process as Bunyan's *The Pilgrim's Progress* illustrates.<sup>3</sup> Thomas Goodwin, for instance, refers to "the parts of Salvation and Works of God in us, which God carrieth on in us by degrees" (qtd. in Greaves 50). Protestants confessed that each part of the process was God's doing, not humankind's—salvation comes by grace alone—but that humans are given the grace to respond in repentance, faith, and thankfulness. And while this process could be described in a number of ways, Defoe depicts in Moll's conversion three basic, essentially Protestant steps, each one signaled by a stage in Moll's legal proceedings. The steps are a conviction of sin, true repentance, and justification which leads to new life. These steps find their parallel in, respectively, Moll's imprisonment, her trial and sentencing, and her reprieve. We could add a fourth step: Moll's transportation and subsequent new life represent her thankfulness and perseverance in the faith.

When Moll is committed to prison, she is in much the same circumstance as Bunyan's Christian at the beginning of *Pilgrim's Progress*: desperately burdened but with no sense of a way out. Both are experiencing a growing conviction of their being lost and unworthy. Moll has always feared returning to Newgate, and so when she is committed there, she feels that her life has come full circle and thus that there is no way out for her. She explains,

I was carried to Newgate; that horrid Place! My very Blood chills at the mention of its Name; the Place, where so many of my Comrades had been lock'd up, and from whence they went to the fatal Tree, the Place where my Mother suffered so deeply, where I was brought into the World, and from whence I expected no Redemption, but by an infamous Death. To conclude, the Place that had so long expected me, and which with so much Art and Success I had so long avoided. (348-49)

Her return to the place of her birth and her sense that Newgate "so long expected" her convince Moll that her life has simply been a closed loop. The circular pattern from birth to death, from Newgate and back again, means, essentially, that her life has no meaning or purpose. Spiritually, it suggests that Moll may be reprobate. In that context, her subsequent conversion disrupts the closed, inevitable pattern, not only refocusing her past but offering a new beginning. Her conversion, in narrative terms, is something entirely new and unexpected.

Moll's sense of impending doom, her fear of what cannot be avoided, provided Defoe with an emotional equivalent for Moll's spiritual condition. Moll says, "I look'd on myself as lost" and adds that the noise, chaos, and filth of the prison "and all the dreadful croud of Afflicting things that I saw there; joyn'd together to make the Place seem an Emblem of Hell itself, and a kind of an Entrance into it" (349). Without fully acknowledging it, Moll is realizing that she is in danger of a condemnation that is not just legal but eternal: she is on her way to hell. She realizes she must "give satisfaction to Justice with [her] Blood" (349), a hint that what she really needs is someone else's blood, but the effect on her is that she is "overwhelm'd with Melancholly and Despair" (349).

Moll is careful to point out that in this stage of her legal and spiritual progress, she as yet "had no Sense of [her] Condition" (355). She says that while she

repeated several times the Ordinary Expression of, Lord have Mercy upon me; I never brought my self to any Sense of my being a miserable Sinner, as indeed I was, and of Confessing my Sins to God, and begging Pardon for the sake of Jesus Christ; I was overwhelm'd with the Sense of my Condition, being try'd for my Life, and being sure to be Condemn'd, and then I was as sure to be Executed, and on this Account, I cry'd out all Night, Lord! what will become of me? Lord! what shall I do? Lord! I shall be hang'd, Lord have mercy upon, me, and the like. (360)

Earlier Moll pointed out that while she "repented heartily of all [her] Life past," such repentance was ineffectual because it is motivated only by a fear of punishment (349). She has not yet been brought to that true repentance which leads, as in the passage just cited, to confession and forgiveness. Moll's state, symbolized by the horrors and sense of impending judgment of her incarceration, is one of despair and doom.<sup>4</sup>

Moll's turning point is occasioned by, and represented by, her conviction and sentencing. She says the judge "Pronounc'd the Sentence of Death upon me, a Sentence that was to me like Death itself" (363). Moll means her sentence effectually killed her, but the emphasis on "Death itself" suggests more than a physical death. In fact, the classic formulation from Ephesians comes to mind: "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (2:1).<sup>5</sup> It is at this point that Moll listens to a minister, having been prompted by the woman Moll calls her "Governess" (363; this woman became a "true Penitent" by reflecting on Moll's circumstances). Feeling she "had nothing before [her] but present Death" (364), Moll listens to his urging her to "look up to God with my whole Soul, and to cry for Pardon in the Name of Jesus Christ" (364). Moll tells us, "It was now that for the first time I felt any real signs of Repentance," and she for the first time considers "Eternity" (364).

The minister evokes from Moll the confession we considered earlier—one she calls "an Abridgement of this whole History"—and he presents her with "a Scheme of infinite Mercy, proclaim'd from Heaven to Sinners of the greatest Magnitude" (366).<sup>6</sup> Moll summarizes,

I am not able to repeat the excellent Discourses of this extraordinary Man; 'tis all that I am able to do to say, that he reviv'd my Heart, and brought me into such a Condition, that I never knew any thing of in my Life before: I was cover'd with Shame and Tears for things past, and yet had at the same time a secret surprizing Joy at the Prospect of being a true Penitent, and obtaining the comfort of a Penitent, I mean the hope of being forgiven. (366)

Moll, under the sentence of death, has been brought to the point of true repentance. As if in response to this development, there occurs what is probably the most striking parallel between Moll's legal case and her spiritual one: Moll is given a Reprieve! Her response is "as Grief had overset me before, so did Joy overset now" (368). More significantly, Moll's minister prays that her "coming back as it were to Life again" might be effectual (368). The minister's choice of words, along with the parallel to Moll's new legal status, suggests that Moll has been justified, that she is no longer dead but alive. Moll concludes,

God in sparing my Life; and a greater Detestation of my past Sins, from a Sense of the goodness which I had tasted in this Case, than I had in all my Sorrow before. (368)

The new notes here are an experience of Mercy and “a Sense of goodness” which is experienced as strongly as taste.<sup>7</sup> These suggest that Moll is reprieved in the spiritual, as well as the legal, sense.

At this point in Moll’s narrative, she argues directly with her readers (in a passage we have already considered) that her account of her conversion is an essential part of her story. That passage is followed with, “But I go on with my Relation” (369), and it is as if the magic of allegory has been spent. In later passages, there are hints that Moll is making spiritual progress. For instance, her minister reminds her that her reprieve is only a stay of execution, not a pardon (370), and so when it is decided that she will be transported, Moll explains, “I had now a certainty of Life indeed” (371). Later, when she leaves for America, she says, “I launch’d out into a new World, as I may call it, in the Condition (as to what appear’d) only of a poor nak’d convict” (393). For Moll, the new world symbolizes her new life, both physical and spiritual. But these passages are more and more rare in the narrative. Having taken us through the intense process of Moll’s conversion, where resorting to allegory was, for a while, natural and necessary, Moll’s story returns to the world of the novel, to the details of the rest of Moll’s life.

