Proceedings of the
Seventh Northern Plains Conference on

EARLY BRITISH *Literature*

Edited by
Jay Ruud
Northern State University

Northern State University Press
Aberdeen, South Dakota
1999

Copyright © 1999 Jay Ruud
All rights reserved

NSU PRESS IS AN ENTITY OF THE NORTHERN STATE UNIVERSITY FOUNDATION

Published by the Northern State University Press
Northern State University
Aberdeen, SD 57401

ISBN: 1-883120-14-4

Contents

The Future of Early Modern Studies
Susanne Woods 1

London in Art and Poetry, 1660-1798
Xavier Baron 16

Jonson's Comedies of Manners
Douglas A. Northrop 52

The Tragedy of the Common Bureaucrat: Jonson's *Sejanus* and Its Sources
Art Marmorstein 65

The Rhetoric of Despair in Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton
Nicholas Wallerstein 77

Buyer Beware: The Business of Marriage Conracts in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*
Mary McGlynn 90

Mother Knows Best: Matriarchal Domesticity, Public Intrusion on Private Order in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*
Nicole R. Tiongson 101

Images of the Failed Father in *Romeo and Juliet*: Undercutting Systems of Domestic and State Patriarchy
Ken Enockson 115

Notes on a Work in Progress: Teaching Genre in Early Literature and Film (Or Odysseus and Sir Gawain meet Gary Cooper, Clint Eastwood, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sigourney Weaver)
Bob De Smith 127

Philosophy and the Metaphor of the Mechanical Mind: Adam Smith on the Presocratics
Ken Blanchard 149

The Future of Early Modern Studies

Susanne Woods
Franklin and Marshall College

With all the current millennial hype, however misguided as to its actual beginning date, it seemed appropriate to throw you a grand title. With our backward glance we are perhaps more inclined to celebrate Shakespeare's 335th birthday than to anticipate how his 350th or 400th might look to scholars gathering, yet once more, to acknowledge the appeal of early British literature. Nonetheless, I would like to use the opportunity you have kindly given me to suggest some interesting parallels between early modern Europe and our own time, and speculate where scholarship and teaching might be headed as we saunter into the next millenium. I promise to give this airy nothing a local habitation and a name with the example

of the Brown University Women Writers Project, including a report on some recent investigations using the Project's new online search capability.

When I first descended from professor to dean, I liked to point out the parallels between the renaissance and our own time. Like the renaissance, we are an age of exploration, with planets and oceans our new frontiers. We are an age of cultural imperialism, with American capitalism and the dollar replacing Christianity and syphilis. Like the renaissance we are watching our world shrink and our vision become more global, as new mercantilism and new learning combine to create entrepreneurial opportunities. And, perhaps like every period in European history, religious and ethnic divisions continue to evoke both high principles and low brutality. But three parallels in particular seem to me to be especially interesting for early modern studies: emphasis on textual scholarship, distrust of traditional boundaries, and an information revolution emerging from new technology.

The renaissance is often defined as the "rebirth" of classical learning, but it might more aptly be defined as the birth of multifaceted attention to text. From the recovery of Plato to the pedagogy of double translation, renaissance scholars were enamored of the book and the word. So Thomas Elyot rhapsodizes in 1531: "Lord God, what incomparable sweetness of words and matter shall [the student] find in the...works of Plato and Cicero; wherein is joined gravity with delectation, excellent wisdom with divine eloquence, absolute virtue with pleasure incredible" (113). And despite Ben Jonson's approval of Bacon's claim that "the study of words is the first distemper of learning" (666), the great Jacobean poet also noted that "eloquence is a great and diverse thing...[and] he is happy that can arrive to any degree of her grace" (663). Combined with the reformation's emphasis on scripture and biblical translation, this humanist passion led early modern scholars deeper and deeper into the

pyrotechnics of language. Donne's wrenched and multiple meanings held such charm for Herbert that the younger priest needed to shake free from them:

> As flames do work and winde, when they ascend,
> So did I weave my self into the sense. (102-03)

I leave better theorists than I to make the parallels with Barthes and Derrida, but certainly this joy in and attention to language has had various twentieth-century parallels–Russian formalism, new criticism, structuralism, even the play of the language poets.

From the late Middle Ages to the early nineteenth century and the invention of linotype, textual artifacts also underwent transition and became the site of cultural anxiety and change. As first the printing press changed the conventions and appearances of manuscripts and altered both the number and pattern of textual circulation, so at the end of the early modern period printing practices trifurcated into elite special editions for the rich, periodicals (including serial novels) for the middle classes, and the continuing tradition of broadsides for the poor. In our own time and for at least the near future, I predict we will see more focus on the text as a physical as well as linguistic object. The recent interest in text as a cultural construction and commodity has led us to look increasingly on textual production and reception history, while electronic text encoding has forced us to rethink both the intellectual and physical parts of a book. What elements of a text do we mark up when we encode it electronically? What things about or in the book, in other words, might we want to retrieve? Surely we will want to register that the work is a folio or quarto, structured with a title page, frontispiece, dedicatory matter, and preface, as well as that it is (say) an allegorical verse romance divided into books, cantos, and nine-line stanzas, or a play divided into acts and (possibly) scenes. If post-structuralism keeps us playing with words and deferring

closure, a curious combination of Marxist and anthropological criticism, structuralism, and technology is sending us to a new version of "complete" text and authorial production.

This attention to text, particularly in its new electronic environment, suggests two other directions for early modern studies: examination of unmarked categories and reconfiguring of traditional boundaries. We are all familiar with the way Black and Ethnic Studies, Women's Studies, Gay and Lesbian Studies have forced us to recognize that our own center in early British studies is itself a particular category and not the singular heritage of English-speaking people, and that even early British and European studies contain categories long ignored: definitions of the other that confirm the cultural self, from Shakespeare's outline of ethnic stereotypes in Shylock's greed and Portia's suitors to the Jacobean fascination with monstrous births; transgressive behaviors both attractive and frightening, including homosexuality and witchcraft; and actual texts by marginalized members of society, most notably women of various social classes.

As a consequence of all the recent re-weighing of early modern cultural reality, we are paying more attention to the categories that have never been marked or seriously examined directly, because they were assumed: male, white, and heterosexual. Anne Lake Prescott and Betty Travitsky have just completed an anthology of renaissance poetry by men and women with particular attention to how men are unconsciously characterized as the norm, and in Eve Sanders' new book, *Gender and Literacy on Stage in Early Modern England* (1998), you will find "Men" in the index: "as patrons, as readers, as teachers, as translators, as writers" and even "images of." Critical White Studies is another new reaction to cultural hegemony, with Kim F. Hall's *Things of Darkness: Economies of Race and Gender in Early Modern England* (1995) extending its observations to early modern Britain and showing the extent to which whiteness is defined and valorized in relation to the dark other. And, most recently, Anne

Shaver of Denison University has begun to teach heterosexual studies on the model of gay studies, looking at the assumptions of and pressures on heterosexuality in largely homosocial early modern europe. We continue to look beyond the surfaces, to question our assumptions, to distrust easy categorizations and traditional boundaries.

We share that distrust of old boundaries with early modern Britain, and sometimes forget that the much-touted "traditional" family is a product of the massive social reconfiguration that accompanied the reformation. When hierarchies fall or blur, when the priest no longer stands between God and the individual conscience, when religious authority is in flux, something has to serve as the basic structure for perpetuating the faith community. What could be more natural, in a society based on Aristotle, than the family? *A Godlie Form of Household Governance*, a small treatise by two reformed Protestant ministers, went through twelve editions between the 1590s and 1630s. So thoroughly did this new vision of social order take hold, that in the middle of the seventeenth century Sir Robert Filmer (c. 1588-1653) could base a sophisticated theory of monarchy on it, in his *Patriarca: or the Natural Power of Kings* (published posthumously in 1680). And from that treatise John Locke could build a rebuttal that would form the new foundation for Anglo-American theories of government. These basic social reconstructions accompanied enormous political uncertainty, from a childless queen through civil war to revolution.

Closer to home and on a smaller scale, education shifted its focus and boundaries in early modern Europe. The traditional ascent from trivium to quadrivium was first turned on its head with the new learning's emphasis on rhetoric, then diffused into a new portrait of useful humanities, conveyed by educational writers from Ascham to Milton. Ramus challenged traditional epistemology and Bacon rearranged it, freeing the Book of God's Works for close empirical study.

It is perhaps facile to draw the parallel with modern American colleges and universities, but there is nothing facile about redrawing the modern curricular map. The boundaries so confidently established in the nineteenth century and supplemented in the twentieth–chemistry and biology joining classics, history, philosophy, and modern languages, sociology and political science following after–now scarcely seem relevant. So-called "interdisciplinary studies" have increasingly become the norm, and we may cheerfully note that "renaissance studies" and "medieval studies" were among the earliest to suggest that traditional disciplinary boundaries could not contain full and nuanced inquiry.

So I predict safely from directions that already seem clear: our own study will continue to change its emphases, with the near future finding productive scholarly direction from attention to the text as both physical and intellectual object, from examination of traditional boundaries whether they be social, textual or curricular, and, lying behind both of these, from an information revolution emerging out of new technology.

Scholars have recently paid considerable attention to how texts circulated with the advent of print, with Arthur Marotti and Margaret Ezell emphasizing the continuing vitality of manuscript circulation well into the seventeenth century and Wendy Wall outlining some of the anxieties that accompanied "pressing the press" (279). We see similar patterns with the advent of electronic texts. As with manuscript and print, both print and electronic texts are likely to coexist for the near future, with print remaining (as manuscripts remain) a continuing form of textual circulation even when electronic communication has become fully dominant. There are class implications, broadly speaking, attached to whether a person has access to electronic texts, with computers much less available to the poor than to those with money or access to some form of privilege, such as a college education. On the other hand, as with the advent of print, the acceleration of

internet resources, many of them without specific authority or organizational principles, radically democratizes learning and may threaten the gatekeepers of knowledge and knowledge structures. Watch the news for continuing evidence of the scramble to control the internet: the anti-trust suit against Microsoft is one highly visible instance, as the Justice Department and internet providers such as Netscape seek to prevent the giant of computer software from having a virtual lock on how one enters cyberspace. Only slightly less visible are the Congressional hearings on the so-called "Y2K" problem–whether government and business will be ready to function in years that do not begin with "19"–and the stock market's blood lust for internet commerce, or "ecommerce" as it is destined to be known. As usual, business is getting its act together faster than other sectors, notably education and research, though librarians have worked heroically to alert the rest of us both to the massive change in communications technology and the desperate need for someone to organize what's out there. We still have a long way to go, but an increasing amount of fairly reliable and accountable material is finding its way to the web. Some of you may know Richard Bear's "Renascence Texts," a monumental effort to collect electronic editions of primary texts in the renaissance. Most of them are plain texts, available for printing but not much else, but a few, notably his Spenser corpus, are searchable in simple ways. You may also know some of the important tools making their way online, including various bibliographic resources available by subscription from the MLA and the Eighteenth-century Short Title Catalogue, or ESTC. And you are also probably familiar with the increasing number of texts, including a great deal of Shakespeare, available with hypermedia contexts, allowing students to go from text to picture to critical article to background information with the click of a mouse. One that I think will set the standard for future products of this type is Stuart Curran's online edition of

Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*, which is about to appear through the University of Pennsylvania Press.

And now I want to tell you the story of the *Women Writers Project*, because I know it best, and I also believe it illustrates some basic things about how we happen into new scholarly directions and where they may take us–and it also leads me to what, I believe, will be a primary path into the future of early modern studies, as well as of humanities scholarship more generally.

In the summer of 1985 I was at the Huntington Library when Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar's *Norton Anthology of Literature by Women: The Tradition in English* first appeared. Margaret Ezell, Stuart Curran and I scanned it eagerly–at last women writers had their Nortonian canonization–only to discover that its more than 2400 pages allowed fewer than 200 to women who wrote before 1800, and many of those pages were lengthy explanations of why earlier women did not write. Since we each knew too many exceptions to let that stand, we originally thought of putting together an alternate anthology of the earlier period, and invited Patricia Caldwell, Elizabeth Hageman, and Elizabeth Kirk to participate. When I returned to Brown that fall I had a conversation with one of my doctoral students, James Coombs, an expert in humanities computing. A group of specialists in pre-Victorian literature want to put together an anthology to counter the impression left by the Norton, I said, and (here comes one of those bright ideas we live both to regret and congratulate) why don't we put the texts we gather onto the computer? In words I have never forgotten, Jim said: "what do you want to *do* with the computer?" I had absolutely no idea. All I knew was that these women writers had been repeatedly discovered and lost, and I had some vague sense that by marrying them to the newest technology they might be permanently visible.

Jim led me to Allen Renear, a young philosophy Ph.D. and Brown's most promising expert on electronic texts, and, with grant money from the NEH and office space from Brian Hawkins,

then Brown's Vice President for Computing (and now head of Educom), in June 1988 we were able to hire Elaine Brennan as our first project manager. Elaine, Allen, Pat Caldwell, Stuart Curran, Margaret Ezell, Betty Hageman and I gathered at the new office and began to think seriously about what we wanted to do with the computer. The first thing we knew was that we wanted to make electronic versions of complete texts. Though we were still thinking about an anthology, we wanted to avoid the snippets that characterized anthologies in general and works by women in particular. So we made some good, hard and largely traditional decisions about text selection: we would put on the computer analogues of specific textual objects, and not try to edit. The computer, after all, was a tool that could allow various editors to work their wills, and with luck we would eventually have several versions of each text available. I am embarrassed to add that in 1988 we thought we might be looking at a total of about a thousand texts published by women between the late Middle Ages and around 1830–the truth is at least five times that amount, possibly more, and we have long since realized that the Women Writers Project will continue to be selective, rather than inclusive, for the foreseeable future. But the decision to select, and record the provenance, of a specific physical object, a book (or, later, manuscript) owned by a particular person or library, remained a good one. It allowed us to build accuracy and accountability into our system, producing an electronic archive of materials based on known texts. The second decision we made was to define "literature by women" broadly. The principal standard was that it be written with a derivable sense of authorship and audience, with some consciousness that this was writing to be shared. This allowed us to include a variety of genres, from traditional belles lettres to mother's advice books, polemical literature, and conversion narratives.

The next decision was to follow Allen's advice and encode these texts using Standard General Markup Language, or SGML,

which we did not understand at the time but which Allen assured us was the wave of the future. He was absolutely right. What we did not know was that we were about to ride the crest of that wave, and the view has often been pretty scary.

We soon realized that an anthology was a waste of effort; what we needed were texts, and, by putting them on the computer, we could make them available to scholars and teachers around the world, who could determine their own anthologies. And by about 1993 we were sending hard copy versions of texts, and sometimes custom anthologies, to over 200 scholars from twenty-five states and eight foreign countries. We had also by then engaged in a partnership with Oxford University Press to produce the series "Women Writers in English 1350-1850," which will have produced sixteen volumes before it concludes next year. We had also become one of the principal projects for the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI), the international effort to standardize how texts would be described electronically. But the question we continued to get from research scholars was, when are the texts going to be available online? And, stated or unstated, the familiar question: what can we *do* with the computer?

I can now report that over 200 of the texts will be available online this August. About 100 of them are part of a special subset funded by the Mellon Foundation, Renaissance Women Online (RWO). The subset has some traditional sorts of material to help teachers and students negotiate works and authors that may be new to them: introductions and contextual essays. RWO functions on one level as that anthology we originally envisioned, though it is an anthology of complete texts, and from it a teacher or scholar may now produce her or his own individualized course or research materials.

The whole project cost more in effort and money than we could have imagined–eleven years of support from NEH, three from Mellon, and twelve from Brown University and individual donors. Over a hundred Brown undergraduate and graduate

students developed into sophisticated text encoders and proofreaders, while the professional staff created a model system of documentation and supervision. The Project also continues to set international standards for text encoding.

But if money, effort, and even the direction of the Project itself, have been more than we expected, it is increasingly clear that the result is far greater than we could have imagined. We are just beginning to see some of the things this amazing facility can do. I'll show tell you a few
of those things, and offer a couple of modest demonstrations of how we can actually learn something from texts carefully and rigorously encoded to tell us things about themselves.

Encoding describes the features of a text. When a student enters the letters and words and sentences, she also indicates some things about them, using the angle brackets which SGML developed as the code to tell the computer that this is something about the text, not the text itself. For example, <titlepage> tells the computer that the text that follows is part of the work's title page, while </titlepage> tells it that this is the end of the title page (you may be familiar with these conventions from HTML, Hypertext Markup Language, a much simpler system which uses the SGML metagrammar). SGML can encode both physical and intellectual features of text. Folio, title page, and frontispiece, and also act, scene, and line. Poem, stanza, and verse, but also proper nouns, personal names, and place names. With the right search engine, we can recover not only all instances of any of these, but additional things about them.

When you enter the Women Writers Project's presence on the web, you can find information about the project, see the current list of texts, or look at individual texts. But you can also enter the texts, individually or as a whole group, to find out new things about them.

You can do a simple search, with a unique concordance feature that lets you learn something about what you have found.

Since a student recently wondered out loud whether early women writers evoked the muse in the same way male writers did, I asked the computer to show me all the examples of the word "muse," or, better, using the "wild card" asterisk to find "muse*" in all its varieties. With the texts currently online, this particular search produced ninety-four hits–not surprising, perhaps, for pre-Victorian writers, but the concordance feature allowed me to review a listing of all the hits, with surrounding language, and I immediately noticed an interesting distinction between Aphra Behn and Margaret Cavendish's use of the term. The Behn texts encoded so far show only four hits, all from one text, but every one of them is a traditional invocation to a personal muse. More texts by Cavendish than by Behn are available at this point, so it is not surprising there are more hits–forty-six; what is surprising is that the great majority of instances refer to the muses (all but a few are in the plural form) as characters or figures who signify various graces, but not her personal inspiration. She puts them in her plays, but does not preface her plays by invoking them, whereas Behn leaves them out as characters or referents, but invokes them. Interestingly, Aemilia Lanyer's one book shows fifteen instances, used both ways: she invokes and admonishes a personal muse, but also has muses as characters, notably in her poems to Queen Anne and the Countess of Pembroke.

You can also do much more complex searches. For example, you can find all the instances of a proper noun used as a personal name, as distinguished from a place name. ("Newcastle" appears thirty-one times as a personal name, seven times as a place name.) You can find all works published in a certain year, or before or after certain years. So far the textbase has encoded 11 works published during the reign of Elizabeth I (after 1558 and before 1604). You can find alphabetically, or order by date, all the texts that come from the Huntington or Bodleian Libraries, or from any of the source libraries for copies in the textbase. You can find all folios or quartos, all works by a given

printer or publisher, all words that appear as marginal notes, any or all examples of terms in colophons or epigraphs, all examples of a word that appears in verse only, prose only, dramatic text, headings, or titles. And the list runs on.

One of the most interesting and productive searches, however, allows you to see one word or phrase in relation to another. I conclude with an example that I find particularly intriguing, and which may, simple as it is, help lead us to think anew about language and gender in the early modern period.

In working with Lanyer and Spenser, I had noticed that both poets are interested in the relation of beauty and virtue. For Spenser, it is the mostly traditional neo-Platonic equation of the beautiful with the virtuous, of ideal form breaking through recalcitrant matter. I suspected
the relationship was somewhat different for Lanyer, but was not quite sure how. On a hunch, I asked the computer to give me "v*rtu*" within 10 words of "beaut*" in Lanyer's book. The request produced six hits–and in every case, "virtue" came first. Here are a couple of typical examples:

> I do but set a candle in the sunne,
> And adde on drop of water to the sea,
> Virtue and Beautie both together run,
> When you were borne, within your breast to stay;
> Their quarrell ceast, which long before begun.
> They live in peace, and all doe them obey.
> ("To the Ladie Anne, Countesse of Dorcet," ll. 97-102)

> Each blessed Lady that in Virtue spends
> Your pretious time to beautifie your soules.
> ("To all vertuous Ladies in generall," ll. 1-2)

For Lanyer, virtue is not the product of beauty, as it most often is for Spenser and the neo-Platonic tradition in male poets, but in

danger because of it. True beauty must stem first from virtue, and not the other way around.

Of course this is traditional scholarship with a new tool, allowing a shortcut, perhaps, for something anyone might have discovered. And indeed, the future of early modern studies depends, first of all, on its past–on what we know, on what we continue to learn, about the people who were real flesh and blood, gendered male and female, living through universal joy and sadness in highly specific times and places, and about what they wrote and the conditions under which they published. But the future of early modern studies lies also in the challenge of new questions, some of them emerging from the changes in what we know and understand about ourselves, our communities, and the world, and some of them, I would argue, the product of a new ability to range freely over vast amounts of material, and cull information that, in the past, it might have taken several lifetimes to discern and absorb.