It would be convenient for my thesis if Defoe had demonstrated more immediately in Moll’s life the thankfulness that comes from true repentance and as a response to justification. But that would not have been, to speak as a novelist would, “real.” There is, as we have noticed, the suggestion that the new world offers Moll a new life, though we (and she) quickly learn that Moll has not been transported to Paradise-or even to the God-centered new world an earlier group of Puritans had sought up the coast a ways. In her new world, Moll confronts the real problems of her former husband who is her brother, a son she needs to reconcile with, and a current husband who must gradually learn who Moll is and how she has lived. Still, in the final paragraph, Moll’s summary of her life in the new world suggests something of the everyday road of the thankful, and of blessed life of someone who has experienced the conversion Moll says is central to her experience:

Thus all these little Difficulties were made easy, and we liv’d together with the greatest Kindness and Comfort imaginable; we are now grown Old: I am come back to England, being almost seventy Years of Age, my Husband sixty eight, having perform’d much more than the limited Terms of my Transportation: And now notwithstanding all the Fatigues, and all the Miseries we have both gone thro’, we are both in good Heart and Health; my Husband remain’d there sometime after me to settle our Affairs, and at first I had intended to go back to him, but at his desire I alter’d that Resolution, and he is come over to England also, where we resolve to spend the Remainder of our Years in sincere Penitence for the wicked Lives we have lived. (427)

If this resolution seems too muted for the conversion experience we have been exploring, it is perhaps the intensification that allegory brings which leads us to expect clearer assurances of a change in Moll’s life. But Defoe ends where he began, in a realistic presentation of a woman’s life in her own voice.

Where does this leave us? Perhaps I can fashion a conclusion for this exploration by putting my teaching of *Moll Flanders* in context. When I teach a course in the English Novel, I never know where to begin. I have begun with a piece of Renaissance fiction, Gascoigne’s *The Adventures of Master F.J.*, and I have begun with Bunyan’s *The Pilgrim’s Progress*, in each case asking how these works are like or unlike the novel. And I have used Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe*. This year, on the strength of a new PBS Masterpiece Theatre production of *Moll Flanders*, as well as an imminent theatrical release of a film named *Moll*, I thought I’d try beginning the course with this novel. Using *Moll Flanders* as a way into such a course, when opening questions like How do we read the novel? and Just what is this thing we call the novel? and Who wrote the first one? are urgent, helped to focus my attention on Defoe’s work. What I have tried to articulate here is an interesting moment in the process of answering those questions. More specifically, what I learned (I think) is that for an early novelist like Defoe, the distinctive feature of what we call the novel—its grounding in realism—develops gradually and that it is only part of the story. The other part is an effort by a novelist like Defoe to make his intentions—even his moral lessons—clear to his readers. And one of the techniques that Defoe resorts to is allegory. Michael McKeon, writing about what he calls the “paradigmatic case” of *Pamela* and *Shamela*, suggests that the rise of the novel must be understood in part as a dialectic between “two competing versions of how to tell the truth in narrative” (168). In a small way, Defoe incorporates his own two ways—copious realism and judiciously applied allegory—to tell his truth.<sup>8</sup>

### Notes

<sup>1</sup>For Bunyan, life itself was allegorical, or at least typological. Thus he invites his readers to search their lives for signs. “Yea, look diligently, and leave no corner therein unsearched, for there is a treasure hid, even the treasure of your first and second experience of the grace of God toward you” (*Grace*, “Preface” 5). He adds, “Have you forgot the close, the milk house, the stable, the barn, and the like, where God did visit your soul?” (5). For Bunyan, these places have allegorical meaning in the lives of his fellow-believers: they are to be interpreted as signs of God’s work in their lives.

<sup>2</sup>Bunyan, in the verse preface to *Pilgrim’s Progress*, asks his readers, “Would’st thou see truth within a fable?” (49).

<sup>3</sup>Bunyan writes, "To save, is a work of many steps, or to be as plain as possible, to save, is a work that hath its beginning before the World began, and shall not be completed before it is ended" (qtd in Greaves 50). Greaves outlines the process of salvation in these comprehensive steps: election, calling, faith, repentance, justification, forgiveness, sanctification, and perseverance (50).

<sup>4</sup>For another literary figure in the same circumstances, consider Spenser's Redcrosse Knight in the Dungeon of Despair (in Book 1, canto 9).

<sup>5</sup>A later verse in the same chapter restates the concept: "Even when were dead in sins, [God] hath quickened together with Christ (by grace ye are saved;)" (2:5).

<sup>6</sup>Here we may find an echo of Bunyan's title *Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners*, and of Paul's testimony in 1 Timothy 1.

<sup>7</sup>Defoe may have in mind this invitation to the gospel from the Psalms, "O taste and see that the Lord is good" (34:6).

<sup>8</sup>McKeon distinguishes between what he call "native empiricism" and "extreme skepticism" (161). My own formulation responds to McKeon.

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## Samuel Richardson in Eighteenth-Century America

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Not long after Samuel Richardson's *Pamela* (1740/41) first appeared in London, where it soon became a sensation, it made its way across the Atlantic to colonial readers. By May 2, 1742, Eliza Lucas, later the wife of Chief Justice Charles Pinckney, returned to the lender the last of the borrowed volumes of *Pamela* with a less-than-enthusiastic note. The work was admirable in many ways, and she found *Pamela* a "good girl" in many ways. But her character was nevertheless "very defective...while she allows herself that disgusting liberty of praising herself" (Stedman 446-447). However, Miss Lucas's reaction was not typical. Her voice was soon drowned out by choruses of admirers, who snapped up copies of the book offered for sale on September 23, 1742 in *Pennsylvania Gazette* by the bookseller William Bradford and elsewhere (Brown 29), and talked and talked and talked about it. In Philadelphia social circles, "happy the person who could procure a reading" (Wolf 188).

It seemed to make good sense to provide copies, so in 1744 *Pamela* was brought out by three printer/publishers: by James Parker in New York, by Charles Harrison in Boston, and by Benjamin Franklin in Philadelphia. It was the first novel published in the colonies. Expecting to make a good profit from the book's popularity, Franklin sent a number of *Pamelas* north to New York and 100 copies south to William Parks in Williamsburg at 5 shillings a set (Wolf 188). However, his American reprints—and most likely those of Parker and Harrison, too—did not sell very well. When Franklin gave up his printing business about a decade later, unsold copies of *Pamela* were listed in his inventory. After that, American printers did not publish any fiction for a long time. (Twenty-three, twenty-four years passed before the next novels—an abridgment of Defoe's *The Journal of the Plague Year*, printed by Henry Miller, Philadelphia, 1767(?) and Johnson's *Rasselas* (Philadelphia, 1768)—were published in the colonies.) Nevertheless, *Pamelas* sent from England remained very popular. In 1757 Franklin himself sent from London home to his daughter Sally a *Pamela* in French translation to help her with her lessons (Wolf 188). Jonathan Edwards listed it along with *Clarissa* among books he intended to read to improve his prose style, and he made his daughter Esther read it (Brown 29-30). She found it rather long but quite worthwhile because of its "many excellent observations and rules laid down."

Soon after their publication in London, full-length versions of Richardson's other two novels, *Clarissa* (1747/48) and *Sir Charles Grandison* (1754) met with an enthusiastic reception in America. A Mr. Murray had his daughters read

alternately in the Bible and in *Clarissa*; Mrs. Foster, the novelist, recommended Richardson's works to the characters within the text of her novel, *The Boarding School*; the author of the column headed *The Gleaner* in the *Massachusetts Magazine* did not hesitate to place *Clarissa* "for literary excellence, above the *Iliad* of Homer or any other work, ancient or modern"; and an admirer in the *Monthly Magazine* in 1800 declared Richardson the only man worthy to be compared with Jesus Christ (Brown 32-33).

Purchasing such reading did not come cheap. James Iredell, Richardson enthusiast and later Supreme Court Justice, paid for his copy of *Clarissa* fifty American shillings (Hart 88), more than many an ordinary workman's weekly wage. Obviously such books were bought by individuals who could afford them. And the purchasers often lent them to family members and to friends.