Through it all, I hope we continue to value and advance what I believe is our primary mission: to open up the joys of reading and learn to see the multiple perspectives it gives us on what it means to be human.With love of the books we study and respect for the people, times and places that produced them, we can both honor tradition and welcome change.

Works Cited

Bear, Richard. "Renascence Texts." Online. http://darkwing. uoregon.edu/~rbear/ren.htm

Elyot, Thomas. *Book Named the Governor* (1531). Cited from Hyder E. Rollins and Herschel Baker. *The Renaissance in England*. Lexington: D. C. Heath, 1954. 113.

Ezell, Margaret. *The Patriarch's Wife*. Chapel Hill: North Carolina UP, 1987.

Jonson, Ben. *Timber or Discoveries* (c. 1620). Cited from Hyder E. Rollins and Herschel Baker. *The Renaissance in England*. Lexington: D. C. Heath, 1954. 113, 666, 663.

Herbert, George. "Jordan II." *The Works of George Herbert*. Ed.. F. E. Hutchinson. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1941. 102-03.

Lanyer, Aemilia. *The Poems of Aemilia Lanyer: Salve Deus Rex Judaeorum*. Ed. Susanne Woods. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1993.

Marotti, Arthur F. *John Donne, Coterie Poet*. Madison: U of Wisconsin P, 1986.

Wall, Wendy. *The Imprint of Gender: Authorship and Publication in the English Renaissance*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1993).

"Women Writers Project." Online. http://www.wwp.brown.edu

London in Art and Poetry, 1660-1798

Xavier Baron
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee

1. THE CHARACTER AND SPIRIT OF RESTORATION & 18TH CENTURY LONDON, 1660-1798

In the 150 or so years beginning with the restoration of the monarchy with Charles II in 1660, London came into the beginning of its nearly three centuries (until the Great War of 1914-1918) as the world's most powerful and important city. A parliamentary monarchy had replaced a divine right monarchy. Parliament was controlled by money and the center and source of that money was London.[1] Torn apart as they were by religious and political differences in the first part of the seventeenth century, after the Restoration and again after the "Glorious

Revolution" of 1688, there was such a longing in British society for relative peace, unity and stability that the needs and desires of the individual were subsumed (and often denied) for the perceived greater good of the whole. This was especially so in London, not just because it was growing in size and importance as the capital of the emerging empire and the center of developing capitalism; but also because the English realized that if you prize society over solitude, you prefer the city to the country. You thrive on urban life (see Williams).

Culturally, the rise to dominance of the moneyed middle class–centered in London–expressed its natural insecurities by requiring "certified" art and literature which followed the rules of taste and decorum, and shied away from most that was idiosyncratic or special, reckless or controversial. The age in general was conservative, distrustful of the emotions, fervently convinced of the primacy and necessity of reason, order, law and social stability, and the accompanying restraint or elimination of passion, disorder and rebellion against the rules. After all the division and turmoil of the Civil War, people wanted stability and at least the semblance of unity and agreed upon sameness, rather than factional difference. To be sure this was a fiction, but for most of the eighteenth century it was a fiction agreed to and welcomed as a stabilizing factor in social, cultural and personal affairs (Hill).

The Great Fire of 1666 destroyed much of the medieval, Tudor and Stuart London cityscape, to be replaced with the rational splendor of Christopher Wren, whose stamp remains everywhere: in the rebuilt City Churches, Chelsea, and Hampton Court. By the end of the seventeenth century, and especially with the completion of St. Paul's in the eighteenth, the capital is visibly "Wren's London," making Wren a figure of even greater impact and significance for the capital than his contemporary Isaac Newton was for English prestige in science, mathematics and thought.

Wren's impact, though often hidden, continues at the end of the Twentieth century: The City Churches [50] (begun 1670), The Monument (1671-76), St. Paul's Cathedral (begun 1675); Royal Army Hospital, Chelsea (1682-89); Kensington Palace (1689-95); Hampton Court Palace additions (1689-1700); Royal Naval Hospital, Greenwich (begun 1696). In addition, the face of London changed with the establishment of urban spaces designed by others and imitative of Inigo Jones's seventeenth-century Covent Garden: Bloomsbury Square (1660), St. James's Square (1663), Leicester Square (1670) Gray's Inn Square (1676-88), Soho Square (1681) and Berkeley Square (1698).

London became in the eighteenth century truly a capital, a financial, intellectual, fashionable and cultural center for all of Britain and much of the world. Third in size among European cities in 1600, after Paris and Naples; by the end of the seventeenth century she was the largest city in Europe.[2] Power was shifting to the middle classes as the greater powers of Parliament made politics attractive to many gifted men. Business and the arts attracted others. London was without peer as the place to be, and well epitomized by two symbols of the social and intellectual life of the city and its need for constant information: the coffee house and the newspaper.

Christopher Wren continued his remaking of London into the first decades of the eighteenth, with the completion of St. Paul's Cathedral and the Royal Naval Hospital at Greenwich, both in 1711, and a number of the City churches until 1717. And his influence is complimented and extended by his followers, James Gibbs and Nicholas Hawksmoor. Queen Anne's accession in 1702 promised renewed support for the Church of England, since she was a devout Anglican, but the "Fifty New Churches" Act of 1711 was the only successful legislation prompted by her devotion. Although only twelve were actually constructed, they included masterpieces by Hawksmoor and Gibbs. They were followed later in the eighteenth century by builders like Lord

Burlington, William Kent, George Dance, Robert Mylne, Robert Adam, John Soane and others.

The importance of their many buildings, and urban spaces is that, despite the devastation of the German Blitz in World War II and some later reckless rebuilding, their works still form the core of the modern London cityscape.[3] Such impressive and lasting building bespeaks of the growing power of London, but tremendous expansions in population, power and influence also caused the growth of modern urban problems. Filth and pollution began to be identified, particularly the foul, unhealthy and dangerous London air. John Evelyn in *Fumifugium* (1661), proposed an elaborate series of gardens of sweet smelling plants to counteract the "Hellish and dismall Cloud of Sea-Coale," so that "Catharrs, Phthisicks, Coughs and Consumptions rage more in this one City than in the whole Earth beside" (qtd. In Brett-James 313).

Moreover, the unrest that stirred many in the American colonies to rebel against the king in 1776 and the French to revolt against the monarch in 1788 was echoed in the dissatisfaction with received restrictions on personal taste and artistic expression as evidenced by the early strains of the Romantic revolution that were in evidence by the last decades of the eighteenth century. Particularly was this so with regard to cities. The signs of the next century's condemnations of the evils of London and the glorification of the rural idyllic countryside are increasingly prominent. The feared breakdown of social order was seen in the anti-Catholic Gordon Riots of 1780, some of the worst rioting in the history of London since the Peasant's Revolt of four hundred years earlier.[4]

Like most great cities, Restoration and eighteenth-century London was a city of contrasts, and its art and poetry reflect this. The development of the Grosvenor, Bedford, Cadogan, Portman and Harley-Cavendish estates imposed on London some of the grandeur of the capitals of the continent. Impressive buildings

like Buckingham House, Montagu House and the Adelphi and the pleasure gardens at Ranelagh and Vauxhall bespoke the wealth and vaunting of wealth that commerce and empire provided. At the same time the plight of the ill and the poor reached the point of crisis in volume and severity, and the extremity of the situation prompted humane, if partial, relief in the founding of charitable societies and their hospitals: the Westminster Infirmary (1716), Guy's Hospital (1726), the London Hospital, Mile End Road (1740), the Middlesex Hospital (1745) and the Lock Hospital (1746). But most of the wealthy feared the poor, the "London mob," even as they held steadfastly to their belief in the fixed hierarchy of social orders.[5] Thus, for most of society, and especially for London, two classes existed in eighteenth-century society: "the rulers and the ruled, the high and the low people, persons of substance and of independent estate and the loose and disorderly sort. In between, where the professional and middle classes, and the substantial yeomanry, should have been, relations of clientage and dependency were so strong that, at least until the 1760s, these groups appear to offer little deflection of the essential polarities" (Thompson, "Plebian Society" 395).

Urban reformers "could legislate and impose rates and fines for non-performance on docile landlords and lessees, but they could not impose their will or standards of behaviour on the casually employed, the unemployed and workers such as porters and labourers, the impoverished denizens of rookeries, common lodging houses and unfurnished rooms–in short, the mob that made up a large proportion of a Georgian city such as London. The streets were ungovernable and any behaviour short of absolute riot fell below the field of vision of central authority, which was not equipped with an efficient police force" (Cruickshank and Burton 17; see also George 14-15).

Such tensions also manifest energy in prosperity and growth, with strong under and counter currents of opposition and

unrest. The poetry and art of Restoration and eighteenth-century London reflect this in works that satirize and condemn or that praise and celebrate London. Satire is the more vigorous of the two attitudes.

2. SATIRES OF RESTORATION AND 18TH CENTURY LONDON

The moral role of the poet and artist presented difficulties in an age of often corrupt capitalism centered in the City of London. In a great "Age of Satire," Georgian responses to London are broadly satirical and mildly scornful of living in London, but always short of unqualified contempt. For example, the sense of muted contempt of the evils of London is captured in the three imitations of Juvenal's Third Satire that span some fifty years: John Oldham's (1682); Dryden's (1692); and Samuel Johnson's (1738). Contempt for the horrors of living in London is qualified, defused and blunted by the imitation of the classical model. The English versions lack the vitriolic bite of the Latin original, and always suggestively in the background, is the comparison with the ancient and superior capital, that counteracts the satirical depictions of the violence, injustice and corruption of the poets' Restoration and eighteenth-century London. Rome was worse, as John Oldham, in the 480 lines of "The Third Satyr of Juvenal, Imitated" (1682), reports:

[The poet brings in a friend of his, giving him an account why he removes from London to live in the country.]

> Though much concerned to leave my dear old friend,
> I must however his design commend
> Of fixing in the country; for were I
> As free to choose my residence as he,

The Peak, the Fens, the Hundreds, or Land's-end,
I would prefer to Fleet Street, or the Strand.
What place so desert, and so wild is there,
Whose inconveniences one would not bear,
Rather than the alarms of midnight fire,
The fall of houses, knavery of cits,
The plots of factions, and the noise of wits,
And thousand other plagues, which up and down
Each day and hour infest the cursed town? [6]
(ll. 1-13)

Similarly John Dryden (1631-1700), in "The Third Satire of Juvenal" (1692), complains:

Return we to the dangers of the night,
And, first, behold our houses' dreadful height;
From whence come broken potsherds tumbling down;
And leaky ware, from garret windows thrown;
Well may they break our heads, that mark the flinty stone.
'Tis want of sense to sup abroad too late,
Unless thou first hast settled thy estate.
As many fates attend, thy steps to meet,
As there are waking windows in the street.
Bless the good gods, and think thy chance is rare,
To have a pisspot only for thy share. (429-239)

Alexander Pope (1688-1744), in "A Farewell to London in the Year 1715" (1715), reads a bit like a compressed imitation of Juvenal's Third Satire:

Dear, damn'd distracting town, farewell!
Thy fools no more I'll tease.
This year in peace, ye critics, dwell,
Ye harlots, sleep at ease! (ll. 1-4)

Although he eschews his characteristic rhymed couplets, most lines end in monosyllables (usually verbs). Pope also savagely pillories the London literary and publishing scene in *The Dunciad* (1728-1743), with its depiction of the hack writers descending "To where Fleetditch with disemboguing streams/Rolls the large tribute of dead dogs to Thames,/The king of dykes! Than whom no sluice of mud/With deeper sable blots the river flood" (II, 271-74).

John Gay's (1685-1732) "Trivia, or The Art of Walking the Streets of London" (1716) is the greatest London poem of the eighteenth century, effective as satire because the criticisms are so disarmingly presented in a comic but affectionate spirit. "Trivia" imitates the *Georgics* of Virgil, but substitutes the gently mocked sights and scenes of the city for those of the country which had been praised. As early as 1756, Joseph Wharton compared "Trivia" to Hogarth, "describing objects as they really exist in life, like Hogarth's paintings, without heightening or enlarging them, and without adding any imaginary circumstances." [7] Perhaps this isn't quite the case, but Gay's tour de force is significant in a special way. Although satirical walks about London go all the way back (at least) to the fourteenth century, "London Likpoenny" and its successors in the Renaissance, culminating in the satirical prose of Thomas Dekker, no one before John Gay presented the rakes, thieves, spectacles and the gaudy/seedy amusements of London quite so boldly, brightly or completely. He is almost Chaucerian, biting but merry, in "BOOK II: Of Walking the Streets by Day."

For ease and for dispatch, the morning's best;
No tides of passengers the street molest.
You'll see a draggl'd damsel, here and there,
From Billingsgate her fishy traffic bear; [...]
Full charg'd with news the breathless hawker runs.
Shops open, coaches roll, carts shake the ground,

And all the streets with passing cries resound. (8-23)
[...]
See yon bright chariot on its harness swing,
With Flanders mares, and on an arched spring;
That wretch to gain an equipage and place,
Betray'd his sister to a lewd embrace.
This coach that with the blazon'd 'scutcheon glows,
Vain of his unknown race, the coxcomb shows.
Here the bribed lawyer, sunk in velvet, sleeps;
The starving orphan, as he passes, weeps;
There flames a fool, begirt with tinseled slaves,
Who wastes the wealth of a whole race of knaves.
That other, with a clustring train behind,
Owes his new honours to a sordid mind. (451-462)

He elaborates in "Book III: Of Walking The Streets By Night."

Where the mob gathers, swiftly shoot along,
Nor idly mingle in the noisy throng.
Lured by the silver hilt, amid the swarm,
The subtle artist will thy side disarm.
Nor is thy flaxen wig with safety worn;
High on the shoulder in a basket borne.
Lurks the sly boy; whose hand to rapine bred,
Plucks off the curling honours of thy head.
Here dives the skulking thief, with practiced sleight,
And unfelt fingers make thy pocket light.
Where's now thy watch, with all its trinkets, flown?
And thy late snuff-box is no more thy own. (51-62)

The criticisms of Samuel Johnson in "London, in Imitation of the Third Satire of Juvenal" (1738), written in his early struggles to "make it" as a London poet, are somewhat blunted because of his later pronounced enthusiasms for the capital. But as a young man, he warns against a violent London:

Prepare for Death, if here at Night you roam,
And sign your Will before you sup from Home.
Some fiery Fop, with new Commission vain,
Who sleeps on Brambles till he kills his Man;
Some frolick Drunkard, reeling from a Feast,
Provokes a Broil, and stabs you for a Jest.
Yet ev'n these Heroes, mischievously gay,
Lords of the Street, and Terrors of the Way;
Flush'd as they are with Folly, Youth and Wine,
Their prudent Insults to the Poor confine;
Afar they mark the Flambeau's bright Approach,
And shun the shining Train, and golden Coach.

In vain, these Dangers past, your Doors you close,
And hope the balmy Blessings of Repose:
Cruel with Guilt, and daring with Despair,
The midnight Murd'rer bursts the faithless Bar;
Invades the sacred Hour of silent Rest,
And plants, unseen, a Dagger in your Breast. (224-241)

William Cowper (1731-1800) in "The Task" (1785), continues the tendency of the Augustan poets to condemn London as an expected and conventional response that is not quite taken seriously, but the tone changes. Eighteenth-century satire, even at its most vitriolic, expresses a helplessness to expect or effect change. The escape from the harshness of London life that all of her critics advocate suggests only one answer. The huge metropolis and her growing problems cannot be changed. Cowper sharpens the contrasts between dehumanizing London and the healing countryside. Although Cowper is the least revolutionary of poets, "The Task" prophetically signals the contempt for London enunciated by William Wordsworth and other Romantic writers in the next century in "Book I: The Sofa," where he condemns the artifice and dishonesty of the capital:

London is, by taste and wealth proclaim'd
The fairest capital of all the world,
By riot and incontinence the worst.[...]
She has her praise. Now mark a spot or two
That so much beauty would do well to purge;
And show this queen of cities, that so fair
May yet be foul, so witty, yet not wise.
It is not seemly, nor of good report,
That she is slack in discipline.[...]
God made the country, and man made the town.
What wonder then, that health and virtue, gifts
That can alone make sweet the bitter draught
That life holds out to all, should most abound
And least be threatened in the fields and groves?
Possess ye therefore, ye who borne about
In chariots and sedans, know no fatigue
But that of idleness, and taste no scenes
But such as art contrives, possess ye still
Your element; there only ye can shine,
There only minds like yours can do no harm.
Our groves were planted to console at noon
The pensive wand'rer in their shades. At eve
The moon-beam sliding softly in between
The sleeping leaves, is all the light they wish,
Birds warbling all the music. (697-764)

He restates his contempt for London in "Book III. The Garden":

Ambition, av'rice, penury incurr'd
By endless riot; vanity, the lust
Of pleasure and variety, dispatch,
As duly as the swallows disappear,
The world of wand'ring knights and squires to town.
London engulfs then all. The shark is there,
And the shark's prey; the spendthrift, and the leech
That sucks him. There the sycophant, and he
That, with bare-headed and obsequious bows,

Begs a warm office, doom'd to a cold jail,
And groat per diem, if his patron frown.
The levee swarms, as if in golden pomp
Were character'd on ev'ry statesman's door,
"BATTER'D AND BANKRUPT FORTUNES MENDED HERE."
These are the charms that sully and eclipse
The charms of nature.[...] (811-826)

In sum, London is corrupt, dirty, dangerous, prone to drunkenness and violence among the low-born and fraud and deceit among their so-called "betters."

William Blake (1757-1827)–with his bitter observations about the exploited London poor in the *Songs of Innocence* (1789); or the morally outraged contempt for the powers that have condemned them in the *Songs of Experience* (1794)–wants change, if only destroyed are "the mind forged manacles" that perpetuate them. Blake never left London and lived a life of transforming London's injustices and depravations by the imagination, which may be the only possible answer to the anxiety and stress of modern urban life, which London preeminently illustrated, epitomized and symbolized by 1800. The childlike simplicity and directness of voice and tone in his *Songs of Innocence* and *Experience* have a lasting appeal, but present two contrasting states of perception and response: the one naive and simple of trust; the other manifesting a grim awareness that the stern authority of the seemingly moral in actuality masks a repressive and killing conformity and injustice. In both his poetry and his engravings and paintings Blake sought to confront, confound and break the "mind forg'd manacles" and the resulting spiritual regeneration, a necessary stage to the "visionary forms dramatic" of the prophetic books.[8]

The matching and contrasting "Holy Thursday" poems show Blake's keen eye as a social observer of traditional London customs that appear benign and benevolent but–so often with the

treatment of the poor–cover up the controlling and deadening forces of established power and authoritarian control. "London" is one of the most important poems to focus on the repressive conditions of late eighteenth century London life that could only be alleviated by the release and rebirth of the imagination (see Ferber; Johnston; Pechey; and Punter).

Holy Thursday [*Songs of Innocence*] (1789)

'Twas on a Holy Thursday their innocent faces clean,
The children walking two & two in red & blue & green,
Grey-headed beadles walk'd before, with wands as white as
snow,
Till into the high dome of Paul's they like Thames' waters flow.

O what a multitude they seem'd, these flowers of London town!
Seated in companies they sit with radiance all their own.
The hum of multitudes was there, but multitudes of lambs,
Thousands of little boys & girls raising their innocent hands.
(1-8)

Holy Thursday [*Songs of Experience*] (1794)

Is this a holy thing to see,
In a rich and fruitful land,
Babes reduc'd to misery,
Fed with cold and usurous hand?

Is that trembling cry a song?
Can it be a song of joy?
And so many children poor?
It is a land of poverty! (1-8)

London [*Songs of Experience*] (1794)

I wandered thro' each charter'd street,
Near where the charter'd Thames does flow,
And mark in every face I meet
Marks of weakness, marks of woe.

In every cry of every Man,
In every Infant's cry of fear.
In every voice, in every ban,
The mind-forg'd manacles I hear.

How the Chimney-sweeper's cry
Every blackning Church appalls;
And the hapless Soldier's sigh
Runs in blood down Palace walls.

But most thro' midnight streets I hear
How the youthful Harlot's curse
Blasts the new born Infant's tear,
And blights with plagues the Marriage hearse.