Other copies were acquired by social libraries. These institutions, which had existed in England before they were established in the colonies, lent books to individuals who paid a set fee—commonly about twelve dollars a year—for the privilege of borrowing books, usually one volume at a time, from among the standard and most sought-after works in all fields, including theology, history, law, politics, geography, mathematics, the natural sciences, the classics and modern literature: poetry, drama, and, of course, fiction. Membership was rather costly, but it was worthwhile when one remembers that a long novel, such as *Clarissa*, was published in seven volumes, and that borrowing such books would be much more economical than buying them.

These social libraries existed in many colonial cities and large towns. A few, for instance, the Library Company of Philadelphia (founded in 1731 by Benjamin Franklin and his friends), the Redwood Library in Newport, R. I. (founded in 1749), and the New York Society Library, NYC (founded in 1754 with 118 subscribers), still exist today.

Readers at the social libraries were generally upper-class men, including many of the leaders in eighteenth-century American society. As the century wore on, these men demonstrated an increasing preference for fiction—supposedly the kind of literature which appealed to women. By 1791, though, when three women joined the New York Society Library, they proved to have the same tastes as male subscribers.

To be sure, many libraries' and booksellers' records are lost or incomplete. Even so, enough evidence exists to infer that novels were increasingly popular and that Richardson's novels were in constant demand. *Pamela*, with a required sale of 10,000 copies—the number needed to prove extraordinarily large sales—was a best seller in the 1740's (Hart 304).

Though they never achieved the enormous popular success of *Pamela*,—"the very crudity of *Pamela* no doubt prolonged its popularity on a sub-literary level," suggests Alan D. McKillop (86)—both *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison* were very popular, too. *Clarissa*, with a required sale of 25,000, was a best-seller in the 1780's and *Sir Charles Grandison* was during the same decade a near best seller

(Hart 116). Both were esteemed by American readers. Frequent enthusiastic references to *Sir Charles Grandison* by James Iredell in his diary show its power over him: its special appeal was that it showed "what ought to be the conduct of a Man in an exalted station...who having so largely the power ought therefore to have the will to do good" (Iredell, I, 208). *Grandison* whetted Iredell's appetite for *Clarissa*. A few days later, on January 24, 1773, he writes that while a visitor at a lady's house, "I fear I was a little rude, for happening to take up *Clarissa* Harlowe, I could not quit it. I read a little of the 3rd volume, and a great deal of the 7th, which often obliged me to shed tears" (Iredell, I, 211). *Clarissa* still possessed him a few days later, when "In the afternoon went early to my Office, and could not resist the temptation of reading a little in *Clarissa*, having the first volume in my pocket, began it yesterday at home and read a little in it this morning (but not much) in my Office" (Iredell, I, 213).

Numerous allusions from 1764 through the 1780's in the Adams family correspondence to *Clarissa* and, more frequently, to *Sir Charles Grandison* show that the Adamses went so far as to use Richardson's novels to give dimension to their own lives. On April 30, 1764—that is, before her marriage to John Adams—Abigail Smith alludes to *Sir Charles Grandison* to chide her fiancé on his cold and reserved manner towards her (Adams, I, 42). A pair of Massachusetts lovers are likened to Mr. Hickman and Anna Howe (Adams, VI, 402). A sickly lady of the Adamses' acquaintance is compared to Richardson's *Clementina*, the Swedish Ambassador to the Court of St. James is identified with *Sir Charles Grandison*, the characters in *Sir Charles Grandison* are just like the Adamses' neighbors in Grosvenor Square. Even a newly acquired harpsichord is connected with the one played by *Sir Charles Grandison*'s sister. Richardson is also praised by Abigail Adams for his mastery of the human heart, for his faithfulness to nature, for his depiction of the odiousness of vice and the amiability of virtue, and for his true morality and religion because he points "his characters to a future state of restitution as the sure ground of safety to the virtuous, and excludes not hope from the wretched penitent" (Adams, VI, 313).

As the century wore on, existing booksellers' records, borrowers' records from social libraries and letters and diaries seem to show, despite a steady demand for copies, *Pamela*'s eventual replacement in the esteem of the public by *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison*. For instance, by 1785, Abigail Adams's admiration for *Pamela* sounds a bit condescending: "You know I am passionately fond of all of his [i.e., Richardson's] works, even to his 'Pamela'" (Adams, VI, 313). But all of Richardson's novels seem to have held their own against the increasing popularity of Smollett, Sterne, and various practitioners of the sentimental and the gothic novel. Extant borrowers' records from the New York Society Library for the years 1779 and 1789-1792 reveal that all of Richardson's novels continued their appeal to readers, and that *Pamela* was borrowed about as many times as *Clarissa* or *Grandison*. By the century's end, in both the New York Society Library and the Philadelphia Library Company, *Pamela* as well as Richardson's two other

novels, were among the works scheduled for rebinding and/or replacement because of hard wear.

At the same time as some relatively affluent, literate and genteel American admirers of Richardson read his works in unabridged versions they had bought themselves or borrowed from friends or from a social library, a larger number of American readers (those who had little leisure, little money and little acquaintance with literature and who were mute in their reactions to what they so avidly read) got their Richardson from small-format abridgments, often borrowed from circulating libraries. The circulating libraries were a newer phenomenon than the social libraries, dating from past the mid-century. They could be found in cities, even in small towns, up and down the North Atlantic coast and even inland. Their patrons, by and large, came from the middle and lower classes, and soon included women. Such libraries were casual establishments, often coexisting with a bookstore, a millinery shop, or a coffeehouse. Some of them offered a mere handful of books, but others, such as those operated by Hocquet Caritat of New York from the 1790's to the beginning of the 1800's, at least for a time, were well stocked with many books in all fields. In 1797 Caritat claimed holdings numbering 4,000 books. A catalogue of his library, dating from 1800, lists 30,000 volumes, including six copies of Richardson's novels—the four-volume sixth London edition of *Pamela*, full-length *Clarissas* in French and in English and in English abridgment, and a full-length *Sir Charles Grandison* in French and in an English abridgment (Raddin 98).

Such evidence as has been possible to collect shows that like the holdings of social libraries, those of circulating libraries reflected the tastes of their customers. Like the members of social libraries, patrons of circulating libraries also preferred fiction to all other kinds of reading.

The cost of borrowing from such libraries was much less than subscriptions to social libraries and, of course, much less than the cost of buying books at \$.75 to \$1.00 for a duodecimo volume or \$1.50 to \$2.00 for a whole work when even skilled workers were paid no more than \$1.00 a day (Winans 270). An elegant binding would add fifty cents per volume to its price (Hart 52). In the years between 1763 and 1768, for example, one could borrow books from Garrat Noel, a New York bookseller, for four dollars a year (Keep 101). In the late 1790's, Caritat charged \$6.00 a year, \$3.50 for 6 mos., \$2.00/quarter, \$.75 a month, or three cents a day for a duodecimo, which working people could afford (Winans 270). His prices were slightly higher than those of other New York circulating libraries. But because of the size and quality of his library, he had no difficulty in attracting customers. The first abridgments that the less literate and less affluent borrowed from circulating libraries or bought came from England. These might have included the first of the abridgments of Richardson's novels, titled *The Paths of Virtue Delineated: or the history in miniature of the celebrated Pamela, Clarissa Harlowe and Sir Charles Grandison, familiarized and adapted to the capacities of youth* (Becquin, London, 1756), the perhaps identical condensation

offered in 1762 by the London booksellers Rivington and Brown, who sold *Pamela, Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison* "all abridg'd, and collected into the small Compass of a single Volume" (Wolf 190), and the one-shilling versions of the three novels John Newbery brought out by 1768 or 1769, which were, as Alan D. McKillop says, "designed to afford moral reading for the young, although no doubt they made more than a didactic appeal to the readers of chapbooks" (234).