3. CELEBRATIONS OF RESTORATION LONDON IN POETRY

But while satire and condemnation dominate the literature of Restoration and eighteenth-century London, celebrations of the variety, energy and delights of the capital are also prominent. Even the often vicious satire of the period stays within certain fixed boundaries. Eighteenth-century written satire, like its counterparts in the visual arts, is almost always based on a sense of the reasonable norm, as it pillories the unreasonable deviations from that standard. The norm is always either apparent or implied. Rules in drama, symmetry in architecture and design, the

formal garden, balance in prose and heroic couplet, all illustrate the profound and pervasive emphasis on order. In all the arts, following the "rules" was the ideal standard, and not "free expression."

The stated emphasis on the general and the public rather than on the personal and private is clearly evident in the literature of the eighteenth century (the classic examples come from Johnson's *Rasselas* [1759] and the *Discourses on Art* [1771] of Joshua Reynolds). In whatever form one looks to for an epitome of the age, elegance, symmetry, balance, decorum, tastefulness, reasonableness, are words that come to mind; in literature "What oft was thought, but ne'er so well expressed."

The Restoration of Charles II initiates many poems about the new peace and stability of the court and the kingdom and London as the epitome of the benefits. Both Edmund Waller's "On St. James's Park, Newly Improved by His Majesty" (1661) and Abraham Cowley's "On the Queen's Repairing Somerset House" (1663) manifestly show this emphasis:

> Before my gate a street's broad channel goes,
> Which still with waves of crowding people flows,
> And every day there passes by my side,
> Up to its western reach, the London tide,
> The Spring-tides of the Term; my front looks down
> On all the pride, and business of the town. [...]
> And here, behold, in a long bending row,
> How two joint Cities make one glorious bow,
> The midst, the noblest place, possess'd by me;
> Best to be seen by all, and all o'ersee.
> Which way soe'r I turn my joyful eye,
> Here the great court, there the rich town, I spy;
> On either side dwells safety and delight;
> Wealth on the left, and power upon the right. (31-52)

Even responses to the greatest London disaster of the seventeenth century, the Great Fire of 1666, become celebrations of the restored London, the New Troy.

John Dryden (1631-1700), in the 1216 lines of *Annus Mirabilis* (1667)–like John Crouch's "London's Second Teares," and an anonymous broadside, "*Vox Civitatis,*" both written and published in 1666–presents the Great Fire of London in 1666 as the burning away of the old for the birth of the new. As "Mother London" in "*Vox Civitates*" expresses it: "Burnt by the raging Fire almost to th' ground: / My present Fall indeed stupendious is, / Yet have I risen from as great as this" (50-52). Dryden thus expresses something of a commonplace London response to the Great Fire, confidence and optimism symbolized by the resurrection of London, like the Phoenix:

> Methinks already, from this chemic flame,
> I see a city of more precious mold
> Rich as the town which gives the Indies name*, [Mexico]
> With silver pav'd, and all divine with gold.
> [...]
>
> Now, like a maiden Queen, she will behold,
> From her high turrets, hourly suitors come,
> The East with incense, and the West with gold
> Will stand, like suppliants, to receive her doom.
>
> The silver Thames, her own domestic flood,
> Shall bear her vessels, like a sweeping train;
> And often wind (as of his mistress proud)
> With longing eyes to meet her face again. (997-1192)

James Wright also responds in "An Essay on the Ruins of St. Paul's Cathedral" (1668) to the devastation of the great monument of London destroyed by the Great Fire. But in later poems, Wright, like Dryden, celebrates the even greater St. Paul's

of Christopher Wren as a symbol of restoration and renewal, most effectively in "The Choire" (1697), which serves as a prelude to Wright's later, more elaborate poem "Phoenix Paulina" (1709). Unlike Dryden, whose tightly controlled emotions sometimes handicap the convincing genuineness of his responses, Wright is both passionately and decorously committed.

"Phoenix Paulina" is notable for its focus on the details of the building (front, dome), used as examples of the artistry of the architect it praises. The verbal panoramic view from the dome that comprises the bulk of the poem includes sketches of London landmarks ranging from the Tower and the Exchange to the distant hills of Hampstead and Highgate and Wren's Royal Hospitals at Greenwich and Chelsea. Along with many paraphrases of celebrations of Rome by Ovid and Horace, Wright offers a neo-Platonic and slightly mystical meditation on the significance of the building. He praises the cathedral's power and beauty, but quietly insists that its real beauty and perfection are spiritual, which the stones and mortar of St. Paul's symbolize in the church's greater role as the palace of God, "the supreme celestial Majesty":

> Let us ascend the All-commanding Height,
> Then, from the Summit of the Dome look down;
> A Visionary Feast regales our Sight,
> When, under us, we view the Boundless Town.[...]
>
> Chief of the Sacred Structures, Westward, see
> A Sister-Minster, famed for many Things;
> For Architecture much; but more, that She
> Is the first Throne, and last Repose of Kings.
>
> Neighbour to This, the Chief of Civil Seats,
> The Spring and Fountain of our Laws, does stand;
> There the contracted Soul of Britain meets,
> Dispersing Life and Vigour through the Land.

> Behold that Chappel, of St. Stephen nam'd,
> Which, for the Palace only, serv'd e'rewhile;
> 'Tis now to a much larger Office fram'd;
> And its Parochial Cure is the whole Isle.[...]
>
> Eastward, the Tower, the Bridge, the Monument,
> With other infinite Remarks from hence,
> To the pleas'd Eye, a copious View present,
> In all Variety of Excellence. (121-156)

Jonathan Swift (1667-1745) without the bitterness of so much of his satirical writing, presents himself as mildly amused and fondly in love with London, in the 18 lines of "A Description of the Morning" (1709) and the 63 lines of "A Description of a City Shower" (1710). In celebrating the filth of London, which so many hated, as evidence of an intensely lived energy and vitality, there is an affinity with the exactly contemporary prose essays on London by Addison and Steele, who published the poems in *The Tattler*. Swift is less celebratory, and more biting in his emphasis on the detritus of London life, but the tone is similar, jolly and merry in "A Description of the Morning" (1709):

> Now hardly here and there a hackney-coach
> Appearing, showed the ruddy morn's approach.
> Now Betty from her master's bed had flown,
> And softly stole to discompose her own.
> The slip-shod 'prentice from his master's door
> Had pared the dirt and sprinkled round the floor.
> Now Moll had whirled her mop with dext'rous airs,
> Prepared to scrub the entry and the stairs.

Similarly, in "A Description of a City Shower":

Now from all parts the swelling kennels flow,
And bear their trophies with them as they go;
Filth of all hues and odours seem to tell
What street they sail'd from, by their sight and smell.
They, as each torrent drives, with rapid force
From Smithfield, or St. Pulchre's shape their course,
And in huge confluent join at Snow-Hill Ridge,
Fall from the Conduit prone to Holborn-Bridge.
Sweepings from butchers' stalls, dung, guts, and blood,
Drown'd puppies, stinking sprats, all drenched in mud,
Dead cats and turnip-tops come tumbling down the flood.
(53-63)

John Bancks (1709-1751) perhaps imitates Swift in the 24 lines of "A Description of London" (1738):

Houses, churches, mixed together,
Streets unpleasant in all weather;
Prisons, palaces contiguous,
Gates, a bridge, the Thames irriguous.

Gaudy things enough to tempt ye,
Showy outsides, insides empty;
Bubbles, trades, mechanic arts,
Coaches, wheelbarrows and carts. [1-8]

For sheer delight, it is difficult to improve on the two London nursery or jump-rope rhymes. The 36 lines of "London Bridge is Broken Down" (c. 1725) were first published in *Tommy Thumb's Pretty Song Book* (1744):

London Bridge is broken down,
Dance over my Lady Lee.
London Bridge is broken down,
With a gay Lady. (1-4)

"The Merry Bells of London" ("Oranges and Lemons") was first published in *Gammer Gurton's Garland* (1784), with many of the verses having been printed earlier in *Tommy Thumb's Pretty Song Book* (1744), which itself presented materials already a hundred or more years old. Like its companion, "London Bridge is Broken Down," the earliest reference to "The Merry Bells of London" is as a dance, "Oranges and Lemons," recorded in the *Dancing Master* (1665). What is most striking is how this lovely and playful children's song captures the mercantile ethos of London; for although it purports to be about the bells of London's churches, it really is about commerce and financial transactions:

Gay go up and gay go down,
To ring the bells of London Town.

Two sticks and an apple,
Say the bell at Whitechapel.

Old father Baldpate,
Say the slow bells at Aldgate.

Maids in white aprons,
Say the bells of St. Catherine's.

Oranges and lemons,
Say the bells of St. Clement's.

Bull's eyes and targets,
Say the bells of St. Margaret's

Brickbats and tiles,
Say the bells of St. Giles.

Kettles and pans,
Say the bells of St. Ann's.

Pokers and tongs,
Say the bells of St. John's.

Halfpence and farthings,
Say the bells of St. Martin's.

You owe me ten shillings
Say the bells of St. Helen's.

When will you pay me?
Say the bells of Old Bailey.

When I grow rich,
Say the bells of Shoreditch.

Pray, when will that be?
Say the bells of Stepney?

I am sure I don't know,
Say the great bells at Bow.

When I am old,
Say the bells at St. Paul's.

Here comes a candle to light you to bed,
Here comes a chopper to cut off your head. (1-34)

Perhaps the last line of "Oranges and Lemons" affords a grim reminder of the violence identified with the city; but Charles Morris (1745-1838) in "Country and Town" (1797) has no question about his love of London's society:

In London how easy we visit and meet,
Gay pleasure the theme and sweet smiles are our treat;
Our morning's a round of good-humoured delight,
And we rattle in comfort and pleasure all night.

In the country how charming our visits to make
Through ten miles of mud for formality's sake,
With the coachman in drink and the moon in a fog,
And no thought in our head but a ditch and a bog.[...]

You jays and your magpies may chatter on trees,
And whisper soft nonsense in groves if they please;
But a house is much more to my mind than a tree,
And for groves, O! a fine grove of chimneys for me.

Then in town let me live and in town let me die,
For in truth I can't relish the country, not I.
If one must have a villa in summer to dwell,
O give me the sweet shady side of Pall Mall. (17-44)

His comments are echoed by Charles Lamb writing in 1801 to William Wordsworth who was at work on *The Prelude*, with extended and powerful condemnations of London. Declining an invitation to visit the Romantic poet in the country, Lamb writes of his love of the capital:

> Separate from the pleasure of your company, I don't much care if I never see a mountain in my life. I have passed all my days in London, until I have formed as many and intense local attachments, as any of you mountaineers can have done with dead nature....London itself a pantomime and a masquerade,–all these things work themselves into my mind and feed me, without a power of satiating me. The wonder of these sights impells me into night-walks about her crowded streets, and I often shed tears in the motley Strand from fulness of joy at so much Life.

4. RESTORATION AND EIGHTEENTH-CENTURY LONDON IN THE VISUAL ARTS: 1666-1800[9]

In part because of the influence of the landscape and cityscape tradition established by the Dutch, the seventeenth century sees the flourishing of a great series of panoramas, the London cityscapes, in both painting and engraved prints, such as those by Claus Janz Visscher and Wenceslaus Hollar. This increase in cityscapes was due to the rise in commercial importance of cities and the consequent interest and support of wealthy patrons and buyers, the easy adaptation of the square lines and angles of buildings to relatively cheap engraving and printing, and the decline in a demand for religious narrative work due to Protestant iconoclasm and disinterest in the saints and their legends.[10]

The period after the relative peace of the Restoration commences with an important view of Westminster, Cornelis Bol's *A View on the Thames* (c.1660), continuing the pictorial tradition of similar works in the earlier seventeenth century. This view suggests the popular fashion of civic pride which led to the commissioning and buying of paintings and engravings of London scenes and cityscapes. The disaster of the Great Fire of 1666 produced over a dozen spectacular paintings, engravings and drawings, by Thomas Wyck (c. 1616-1677), Jan Griffier the Elder (1645-1718), and others.

As London rapidly grew in the eighteenth century in size and importance, many London scenes and panoramic views recorded in engraved prints and paintings proliferated. They are also evidence of the new interest and pride in urban matters, part of the eighteenth-century emphasis on the worth and importance of society and public experience. The "Prospects" of John Kip in the 1720s and the elaborate panoramas such as those published by John Bowles in 1731 and 1736 culminate in the elaborate London project of the brothers Samuel and Nathaniel Buck in

1749, as part of their series of engravings of eighty-nine town prospects.

The glory and the shame of London in the eighteenth century are epitomized in the sharply contrasting works of Canaletto (1697-1768) and William Hogarth (1697-1764). The contradictions between Canaletto's detached grand celebration of the wealth, power and pomp of London and Hogarth's involved satiric condemnation of the violence, corruption and inhumanity of London life could not be sharper. Canaletto's painted, distantly viewed panoramas of the Thames and the London cityscape between 1746 and 1756 are exemplified in *The Thames on Lord Mayor's Day* (1747), *Westminster Bridge from the North on Lord Mayor's Day* (1747), *London: the Thames and the City of London from Richmond House* (1747) and the two views "towards The City" and "toward Westminster," as companion paintings of *The Thames from Somerset House* (1746-51). He also painted scenes in Whitehall, Westminster and Greenwich which portray a sense of the fashionable life of London, always with reserve and a sanitized decorum, as in *Whitehall and the Privy Garden from Richmond House* (1747) and *Whitehall and the Privy Garden Looking North* (1747). He attempted to evoke something of the rich pageantry of Venetian civic life in *London: Westminster Abbey, with a Procession of the Knights of the Order of the Bath* (1749), but the buildings dominate all. So also do they in *Northumberland House* (1752-1753), *London: Greenwich Hospital from the North Bank of the Thames* (1754), and in finished drawings like *London: Northumberland House* (1753) and *Old Walton Bridge* (1755).

In contrast, although he also painted and engraved for a middle class audience, Hogarth showed the violence of the London streets and the tawdriness and disorder of the life inside the Strand mansions. Both artists prized order, harmony and balance. Canaletto, in the distant and static scenes of his *Vedute*, pretended it was everywhere of importance in London. Hogarth, in the street-wise and dynamic scenes of his satires, showed that

it existed randomly and incompletely. His satiric vision, like that in the seventeenth-century prose of Thomas Dekker, convinces us that the street life around Covent Garden and Bloomsbury presented in *The 4 Times of the Day* (1738) and *Gin Lane* (1750-51) is accurately portrayed. In both *A Rake's Progress* (1734-35) and *Marriage a la Mode* (1743-45), he depicted the sordid, sad and money-driven depravity behind the impressive façades of London mansions. He showed the foul underside of London wealth and prosperity. Similarly the cruelty of the London streets appears vividly in *The Four Stages of Cruelty* (1750-51). Hogarth is important because he documented the difficulties of eighteenth-century London life, convincing us by his deft and creative uses of rhetorical "realism." As one critic remarks:

> He recorded with verve and energy in a lasting reportorial style the fortunes of the English middle and lower classes in their efforts to establish themselves in a world dominated by an older order often hostile to them and their values. He also pictured the subtle and overt violence inflicted by a mercenary urban society upon its special prey: the poor, children and women. And he recorded also the perennial vanity, cruelty, folly and self-delusion people practice on themselves and on each other, both in their grim and in their comic manifestations.[11]

In addition to Hogarth, other artists emphasized the disorder of London life, driven by fraudulent wealth, and "covered" by the sham veneer of "good manners." For example, Pieter Angillis (1685-1734) and Balthasar Nebot (fl. 1735-1750) both painted *Covent Garden Market* (c. 1726 and c.1737) and present the grand and impressive London, lovely and prosperous, while Louis-Phillipe Boitard shows the underside of the same place, in an engraved scene of lawlessness and debauchery, *The Covent Garden Morning Frolic* (1747). Later in the century Thomas

Rowlandson (1756-1827) continues the Hogarthian satirical tradition in his watercolors of the 1780s, although he is mild by comparison, and charmingly humorous rather than provocatively severe. He lacked Hogarth's incisiveness and depended more on caricature.[12] So also did Robert Dighton (1752-1814) in his watercolor, *The Westminster Election of 1788* (1788).

Most of the artists of eighteenth-century London celebrated the grandeur, power and confidence of the growing world capital. Important contemporaries of Canaletto, though lesser artists, were Jan Griffier the younger (1690-1750), Antonio Joli (1700-1777) and Samuel Scott (1702-1772). Griffier's monumental *The Thames during the Great Frost of 1739-40* (1739) presents a bird's eye view of the curve of the Thames at Westminster with the eastern skyline dominated by St. Paul's in the distance. Joli came from Venice to work as a theatrical scene painter in London, and several of his paintings are as grand as Canaletto's: *Capriccio with a view of the Thames and St. Paul's* (1746), *The Thames looking toward the City* and *The Thames looking toward Westminster*, a matched pair of views (1746). Scott was less expansive, not trying to paint London as if it were a vast Venice; but he is often more convincingly "accurate." In works like *Westminster Abbey, St. Margaret's and Westminster Hall* (1743-44), *A View over the River Thames toward Westminster* (1749), *Old London Bridge* (c.1750), *An Arch of Westminster Bridge* (1750), *A Quay on the Thames at London* (c. 1756) and *Covent Garden Piazza and Market* (1749-58), Scott was warmer and more involved than the Italian visitors. The Englishman clearly was a lover of the London he painted.

Less obviously so was Paul Sandby (1730-1809), in panoramas like his *View towards Westminster from the Terrace of Somerset House* (c.1799). His restraint was dictated by the techniques of the aquatint he invented, but the social scene lacks passion and the focus is on the dress of the lovely (but idle) rich, almost as much as it is in Thomas Gainsborough's (1727-1780)

very beautiful *The Mall in St. James's Park* (1783), which presents a London scene as if it were in an elegant country estate; as does a watercolor of Edward Dayes (1763-1804), *The Promenade in St. James's Park* (1790). Thomas Rowlandson was satirical of the social life that appears in *Vauxhall Gardens* (1784) depicting on the left Samuel Johnson devouring his meal and on the right towering summer trees with elaborately gowned men and women flirting and chatting beneath the ostentatious pleasure palace between. William Marlow (1740-1813) painted important London scenes, such as *Ludgate Hill* (c.1775), *Fish Hill and the Monument* (1790) and *Blackfriars Bridge and St. Paul's Cathedral* (c. 1790). So too did Thomas Malton (1748-1804), whose London paintings culminated in *A Picturesque Tour through London and Westminster* (1792). An important popular documentary of London was recorded in Robert Barker's (1739-1806) panorama, *London from the Roof of the Albion Mills* (1792-1793) which was exhibited in the Rotunda in Leicester Square.

Restoration and eighteenth-century London poetry and art present a city that is taken for granted as a city; but, since society and a city gave identity, necessary for reference and a fundamental and needed sense of place, a rootedness; London was, as it still is, a symbol of human achievement and human limitations. In the "Age of Reason," despite its pronounced love of satirical responses to London, there remained strong convictions in society that even the capital's injustices and failures could be corrected, minimized and perhaps overcome.

And change was in the air. By the end of the 18th century, "British art had developed from the rule of taste to the rule of liberty. But already the boundaries of the battlefield on which would be fought the war between romanticism and classicism, between sense and sensibility, had been defined" (Denvir 24).

In conclusion, the contrasts in the art and poetry that celebrates Restoration and eighteenth century London, and that which condemns it equally as powerfully, bespeak two opposed

responses to urban life and experience. We love and enjoy cities for their complexity, diversity, energy and vitality. We also hate and fear cities for their inhumanity, violence, corruption and pollution. These are not peculiar to the London of 1660 to 1798, but their contrasts were perhaps first most sharply defined there, and as London was the "first world city," transmitted to later centuries, and still with us at the end of this one.

Notes

[1] "In 1688 the City of London appeared almost as a separate estate of the realm. The Lord Mayor, aldermen, and fifty common councillors were summoned to sit with the members of Parliament in December to decide on the country's future. In 1660 the City had probably played the decisive part in restoring Charles II; in 1688 its leading role was formally recognized" (Hill 25). The Whig leadership was staunchly aristocratic and "their chief support in the City came from the great business magnates with a heavy stake in the establishment" (Holmes 14). See also Jones 64.