Eventually, American abridgments appeared. Brief versions of *Clarissa* and *Sir Charles Grandison* for children were brought out in 1776, by Cox and Berry of Boston (Brown 31). These were followed by William Spotswood's 1786 Philadelphia imprints of abridged versions for young people and adults of all three of Richardson's novels.

The trickle of American abridgments of Richardson's novels soon turned to a flood. By 1800, American condensed versions of *Pamela* had appeared at least twenty times, of *Clarissa* at least eight times, and of *Sir Charles Grandison* at least nine times.

These American abridgments, which hailed from cities and small towns in New England and the mid-Atlantic states, were probably printed in editions of between 500 and 1000 copies. Much shorter than their originals, the *Pamelas* varied in length from 90 to 168 pages, the *Clarissas* ran from 117 to 154 pages, and the *Grandisons* had from 113 to 176 pages. Some of the abridgments were simple edifying tales for young people or prescriptive guides to moral or social conduct for adults; others were precursors of the modern bodice ripper. Nearly all were carelessly printed on cheap paper. True, a few *Pamelas* and *Clarissas* were embellished with rudely executed and repellent "cuts." But such shortcomings did not deter a readership looking for edification and/or titillation.

Few examples of the eighteenth-century American abridgments of Richardson's novels have survived. Copies of 25 of them, none from circulating library holdings, are in the library of the American Antiquarian Society in Worcester, Mass. They generally show hard wear. But the owners' inscriptions—and sometimes a succession of owners' names and places of residence—reveal pride of possession. These people and their friends probably belonged to the growing group of unsophisticated and relatively unmonied readers who found more of the same in the popular so-called "Richardsonian" novels of Susanna Rowson and her many successors.

The 1786 Spotswood imprints of Richardson's novels—the first American abridgments for adults—did not just signal the beginning of the flood of many editions of abridgments of Richardson's novels. They also begot the sort of fiction American writers, eager to imitate success, began to churn out. In fact, Richardson has already been cited by Herbert Ross Brown, Leslie Fiedler and others (including several authors of the churned-out books), as the source of the didactic stance, the epistolary form and especially the sensational plots of early American novels. These plots were concerned with marriage above one's own station, with child/parent conflict, sibling rivalry, mercenary parents (especially

mercenary fathers) forcing children into loveless marriages, domineering patriarchs, seduction, rape, betrayal, loss of virginity and death, racial and religious differences, refuge in madness as a solution of problems, etc. In a line of direct descent from *Clarissa* were William Hill Brown's *The Power of Sympathy* (the first American novel, published in 1789), Susanna Rowson's mega-bestseller *Charlotte Temple*, first published in London in 1791 and then in America in 1794, her *The Trials of the Human Heart* (1795), Hannah Webster Foster's *The Coquette* (1797) and *The Boarding School* (1798), and Charles Brockden Brown's *Wieland* (1798). These books catered to an ever-increasing new market of readers who ignored the cries of dismay and outrage from those who deplored the rage for novel reading as a sign of mental and moral laxness or even of depravity.

As the *Columbia Literary History of the United States* puts it, Richardson's fiction was a chief determinant that "the bulk of early American fiction would be didactic in purpose, sentimental in tone, and sensational in materials..." (169). But the conduit of this didacticism, sentimentality and sensationalism was not the full-length versions of Richardson's novels but their English and especially their American abridgments.

Like the American abridgments of Richardson's novels, the new American novels were short. *Charlotte Temple*, for instance, which William Charvat calls a "tiny book," is about 190 pages long; even though it was "in two volumes," these two volumes were bound as one. It was, Charvat says, typical of the very short novels published "from the nineties to 1820..." (Charvat 81).

Not the full-length versions, but the bought or borrowed American abridgments of Richardson's novels, were the kind of books which sold best in America, perhaps because they were the ideal kind of reading to provide, as an anonymous hostile critic put it, "just the recreation of an hour or two for a sofa-lolling miss on a summer's afternoon."

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## *Evelina and Pamela:* Symbolic Capitol via Domestic Fiction

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To explore the empowerment of women through the rise and propagation of Domestic Fiction, I've chosen a pair of terms that are used in theorizing about the underlying or invisible strategies of power relations in institutions like marriage. Pierre Bourdieu uses the terms "symbolic violence" and "symbolic capital" in his *Outline for a Theory of Practice* for explaining differences in cultural and social practices that remain unexplained by theories of material capital and overt forms of institutional oppression. The first, as Bourdieu explains, is "the violence of credit, confidence, obligation, personal loyalty, hospitality, gifts, gratitude - in short, all the virtues honoured by the code of honour" (16). In this sense, violence is concealed behind a series of culturally empowered mores for it appears in the guise of integrity, respect, prominence, or reverence. Essentially, it appears to be anything other than what it is: a form of oppression practiced under the guise of laudable, culturally approved virtues. Bourdieu claims additionally, that these forces operate by the establishment of "relations of domination that have the opacity and permanence of things and escape the grasp of individual consciousness and power" (184). Thus, direct modes of oppression become unnecessary for "the dominant class have only to let the system they dominate take its own course in order to exercise their domination" (190).

This "symbolic violence" is demonstrated in judiciary rulings on marriage in the eighteenth century. It was the common law that whatever property a woman owned before marriage or might receive thereafter became automatically her husband's. Sir William Blackstone, an eighteenth century legal commentator, explains in his *Commentaries on the Laws of England*, that when women became one with their husbands they lost their legal identity; and he adds that the law was designed for women's protection and benefit (Wardle 135). As demonstrated, the economic oppression in this law is justified and veiled in respect and reverence for women. As Ralph Wardle explains, any advantages that had been gained during the late Middle Ages and the Renaissance were swept away by the advent of Puritanism which used scriptural justification for commanding adherence to codes of silence and submission (134). This was performed and reinforced by educational and religious institutions which were empowered by individuals of significant "symbolic capital" and which in turn granted that same "capital" to like-minded men.

Bourdieu's second term, "symbolic capital," is grounded in "relational power" and wealth, but instead of being centered on a general system of economics, it

both investigates and represents the number of social, political, or cultural relations that any one person has accumulated. Toril Moi, in her "Appropriating Bourdieu: Feminist Theory and Pierre Bourdieu's Sociology of Culture," illustrates this by reference to the great French bourgeois families: these families maintain or reproduce their social standing by relying on extensive networks of family members with large amounts of capital and prestige in different fields of influence such as law, religion, government, etc. Thus, "the family as an extended group can be said to have heavy symbolic investments safely spread across the whole social field," and any one member of a family acquires more symbolic capital as his or her familial relations increase (17).