[2] London's increasing importance in the latter part of the seventeenth century and throughout the eighteenth is indicated by appearance of the many historical guides to London, especially for foreign visitors. The earliest guides concentrated on Westminster Abbey (William Camden, 1600) or St. Paul"s (William Dugdale, 1658). Traveler's accounts include Paul Hentzer, *A Journey into England in the Year 1598* (Breslau, 1617; London 1757); Samuel Sorbiere, *A Voyage to England* (Paris, 1664; English translation, 1709). The first general guide was by Nathaniel Crouch (as "Richard Burton"), *Historical Remarques and Observations of the Ancient and Present State of London and Westminster...with an account of the most remarkable accidents...till the*

year 1681, a scrappy overview, derived from Stow and Howell, followed Thomas de Laune *The Present State of London...*(1681), François Colsoni, *Le Guide de Londres pour les Estrangers...*(1693). Two German guides were published in 1706 and 1726. Some eight other guides appeared during the middle of the century, including William Stow's *Remarks on London: being an Exact Survey of the Cities of London and Westminster* (1722), and a Dutch guide in 1759. A number of French guides (several by refugees from the Revolution) appeared at the end of the century. Among the more important travel memoirs by continental visitors are Pierre Jean Grosley, (from) *A Tour to London* (1772), Charles P. Moritz, (from) *Travels, Chiefly on Foot, Through Several Parts of England in 1782* (translated by a Lady in 1795) (1782) and Friedrich August Wendeborn, (from) *A View of England Towards the Close of the Eighteenth Century* (1791).

[3] Some of the major buildings and works of eighteenth-century London include: James Gibbs: St. Mary-le-Strand (1714-17); St. Martin in the Fields (1722-26); Nicholas Hawksmoor: Christ Church, Spitalfields (1714-29); St. Anne, Limehouse (1712-30); St. Mary Woolnoth (1716-24); St. George, Bloomsbury (1716-31); Towers of Westminster Abbey (1734-40); Thomas Archer: St, John"s, Smith Square (1717-28); Lord Burlington: Chiswick House (1725-29); Westminster Bridge (1737-1750); William Kent: The Horse Guards (1745-60); George Dance (the Elder): Mansion House (c. 1750); Robert Mylne: Blackfriars Bridge (1760-1769); Robert Adam: Kenwood House, Hampstead (c.1770); Fitzroy Square (1793-98); John Soane: Bank of England (1788); George Dance (the Younger): Guildhall (1788-89). See Downes and Sinclair.

[4] "Although in comparison with the seventeenth century, when it was torn apart by civil war, and with the nineteenth century, when it was divided by reform, Augustan England seems remarkably stable and peaceful, there were nevertheless profound disagreements about the ways in which society was

developing. Some reacted to change with unease and even apprehension. They regretted the passing of a more structured society which they imagined had existed in the recent or remote past. Politically they found refuge in what has been called the politics of nostalgia. Others welcomed change, some cautiously, some eagerly, discerning in its signs of progress rather than of decadence" (Speck 189). Perhaps the surest sign of this undercurrent of unrest, dissent and questioning is in the life of the Church. Thus, arguably what most characterizes the church is a growing calcification of the established church and reactions against its declining impact either by a secular withdrawal to science or materialism; or a charismatic conversion to one of the many sects in eighteenth century England, most more or less antinomian and scornful of the stern God the father of the Old Testament while embracing God's loving son. The proliferation of these dissenting sects attests to the fragmentation induced by the Protestant Reformation and the decline of the importance of religion by the end of the seventeenth century: Diggers, Ranters, Behmenists, Philadelphians, Seekers, Familists (the Family of Love) and Muggletonians, this last having a strong influence on William Blake. The Methodists became the most flourishing religious group who started in the heart of London, so that by "1760 Methodism was easily the most highly coordinated body of opinion in the country, the most fervent, the most dynamic. Had it been bent on revolution in Church or State nothing could have stopped it" (Plumb 93-94, 96-97). The Methodists get a fairer and finer treatment by Knox.

[5] As Isaac Watts phrased it in his *Essay towards the Encouragement of Charity Schools* (1728): "The Great God has wisely ordained in the course of His Providence in all ages, that among mankind there should be some rich and some poor. And the same Providence hath allotted to the poor the meaner services, and hath given to the rich the superior and more honourable business of life. Nor is it possible according to the present course of nature

and human affairs to alter this constitution of things, nor is it our design to attempt anything so unreasonable" (qtd. in McInnes 90).

[6] This and all of the other literary quotations used in this paper are taken from Baron. Roy Porter's generally favorable review of *London 1066-1914* dislikes my not including the satirical dramatists–especially fertile in the Stuart and Georgian periods (Porter 237).

[7] Quoted in Irving 26. For similar, but lesser works, see, for example, Thomas D'Urfey, *Collin's Walk Through London and Westminster* (1690); Richard Ames three "Search after Claret" rambles (1691) and Ned Ward's *Journey to Hell* (1700) and *Vade Mecum for Malt-Worms* (1712). See Irving for a full discussion. John Wilmot had written an celebratory "Ramble in St. James's Park," and recording the promenade of the upper classes becomes a fixed motif of Gainsborough, Rowlandson and others. "Trivia" introduces into English literature the "flaneur" so important in Baudelaire, T. S. Eliot, and others. Gay's walker is more jovial and energetic, less filled with angst and ennui, but he presents the detached observer of the city as the characteristic role of the city native and visitor, that continues right on to the present. Lord Byron in *Don Juan* (1819-1824) is the great imitator and continuator, in the nineteenth century, of John Gay's "Trivia"; just as Elisabeth Hauptmann/Bertold Brecht and Kurt Weill bring Gay's *Beggar"s Opera* (1728) into the twentieth century with the *Three Penny Opera* (1928). All are timeless explorations of the London experience.

[8] Echoing throughout Blake's work are the ideas of the Muggletonians (founded by Lodowicke Muggleton): total identity of God and Christ, the satanic nature of reason and the indwelling divinity of man, anticlericalism, belief in the supreme value of liberty and their intellectual anti-intellectualism. See Thompson *(Witness Against the Beast)*, who argues that the seventeenth-century radical Puritan tradition survived in Eighteenth century

dissent and fused with the political radicalism of the 1790s in Blake's thought.

[9] This section is largely taken from my "Afterword: London in the Visual Arts, 1066-1914," in *London 1066-1914: Literary Sources and Documents* cited above. An enlarged version will also be part of the "Introduction to Part I: London in Art, 1603-1800," of my *London in Art: Art History Sources and Documents,* to be published in 2000.

[10] The fullest discussion of the painted panoramas and their relation to the engraved views of Visscher, Merian and others is in Galinou. See also Hyde, and Griffiths and Kesnerova.

[11] Shesgreen xxiv. He also points out the similarities (if not the indebtedness) to the "modern philosophical realism" of John Locke. See also Watt, for affinities among Hogarth, Locke, Daniel Defoe, Henry Fielding and Samuel Richardson. Pevsner has an important chapter on "Hogarth and Observed Life" (26-55). Paulson is persuasive in emphasizing the literary affinities of Hogarth. See also Byrd.

[12] See Hayes. He "lacked the emotional involvement with the troubles of his age which gives urgency and bite to the satirist"s pen--he was too content with the superficial, too little capable of sympathy" (7).

Works Cited

Baron, Xavier, ed. *London 1066-1914: Literary Sources and Documents.* 3 vols. Mountfield, UK: Helm Information, 1997.

Brett-James, Norman G. *The Growth of Stuart London*. London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1935.

Byrd, Max. *London Transformed: Images of the City in the Eighteenth Century*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1978.

Cruickshank, Dan and Neil Burton. *Life in the Georgian City*. New York: Viking Penguin, 1990.

Denvir, Bernard. *The Eighteenth Century: Art, Design, and Society, 1769-1789*. White Plains: Longman, 1983.

Downes, Kerry. *The Architecture of Wren*. London: Granada, 1982.

Ferber, Michael. "London and its Politics." *ELH* 18 (1981): 310-338.

Galinou, Mireille. "Acquisition in Focus: 'London from Southwark' (Museum of London)." *Apollo* December 1994: 45-51.

George, Mary Dorothy. *London Life in the Eighteenth Century*. New York: Harper and Row, 1965. Orig. Pub. 1925.

Griffiths, Antony and Gabriela Kesnerova. *Wenceslaus Hollar: Prints and Drawings*. London: British Museum, 1983.

Hayes, John. *A Catalogue of the Watercolor Drawings by Thomas Rowlandson in the London Museum*. London: HM Stationary Office, 1960.

Hill, Christopher. *The Century of Revolution: 1603-1714*. New York: Norton, 1982.

Holmes, Geoffrey. "Introduction: Post-Revolution Britain and the Historian." *Britain after the Glorious Revolution 1689-1714*. Ed. Geoffrey Holmes. New York: St. Martins P, 1969.

Hyde, Ralph. *Gilded Scenes and Shining Prospects: Panoramic Views of British Towns, 1575-1900*. New Haven: Yale UP, 1985.

Irving, William Henry. *John Gay's London Illustrated from the Poetry of the Time*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1928.

Johnston, Kenneth R. "Blake's Cities: Romantic Forms of Urban Renewal." *Blake's Visionary Forms Dramatic*. Ed. David V. Erdmam and John E. Grant. Princeton: Princeton UP, 1970. 413-442.

Jones, J.R. "Parties and Parliament." *The Restored Monarchy 1660-1688*. Ed. J. R. Jones. Totowa, NJ: Rowman and Littlefield, 1979.

Knox, Ronald. *Enthusiasm A Chapter in the History of Religion*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame P, 1994. Orig. Pub. 1950.

McInnes, Angus. "The Revolution and the People." *Britain after the Glorious Revolution 1689-1714*. Ed. Geoffrey Holmes. New York: St. Martin's P, 1969.

The Oxford Dictionary of Nursery Rhymes. Ed. Iona and Peter Opie. Oxford: Clarendon P, 1952.

Paulson, Ronald. *Hogarth*. 3 vols. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers UP, 1990-1993.

Pechey, Graham. "The London Motif in some Eighteenth-Century Contexts: A Semiotic Study." *Literature and History* 4 (1976): 2-29.

Pevsner, Nikolaus. *The Englishness of English Art*. New York: Viking Penguin, 1979. Orig. Pub. 1956.

Plumb, J.H. "John Wesley and the Road to Salvation." *England in the Eighteenth Century (1714-1815)*. Harmondsworth, Eng.: Penguin, 1951.

Porter, Roy. "Review Article: Writing London." *Journal of Historical Geography* 25 (1999): 235-40.

Punter, David. "Blake and the Shapes of London." *Criticism* 23 (1981): 1-23.

Service, Alistair. *The Architects of London*. London: Architectural P, 1979.

Shesgreen, Sean. "Introduction." *Engravings by Hogarth*. Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 1973.

Speck, W.A. *Society and Literature in England 1700-1760*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan; Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Humanities P, 1983.

Thompson, E.P. "Patrician Society, Plebian Culture." *Journal of Social History* 4 (1979): 395.

Thompson, E.P. *Witness Against the Beast William Blake and the Moral Law*. New York: The New Press, 1994.

Watt, Ian. *The Rise of the Novel*. Berkeley: U of California P, 1957.

Webb, David. "Guide Books to London Before 1800: A Survey." *London Topographical Record* 26 (1990): 138-152.

Williams, Raymond. *The Country and the City*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1975.

Jonson's Comedies of Manners

Douglas A. Northrop
Ripon College

Three differences are immediately striking when we compare *Every Man in His Humor* (1598) with *Every Man out of His Humor* (1599). First, clearly *Every Man in His Humor* is a new comedy, that is, a comedy with a plot requiring a resolution which comes in a marriage and a feast, just as Northrop Frye (163-5) and others would have it.[1] A new society emerges centering around a younger couple with more freedom from the constraints of the older, conventional society, some members of which are excluded from the harmony. Just as clearly, *Every Man out of His Humor* is an old comedy (a *vetus commedia*, as Jonson himself calls it in the Induction, l. 233), a comedy of revelation, not resolution.[2] The plot quite specifically ends in a feast disrupted and overthrown, and there is no marriage and no new society. Characters are revealed to themselves and to others,

but no judgments are made as to whom to include or exclude from a celebration. As J. W. Lever warns us, although they have similar names, "the plays belong to two distinct dramatic genres" (xiii).

The second difference follows from and indeed is part of the first. The characters of *Every Man in His Humor* are based on the stock characters of new comedy: the young hero tries to get free of the supervision of the senex, his father. There is the wonderful braggart soldier, Bobadil; the city gull Matthew parallels the country gull Stephen. There is Downright, whom Jonson calls a plain squire while Northrop Frye calls the type a plain dealer (176, 178). We get two jealous husbands on two social levels: Kitely as the merchant and Cob as the water carrier, but both fearing, quite unnecessarily, the cuckold's horns. And, of course, the tricky servant, without whom no new comedy plot would move, in this instance called Brainworm. His devices must produce both the muddles and the confrontations from which the plot grows.

In *Every Man out of His Humor*, on the other hand, one is tempted to say the characters are drawn from life, not art. They have literary ancestors, perhaps even the Canterbury pilgrims, but they do not begin in dramatic cliches or stereotypes. They include a scholar, a knight, a jester, a courtier, a citizen, a court lady, and others as Jonson names them in the cast list. I don't intend to demean the characterization in *Every Man in His Humor*, which is rich and subtle, only to remind us of the source of the characters.

The third difference is that the conclusion of *Every Man in His Humor* is in the hands of a judge, while the conclusion of *Every Man out of His Humor* is in the hands of a scholar. Brainworm, the tricky servant in *Every Man in His Humor*, has been responsible for the plot convolutions that occur, but it is Justice Clement who gets the responsibility of sorting it all out and distributing the rewards and punishments as the characters deserve. Bobadil and Matthew

will be excluded from the feast, Stephen will be assigned to the kitchen for his meal, Brainworm will be forgiven for all his clever deceptions, and the married couple will be feasted, setting a new or renewed standard of marital harmony to which Kitely and his wife and Cob and his wife are invited. And it is Justice Clement who decides all of this. In *Every Man out of His Humor* the scholar, Macilente, mostly observes and comments throughout the play, but at the end takes the actions that bring about the final revelations and the growth in self-awareness that stand for the conclusion of the play. Macilente devises the trick to reveal the court lady Saviolina's lack of sophistication; he arranges the dinner and urges on Carlo Buffone to irritate the knight, leaving Fungoso to pay the bill; and he brings the Fastidious Brisk-Fallace affair to conclusion by revealing Brisk's lack of status at court and Fallace's infatuation with him to Deliro, Brisk's creditor and Fallace's doting husband.

This third point of difference is particularly important to the nature of the comedies, and to Jonson's treatment of manners in each play. Judge Clement presides at a trial–a comic trial, but nevertheless a trial with witnesses and charges. He needs to determine what happened, who did what to whom. There are specific acts to be considered; there are specific laws or rules to follow; there are questions of guilt or innocence to decide. Among others, there are issues of adultery, plagiarism, theft, and assault to settle. In *Every Man out of His Humor* the only specifically unjust act is by Macilente who poisons the knight's dog, which Anne Barton calls "unpleasant and disturbing" (72). Macilente then accuses Shift of stealing it, and is never questioned or punished for the misdeed. In this play the specific act is of little significance; it seems to be the general attitude or behavior that is important. Thus, while *Every Man in His Humor* needs a judge to settle the justice of various activities, *Every Man out of His Humor* needs a scholar to analyze and expose the characteristics and hypocrisies of the society.

Insight into this difference is offered by noting that *Every Man in His Humor* is largely concerned with issues of guilt while *Every Man out of His Humor* is largely concerned with issues of shame. The contrast of guilt cultures and shame cultures is of venerable standing, perhaps most notably presented in Ruth Benedict's contrast of American and Japanese cultures as representing fairly pure types in her book, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword*, 1946. Douglas Cairn refined those definitions in *Aidos: The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature*, 1993, and even more recently Stuart Schneiderman has discussed America in a book entitled *Saving Face: America and the Politics of Shame*, 1995. Schneiderman summarizes the distinction:

> Theoretically, the difference is this: a shame culture provides a uniform code of conduct to promote civility, propriety, dignity, integrity, and honor. Group cohesion is more important than individual expression and good behavior is encouraged by knowledge that the consequence of deviation is expulsion from the group. The behavior of each individual reflects well or badly on the group reputation.
>
> A guilt culture attempts to control behavior by passing laws and punishing transgression. The guilty party is treated as an individual: he alone is punished; his group has no responsibility for his misdeeds. (5-6)

Cairns offers another insight when he says that "shame is concerned with the self as a whole, with what kind of person one is and would like to be...[while] guilt is concerned with one's actions as an agent, with what one does" (21).

Part of Schneiderman's argument is that America has traditionally balanced the characteristics of these two perspectives; he calls Hamilton a defender of the qualities associated with a shame culture and Jefferson of those associated with a guilt culture. To help clarify the distinction he is using, one

might reflect on one of the differences in the parties arguing the impeachment of President Clinton. The Republicans often took the position of the shame culture, for they were sure Clinton had offended propriety and behaved shamefully. The Democrats or the White House spokespersons argued that from the perspective of a guilt culture there must be specific transgressions of specific laws. Another example might be offered in the changes often lamented in both amateur and professional sports which are viewed as in a process of consistent change from a shame culture dependent upon the integrity and honor of the participants to a guilt culture dependent upon the ever-increasing rules and decisions by referees and umpires.

Thus, the fact that a judge distributes the punishments for transgressions in *Every Man in His Humor* suggests the dominance of a guilt culture, and the fact that in *Every Man out of His Humor* transgressions are ignored, but honor, dignity, and integrity are emphasized suggest the dominance of a shame culture.

Lever has asserted that *Every Man in His Humor* is more concerned with defining a gentleman than in exploring, exposing, and expelling humors (xvi). There may be less conflict between those two interests than is immediately apparent. One of the broad themes in both *Every Man* plays is the pretense of characters to be something other than what they are. Characters try to take on qualities that don't belong to them. They imitate the actions, attitudes, and appearance of others, whether the source is literary or immediate. This behavior is particularly clear in those characters trying to become gentlemen, Stephen in *Every Man in His Humor* and Sogliardo in *Every Man out of His Humor*. Stephen, who is by birth a gentleman, wants desperately to look and behave like one; therefore, he engages in a series of specific acts which he believes will get him the quality of a gentleman. He begins by buying a hawk and then tries to borrow a book on how to raise it. He seeks the advice of his uncle Knowell on how to behave. He abuses a servant, he buys a worthless sword, he

imitates the oath-swearing ability of Bobadil, and he steals a cloak. Clearly, he doesn't know what the quality of a gentleman is any more than he can tell the quality of a sword; he hopes a number of specific actions and postures will add up to the general thing he seeks. The situation is similar for Sogliardo: while he has the money and land, he does not have the quality or the reality of being a gentleman. He is quite explicit about his willingness to pay for the appearance of being a gentleman and goes to the city to buy a coat of arms. Sogliardo gets practical advice from Buffone on how to appear like a gentleman (or perhaps like a caricature of a gentleman). He is urged to move to the city, to spend the equivalent of 500 acres of land for a few suits of clothes, to imitate the behavior and speech (especially oaths) of the fashionable, and to be melancholy.

Both Stephen and Sogliardo err in seeking a general quality by imitating or acquiring specific features, just as Fungoso tries to be a man of fashion by imitating the specific dress of Fastidious Brisk, only to find that Brisk has changed outfits, and Fungoso is always one style behind. Indeed, this is a characteristic problem in trying to be a gentleman. If you have to ask how, you can't be one. Any list of qualities and characteristics will automatically defeat the overall intention. But, while Castiglione insisted that one can't list or learn how to be a gentleman or gentlewoman, the fact is that he did provide examples and specific qualities that are needed. Furthermore, in the very first edition of Hoby's translation into English of *The Courtier* there is an extended list at the back of the book entitled: "A briefe rehearsal of the chiefe conditions and qualities required in a Courtier." It lists out in useful handbook form just the kind of information that both Stephen and Sogliardo seek. The list may be closer to Knowell's advice to Stephen in content, but it is closer to Buffone's advice to Sogliardo in the number of qualities listed and the specificity of advice. What has happened is that an issue of shame where general ideology and consensus are needed has

been turned into an issue of guilt where a specific set of laws is established.

What all the advice manuals on courtesy produced was people imitating the fashions of manners or the externals of gentle behavior. Castiglione has argued that one destroys the quality of gracefulness by enumerating the specific features that make it up. Gracefulness is precisely not trying too hard to show off your qualities, that is the force of *sprezzatura*. Or as Spenser would have it in Book VI of *The Faerie Queene*, the Book of Courtesy, the effort to understand grace makes it vanish. Calidore spies on the graces dancing, but when "resoluing, what it was, to know," they immediately disappear (6.10.17).