However, during the eighteenth century, the symbolic capital in the institutions, including marriage, rests with the men or at best was acquired by close association to them. Women had no capital of their own. To illustrate this, Ralph Wardle demonstrates how even a woman's power to attract a man physically was curtailed in the law. Parliament passed a law in 1770, declaring that "all women of whatever age, rank, profession, or degree, whether virgin, maid or widow, that shall from and after such Act impose upon, seduce, and betray into matrimony any of His Majesty's subjects by means of scent, paints, cosmetics, washes, artificial teeth, false hair, Spanish wool, iron stays, hoops, high-heeled shoes, or bolstered hips, shall incur the penalty of the law now in force against witchcraft and like misdemeanors, and that the marriage upon conviction shall stand null and void" (135). A woman desiring divorce, however, despite any deceptions which had been played upon her, was forced to seek an act of Parliament before she could recover her "legal identity," and all this "symbolic violence" was done or justified in the name of respect for women.

It is this juncture, however, between the perceptual agenda and the oppression that was acted out that opened the way for domesticity via Domestic Fiction to implement a series of subversive strategies that would co-opt the discourse and empower women with symbolic capital of their own. Nancy Armstrong, in her text, *Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel*, lists a sampling of the educational and religious texts that established or constructed the gender and hence the gendered tasks of the eighteenth century domestic woman. She explains in terms of the education of women:

To gender this field, things within the field itself had to be gendered. Masculine objects were understood in terms of their relative economic and political qualities, while feminine objects were recognized by their relative emotional qualities. At the site of the household, family life, and all that was hallowed as female, this gendered field of information contested a dominant political order which depended, among other things, on representing women as economic and political objects. (15)

The woman, although still subject to political force, was given a positive subjectivity that operated within a specific sphere of responsibility. As Armstrong

explains, the Puritans attempted to form the family, or household, into a self-enclosed social unit in whose affairs the state could not intervene. The two roles of man and woman were separated into distinct areas of responsibility as Armstrong supplies:

<i>Husband</i>	<i>Wife</i>
Get Goods	Gather them together and save them
Travel, seek living	Keep the house
Get money and provisions	Do not vainly spend it
Deal with many men	Talk with few
Be "entertaining"	Be solitary and withdrawn
Be skillful in talk	Boast of silence
Be a giver	Be a saver
Apparel yourself as you may	Apparel yourself as it becomes you
Dispatch all things outdoors	Oversee and give order within (18-19)

The man still claimed sovereignty over his home, but in the Puritan doctrine, equality between partners in the sense of separate, but complementary roles served to inform the educational discourse of the nineteenth century (18).

This educational doctrine, however, finds its roots in not only the Puritan discourse, but also in the popular conduct books of the period. Armstrong explains how the language or discourse of conduct served to reinforce this shift:

This rhetoric replaced the material body with a metaphysical body made largely of words, albeit words constituting a material form of power in their own right. The modern female body comprised a grammar of subjectivity capable of regulating desire, pleasure, the ordinary care of the body, the conduct of courtship, the division of labor, and the dynamic of family relationships. (95)

The regulation of these domestic areas, as Nancy Armstrong suggests, occurred through agency as represented in text and found its operative power in what she terms "domestic surveillance." It is this ability to place an inhabitant of the domestic space under her watchful eye, since she was placed as the guardian of domestic virtues, that shifts the discourse of male domination by reversing it back upon those who had empowered it in the first place. In a sense, the woman acquires "symbolic capital" from the man who has determined what her role is to be, and then with this capital she enacts "symbolic violence" to hold the man to the set of values that are already in place.

In this paradigm, the role, the gendered areas of responsibility, empower the woman in a domestic environment despite the great unbalanced nature of her perceived "symbolic capital." It is this paradigm of power in a limited sphere that is played out in "Domestic Fiction," which serves to propagate this doctrine

and make its rhetorical power a part of the discourse and so allows it to become part of the "common sense" or the discursive reality. Take *Evelina* for instance; Frances Burney's novel develops, recommends and commends domesticity by first attacking the legal inequality that women faced in courtship, second by presenting Madam Duval, and hence the entire aristocratic notion of marriage, as a monstrous mockery of a domestic woman, and lastly by demonstrating how *Evelina* by virtue of her domestic values is able to come into her own in the form of honorable marriage to Lord Orville who, is taken with her propriety and good graces.

In the first instance, Burney demonstrates the importance of a properly regulated marriage, for in the domestic schema a woman has limited "symbolic capital" until it is given her in a legally binding marriage contract. As Armstrong states, "the power of the contract depended not so much on the logic of exchange as on the figurative power of the contract to constitute the very parties it proposed to regulate" (31). Essentially, the marriage contract functioned to position the bearers of it, so that they would in the Foucaultean sense regulate themselves. This self-regulation, however, would not occur if the man was not bound to the contract in which he empowers the woman. To illustrate, Burney relates the story of the unfortunate Miss Evelyn who both was forced into an environment that was not "domestic" and who also failed to secure her legal status:

...Madam Duval, at the instigation of her husband, earnestly, or rather tyrannically, endeavored to effect an union between Miss Evelyn and one of his nephews. And, when she found her power inadequate to her attempt, enraged at her noncompliance, she treated her with the grossest unkindness, and threatened her with poverty and ruin. Miss Evelyn, to whom wrath and violence had hitherto been strangers, soon grew weary of this usage; and rashly, and without a witness, consented to a private marriage with Sir John Belmont, a very profligate young man, who had but too successfully found means to insinuate himself into her favor. He promised to conduct her to England - he did. - O, Madam, you know the rest! - Disappointed of the fortune he expected, by the inexorable rancor of the Duvals, he infamously burnt the certificate of their marriage, and denied that they had ever been united! (60)

Miss Evelyn "flies" to Mr. Villars for protection, but even he is unable to prove that she was ever married, and so Sir John Belmont escapes from his "husbandly responsibilities" while Miss Evelyn bears his child and dies. She had no legal recourse, yet the suggestion is that if she had gotten married in the proscribed manner, her husband would have been compelled to remain by her side and provide for both her and the infant. However, as Armstrong suggests, the power of the contract lies not so much in the legal aspect of it, but rather resides in the invisible functioning of the power relations inherent in it. So, when

Burney posits a situation where the legal contract establishes power, what she is doing in effect is creating a *fiction* that empowers or lends power by appealing to the established institutions, and is therefore in a sense altering or shaping the discourse to empower her value system- domesticity.

Included in this short history is Burney's assertion that a young woman in a non-domestic environment is in danger of being deceived or essentially abused by male dominance which has no hindrance acting upon it except for domesticity. Thus, Evelina is placed in a household that has a monstrous mother-figure so that her domestic charms will be revealed in conflict with the environment of such a house. Madam Duval, who is already responsible for the destruction of the mother, now seeks to introduce Evelina into "polite" society. Her power resides in her money and the position that marriage bestowed. She comes from a lower class background, and now that her husband is dead, she is free to indulge herself in whatever activity she deems appropriate. She rules her house, not from a domestic position, but rather from an ineffectual male authoritarian position which leaves, in the Puritan model, the domestic duties undone. As evidence of this I submit a section of Letter XVI from Volume II where she verbally assaults a gentleman:

"Oh Sir, you're vastly polite, all of a sudden! but I know what it's all for; - it's only for what you can get! - you could treat me like nobody at Howard Grove - but now you see I've a house of my own, you've a mind to wheedle yourself into it; but I sees your design, so you needn't trouble yourself to take no more trouble about that, for you shall never get nothing at my house, - not so much as a dish of tea: - so now, Sir, you see I can play you trick for trick." There was something so extremely gross in this speech, that it even disconcerted Sir Clement, who was too much confounded to make any answer. (251)

Madam Duval is not only unintelligent in this example, but is at the peak of her ill-mannered form. Burney presents her as one who will strike servants, and pummel guests. She attacks visiting gentlemen, their honor and manners, and praises her uncouth guests and relations. Madam Duval exercises her "capital", which is only symbolic in that she doesn't directly purchase the muscle necessary to dominate her social scene. She instead constructs her social scene by luring to her house and company those who seek her favor and thus her money. She is, in Burney's view, anything but a domestic figure, and so the results of her impropriety are ill-bred youth, uncomfortable associations, and what amounts to a dearth of polite company; in short, her household is in disarray:

It was curious to observe the effect which his embarrassment, added to the freedom with which Madame Duval addressed him, had upon the rest of the company: every one, who, before, seemed at a loss how, or if at all, to occupy a chair, now filled it with the most easy composure: and Mr. Smith, whose

countenance had exhibited the most striking picture of mortified envy, now began to recover his usual expression of satisfied conceit. Young Branghton, too, who had been apparently awed by the presence of so fine a gentleman, was again himself, rude and familiar: while his mouth was wide distended into abroad grin, at hearing *his aunt give the beau such a trimming*. (251)

It is into this setting, over whom Madam Duval presides in state, that Evelina is thrust so that her domestic virtues might be tried in the refiner's fire. In this way, also, Burney proves their value in extreme circumstances while simultaneously placing them in direct contrast to what might exist without domesticity.

Evelina, then, enters the unruly household and circle of associations with no "symbolic capital" whatsoever. She must continually appeal to the authority of her benefactress or to people who represent the weak forces of propriety. Thus, she is constantly at risk from the unscrupulous types that Madam Duval attracts and is simultaneously under pressure from the same to align herself with men whom she finds odious. When faced with the rude company of one of M. Duval's parties, she is forced to employ a series of genteel strategies to dissuade her multiple admirers. Having relieved herself of one, she states:

For a few moments I very much rejoiced at being relieved from this troublesome man; but scarce had I time to congratulate myself, ere I was accosted by another, who *begged the favour of hopping a dance with me*. I told him that I should not dance at all; but he thought proper to importune me, very freely, not to be so cruel; and I was obliged to assume no little haughtiness ere I could satisfy him I was serious. After this, I was addressed, much in the same manner, by several other young men, of who the appearance and language were equally inelegant and low-bred: so that I soon found my situation was both disagreeable and improper; since, as I was quite alone, I fear I must seem rather to invite, than to forbid, the offers and notice I received...I will not trouble you with the arguments that followed. Mr. Smith teased me till I was weary of resistance; and I should at last have been obliged to submit, had I not recollected the affair of Mr. Lovel... (264)

Evelina dissuades as gently and as genteelly as she can, only increasing her text of refusal as the demands of her petitioners continue. She learns from past breaches of impropriety, which she uses to inform and empower her speech, and in this sense her "symbolic capital" increases. For instance, when her self-appointed suitor, Mr. Smith, continues to press his suit and delves brashly into a discussion on marriage, he finds himself immediately as a subject under Evelina's domestic surveillance, for she labels his text inappropriate and unacceptable:

"— I assure you, Ma'am, you are the first lady who ever made me even demur

upon this subject; for, after all, my dear Ma'am, marriage is the devil!"

"Your opinion, Sir," answered I, "of either the married or the single life, can be of no manner of consequence to me, and therefore I would by no means trouble you to discuss their different merits."

"... marriage is all in all with the ladies; but with us gentlemen it's quite another thing! Now put yourself in my place, - suppose you had such a large acquaintance of gentlemen as I have, - and that you had always been used to appear a little - a little smart among them, - why now, how should you like to let yourself down all at once into a married man?"

I could not tell what to answer; so much conceit, and so much ignorance, both astonished me and silenced me.

"... but there are a great many ladies that have been proposed to me, -but I never thought twice of any of them, - that is in a serious way, -so you may very well be proud," offering to take my hand, "for I assure you, there is nobody so likely to catch me at the last as yourself."

"Sir," cried I, drawing myself back as haughtily as I could, "you are totally mistaken, if you imagine you have given me any pride I felt not before, by this conversation; on the contrary, you must allow me to tell you, I find it too humiliating to bear with it any longer." (264-265)

It is noticeable, in this particular instance, that when her domestic virtues are not regarded and her subjectivity is ignored, she reverts to an appeal to the recognized economic power of M. Duval. In essence, she goes and stands behind her benefactress's chair so that admirers will have to face the ogre to reach her.

However, this also is an act of agency. Her refusal to accept entreaties and her flat condemnations of improper behavior place her in the center of the Foucaultean panopticon. In the conduct book or Puritan model she places herself in the position of being the guardian of courtship values and thus her suitors must conform or be refused. They, as well as the prisoners in a panoptic structure, become agents of their own discipline or lose any possibility of the "reward." In this small area of social interaction, Evelina's "symbolic capital" is overwhelming and her ability to commit "symbolic violence" is unquestioned. Her willingness to do so, however, is governed by the model by which she draws power. She is demur and submissive, quiet and timid to those- Mr. Orville in particular- who accept her authority and who practice or move within the discourse approved by domesticity.

Such a model explains and justifies the extreme resistance which is practiced in Samuel Richardson's *Pamela: or Virtue Rewarded*. From the perspective of domesticity, Mr. B is trying to take what is not his to take. He has not entered into the contract, and so his claim on Pamela's "virtue" is nonexistent, and she is in a sense authorized to resist with all the powers at her command. These powers include her subjective voice or text, which serves to engage Mr. B in an argument that he cannot in effect win for when he enters the discourse he is trapped within

the framework of domesticity wherein his arguments do not apply. Further, Pamela's text serves to put Mr. B under the hostile eye. He becomes the viewed object, rather than her, and so her denouncement of his actions to an audience both herself (representing domesticity in the singular) and the wider readership (representing it in the general) exerts disciplinary force upon him which serves to curtail if not eradicate his contra-domestic, sexual aggression.

Pamela defends herself by first asserting her subjectivity, and then by engaging her "master" in the domestic discourse. As Mr. B attempts to persuade her, he finds himself falling farther and farther away from his goal as she appeals to her only defense, domestic virtues:

She said, 'I won't stay.'

'You *won't*, hussy! Do you know whom you speak to?'

I lost all fear, and all respect, and said, 'Yes, I do, sir, too well! Well may I forget that I am your servant, when you forget what belongs to a master.'

I sobbed and cried most sadly. 'What a foolish hussy you are!' said he: 'Have I done you any harm?' 'Yes, sir,' said I, 'the greatest harm in the world: You have taught me to forget myself, and what belongs to me; and have lessened the distance that fortune has made between us, by demeaning yourself, to be so free to a poor servant. Yes, sir, I will be bold to say, I am honest, though poor: And if you were a prince, I would not be otherwise than honest.'

He was angry, and said, 'Who, little fool, would have you otherwise? Cease your blubbing. I own I have undervalued myself; but it was only to try you. If you can keep this matter secret, you'll give me the better opinion of your prudence... (55-56)

Pamela places Mr. B in the position of "demeaning" himself if he trifles with a servant girl, and then asserts her own honesty. Richardson further adds what was in Henry Fielding's view an unreasoning fear of reputation, and yet it is this very fear which is played out as Pamela continues to write and observe thus placing Mr. B on the periphery of the panopticon.