In the revisions Jonson made before *Every Man in His Humor* was published in the 1616 folio he consistently adds particular details, nowhere to better effect than in the rewriting of the Lorenzo/Knowell speech which attempts to justify his suspicions of his son. Instead of a reason versus affections discussion, we have a charming exploration of "What's the matter with kids today?" Again in Knowell's advice to Stephen on gentility, additional stress is placed on the words and acts by which Stephen must "make, or hold it" (1.1.89). A Prologue is added to the Folio which emphasizes the failure of much previous drama to follow the unities of time and place: bringing a character from swaddling clothes to a bearded man within a play or having a Chorus waft the audience across the seas. These failures to follow the rules are treated as transgressions, just like the other human follies and crimes which in the course of the play will be detailed, judged, and punished.

Every Man in His Humor, then, is consistently presented as a comedy which identifies particular transgressions of the rules and punishes them. The revisions frequently increase the particularity of the transgressions and point up the importance of specific actions. These specific misdeeds are punished within the play by internal laughter as well as beating, ridicule, and

exclusion from the final feast. However, insofar as Jonson is urging gentlemanly behavior as the goal sought, there is an internal contradiction. If gentility is a quality not attained by a series of specific actions, then the play, however successful as a comedy, will not satisfy the moral or behavioral goal. Punishing transgressions does not build the community needed; the audience remains apart, laughing at the folly, but not participating in the values which underlie the quality of gentility.

Instead of punishing transgressions of the rules, *Every Man out of His Humor* seems to insist, from the beginning, on breaking the rules. The play begins after the second sounding, so that when the Prologue comes out at the proper time after the third sounding, too much has already been spoken: we are 290 lines into the play. There then follows an argument about who shall speak the prologue, settled by another character from the play itself, Carlo Buffone, coming forward and proposing to drink a health to the audience in place of a prologue. Jonson continues to break down the established boundaries between the play and the audience by having the two characters who began the action continue to sit on stage as members of the audience and comment on the play as it progresses. One raises questions and objections to the action; the other answers and explains. Robert N. Watson argues that the chorus or Grex sitting on stage and commenting "mediates between the audience and the play" (51).

Three topics are discussed by these players pretending not to be players. The first is the definition and use of the term humor. Asper, who is supposed to be the author of the play we are about to see and who will play the part of Macilente within the play, argues that the term humor has been perverted from its original sense of one of the four humors of the body, the imbalance of which created a basic disposition, and extended by metaphor to mean any quirk or affectation of character or behavior. Clearly, the complaint is that a general condition has been turned into a series of specific qualities. The second topic is broached when

Asper explains to Mitis how to interpret the audience, again an effort to treat the audience as actors and to diminish the distinction between the players and the beholders. The third topic is discussed between Mitis and Cordatus and concerns the laws of comedy. Cordatus explains that there has been a history of development in comedy and that playwrights now as in the past "should enjoy the same licence, or free power, to illustrate and heighten our invention as they did; and not bee tyed to those strict and regular formes, which the niceness of a few (who are nothing but forme) would thrust upon us" (Prol. 266-70). This explanation appears to present the exact opposite of the position taken in the prologue to *Every Man in His Humor* where the rules of drama were insisted upon. While the positions may finally be reconcilable, Jonson is signaling quite different directions in the two prologues.

All three topics are united in their insistence on general principles over particular instances, on attitude over specifics, on what might be called the substance over the accidentals. This insistence will continue throughout the play, as characters will be valued not for their particular actions as much as for their general attitudes. Nowhere is this clearer than in the contrast between Carlo Buffone and Macilente. Both are satiric critics of the society and point out the foibles and foolishness of others. But Buffone's wit is malicious; he does not use it for the benefit of those who are castigated. He can be used by Macilente to reveal the folly of others, but Buffone's goal is merely his own amusement, not the reformation of society. Oscar James Campbell observes that scurrility is "the stock in trade of a buffoon," and that "his [Buffone] derision aims at no improvements of its victims" (12, 68).

This quality relates back to the nature of the play and to the culture of shame that has been proposed as the underlying mechanism of the action. Jonson uses the mechanics of shame, exposure, and humiliation, to achieve the reformation of society.

No one is accused of specific transgressions, no one serves as judge over everyone's actions, and no one is punished through formal procedures. We are invited to reach our conclusions as a unified society sharing values and honoring the same attitudes.

In *Every Man in His Humor* the audience is external to the play and its actions. Judgment is provided for us, and we can individually accept or reject it. There are rules to follow, and we should be able to see and appreciate their application. In *Every Man out of His Humor*, on the other hand, the audience must be part of the action. We are drawn in so that we share in the attitudes and participate in the responses. Thus the play is structured to break down the barriers between audience and action. We are represented on the stage itself so that there will be a social response not an individual one, a response of attitude not an application of rules. One of the clearest examples of Jonson mystifying the relationship of audience to action is when he has the audience watching Mitis and Cordatus (the audience representatives on stage) watching Fastidious Brisk, Sogliardo, Carlo Buffone, and others, who have made themselves into an audience to watch Puntarvolo put on a performance for his wife.[3]

In the two *Every Man* plays Jonson has worked a single theme in very different contexts. He has shown that gentility is the consequence of a general attitude, not of adopting specific gestures, expressions, appearances, or behaviors. Thus, we might say that gentlemanly manners are only realized in a culture of shame. He has shown this point, however, in two very different plays. In one there has been an insistence on noticing and punishing specific transgressions, an atmosphere alien to the kind of behavior Jonson seems to advocate. In the other, now widely considered unsuccessful, play, the medium and the message seem more in harmony. The play itself is structured by the principles it supports, and Jonson attempts to create a culture of shame by involving the audience in the attitudes and actions.

An argument for the intellectual coherence of a play doesn't make the play popular or successful on stage. Jonson seems aware of the problem, as his later comedies continue to experiment with the relation of the actors and audience in an effort to find a structure that will satisfy his moral, his aesthetic, and one might say his economic requirements. The other two "comicall satyres," *Cynthia's Revels* and *Poetaster*, use very different settings but a similar figure to resolve the action. Interestingly in both cases an authority figure assigns a poet to oversee the ending: Cynthia appoints Criticus to write a masque and Caesar resigns to Horace the evaluation and exposure of the false poets.

The structure of new comedy with its easily identified characters and its specific rules of action and punishment is never used again by Jonson. Perhaps the closest he comes to it is with *Epicoene, or The Silent Woman* (1609), but that play makes use of a false trial with a hired lawyer and civil doctor and ends in divorce rather than marriage. The inadequacy of judges seems to be a regular feature of the comedies after Justice Clement. The Avocatori in *Volpone* (1605), to the very end of the play, depend on Volpone to tell them who is guilty and who is not. Both *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) and *The Devil Is an Ass* (1616) make exemplary use of a flawed judge who mistakes the issues and tries to substitute law for sense. And even in *The New Inn* (1629) and *The Magnetic Lady* (1632), Jonson still seems to be experimenting with different ways of relating the action to the audience and of resolving the actions on stage.

Notes

[1] Anne Barton says that like Latin comedy, *Every Man in His Humor* involves "the outwitting of a senex, a stolen marriage and the frolics of young men and their clever slaves..." (51).

[2] All quotations from the plays of Jonson are from the Herford and Simpson edition.

[3] Barton lists several examples of such incidents in *Every Man out of His Humor* which she calls "internal eavesdropping" (69).

Works Cited

Barton, Anne. *Ben Jonson Dramatist*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1984.

Benedict, Ruth. *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword: Patterns of Japanese Culture*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1946.

Cairns, Douglas. *Aidos.The Psychology and Ethics of Honour and Shame in Ancient Greek Literature*. Oxford: Clarendon P, 1993.

Campbell, Oscar James. *"Comicall Satyre" and Shakespeare's "Troilus and Cressida."* San Marino, California: Huntington Library, 1938.

Castiglione, Baldassare. *The Book of the Courtier*. Trans. Sir Thomas Hoby. Ed. Virginia Cox. Everyman's Library. New York: Charles E. Tuttle, 1994.

Frye, Northrop. *Anatomy of Criticism*. New York: Atheneum, 1957.

Jonson, Ben. *Ben Jonson, Volume III*. Ed. C. H. Herford and Percy Simpson. Oxford: Clarendon P, 1927.

Lever, J. W. *"Every Man in His Humour": A Parallel Text Edition of the 1601 Quarto and the 1616 Folio*. Regents Renaissance Drama Series. London: Edward Arnold, 1971.

Schneiderman, Stuart. *Saving Face: America and the Politics of Shame*. New York: Knopf, 1995.

Watson, Robert N. *Ben Jonson's Parodic Strategy: Literary Imperialism in the Comedies*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard UP, 1987.

The Tragedy of the Common Bureaucrat: Jonson's *Sejanus* and Its Sources

Art Marmorstein
Northern State University

In his never-ending quest to test the Delphic oracle's assertion that no-one was wiser than he, Socrates approached several of the greatest Greek poets (including, especially, the writers of tragedies and dithyrambs), asking them to explain the meanings of some of their finest works. The result was disappointing. Amazingly, says Socrates, almost anyone could explain those poems better than the actual authors. From this, Socrates concluded that the ability to write great poetry comes, not through the conscious efforts of the poet, but from some sort of inspiration (*Apology* 21D).

If Socrates were right, it would be of no use for the poet or playwright to study literary theory. It would be enough simply to trust to inspiration.

But is Socrates right? Or is it possible for a great poet to be made as well as born? Certainly many a would-be Sophocles has thought so.[1] Wagner's work at Bayreuth and Hofmansthal's at Salzburg, for instance, were deliberate attempts to use literary theory in creating for a modern German-speaking audience the equivalent experience of Greek tragic theater–and both writers managed fairly well to translate theory into practice. Another at least partially-successful attempt at theoretically-correct tragedy is Ben Jonson's *Sejanus*.[2]

That *Sejanus* is a deliberate attempt to put theory into practice is clear from Jonson's introductory comments in the quarto edition. He promises his readers an elucidation of the theory behind the play in a soon-to-be-forthcoming translation-of-and-commentary-on Horace's *Art of Poetry*. Unfortunately, the comments and the translation were destroyed with the burning of Jonson's study. Nevertheless, it is clear from the introduction to *Sejanus* that Jonson was attempting, for the most part, to follow the recipe for tragedy in Aristotle's *Poetics*, a recipe that included, in Jonson's words, "truth of argument, dignity of person, gravity and height of elocution, fullness and frequency of sentence" (*Sejanus*, Preface).[3]

Jonson admits that he has not followed Aristotle's advice in all respects. He notes, for instance, that he has not chosen to observe the unity of time and that, in deference to his audience, he has omitted the traditional chorus. But Jonson's introduction is strangely silent on his most glaring departure from Aristotelian standards: his choice of a protagonist. Aristotle specifically argues that tragedy cannot work its intended purpose if the protagonist is a total villain:

> It follows plainly, in the first place, that the change of fortune presented must not be the spectacle of a virtuous man brought from prosperity to adversity: for this moves neither pity nor fear; it merely shocks us. Nor, again, that of a bad man passing from adversity to prosperity, for nothing can be more alien to the spirit of Tragedy: it possesses no single tragic quality; it neither satisfies the moral sense nor calls forth pity or fear. Nor, again, should the downfall of the utter villain be exhibited. A plot of this kind would, doubtless, satisfy the moral sense, but it would inspire neither pity nor fear; for pity is aroused by unmerited misfortune, fear by misfortune of a man like ourselves. (*Poetics* XIII)

Clearly, Aristotle would have thought Sejanus a very poor protagonist. How is it that Jonson thinks he can create a successful tragedy (successful in the sense of bringing about an Aristotelian-style catharsis) based on the fall of this completely villainous protagonist? The answer, I think, lies in Jonson's correct reading of his sources. The story of Sejanus is not merely tragic, but a true tragedy, and it is Jonson's contribution to help us see what is already latent in these sources.

By far the most important of Jonson's sources is Tacitus' *Annals*, and it is from this work he derives his basic story line. Lucius Ails Sejanus, commander of the Praetorian guard, worms his way into the confidence of the emperor Tiberius, becoming the only man the naturally-suspicious emperor trusts. Not content with being Tiberius' "partner in labor," Sejanus schemes for more. He seduces Leoville, the wife of Tiberius' son Dress, gaining her as his agent in Dress' household. Sejanus and Leoville conspire successfully to poison Dress, and Sejanus is one step closer to the position of ultimate power he craves. Taking advantage of Tiberius' suspicious nature, Sejanus convinces the emperor to allow prosecutions for the crime of *majestas*, "impugning the majesty of the Roman people." This vaguely-defined crime

provides grounds for Sejanus to destroy his enemies through the judicial system, and dozens of prominent Romans are executed or driven to suicide. Sejanus also manages to bring about the destruction of his most likely obstacles to power in Rome, the family of Germanicus.

Sejanus almost succeeds in his quest for supreme power. He persuades Tiberius to take an indefinitely extended "vacation" in Capri, leaving Sejanus in Rome as emperor in all but name. However, at the very moment when Sejanus anticipates his ultimate triumph, his machinations are discovered by Tiberius, and the outraged emperor takes a fitting revenge on his disloyal confidant. In moments, Sejanus falls from the pinnacle of success into complete destruction.

Jonson's skillful plotting brings out several thematic elements already present in the *Annals*. The play opens with two Roman noblemen, Caius Sirius and Titus Sabin us, bemoaning the ascendancy of sycophants in the emperor's court. They are soon joined by Lucius Errands and the historian Cremates Cords, two others who share their distress that the days of truly noble Romans seem to have come to an end.

In the *Annals*, these men are introduced to the story only when they are actually indicted through the machinations of Sejanus. Jonson takes Tacitus' summary remarks on the personalities of these men and fleshes each character out, quite plausibly attributing to them many of the criticisms that Tacitus himself levels at the corrupt court of Tiberius. In addition, Jonson weaves into their dialogue many comments on the flatterer's art and added bits of historical detail taken from Juvenal, Seneca, and Suetonius. Jonson takes, for example, an observation from Juvenal on the fact that, to be great in Rome, one must commit crimes worthy of prison or exile (*Satire* 1.75). He turns this around, allowing Sabin us to lament:

We are no guilty men, and then nor great;
We have no place in court, office in state,
That we can say, we owe unto our crimes (*Sejanus* I.i.12-14)

Jonson also draws on Juvenal for some of Sirius' lines in this scene. Juvenal notes, for instance, the ability of sycophants to pick up their patrons' moods on cue (*Satire* 3.105). Jonson gives Sirius a speech with the same theme (though with slightly different images):

[*Sycophants*]
Laugh when their patron laughs; sweat when he sweats;
Be hot and cold with him; change every mood,
Habit, and garb, as often as he varies;
Observe him, as his watch observes his clock;
And, true as turquoise in the dear lord's ring,
Look well or ill with him (*Sejanus* I.i.33-37)

Sabinus' reply runs parallel to Suetonius' remarks on free reign of the informers (*Tiberius* 61):

And now to many: every minist'ring spy
That will accuse or swear is lord of you,
Of me, of all our fortunes and our lives.
Our looks are call'd to question, and our words,
How innocent soever, are made crimes;
We shall not shortly dare to tell our dreams
Or think, but it will be treason. (*Sejanus* I.i.64-69)

In subsequent scenes, Jonson shows us a master sycophant and schemer at work. He first shows us how Sejanus manages to corrupt Eudemus, physician to Drusilla.

Of this Eudemus, Tacitus tells us only that he was the agent through whom Sejanus gained access to Drusilla. Jonson shows a hesitating Eudemus seduced by the diabolical arguments

of Sejanus. Betraying Dress would be dishonorable, says Eudemus. Sejanus assures him not:

> ... The coarsest act
> Done to my service, I can so requite
> As all the world shall style it honorable:
> Your idle, virtuous definitions,
> Keep honour poor, and are as scorn'd as vain:
> Those deeds breathe honour that do suck in gain. (*Sejanus* I.ii.68-72)

Eudemus protests that, should he betray others, Sejanus himself could have no trust in him. Not so, says Sejanus: and with this feeble assurance (and the promise of reward) Eudemus succumbs.

Sejanus then proceeds to corrupt Drusilla (promising her love and power), the eunuch Lygdus (taking advantage of his "wanton, light" ways), and the emperor Tiberius himself, playing on the emperor's fears and his love of debauched pleasures.

In depicting Sejanus' methods of manipulating Drusilla and Tiberius, Jonson is elaborating on ideas already explicit in the *Annals*. However, Jonson heightens greatly the dramatic tension of these scenes (and the remainder of the work) by amplifying a theme only hinted at in his sources.

Suetonius, while including in his life of Tiberius his usual quota of divine signs presaging great events, gives no comment on the divine reaction to the events of Tiberius' reign. Tacitus, on the other hand, notes specifically that these tragedies were caused by "heaven's anger against Rome" (*Annals* IV.i.), but that's as much as he says. For Jonson, the theme of divine retribution is far more important.

To a certain extent, Sejanus' chief "tragic flaw" is his making of himself into a god and his refusal to acknowledge even

the existence of the gods. Jonson gives Sirius these lines on Sejanus' usurping of divine authority:

> Sejanus can repair, if Jove should ruin.
> He is now court-god; and well applied
> With sacrifice of knees, of crooks, and cringe,
> He will do more than all the house of heav'n
> Can for a thousand hecatombs. (*Sejanus* I.i.202-206)

Sejanus' speeches are littered with blasphemy:

> On, then, my soul, and start not in thy course;
> Though heav'n drop sulpher, and hell belch out fire,
> Laugh at the idle terrors: tell proud Jove,
> between his power and thine there is no odds:
> 'T was only fear first in the world made gods. (II.ii.22-24)
> ...
> Rome, senate, people, all the world have seen
> Jove but my equal; Caesar my second. (V.iv.92-93)

Jonson's prefatory remarks indicate his desire to depict the fall of Sejanus as the inevitable outcome of the praetorian captain's defiance of the divine order:

> This we do advance, as a mark of terror to all traitors, and treasons; to show how just the heavens are, in pouring and thundering down a weighty vengeance on their unnatural intents, even to the worst princes; much more to those, for guard of whose piety and virtue the angels are in continual watch, and God himself miraculously working.
> (*Sejanus*, Argument)

But there is a problem here. This is just the sort of fall that Aristotle said would appease our sense of justice, but would not

be enough for catharsis. One can hardly feel pity for Sejanus as an innocent victim, or terror for him as a man like ourselves.

Or can we?

Jonson himself travelled at least part way down the road travelled by Sejanus. He was himself a seducer of other men's wives (Riggs 19-20), and, in his constant quest for patronage and preferment, certainly not immune to the temptation to sycophancy. Note the Argument to *Sejanus* quoted above. James I a man whose piety and virtue were being watched over by the angels? Well, they can't have been watching too closely.

Jonson introduces a few plot elements that create, if not sympathy, at least a small measure of understanding for Sejanus. A public slap from Dress (an incident not, as far as I can tell, included in the sources) serves to explain his thirst for revenge on the heir apparent. Not a very good motivation, to be sure, but at least some motivation.

The more important catharsis in *Sejanus*, however, stems, not from any sympathy Jonson creates for his title character, but in his elaboration on another theme picked up from Tacitus. Tacitus notes that both Sejanus' rise *and* fall were disasters for Rome (*Annals* IV.i.), and Jonson makes sure to show us why.

Relatively early in the play, Jonson introduces Sertorius Macro, the key figure in Sejanus' downfall and the man who eventually takes his place as praetorian prefect. Elaborating on some rather brief hints in Tacitus (*Annals* 6.29), Jonson shows us Macro as an even greater devotee of sycophancy and might-makes-right philosophy than Sejanus. Macro's speech at the end of Act III makes it clear that Sejanus' fall will in no way improve things for Rome.

> I will not ask why Caesar bids do this;
> But joy, that he bids me. It is the bliss
> Of courts to be employ'd no matter how;

> A prince's power makes all his actions virtue. (*Sejanus* III.iii.92-95)

He would, he says, sacrifice a much-loved wife, do away with a parent, bring any and all of his kinsmen to perdition, and commit any act of impiety asked of him. Such willingness is the path to success:

> This being impos'd me, both with gain and ease:
> The way to rise is to obey and please.
> He that will thrive in state, he must neglect
> The trodden paths that truth and right respect. *(Sejanus* III.iii.105-115)

Jonson hints throughout that the ascendency of Macro will be an even greater evil than the hegemony of Sejanus, and in the final scene, he drives the point home.