As Nancy Armstrong argues, the shift from observed to observer comes when Pamela is abducted and taken to Mr. B's Lincolnshire estates. There she is confined and watched and is reduced to writing down her observations. She essentially spends her time representing herself and others, and this is the point at which she shifts the gaze (Mr. B who is watching her) back upon itself. Mr. B intercepts her letters and reads them aloud to an audience. "As he speaks her writing, then, he internalizes her moral authority, her conscience becomes his, his speech is indistinguishable from her writing, and she has achieved a form of power over him." Mr. B recognizes her domestic virtues and her subjectivity at this point, his admiration grows, and they marry. Armstrong concludes, "Having ensured the power of her gaze through writing, Pamela grows tired, she says, 'of their gazing' and retires from public view into the objects and activities of the

household under her control" (124). Pamela, through the exercise of domestic virtues, through coopting Mr. B into her discourse, and through placing him under her surveillance gains a form of "symbolic capital" sufficient to exert that disciplinary force in an act which Bourdieu would recognize as "symbolic violence." Richardson constructs the narrative in such a way that she is able to "turn the gaze back upon itself as a critical mirror" (Armstrong 124) and thus through her gender find a position or place in which her subjectivity carries that symbolic weight.

There were those, however, who derided Richardson's construction. They found it socially and historically unfaithful. As Armstrong states:

Fielding was not alone in accusing Richardson of playing fast and loose with social reality. He thought Richardson insulted the intelligence of readers by asking them to believe that a servant could dissuade a man of Mr. B's position from having his way with her. Fielding found it ludicrous to think that a man of such station would so overvalue the virginity of a woman who was not particularly well born. (29)

It is this very point, however, that suggests the relationship between Richardson's fictional construction and the eventual development of domesticity as a cultural norm in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The domestic household, as outlined in Armstrong's work and carried out in contemporary society, *did not exist* prior to the introduction and reinforcement of domesticity in educational manuals for women, conduct books, religious treatises, and the popular fiction of the day of which *Pamela* and *Evelina* are perhaps two of the better read models. The fictional texts served to produce an operative reality in which the domestic theories could be carried out, and it was the novel in particular that was especially suited to this sort of discourse transformation. As Lennard J. Davis explains in his *Factual Fictions: The Origins of the English Novel*:

I have been suggesting that the innovativeness of spontaneous writing lies in its ability to reduce the cognitive distance between thought, reality, and language.

...As I have been arguing throughout, this new capacity of language should be seen as a major shift in culture- one that is indebted to the establishment of the news/novels discourse and its subsequent breakdown...

Language is no longer a sign for some other level of meaning and reality; language becomes itself capable of verisimilitude, the representing of meaning and reality. (190)

It is in this manner that *Pamela* and *Evelina* serve to form a new reality that is, as has been pointed out, inimical to Fielding's aristocratic notions for they posit a woman who can in her own domain, empowered with symbolic capital

born of domesticity, engage with a man and exert discipline. So perhaps Fielding and his fellow critics were right at the time, but—it appears—not for long.

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## Johnson's Life of Savage: The House of the Mother where "No-body's" Home

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In an early scene in Samuel Johnson's *Life of Savage*, Richard Savage stands in the street in front of Anne Countess of Macclesfield's<sup>1</sup> house "in hopes of seeing her as she might come by accident to the window, or cross her apartment with a candle in her hand." Savage resolutely claimed throughout his life that this woman was his mother; she on the other hand consistently refused his claims of birthright, her affection, and her support. The primary consequence of her refusal to acknowledge him was that Savage, in Johnson's words, had to then "seek some other means of support, and having no profession, [he] became, by necessity, an author" (Oxford *Johnson* 132). It would be incorrect to assume that Johnson is bemoaning Savage's fate as a poet: after all Johnson's biography of *Savage* is advertised as a life of the poet. I want to argue instead, that Johnson by way of his *Life of Savage*, takes pride in the independence and genius of the person of the author, which Savage was so intent on making. It is true that to be an "author" in the early decades of the 18th Century was a risky business, but it had its rewards. There were the indignities of hack work on Grub street, but fame and money were also associated with the literary life. Johnson for one wanted the kind of literary life that would pay him to write. (The anecdote: "No one should write except for money.")

Johnson's *Life of Savage* was a break-through work for Johnson, then age 35. I believe he used the sensational life of Richard Savage to show how the class and gender changes that were just beginning to have their effects on early 18th century culture had begun to produce the "author" as a new specie of self. How Johnson delineates this authorial identity is demonstrated both figuratively and practically in a second narrative where Savage is again in front of the Countess's house. This is how Johnson describes Savage in his second encounter with Countess Macclesfield:

One evening walking, as it was his custom, in the street that she inhabited, he saw the door of her house by accident open; he entered it, and finding none in the passage to hinder him, went up stairs to salute her. She discovered him before he could enter her chamber, alarmed the family with the most distressful outcries, and when she had by her screams gathered them about her, ordered them to drive out of the house that villain who had forced himself in upon her, and endeavored to murder her. Savage, who had attempted with the most submissive tenderness to soften her rage, hearing her utter so detestable an

accusation, thought it prudent to retire; and, I believe, never attempted afterwards to speak to her. (138)

On the surface Johnson uses this second narrative to further impugn Lady Macclesfield's behavior toward Savage. Johnson, in the context of describing Savage's trail for murdering a man in a tavern, goes on to accuse the Countess of prejudicing the court against Savage by spreading the rumor that he had tried to murder her as well. Savage's behavior in the above narrative does not seem to shock Johnson in the least. Richard Holmes (*Dr. Johnson and Mr. Savage*) certainly takes a more righteous stance when he says this scene "demonstrates the kind of terrorizing and persecution to which Lady Macclesfield would be subjected by Savage" (74). I want to argue that these scenes in front of and within the Countess's house should not be seen as mere reportage—they're more figurative: a metonymy of the disruptions going on in gender and class roles in the 18th Century. I see these class/gender shifts as possibilities for new identities as imagined in Johnson's *Life of Savage*. Here the Countess's house stands in for the old aristocracy, and Savage's conduct acts as characteristic of the new authorial identity which Johnson wants to make manifest. Johnson actualizes this identity in the character of Richard Savage, who in Johnson's rendition of him is almost a parody (a figure in a "fable" according to Felicity Nussbaum) of the individual caught in the machine of early modern capitalism. What saves such a scene from parody is that Savage knows what he wants and attempts bravely to get it. Yet there are unaccountable changes going on that make Johnson's story of Savage entering the Countess's house ironic. Johnson wishes to show how the aristocracy treats its own, while upholding a rather censorial attitude toward those like Savage who would feign aristocratic means to artistic ends. This drama of refusal of the aristocratic mother serves Johnson as an opening to a more viable creative identity for those like himself who had no special connections. The cultural economy was at the time ready to reward those like Johnson who possessed wit and genius. But there were still the vestiges of the old order that had to be satisfied. And the erasure of the body of the aristocratic poet-Savage—was the payment demanded. These changes became evident when Johnson allows Savage himself to speak of the "ground zero" Savage has been made to inhabit when he calls himself a "No-body."

Savage refers to himself as "No-body" in a footnote Johnson appends to the original *Life of Savage*, one of the many footnotes subsequent editors have excised from his biography. Savage's remarks are from the *Preface* to his *Miscellany*, a collection of poems printed in Aaron Hill's *Plain Dealer* (1726), that he was "legally the Son of one Earl, and naturally of another . . . [and] nominally, No-body's Son at all: For the Lady having given me too much Father, thought it but an equivalent Deduction, to leave me no Mother, by Way of Balance" (Fleeman 228). Savage has two fathers but no mother, which is in his mind tantamount to being a "No-body," a nameless man, as viewed from the position of the dominant patriarchy. He is, therefore, a non-existent person. It is paradoxical that under the

strict laws of patriarchy the father gives the name, but the mother gives, or as in Savage's case, refuses to give the "body." Thus the bodiless man must write himself into corporeality by becoming an author. It would seem then that Savage has a dearer mission than Johnson, who is working twice removed from Savage's struggle for identity. Johnson, in fact, is Savage's second literary mother, though no less important for it, since it is because of Johnson that we know Savage, who otherwise has been forgotten as a poet. Johnson's biographical methods proceed for more political and personal reasons.