Sejanus is dead: his body torn to pieces by the fickle mob that had once worshiped him. They seek further revenge, and their target is Sejanus' remaining children, a little girl and a young boy.

> Then there begin your pity.
> There is enough behind to melt ev'n Rome,
> And Caesar into tears; since never slave
> Could yet so highly offend, but tyranny,
> In tormenting him, would make him worth lamenting.
> A son and daughter to dead Sejanus,
> (Of whom there is not now so much remaining
> As would give fat'ning to the hangman's hook,)
> Have they drawn forth for farther sacrifice;
> Whose tenderness of knowledge, unripe years,
> And childish silly innocence was such,
> As scarce would lend them feeling of their danger;
> The girl so simple, as she often askt

Where they would lead her? For what cause they dragg'd her?
Cried, she would do no more: that she could take
Warning with beating. And because our laws
Admit no virgin immature to die,
The wittily and strangely cruel Macro
Deliver'd her to be deflower'd and spoil'd
By the rude lust of the licentious hangman,
Then to be strangled with her harmless brother. (*Sejanus* V.x.385-404)

There is no doubt that the story of the rape of the little girl and the strangling of these two innocent children is the proper subject of Aristotelian pity. It is a story I can't read or tell my students without tears in my eyes. But it is also the beginning of terror, for here we begin to see the fall of a figure all-too-close-to-home.

It has been noted that Thucydides' *Peloponnesian War* is, in form at least, The Tragedy of the City of Athens. It was Jonson's genius to see in his sources an equivalent tragedy, and, in presenting the fall of Sejanus, he is showing us also the fall of a much larger protagonist, Rome itself.[4] It is through observing the fall of this protagonist that we feel, or ought to feel, the terror Aristotle says is requisite to tragedy. For Jonson is showing us the ultimate outcome for a free society if ever it abandons its basic principles. This is what sycophancy leads to. This is what law without justice leads to. This is what the philosophy of might without right leads to. This is what unchecked executive power leads to. Above all, this is what forgetting God leads to.

Let this example move the insolent man
Not to grow proud and careless of the gods.
It is an odious wisdom to blaspheme,
Much more to slighten, or deny their powers:
For whom the morning saw so great and high
Thus low and little, 'For the even doth lie. (*Sejanus* V.x.447-454)

Notes

[1] Jonson himself, of course, believed that "a good poet's made, as well as born," as he says in his memorial tribute to Shakespeare (part of the 1623 Folio).

[2] Certainly not successful as originally performed. Jonson's dedication refers to a rather disastrous premier performance. The play also got him into trouble, forcing him to defend himself against charges of "popery and treason" (Dutton 37). Jonson revised the work thoroughly before publication, eliminating those portions that had been the work of a collaborator. Who this collaborator was is unknown, though David Riggs maintains that George Chapman is the most likely of many possibilities (99).

[3] George Rowe connects Jonson, not just to the theories of Aristotle, but to Renaissance elaborations on those theories. He notes, in particular, the Renaissance insistence on history as the only solid basis for tragedy (91-92). The sources for the literary theory behind Jonson's plays are put together in convenient for by James D. Redwine, Jr.

[4] Joseph Allen Bryant, Jr. makes a similar point about Jonson's *Catiline*, maintaining that in that play, too, the protagonist is the whole Roman state.

Works Cited

Bryant, Joseph Allen, Jr. "*Catiline* and the Nature of Jonson's Tragic Fable." *Ben Jonson: A Collection of Critical Essays*. Ed. Jonas Barish. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1963.

Dutton, Richard. *Ben Jonson: Authority, Criticism*. New York: St. Martin's, 1996.

Redwine, James D., ed. *Ben Jonson's Literary Criticism*. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1970.

Riggs, David. *Ben Jonson: A Life*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1989.

Rowe, George. *Distinguishing Jonson: Imitation, Rivalry, and the Direction of a Dramatic Career*. Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1988.

The Rhetoric of Despair in Spenser, Shakespeare, and Milton

Nicholas Wallerstein
Black Hills State University

It is a commonplace in Renaissance literature that sin is often garbed in attractive cloth. One sin, that of despair, has a long tradition of appearing enticing, offering what the Romantic poet John Keats referred to as "easeful Death" (52). In Book 10 of John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, Act III of William Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*, and Book 1 (Canto ix) of Edmund Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, four main characters face moments of absolute despair and a concomitant desire for instant death. Adam, Eve, Romeo, and the Red Crosse Knight all reach the conclusion that their own death is the only solution to their seemingly hopeless situations, the only escape from their psychic pain. The attractiveness of the

sin of despair, though, is fully realized only through the power of rhetoric: each character falls prey to strong arguments in favor of death–arguments either of their own making, as in the case of Adam, Eve, and Romeo, or arguments urged by another (the character "Despaire"), as in the case of the Red Crosse Knight.

My contention is that rhetoric participates in the formation of the attractiveness of despair, yet in a fundamentally flawed way. After all, despair, on a theological level, is not only immoral but also irrational: it assumes that the sinner's sin is greater than God's mercy. This is of course an impossibility, since God's mercy, being an element or feature of God's love (*agape*), is by its very nature limitless. In fact, despair is considered a damnable sin precisely because, in the sinner's belief that his or her sin is greater than God's power to forgive the sin, the sinner is exhibiting *superbia*, or pride–the deadliest of the seven sins. And in committing this sin, the sinner is deprived of grace.

Thus, in being inherently irrational, the arguments that Adam, Eve, Romeo, and the Red Crosse Knight promulgate or accept fail to fulfill the most central of rhetorical appeals: *logos*–the Aristotelian appeal to reason. Right reason is abdicated, and *pathos*, or emotional appeal, takes control, leading inexorably to spiritual, intellectual, and moral disease. Only through a logos-centered rhetoric of intercession is Adam's, Eve's, Romeo's, and the Red Crosse Knight's rhetoric of despair refuted, and salvation preserved. Adam's despair is refuted by Eve, Eve's by Adam, Romeo's by Friar Lawrence, and the Red Crosse Knight's by Una, the allegorical representation of the True Church.

In Book 1 of Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, the Red Crosse Knight–whom I will from now on refer to simply as Red Crosse–reaches his spiritual nadir after having been released by Prince Arthur from the Giant's dungeon–allegorically a representation of Christ's saving of mankind from Satan. Robert Kellogg and Oliver Steele have pointed out the irony that, having been saved by Arthur (representing Christ), Red Crosse begins his

journey on the road to repentance–and toward holiness, the full purpose of his mission–in the wrong direction. Despair and death would *seem* to be the correct path by a sinner who has suddenly come face-to-face with his own depravity, suddenly come to a full awareness of the depths of his own sin. Indeed, Kellogg and Steele refer to John Calvin, who, in his *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, had addressed the inclination of the sinner mistakenly to choose despair as a means toward repentance:

> Some limit must be observed, that we may not be overwhelmed in sorrow [for sin]; for to nothing are terrified consciences more liable than to fall into despair. And with this artifice, also, whomsoever Satan perceives to be dejected by a fear of God, he plunges them further and further into the deep gulf of sorrow, that they may never rise again.
>
> (Qtd. in Kellogg and Steele 38-39)

Yet I would argue that the primary motivating force behind Red Crosse's fall into despair is not just the inherent quality of despair as a natural reaction to the sinner's full realization of sin. Participating also is the rhetorical posturing of the character Despaire, who uses brilliant persuasive techniques to draw Red Crosse into Despaire's web. Scholars have long noted that Despaire's argument is classical in its rhetorical form and that it is replete with allusions to the Old Testament and to classical philosophers–the Stoics in particular (Kellogg and Steele 38). But by looking closely at the stylistic elements that Despaire adds to his appeals–elements that add to the emotional power of his argument–we can gain a fuller understanding of why and how Despaire's argument has its suasive effect on Red Crosse.

For instance, Despaire is a master at *erotema*, or rhetorical question. He sets up several uses of this device while referring to his last victim, Terwin, whom Despaire had convinced to stab

himself to death. Despaire declares to Red Crosse "He there does now enjoy eternall rest / And happie ease which thou doest want and crave" (I.ix.40). At this point, Despaire draws the parallel between what ease Terwin had won and the ease that Red Crosse can now achieve by following the same course of action as Terwin:

> "What if some litle paine the passage have,
> That makes fraile flesh to feare the bitter wave?
> Is not short paine well borne, that brings long ease,
> And layes the soule to sleepe in quiet grave?" (I.ix.40)

Here we find two rhetorical questions in a row, and their persuasive quality is enhanced by peaceful language and imagery, as in the promises of "long ease," "sleepe," and "quiet grave." Also, Despaire mitigates the fears that Red Crosse might have in his initial suffering should he choose death by referring to the "*litle* paine" and the "*short* paine" that Red Crosse would experience (emphasis added). This is what classical rhetoricians termed *prolepsis*, or the anticipating of the audience's objection to one's point. Despaire further strengthens the emotional appeal of his argument by adding to it argument from analogy: "'Sleepe after toyle, port after stormie seas, / Ease after warre, death after life does greatly please'" (I.ix.40). Here we see that Despaire is equating or comparing death with the pleasure of sleep, ease, and the gaining of port. But surely Despaire's analogy is fallacious, since it does not follow that death affords quite the same kind of pleasure as the other three elements: with the other three, one remains alive to enjoy them. This is obviously not so with death. Notice as well that Despaire's grammatical structure furthers his strategy: his use of parallel structure and his use of the figure *asyndeton*–the deliberate omission of a connective device at the end of a series or list (in this case the word "and" omitted before the final phrase "death after life")–give a sense of the relationship

Despaire wants Red Crosse to believe naturally exists between death and sleep, port, and ease. No such relationship exists, of course. Through the subtleties of his language, therefore, Despaire merely makes death *appear* to be pleasing, ignoring the fact that death here represents hopelessness.

Despaire uses rhetorical question again toward the end of his speech, when he declares that Red Crosse had better die now rather than allow his sins to continue to grow and thus cause Red Crosse to heap more punishment upon himself:

> "Why then doest thou, O man of sin, desire
> To draw thy dayes forth to their last degree?
> Is not the measure of thy sinfull hire
> High heaped up with huge iniquitie,
> Against the day of wrath, to burden thee?
> Is not enough that to this Ladie milde [Una, the True Church]
> Thou falsed hast thy faith with perjurie[?]" (I.ix.46)

Here the persuasive effect of Despaire's appeal is increased by the repetition of "Is not" to introduce several of the rhetorical questions. This is the figure *anaphora*, the use of repetition at the beginning of successive clauses. The repetition of the phrase "Is not" emphasizes the truth value of Despaire's claim that Red Crosse would be better off dead. Indeed, Despaire seems to like his use of this phrase so much, that he continues it in the next stanza, further emphasizing the desirability of Red Crosse's quick demise:

> "Is not he [God] just, that all this doth behold
> From highest heaven, and beares an equall eye?[...]
> Is not his law, Let every sinner die:
> Die shall all flesh? what then must needs be donne,
> Is it not better to doe willinglie,
> Then linger, till the glasse be all out ronne?
> Death is the end of woes: die soone, O faeries sonne." (I.ix.47)

It is a rhetorical *tour de force* that has a profound impact on Red Crosse: "The knight was much enmoved with his speach, / That as a swords point through his hart did perse, / And in his conscience made a secret breach" (I.ix.48). Indeed, he decides to take the same course of action as Terwin, and attempts to stab himself to death.

It is only with the intercession of Una, Red Crosse's lady, that Red Crosse is saved. In fact, her appeals have their own rhetorical flourish, and in some ways imitate the style of the character Despaire, particularly in her use of rhetorical question. It is as though Una is paying tit for tat, or perhaps that, having seen Despaire's style work on Red Crosse, she realizes that she can use the same style to her own advantage. Having taken the knife and thrown it to the ground, she declares:

> "What meanest thou by this reprochfull strife?
> Is this the battell, which thou vauntst to fight
> With the fire-mouthed Dragon, horrible and bright?[...]
> Ne let vaine words bewitch thy manly hart,
> Ne divelish thoughts dismay thy constant spright.
> In heavenly mercies hast thou not a part?
> Why shouldst thou then despeire, that chosen art?" (I.ix.52-53)

The irony here is that Una uses the *form* and *style* of Despaire's rhetoric in order to *attack* Despaire's rhetoric. That is, she uses rhetorical question to point up the emptiness of Despaire's appeals, calling them "vaine words," which have "bewitch[ed]" Red Crosse's heart, and filled his mind with "divelish thoughts." The fundamental flaw in Despaire's argument, she maintains, is the fact that God's "mercies" are always stronger than the sins that lead to despair; indeed, to her question, "In heavenly mercies hast thou not a part?" the answer is, in a word, *yes*. Of course Red Crosse has a part in heavenly mercies and grace, but in order for this to occur, he must rely upon faith. On his journey toward

holiness, therefore, Red Crosse must conquer many temptations and overcome many torments, among which are the tantalizing appeals of the rhetoric of despair. He must allow right reason to retake possession of his mind, and banish the passions that have created the spiritual, emotional, and intellectual disease that has overtaken him.

In Adam's soliloquy in Book Ten of *Paradise Lost*, we find an argument fascinatingly similar to Despaire's in *The Faerie Queene*–of course with one major (and ironic) exception: Adam's rhetoric of despair will be aimed at himself, not at some second party. Having fallen into sin, and having had God pronounce his judgment of death on Adam, Adam considers the ease he would gain by being able to take his punishment now, rather than later. In the following passage, we hear him describe the attractiveness of death with much the same language and style as found in the character Despaire's appeals. Notice, for instance, the use again of rhetorical question, and the way death is described as providing surcease from pain:

> That dust I am, and shall to dust returne:
> O welcom hour whenever! why delayes
> His [God's] hand to execute what his Decree
> Fixd on this day? why do I overlive,
> Why am I mockt with death, and length'nd out
> To deathless pain? how gladly would I meet
> Mortalitie my sentence, and be Earth
> Insensible, how glad would lay me down
> As in my Mothers lap? there I should rest
> And sleep secure. (770-779)

Adam makes his own despair sound reasonable by the pleasant imagery he uses: the hour of his death is described as "welcom," and the lack of death described as "pain"; and the coming of his death is described as something that would make him "glad" because it would render him "insensible" and resting secure in

Mother Earth's lap. Further, like the character Despaire, Adam uses repetition to heighten the emotional effectiveness of his appeal: for instance, anaphora is used in the repetition of "why": "*why* delayes / His hand"; "*why* do I overlive"; "*Why* am I mockt" (emphasis added). We also have here an example of the figure *tricolon*, in that the word "why" is repeated three times. Anaphora is also used in the repetition of "how glad" or "how gladly," used twice, emphasizing again the inviting way in which Adam holds his own death.

The depth of Adam's despair is evident to Eve, who–like Una interceding on behalf of Red Crosse–must intercede on Adam's behalf to save Adam from himself. Eve, in fact, seems acutely aware of the fact that Adam, like Red Crosse, has abdicated reason, and allowed passion to transport him into an ecstasy of despair. In the following passage, Eve tries to calm the intensity of Adam's passion: "Whom thus afflicted when sad Eve beheld, / Desolate where she sate, approaching nigh, / Soft words to his fierce passion she assayed" (863-865). The Milton critic Roy Flannagan has said that in this passage "Eve is repentant, sad, desolate, speaking soft words to allay [Adam's] fierce passion. At this point she is much closer to atonement and repentance than Adam" (Milton 569, n.288). Eve's rhetoric of intercession relies upon "soft words," far from the passionate discourse of the rhetoric of despair.

However, Eve herself–perhaps because of the fact that she has been listening to Adam's argument in favor of death–soon falls victim to her own despair, a despair that will necessitate Adam's intercession. Indeed, we soon see that Eve's response to her own sin is very similar to Red Crosse's. We had mentioned earlier that Red Crosse's initial response to his newly-found awareness of his sin was despair and a desire for death; we had further seen that Calvin had cautioned against this kind of response. In the following passage, Eve appears now deeply persuaded by this very type of reasoning:

> Let us seek Death, or he not found, supply
> With our own hands his Office on our selves;
> Why stand we longer shivering under feares,
> That shew no end but Death, and have the power,
> Of many ways to die the shortest choosing,
> Destruction with destruction to destroy. (1001-1006)

Milton emphasizes the desperation inherent in Eve's words by including the following description after her speech: "She ended heer, or vehement despaire / Broke off the rest; so much of Death her thoughts / Had entertained, as di'd her Cheeks with pale" (1007-1009). Like Red Crosse and Adam before her, here Eve is ready to die, to relieve her psychic, spiritual pain, to give in to the ease that death might afford. Curiously enough, though, it is Eve's fall into despair and her use of desperate language that finally move Adam away from his own rhetoric of despair toward a language of hope. The very next lines read as follows: "But Adam with such counsel nothing sway'd, / To better hopes his more attentive minde / Labouring had rais'd" (1010-1012). Her argument is not persuasive to Adam–it can "nothing sway" him–since he has now been filled with hope, a hope engendered out of his realization that God's judgment upon them both is in reality an act of his divine mercy. Through his new-found hope, Adam is now able to see things more clearly: right reason is restored. Adam therefore is able to restore logos to his argument, and he responds to Eve by saying that their double suicide would be illogical since it would 1) necessitate God's further punishment on them for suicide–thus negating the mercy that God has shown them, and 2) would prevent God's punishment on Satan by assuring that Adam and Eve would have no offspring to bruise the serpent's head:

> ...[T]o crush his head
> Would be revenge indeed; which will be lost

> By death brought on our selves, or childless days
> Resolv'd, as thou proposest; so our Foe
> Shall scape his punishment ordain'd, and wee
> Instead shall double ours upon our heads. (1035-1040)

Roy Flannagan suggests the following about Adam's response to Eve's argument:

> He sees that what she says might look good from the perspective of representing contempt for worldliness or bodily pleasure, but it is wrong-headed in that it would deny God's providence in punishing Satan in the Serpent and would instead bring down a double punishment on them for becoming suicides. (Milton 576, n.324)

Thus we see that Adam learns to eschew the rhetoric of despair by restoring logos, or logical appeal, to his thinking, words, and deeds.

Finally, all these various themes have parallels in *Romeo and Juliet*. I am thinking in particular of the scene in which Romeo learns from Friar Lawrence that, for his murder of Tybalt, Romeo has been banished from Verona. Banishment from Verona, of course, means banishment from Juliet–a terrible, earth-shattering possibility for Romeo, one that sends him instantly to the brink of despair and death. The irony of course is that banishment is a type of mercy, since the Prince of Verona's decree had been that anyone breaking the truce between the Capulets and Montegues would be put to death. In the following lines, we see Romeo's impassioned rhetoric of despair, maintaining that death, rather than banishment, would be merciful:

> FRIAR: I bring thee tidings of the prince's doom.
>
> ROMEO: What less than doomsday is the prince's doom?
>
> FRIAR: A gentler judgment vanished from his lips–
> Not body's death, but body's banishment.
>
> ROMEO: Ha, banishment? Be merciful, say "death";
> For exile hath more terror in his look,
> Much more than death. Do not say "banishment."
>
> FRIAR: Here from Verona art thou banishèd.
> Be patient, for the world is broad and wide.
>
> ROMEO: There is no world without Verona walls,
> But purgatory, torture, hell itself.
> Hence banishèd is banished from the world.
> And world's exile is death. Then "banishèd"
> Is death mistermed. Calling death "banishèd,"
> Thou cut'st my head off with a golden ax
> And smilest upon the stroke that murders me.
>
> FRIAR: O deadly sin! O rude unthankfulness!
> Thy fault our law calls death; but the kind prince,
> Taking thy part, hath rushed aside the law,
> And turned that black word "death" to "banishment."
> This is dear mercy, and thou see'st it not.
>
> ROMEO: 'Tis torture, and not mercy. Heaven is here,
> Where Juliet lives. (III.iii.8-30)

Here we see that the prince has invoked what is referred to in Christian theology as the "dual motif," in which the sinner or miscreant deserves justice, but is given mercy instead. This notion of justice being tempered by mercy has profound theological implications, of which the friar is obviously aware, accusing Romeo of "deadly sin" for not appreciating the mercy he has received. Clearly, the friar is cognizant of the fact that

Romeo has fallen into a state of despair. Indeed, when, a moment later, Romeo–like Red Crosse before him–attempts to stab himself, the friar declares, "Hold thy *desperate* hand. / Art thou a man? Thy form cries out thou art; / ...thy wild acts denote / The *unreasonable* fury of a beast" (III.iii.108-111; emphasis added). These words show that, just like Red Crosse, and just like Adam and Eve, Romeo has abdicated reason in favor of passion, and has thus become like a "beast"–a being that lacks rationality. The friar's rhetoric of intercession, therefore, is like the examples we have seen earlier in *The Faerie Queene* and *Paradise Lost*: logos must be restored, and passion (here described as "unreasonable fury") must be subdued. That is, like Red Crosse, Adam, and Eve, Romeo has been transported by a rhetoric of passion that leads to destruction, and the only way out is through a language of hope and a reasoned response to the gift of mercy.

Works Cited

Keats, John. "Ode to a Nightingale." *British & American Poets: Chaucer to the Present*. Eds. W. Jackson Bate and David Perkins. San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986. 478-480.

Kellogg, Robert, and Oliver Steele, eds. *Books I and II of The Faerie Queene*. By Edmund Spenser. Indianapolis, IN: Odyssey, 1965, 1979.

Milton, John. *Paradise Lost*. Ed. Roy Flannagan. New York: Macmillan, 1993.

Shakespeare, William. *The Tragedy of Romeo and Juliet. The Complete Signet Classic Shakespeare*. Ed. Sylvan Barnet. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1972.

Spenser, Edmund. *Edmund Spenser's Poetry*. 3rd ed. Eds. Hugh Maclean and Anne Lake Prescott. New York: Norton, 1993.

Buyer Beware: The Business of Marriage Contracts in Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*

Mary McGlynn
North Dakota State University

Marriage in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, complete with dowries and jointures, pre-marriage financial negotiations and contracts, was saturated with the aura of the business marketplace. And as in any business transaction, the buyers and sellers, whether the bride and groom or their parents, were held accountable. Marriage as a form of business transaction is demonstrated by Claudio and Hero in

William Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*. Walter N. King compares Claudio's approach to marriage as a "philosophy of caveat emptor," or buyer beware (105). Claudio, however, does not hold to these rules. When he slanders Hero at the altar, Claudio is essentially claiming he has purchased damaged goods. However, in the buyer beware world of marriage contracts, his slanderous claim is not enough to void the contract. Reading Claudio's actions as illegal influences the interpretation of *Much Ado's* ending. In the final scene, Claudio's marriage to Hero may be viewed not as a sign of penance, a growth in maturity or marital love, but merely a sign of resignation to his legal responsibility of fulfilling a contract.

It is important to understand Elizabethan marriage law in order to examine the marriage contract arranged between Claudio and Hero. Marriage law in Elizabethan England took shape in the twelfth century and remained unchanged until 1753, with the passage of Harwick's Marriage Act. Twelfth-century marriage law viewed the church marriage ceremony, or solemnization, as secondary to the marriage contract, also called spousal, handfasting or betrothal. Alan Macfarlane writes, "...the church service was only a ceremony, performed to celebrate and commemorate, rather than a ritual affecting the material world through mystical power. A church service was an optional extra, lending gravity to the occasion" (311). What was needed more than a church ceremony to make a marriage legal was a verbal agreement between the man and the woman. According to Martin Ingram, who has studied ecclesiastical court records, "...the exchange of consent alone was sufficient to create a valid and binding union" ("Spousals" 39).

Through the fourteenth century, the number of court cases surrounding the legality of spousals was large, Ingram says. However, that number declined significantly by the middle of the sixteenth century (*Church* 192). The threat of clandestine marriage and the difficulty of proving a spousal, as well as changing views

of the church influenced this change. Ingram writes, "Over the centuries there was a growing acceptance of the principle that solemnisation in church was the only satisfactory mode of entry into marriage, and a corresponding decline in the custom of contracting binding spousals even as a preliminary to the church wedding" (*Church* 193). Although by the late sixteenth century solemnization of marriages gained in popularity and importance, marriage contracts were still used by some couples and enforced by the courts. Church courts were still required to uphold the law when it came to binding marriage contracts (*Church* 133). Consequently, from the fourteenth to the seventeenth centuries, most of the marital lawsuits in English ecclesiastical courts concerned the creation of marriage, not marital failure. In fact, a majority of the marital litigation concerned spousals (Ingram, "Spousals" 36).

David Cressy cites a number of actual cases of marriage contract litigation, proving the binding power of the marriage contract even in the early seventeenth century. One example tells of Francis Beedale and Sara Stacie who entered into a formal marriage contract. Later, before the solemnization, one partner had a change of mind about the espousal, but the court decreed that Francis and Sara had a binding contract and commanded them to have their marriage solemnized (275). Even though the use of spousals had declined and the importance of the solemnization of a marriage had grown, "it cannot be emphasized too strongly," stresses Lawrence Stone, "that according to ecclesiastical law the spousals was as legally binding a contract as the church wedding, although to many laity it was no more than a conditional contract" (30).

In order for a marriage contract to be valid and upheld by the courts, a primary consideration was the tense the consent was given in. A 1632 text entitled *The Law's Resolutions of Women's Rights* explains,

> The first beginning of marriage (as in respect of contract and that which law taketh hold on) is when wedlock by words in the future tense is promised and vowed, and this is but *sponsio* or *sponsalia* [those things which are promised]. The full contract of matrimony is when it is made by words *de praesenti* [in present (tense)] in a lawful consent, and thus two be made man and wife existing without lying together. (34)

William Perkins, in his 1609 text entitled "Christian Economy: or, A Short Survey of the Right Manner of Erecting and Ordering a Family According to the Scriptures," spells it out even further:

> Now, if the promise be uttered in words for time to come, it doth not precisely bind the parties to performance. For example, if one of them saith to the other: "I will take thee, etc.," and not, "I do take thee, etc." by this form of speech the match is not made but only promised to be made afterward. But if, on the other side, it be said, "I do take thee," and not "I will take thee," by these terms the marriage at that very instant is begun, though not in regard of fact, yet in regard of right and interest which the parties have each in another in deed and in truth. And this is the common opinion of the learned. (160)

What was most important, then, in determining the validity of the spousals was whether the contract was stated in present or future tense. A future tense spousal declared an intent *to* marry. A present tense spousal contracted a marriage and created an "indissoluble union" (Ingram, *Church* 190; 132). According to Macfarlane, "A *de praesenti* betrothal was totally binding; it could not be dissolved except by proper divorce. In a sense, 'the betrothal was a true marriage while the nuptials merely its confirmation'" (299-300). A contract that was made in present

tense was valid as long as there were no impediments to marriage.

Perkins writes that between the time of the contract and the solemnization, the couple should take the opportunity to find any "just cause which may hinder the consummation of marriage" (159). He then lists a number of possible impediments summed up by Cressy as "competence, age, consanguinity [kinship], or affinity" (270). Cressy adds prior contract as a "fatal impediment to marriage." He explains, "Prior sexual relations with another partner were insufficient grounds for objecting to a marriage unless it could be proved that a contract was involved" (307). This will apply directly to Claudio's case.

Furthermore, a marriage contract could best hold up in court if it included a number of instrumental, though not obligatory, gestures. Spousals usually included an exchange of gifts and/or kisses and a joining of hands. Property agreements or financial negotiations were agreed upon. Witnesses, such as parents, neighbors or a minister, observed the contract. Finally, the couple spoke of each other as husband and wife (Ingram, *Church* 196-97). Added to a present tense contract, these gestures underscored the validity of a spousal prior to its solemnization.

Claudio and Hero's spousal meets all of the requirements, as well as the important gestures, for validity. Nothing in the preparation for the spousal is out of the ordinary. Claudio and Hero fulfill the most important part of their spousal by contracting it in the present tense. Claudio tells Hero, "Lady, as you are/ mine, I am yours. I give away myself for you, and dote upon/ the exchange" (2.1.269-70). Claudio does not say, "I *will* be yours" or "I *will* give myself to you," which indicates future tense, and, thus, a future contract. Neither does he use a conditional tense, "*if* you are mine, I am yours." Instead, he uses the present tense verbs "are," "am," and "give," clearly consenting to this contract in the present tense. We do not hear Hero's reply, for she whispers it in Claudio's ear. Beatrice, however, conjectures that

Hero "tells him in his ear that he is/ in her heart," and Claudio agrees that that is exactly what Hero has said (2.1.275-76). Again, Hero is consenting in the present tense. She does not say Claudio "*will be* in her heart." Instead, she says he "*is* in her heart." A contract stated in present tense, as we have seen, creates "an indissoluble union" (Ingram, *Church* 132), broken only by an impediment to marriage. Thus, Claudio and Hero, early in the play, Act two, scene one, create their indissoluble union.

While Claudio and Hero meet the main requirement of a spousal, their contract also includes many of the gestures that aid in the defense of a spousal. First, the property agreement and financial plans surrounding the spousal are evident. Claudio not only acknowledges his love for Hero but the financial gain he will attain by marrying her. When he coyly asks Don Pedro, "Hath Leonato any son, my lord?" (1.1.242), Claudio is not looking to meet more of the family. Don Pedro's answer reveals a primary value Claudio places on a possible marriage to Hero–monetary reward. Don Pedro replies, "No child but Hero. She's his only heir" (1.1.243). This acknowledgment of the financial aspect of marriage contracts applies to Claudio's later actions when he not only tries to back out of his marriage contract, but the business or financial dealings that are implicit within it.

Following this acknowledgment of the role finances play in marriage, Don Pedro acts as Claudio's guardian and chief negotiator. Hero's father, Leonato, and Don Pedro, play integral roles in forming Claudio and Hero's union. Cressy writes, "...preparations for marriage began with negotiations among men. Matrimonial engagement was a patriarchal matter concerning 'the young man's father' and 'the father of the maid'" (254). Thus, according to custom, Don Pedro works at negotiating a marriage deal with Leonato. After telling Claudio of his plan to woo Hero in Claudio's name, Don Pedro forecasts his first negotiation session with Leonato, "Then after to her father will I break,/ And the conclusion is, she shall be thine" (1.1.274-75). After

successfully reaching a deal with Leonato, Don Pedro tells Claudio, "I have broke/with her father and his good will obtained. Name the day of/ marriage, and God give thee joy" (2.1.260-62). As final proof that the financial agreement has been laid, Leonato tells Claudio, "Count, take of me my daughter, and with her my fortunes" (2.1.263).

In addition to the establishment of a property agreement, several other instrumental gestures are met. Claudio and Hero declare their marriage contract among witnesses, at a public celebration no less. Claudio gives Hero a gift of gloves (3.4.52-53), which meets the exchange of tokens or gifts gesture. Hero's statement at the end of the play reveals that she, appropriately, has thought of Claudio as her husband all along, and may have even called him such, another important gesture that ensures the validity of a marriage contract. She says, "And when I lived I was your other wife;/ And when you loved, you were my other husband" (5.4.60-1). This statement acknowledges that a marriage contract did exist prior to her contrived death, and they were husband and wife, despite Claudio's attempts at the failed wedding ceremony to prove otherwise.

It is clear that Claudio and Hero have a legally binding marriage contract. Consequently, the only way for Claudio to opt out of the contract is to find an impediment. He appears to be aware of this when, after Don John tells him about possible defects in Hero's character, Claudio says, "If there be any impediment, I pray you discover it" (3.2.77). Claudio and Hero are of age. They are not related. They are both healthy and in their right minds. They have both consented to the marriage. Therefore, the only impediment that can stand in their way of marriage is a prior marriage contract on one of their behalves. This, in fact, happened in Shakespeare's time. Cressy writes of a William and Margaret who, in 1577, espoused each other in the present tense and thought of themselves as husband and wife. As they planned their public wedding, a Nicholas Satch prevented

their marriage by claiming a prior contract with Margaret (275). So, when at the marriage ceremony Claudio declares Hero as unchaste, a "rotten orange" who "knows the heat of a luxurious bed" (4.1.30; 39), he may be calling off the wedding based on the fact that Hero may have a prior contract with Borachio. Or he may read Hero's alleged copulation with Borachio as creating a contract. His slander establishes that Hero may be unchaste, but that is not enough. Claudio must also prove that Hero has a prior marriage contract to Borachio.

Recalling Cressy's words, "Prior sexual relations with another partner were insufficient grounds for objecting to a marriage unless it could be proved that a contract was involved" (307), Claudio can make a case for breaking his marriage contract with Hero if he can prove that Borachio and Hero not only had sexual relations but also had a marriage contract. He fails to do this, however. Leonato, with the aid of Dogberry, Verges and Borachio, proves Claudio's slanderous claims against Hero are incorrect. Since Claudio's slander is untrue, prior to Hero's "death," then, Hero and Claudio's spousal is valid and legally binding. Consequently, even though Claudio thinks Hero is dead, he must submit to Leonato's demands because he has clearly broken the marriage contract, as well as the financial arrangements Don Pedro made with Leonato. Macfarlane writes

> If we revert to the market analogy, the betrothal or spousal was like a promise made between trading partners. Each agreed that he or she would now undertake to assemble the goods and bring them together in a joint venture. The contract could not be broken, even if a more tempting offer came along in the meantime. (300)

As chief negotiator among "trading partners," Don Pedro again takes on the role as mediator between Claudio and Leonato: "By

my soul, nor I,/ And yet to satisfy this good old man/ I would bend under any heavy weight/ That he'll enjoin me to" (5.1.259-62). Leonato sets all the rules this time, however, stating that Claudio must marry Leonato's "niece," sight-unseen. By marrying this niece, Leonato says, Claudio will "give her the right you should have giv'n her cousin [Hero]," (5.1.275). In other words, Claudio will right his broken contract. Claudio accepts, submitting to the buyer beware rules of marriage this time when he assures Leonato that no matter what woman he is presented with, even if she be ugliest, he will marry her (5.4.38).

That Claudio's marriage is merely a part of a business transaction rather than any love for his soon-to-be spouse becomes even clearer by examining the final marriage scene and Claudio's commentary on it. Three veiled women are paraded out in front of the men like cattle at a market. And, like business transactions at the market, once an item is purchased, it cannot be returned. Fortunately for Claudio his veiled woman is the resurrected Hero. Before Claudio is given his veiled woman, he says to Leonato, "For this I owe you. Here comes other reck'nings./ Which is the lady I must seize upon?" (5.4.52-3). The words "love" and "I'm sorry" are suspiciously missing from Claudio's conversation at his final wedding. Instead he uses the words of business transactions: "owe" and "reck'nings." Claudio's attendance at the veiled ceremony and his consequent marriage, then, are his way of settling up of accounts for the contractual debt he owes Leonato.

The oral marriage contract in *Much Ado* demonstrates, as King says, the "depreciation of love and marriage to the level of the market-place" (105). Although Claudio has much to gain by dealing in this marketplace (in fact in the end he receives double the money for contracting Hero because of the addition of Hero's uncle's inheritance), he still must follow the marketplace rules. This means he must hold up his end of the bargain; he cannot

return what he has already contracted for. This means he must marry for restitution, not for love.

Works Cited

Cressy, David. *Birth, Marriage, and Death: Ritual, Religion, and the Life-Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 1997.

Ingram, Martin. *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570-1640*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1987.

—. "Spousals Litigation in the English Ecclesiastical Courts." *Marriage and Society: Studies in the Social History of Marriage*. Ed. R. B. Outhwaite. New York: St. Martin's, 1981. 35-57.

King, Walter N. Excerpt from "Much Ado About Something." *Twentieth Century Interpretations of* Much Ado About Nothing. Ed. Walter R. Davis. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1969. 105-108.

"The Law's Resolutions of Women's Rights." 1632. *Daughters, Wives, and Widows: Writings by Men about Women and Marriage in England, 1500-1640*. Ed. Joan Larsen Klein. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1992. 27-61.

Macfarlane, Alan. *Marriage and Love in England: Modes of Reproduction 1300-1840*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1986.

Perkins, William. "Christian Economy: or, A Short Survey of the Right Manner of Erecting and Ordering a Family According to the Scriptures." 1609. Trans. Thomas Pickering. *Daughters, Wives, and Widows: Writings by Men about Women and Marriage in England, 1500-1640.* Ed. Joan Larsen Klein. Urbana: U of Illinois P, 1992. 151-173.

Shakespeare, William. *Much Ado About Nothing. The Norton Shakespeare: Based on the Oxford Edition.* Ed. Stephen Greenblatt, et al. New York: Norton, 1997. 1389-1443.

Stone, Lawrence. *The Family, Sex and Marriage: In England 1500-1800.* New York: Harper, 1977.

Mother Knows Best: Matriarchal Domesticity, Public Intrusion on Private Order in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*

Nicole R. Tiongson
North Dakota State University

Women in England had very little place in the public sphere during the early modern period. We see repeatedly in the literature examples of women transgressing their roles in the public sphere and being punished for their transgressions. Shakespeare's play *The Winter's Tale* discusses what happens when a king who is also a father over-steps his boundaries within the domestic realm. Among the competing cultural ideals within the play, Shakespeare allows for

matriarchy as an ideal for the domestic sphere. I would argue that it is the domestic culture centering on childbirth that epitomizes the matriarchy of the domestic sphere, and it is Leontes' affront to this power construct that ultimately causes his downfall.

The moralizing writers of the period praise the ideal woman and construct a means by which all women can aspire to this kind of feminine perfection. In his treatise *The true law of free monarchies*, James I outlines the duties of fathers. He clearly parallels the obligations of the king to care for his subjects to the obligations of a father, as head of his household, to care for his family. James' views regarding the monarchy follow traditional patriarchal political theory (Aughterson 145-6). Earlier, Thomas Becon, a Protestant preacher, expresses the same political ideal regarding the family in his 1564 issue *The Book of Matrimony*. Becon expounds in his sermons,

> First it belongeth to a godly married woman to understand, that as God in his holy ordinance hath appointed the husband to be head ruler and governor of his wife: so likewise hath he ordained even from the beginning, that the wife should be in subjection and obedience to her own husband. (Aughterson 141)

Patriarchal political theorists create an authority structure in which the family is not only a part of the state, but also runs directly parallel to the state in terms of organization (Amussen 198). The common Christian view of marriage supported this political patriarchal theory. Early modern British moralists deferred to St. Paul's writings concerning the position of women within family. Ralph A. Houlbrooke, in his book *The English Family 1450-1700*, details the Christian view of marriage during the early modern period: "St. Paul had told wives to submit to their husbands as unto the Lord, for the husband was the wife's head, as Christ was head of the Church" (96). Houlbrooke goes on

to explain that Christian moralists painted a portrait of the early modern marriage as one in which "The husband was held to be the superior partner, the wife the subordinate and inferior. According to the most frequently cited Scriptural texts, the wife's foremost duty was obedience to the husband" (96). Houlbrooke further points out that despite the fact that a husband would ideally take his wife into his confidence and accept her advice, "[t]he duty of obedience set out in Scripture rested on the wife whether or not she appeared to be superior to her husband in spirit or intelligence" (Houlbrooke 97).

It is not until the later seventeenth century that John Locke developed his political theory establishing the family as a private cultural entity. S. D. Amussen, in her essay, "Gender, Family and the Social Order, 1560-1725," finds that Lockean political theory followed a transformation in social practice which allows room for speculation that the patriarchal political theory evidenced in writers like James I and Becon was based not on the actual structure of families but instead on the ideal of the period's moralists (196). Amussen finds,

> gender and class offences disappear from the records. It is possible that these offences had disappeared. It is more likely, however, that they no longer threatened the social order. In a sense, the local notables of early modern England had begun to declare the family "private" in the thirty years before Locke did. (217)

Amussen concludes that the relationship between the family and state is not one of equation where their structure must be strictly parallel, but instead finds it a simple analogy. The very fact that conduct manuals and sermons were written in such great number during the early modern period suggests that in addition to the relationship between family and state being only an analogy, a split between cultural practice and cultural ideals existed.

Marianne Novy, in her book *Love's Argument: Gender Relations in Shakespeare*, looks at the marital relationships of the period as they are represented in Shakespeare's writing. She recognizes the patriarchal presence in early modern society, but, following the Lockean separation of the family as private, supports the ideas of mutuality, within the domestic sphere (4). Houlbrooke sees this separation of cultural spheres as a trend introduced during the Renaissance by the Neo-Stoic psychologists who credited women with the capability of controlling their passions through "will and reason, thus dissociating the humors from mental behavior"(99). Novy argues that there is evidence for both patriarchy and mutuality as ideals in England during the early modern period and that patriarchy should not be mistaken for cultural belief (6).