The identity of the author-Savage-made in this sloughing off of the maternal, ties into how Johnson uses the mother to get at those who control the modes of literary production, while putting a moral distance between himself and Savage. If Johnson can begin to make a body of work himself, then he subsumes the aristocratic maternal, becoming a some-body, separate and complete from the patriarchal patronage system of literary production. Johnson's biography of Savage was a ticket out of obscurity for Johnson. Johnson makes his appearance as an author (in Johnson's *Life of Savage*) by attacking Lady Macclesfield, characterizing her as a "monstrous mother." There is no doubt about the attack, but for Johnson it seems to serve a larger tactical purpose that is complicated by class exigencies of the period. But first his attack on the Countess must be dealt with as a gender issue.

To ground this idea of the "monstrous mother", I will turn to two critics who accuse Johnson in slightly different ways of playing into forces that were naturalizing the maternal status of women during the early eighteenth century. Both Felicity Nussbaum, in her "'Savage' Mothers: Narratives of Maternity in the Mid-Eighteenth Century", and Toni O'Shaughnessy Bowers' essay "Critical Complicities: *Savage Mothers*, Johnson's Mother, and the Containment of Maternal Difference" claim that Johnson's *Life of Savage* is seriously compromised when it mirrors the culture's denigration of women-women as mothers, in particular. Nussbaum describes this denigration taking place in the early 18th century and links it to nascent capitalism:

The cult of motherhood disguises the way that middle-class Englishwomen, formerly producers of things as well as of life, are encouraged to limit themselves in the newly emergent money economy to producing life. (126).

A "cult" necessarily focuses affect in order to produce material difference at a time when the power centers in the culture are shifting. When the affect became centered around motherhood it started to project an ideology that both limited women's production of material things and, because the old regime's hierarchical advantage was breaking down, empowered men, who found themselves employed as the primary wage earner in a burgeoning middle-class economy. What was left for women to do but to bring babies into the world?

What occurs to me is that the Countess Macclesfield is not middle class; she represents a vestige of the old order: the prosperous aristocrat. There are definite

things against the Countess since she is a wealthy woman and can prefer silence; she can in fact afford silence. She can let the Grub street rabble of scribblers attack her because whatever they say has no influence on her state, except of course to embarrass her. William Vesterman in *The Stylistic Life of Samuel Johnson* shows that Johnson had no patience for the embarrassment of the aristocracy. When Sir Richard Steele withdraws his allowance from Savage, Johnson chastises him that he acted in "the Heat of transient Resentment" (24). In this connection Johnson goes on to ascribe fault to both men, but the Countess does not get such favored treatment.

Bowers claims in "Savage Mothers" that Johnson rails at the Countess because she would not support Savage. She says: "Johnson insists that proper affect defines maternal virtue; yet what makes Savage's mother so very bad is the fact that she doesn't give him money" (Bowers 127). I believe Bowers is right in one sense, that since Savage is cut off from the largess of an aristocratic inheritance, and knew he would actually have to work for a living-believing all the time that he was noble born-was an ambivalent place to be, especially at this particular stage of Western cultural development. The success of the self-made man is an important part of capitalist ideology that has its roots in an era when men were given their fortunes at maturity. The capitalist economy employs the fiction that such wealth is self-generated; the man is a self-creation instead of being produced by the unitary aristocratic couple. As an artist, Savage could look both one way and then the other as he straddled the divide between the hierarchical aristocracy and the new middle-class free-agent artist-one free from patronage. This latter stage was not quite set as a trend at the time. Actually, Johnson's letter to the Earl of Chesterfield, more than ten years after his *Life of Savage*, has been said to be the nail in the coffin of the patronage.

There was a sense in the 18th century that to be an author meant that a person was somebody. Fame and money have, since the eighteenth century, been mixed up together so that if one is talented enough one could become financially independent. Alexander Pope was a stunning example of this for those laboring on Grub street during the years Johnson first came to London. Nussbaum rightly states that authorship was, at least initially and for some time, an all male pursuit, and by its very definition a creative act that takes on some of the traits of the feminine. Nussbaum explains Johnson's act of authorship in regards to Savage this way:

The male narrator impersonates the reproductive body in a gender reversal to give birth to Savage ['s life]. The maternal function finds its displacement and manifestation in men's [read Johnson's] writing. European men legitimate bastards, not women, and producing life-in text at least-is reclaimed as mental rather than material labor, a masculine prerogative. ("Nussbaum, "'Savage' Mothers" 146)

It is interesting that she does not ascribe a one-for-one attribution: that is, she is not saying that *Life of Savage's* narrator equals Johnson. This implies Johnson was unable to tell his narrator what to do but let him perform in the zeitgeist as best he could. I contend that Savage's, and by default, Johnson's target, Lady Macclesfield, was someone who could take the hit, could allow these struggling writers to make themselves at her expense, and that Johnson knew it. There is the sense that Johnson thought she should not have minded his insults. I have a sense that people like the Countess had thick skins, or at the very least, they didn't know how to respond, which allowed them not to respond at all. Thus Lady Macclesfield's silence.

It is plain that Lady Macclesfield was an easy object of Johnson's censure. Perhaps too easy in light of Johnson's irony. Her divorce and subsequent ability to retain the money she came to in her marriage with Earl Rivers was an impressive accomplishment for a woman of her time. It may be true that the young Johnson, who was without reputation at the time he wrote Savage's biography, may have used the portrayal of an uncaring mother in his *Life of Savage* to win supporters and admirers for himself and his work while criticizing the way women of property were able to make their way without men. Yet a remarkable ambivalence remains in Johnson's portrait of Richard Savage and his erstwhile mother, the Countess.

In my reading of Johnson's *Life of Savage*, Johnson characterizes Lady Macclesfield as an amoral mother for his own authorial ambitions. In this scenario Johnson fills the silence that Lady Macclesfield provides with the "no-body" cum "some-body," Richard Savage. The Countess had no voice to counter these charges and therefore, sank into silence. Much is left unsaid by the silence that accompanies Lady Macclesfield's public disregard for Savage. For Johnson seems to snatch Savage-the man-child-along with his own substance as biographical/literary personage, away from the Countess, producing by way of her maternal silence the less material/maternal womb/work of writing. What a delicious irony to imagine after all that the Countess is the anti-heroine of Johnson's *Life of Savage*.

### Note

<sup>1</sup>Daughter to Sir Richard Mason. Married at fifteen to Whig firebrand, Viscount Brandon, who inherited the title of Lord Macclesfield. At 30 she fell in love with Richard Savage, the Fourth Earl of Rivers. Lady Macclesfield bore him two illegitimate children in rapid succession; however, both children died at birth. Lord Macclesfield filed for divorce in the House of Lords, 1698. A divorce was granted March 1698, which returned Lady Macclesfield's personal fortune to her as part of the settlement. She subsequently married Colonel Henry Brett, bore him a daughter, and lived in seclusion to the age of eighty.

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