Novy defines patriarchy as "the rule of the father, and in an extended sense the rule of husbands over wives and men over women" --a definition that supports the political and Christian ideals of the period (4). She contrasts this "rule of the father" to Erik Erikson's definition of mutuality in which men and women developed their mutual strengths in a relationship in which they depended on one another. She argues that it is in Shakespeare's romances and comedies that we are given a representation of these two organizational constructs and the tensions and conflicts that may have existed between the two (4-6). She holds that the popularity of Shakespeare's drama rested on his treatment of the tensions between patriarchal and mutual ideals. "[T]he imaginative strength he gives to opposing ideals helped the plays appeal to their first audiences, with all their emotional division, and help them keep the attention of the divided audiences of today as well" (18-19).

I would argue that it is not his allowance for mutuality and patriarchy alone that appealed to his audiences, but his allowance for the possibility of matriarchal tendencies within the domestic culture as well. Houlbrooke also hints at this possibility.

In the writings of feminist writers of the period, he sees not a proposal for any kind of extension of women's roles, but instead a virtue held in women that would allow them equality to men in different areas. Houlbrooke turns specifically to writers such as Mary Astell and her 1697 publication of *A Serious Proposal to the Ladies* as an example of the literature of the time which claimed that the family was a woman's sphere (99). Additionally, Houlbrooke notes, "The actual location of power in the relationship of husband and wife depended upon a number of variables, of which individual character and temperament are the hardest to quantify" (101).

David Cressy, in his study *Birth, Marriage, and Death*, proposes that because the majority of the published writers of the period were men, it is difficult to discern how much of their writing on domestic relationships is a reflection of a patriarchal public ideal and how much of it is a reflection of the private domestic culture in which they lived. Cressy's research regarding the documentation surrounding childbearing functions nicely as an example here. Cressy notes,

> the bulk of the documentation of early modern society was generated by men...our sources are confined to the viewpoints of husbands, fathers, ministers, doctors, and scribes....Most of what we know about the childbed mysteries comes from the other side of the veil. (16)

Cressy creates the image of a domestic sphere run and managed by a community of women. The strength of these women as rulers of their private sphere is highlighted in the many excerpts from diaries and letters regarding childbirth experiences he includes in his book. These artifacts show men simply following the directives of their wives regarding the attention that must be paid to household details while the wife was secluded in the childbed (1-94). Cressy uses the domestic tradition

surrounding the childbirth process to show that the removal of the wife from the center of her sphere caused great disruption. "Households...looked forward to a topsy-turvy time when the wife lay in at leisure"(35). Cressy further describes men's role, "Childbirth was women's work, in which men played distant supporting roles. Very few men gained intimate entry to the birthroom or knew what happened behind the screen" (15).

In addition to Cressy's description of a highly matriarchal part of domestic culture, we can look to the marginalization of the midwife in the early modern period as the reaction of patriarchal political idealists to the perceived threat of women's power over men's lives. In her book, *Not of Woman Born: Representations of Cesarean Birth in Medieval and Renaissance Culture*, Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski underscores the exclusion of men from the childbirth rituals: "The birth chamber was considered the exclusive domain of women" (91). Blumenfeld-Kosinski views this exclusion of men from participation in the reproductive processes of women as the cause for their tremendous anxiety regarding their own reproductive capabilities (111-12). Because men feared the midwife's ability to render them childless by employing her knowledge and art, many ordinances were created dictating the practice of midwifery. It is the anxiety concerning virility, offspring, and public posterity that prompts the medical profession, a public organization, to interfere in the private practices of women and eliminate what it perceives as a threat to society. The very fact that the men of this period saw a need to restrict in public policy the activities of this culture of women at which the midwife is the center demonstrates the autonomy women must have enjoyed within the domestic sphere.

In his writing, Shakespeare depicts not only the patriarchy of the public realm and the ideal held by men concerning women, but he also addresses the private sphere in which men had little part. We see many of Shakespeare's men reacting vilely to the possibility that events taking place within domestic life will

hinder their prosperity in the public arena. One of men's foremost concerns as we see it represented in Shakespeare's writing is to represent the domestic sphere in public and rely on the propriety of their domestic sphere to empower their position within the public realm.

The Winter's Tale concerns itself with the joining of the public and private spheres. It is Leontes' fear of unfavorable representation in the public eye that initiates the conflict for the characters. Leontes, suspecting that Hermione, his wife, has committed adultery with his best friend, Polixines, imposes his role as king upon his family. Leontes, following the patriarchal political ideal, treats his wife as a subject who should submit to his will completely. The consequences for his actions are very clear. Leontes loses the thing that to him in the public sphere where he rules is most dear–his heirs. Additionally, he is prevented from acquiring new heirs by Hermione's apparent death. Leontes' transgression of his role as father in a social structure where he does not rule causes him to suffer consequences for his actions in much the same way the women represented in Shakespeare's writing must suffer for overstepping boundaries within the public arena.[1] Leontes brings the public law against treason into the private life of his family and indicts his wife because he fears infidelity. Leontes interrupts the order of the domestic sphere, in particular the highly matriarchal rituals surrounding childbirth and places himself at the center–a center which is generally reserved for the newly-delivered mother and child–in order to inflate, publicly, his own position and impose patriarchal rule upon his family.

In his book Cressy emphatically states,

> Without childbirth there could be no patriarchy, without human procreation no social reproduction... the ceremonies of childbirth were deeply embedded in the popular culture of Tudor and Stuart England.

> Women of every social background understood the protocols of pregnancy, midwifery, and female fellowship around the childbed. (15)

Because Leontes relies on this culture of women to perpetuate not only the rule of his family, but also the body of his subjects, it is no wonder that the suspicion of infidelity on behalf of his wife would cause him to fear a threat to his role as king. Because Leontes convinces himself that the domestic hospitality shown Polixines by Hermione extends beyond obligatory graciousness to licentiousness, he fears that his role in the public sphere is threatened, and he tries to impose his patriarchal role as "head" to a "body" upon his wife and the other members of her court. However, Leontes is directly confronted by Paulina. Paulina, acting the role of the midwife, tries to restore order and custom surrounding Hermione's deliverance.

Paulina is present shortly after the deliverance of Hermione, and instead of Emilia who was present at the birth of Perdita playing the continuing role of the midwife, Paulina takes over and presents Leontes with his daughter. Paulina takes responsibility for Perdita's well being. Cressy details the obligations of the midwife regarding the care and well-being of the new-born infant. These duties are evidenced in public ordinances and injunctions issued by various dioceses. The midwives' oath as it was used in the seventeenth century included specific items requiring the midwife to be responsible for the baptism of the child if the child was in danger of not surviving, protection of the child from murder or bodily harm by any person, and the affirmation of paternity in the case of illegitimate birth (65-66).[2]

As the role is defined by Cressy, it is clear in Paulina's confrontation with Leontes that she is arguing the part of the midwife. Although Pauline is kept from Hermione's prison cell she assumes her role as soon as the infant is placed in her care.

Paulina addresses the infant Perdita as she carries her to meet her father, "Do not you fear. Upon mine honour, / I will stand twixt you and danger" (2.2.68-9). Paulina, in addressing Leontes, describes herself as "your loyal servant, your physician, / Your most obedient counsellor" (2.3.54-5), a position Leontes validates in referring to Paulina literally as "midwife" (2.3.160). As she seeks Leontes' blessing over his daughter, she implores him to recognize the legitimacy of his own child:

> It is yours,
> And might we lay th' old proverb to you charge,
> So like you 'tis the worse. Behold, my lords,
> Although the print be little, the whole matter
> And copy of the father: eye, nose, lip,
> The trick of's frown, his forehead, nay, the valley,
> The pretty dimples of his chin and cheek, his smiles,
> The very mould and frame of hand, nail, and finger.
> (2.3.97-103)

Leontes' reaction to Paulina's asserted authority as midwife emphasizes the degree to which he imposes public rules upon the private sphere. Leontes not only charges Hermione with the crime of treason against the state, making her alleged offence a public and political one, but he also charges Paulina with being a scold, a harlot, and a traitor, roles typically reserved for women who were too outspoken in the public realm. Not only does Leontes' royal order for his child to be banned without the benefit of baptism, blessing, or protection counter Christian practice, but also the very fact that Leontes assumes the role of authority over the rituals and practices surrounding childbirth interferes with typical domestic order. As King he brings his court and the power he wields over those within it into the domestic sphere and exacts a punishment. Leontes' perceived threat joined with his intrusion upon the rituals of childbirth and his chastisement and dismissal

of Paulina the midwife closely parallel the entire state of midwifery in early modern England.

As Paulina confronts Leontes with his newly-born daughter, he chastises her husband Antigonus for not controlling her actions and speech. It is in this exchange that we see tension between patriarchal ideal and mutuality as it is described in Marianne Novy's book. Leontes questions Antigonus, "What, canst not rule her?" (2.3.47) to which Paulina replies, "From all dishonesty he can. In this, / Unless he take the course that you have done– / Commit me for committing honour–trust it, / He shall not rule me" (2.3.48-51). Antigonus adds to his wife's response, "When she'll take the rein I let her run, / But she'll not stumble" (2.3.51-2). Leontes says finally of Antigonus, "... thou art worthy to be hanged, / That wilt not stay her tongue." To which Antigonus replies in warning, "Hang all husbands / That cannot do that feat, you'll leave yourself / Hardly one subject" (2.3.108-12). With this and several other exchanges between Antigonus and Leontes, we begin to see that in typical marriage relationships within this play the husband and wife do not follow the patriarchal social organization.

In a particularly cruel show of patriarchal public force, Leontes' goes so far as to disrupt Hermione's "lying in" process. As Cressy explains it, "The birthroom was supposed to be kept warm, dark, and snug for the duration of labour and lying in....The woman recovering from childbirth was supposed to remain in the same dark, snug environment in which she had given birth" (53; 82). Cressy notes that it was thought at the time that the worst affliction to the childbearing woman was cold air which was thought to damage the womb if the woman was exposed (83). In a litany of Leontes' unjust actions, Hermione makes it clear that he has transgressed his role in interrupting her recovery following the birth of Perdita.

My third comfort,
Starred most unluckily, is from my breast,
The innocent milk in it most innocent mouth,
Haled out to murder; myself on every post
Proclaimed a strumpet, with immodest hatred
The childbed privilege denied, which 'longs
To women of all fashion; lastly, hurried
Here, to this place, I'th' open air, before
I have got strength of limit. (3.2.96-104)

In Leontes' imposition of his role as king upon his family, it is Paulina that criticizes and chastises him. She warns him of her position in 2.3.36-39 when she says, "I / Do come with words as medicinal as true, / Honest as either, to purge him of that humor / That presses him from sleep." And "that humor" is Leontes' transgression of his role as husband and the imposition of his public life within the private sphere. Paulina goes on with her rebuke: "you are mad..."(2.3.73), "It is an heretic that makes the fire"(2.3.115), and "I'll not call you tyrant; / But this most cruel usage of your queen...something savours / Of tyranny, and will ignoble make you, / Yea, scandalous to the world." As Paulina chastises Leontes for his behavior toward his queen, she on Hermione's behalf is ultimately setting him up for the suffering he will endure for some sixteen years. Without any children or, to Leontes' and the reader's knowledge, a means of having any more, Leontes spends the time doing penance for his transgression at the hands of the Paulina and Hermione.

Given the matriarchal culture which Leontes' has offended, it seems only fitting that it be Paulina and Hermione herself who restore Leontes' role within the domestic sphere. Just as Hermione gives birth to her children and created a family, she reintroduces Leontes to the social order he offended sixteen years earlier by imposing a power construct into a sphere in which it did not belong. By the end of the play the reader and Leontes

discover that it is only the women in the play who can alleviate Leontes' suffering and restore his peace.

Leontes must accept the matriarchal Paulina's role as his guide, and as his guide, she can restore him within the domestic sphere. By doing this he in turn accepts Perdita as his natural daughter and Hermione as faithful and innocent. The reader is reassured that Leontes recognizes his transgression and accepts that he holds a non-ruling position within his private life and that it is only through Paulina's power that he has been re-established. And so, through Leontes' transgression of his role as husband and his imposition of a patriarchal political ideal upon the domestic sphere, the reader is able to see the tensions among the competing ideals and cultural practices in the early modern period.

Notes

[1] As an example of women being punished for transgressing their roles in the public sphere, we can look to Shakespeare's *The Taming of the Shrew*. As Kate becomes the publicly outspoken shrew and scold, she is chastised and taken on by Petruchio as a challenge. As test of his power of rule over a woman–a power of rule we see him exacting in the privacy of his own home. It is worth mentioning, though, that the conversations between Petruchio and Kate concerning her behavior and his intentions take place in a rather public forum within their home with servants and others representing the public in whose eyes Petruchio must succeed in order for his sense of patriarchy to be supported and in order to secure his success, he starves Kate and threatens her with bodily harm.

[2] Excerpted from Cressy. Midwives' oath from the Seventeenth Century:

Item, you shall not be privy, or consent, that any priest or other party shall in your absence, or in your company, or of your knowledge or sufferance, baptise any child by any mass, Latin service or prayers than such as are appointed by the laws of the Church of England; neither shall you consent that any child born by any woman who shall be delivered by you shall be carried away without being baptised in the necessity baptised privately according to the Book of Common Prayer....

Item, You shall not suffer any woman's child to be murdered, maimed, or otherwise hurt, as much as you may; and so often as you perceive any peril or jeopardy, either in the woman or the child in any such wise as you shall be in doubt what shall chance thereof, you shall thenceforth in due time send for other midwives and expert women in that faculty, and use their advice and council in that behalf.

Item, Ye shall neither cause nor suffer any woman to name or put any father to the child, but only him which is the very father thereof indeed.

Works Cited

Amussen, S.S. "Gender, Family, and the Social Order, 1560-1725." *Order and Disorder in Early Modern England*. Ed. Anthony Fletcher and John Stevenson. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1985. 196-217.

Becon, Thomas. "The Book of Matrimony." *Renaissance Woman: Constructions of Femininity in England*. Ed. Kate Aughterson. New York: Routledge, 1995. 140-144.

Blumenfeld-Kosinski, Renate. *Not of Woman Born: Representations of Cesarean Birth in Medieval and Renaissance Culture*. Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1990. 91-119.

Cressy, David. *Birth Marriage, and Death: Ritual, Religion, and the Life Cycle in Tudor and Stuart England*. New York: Oxford UP, 1997. 15-94.

Houlbrooke, Ralph A. *The English Family 1450-1700*. New York: Longman, 1984. 94-126.

James I. "The True Law of Free Monarchies." *Renaissance Woman: Constructions of Femininity in England*. Ed. Kate Aughterson. New York: Routledge, 1995. 145-47.

Novy, Marianne. Introduction. *Love's Argument: Gender Relations in Shakespeare*. Chapel Hill: U of North Carolina P, 1984. 3-20.

Shakespeare, William. *The Winter's Tale. The Norton Shakespeare*. Ed. Stephen Greenblatt. New York: Norton, 1997. 2883-2953.

Images of the Failed Father in *Romeo and Juliet*: Undercutting Systems of Domestic and State Patriarchy

Ken Enockson
North Dakota State University

When one examines the plays of Shakespeare from a domestic perspective, it doesn't take long to realize that all is not well in the family. There is, for instance, the constant allusion to cuckolding, indicating deep-seated anxieties of men regarding the chastity of wives, daughters, and lovers. These apprehensions manifest themselves at times in disturbing and bizarre ways: Leontes banishing his wife to a dungeon, fatally neglecting his son (whose paternity is suddenly

under suspicion), and deliberately abandoning his newborn daughter Perdita to the wilderness.

In *King Lear* we encounter the Duke of Gloucester who fathers two sons, Edgar the legitimate heir, and Edmund the bastard. Unfortunately for Gloucester, this particular "blended" family is a deadly mixture. This same potent combination helps carry the plot in *Much Ado* as Don John, the bastard brother of Don Pedro, seeks to create disharmony within the household of their host, Leonato, the governor of Messina. The fact that Don Pedro takes on the role of the father when negotiating a marriage contract between his friend Claudio and Leonato's daughter Hero implies that the marriage alliance will bring Leonato's household symbolically into the extended family of the two brothers John and Pedro. This is something Don John desperately wants to prevent.

My point is this: domestic settings in Shakespeare are rarely very tranquil ones. This is most certainly the case when examining the relationships between fathers and daughters as represented in *Romeo and Juliet*. Lynda Boose, in her article "The Father and the Bride in Shakespeare," comments: "Shakespeare's dramas consistently explore affective family dynamics with an intensity that justifies the growing inference among Shakespearean scholars that the plays may be primarily 'about' family relations and only secondarily about the macrocosm of the body politic" (Boose 325). Although this is certainly a plausible argument, others have suggested that the two are fundamentally linked. Indeed, Boose seems to suggest the same idea when discussing Rosalind's quest for her banished father's blessing before marrying Orlando. Through the ceremonial passing of a daughter from her father to her new husband, "Duke Senior is miraculously reinstated in his dukedom, regaining the paternal authority over his domain that he had lost at the same time as he had lost that over his daughter" (328). Boose then points out the same connection in both *King Lear* and *The Tempest* where "the

King's ability to govern his state depend[s] on his ability to enact his ritual role as father" (328).

David Sundelson makes the same connection between the domestic setting and the state in his book *Shakespeare's Restorations of the Father* when he points out that the "king" and the "father" are generally synonymous in Shakespeare (7). It would seem that the recurrent domestic upheavals and civil disorder so prevalent in Shakespeare mirror each other. The failed father and the wayward child parallel the inept king and a rebellious citizenry.

Considering how often the analogy between "father" and "king" was used by the social commentators, moralists, and King James himself, suggests that Shakespeare's interchange of the words was not lost on his original audiences. Only a few years after his ascension to the English throne, James I appropriated biblical images from the marriage ceremony when he stated in a speech to Parliament: "What God hath conjoined then, let no man separate. I am the husband, and all of the whole isle is my lawful wife; I am the head and it is my body; I am the shepherd and it is my flock" (qtd. in Greenblatt 25). James was speaking of his desire to join the two kingdoms of Scotland and England but his representation must have recalled similar notions he had used in his 1598 treatise, *The True Law of Free Monarchies*.

It seems James I sought not only to reaffirm the tradition of royal absolutism in this exposition. He also desired to reinforce the patriarchal system that had made the reign of his predecessor Elizabeth I so unsettling to many in England. According to natural law, James reasons, "the king becomes a natural father to all his lieges at his coronation" (qtd. in Aughterson 143). Therefore, he continues, just as the father's duty is "to care for the nourishing, education and virtuous government of his children: even so is the king bound to care for all his subjects" (143). The idealization of the duties of the king is further reinforced when James states: "as the father's chief joy ought to be in procuring his children's welfare...so ought a good prince think of his people"

(144). After establishing the responsibilities of the prince to his "children," James then addresses their duties to their "father" in a rhetorical question:

> consider I pray you...whether, upon any pretext whatsoever, it will not be thought monstrous and unnatural to his sons to rise up against him, to control him at their appetite, and when they think good, to slay him or cut him.... Or can any pretence of wickedness or rigour on his part be a just excuse for his children to put hand [onto] him? (144)

The implied answer to the question is that, just as the father, the king's rule is complete and eternal.

Others saw it necessary to legitimize the patriarchal role of the king as well. Robert Filmer, a contemporary of James I, disputes in his *Patriarcha, or the Natural Power of Kings* Bellarmine's assertion that power rested in the hands of the people by divine order:

> I see not then how the children of Adam, or any man else can be free from subjection to their parents: and this subjection of children being the fountain of royal authority, by the ordination of God himself; it follows that civil power, not only in general, is by divine institution...." (qtd. in Aughterson 161)

This concept of the "supreme father," or *pater patriae*, can be traced, according to Filmer, to the Israelite kings of the Old Testament where God "re-established the ancient and prime right of lineal succession to paternal government" (162). Filmer continues,

> To confirm this natural right of regal power, we find...that law which enjoins obedience to kings, is delivered in the terms of honour they father, as if all

> power were originally in the father....If we compare the natural rights of a father with those of a king, we find them all one, without any difference at all. (163)

In sum, the father is king and the king is the father. The two ideals are separated only by degree.

In *Romeo and Juliet*, Shakespeare presents an inverted transmission of the authority of the father and of the state. Whether at the level of the state or of the household, rule and control by the "father" is presented as inept, nonexistent, or petty authoritarianism. Escalus, the Prince of Verona, is rarely able to prevent violent bloodshed between the two warring factions in the city. When we first encounter him he blusters out repeated entreaties to end a brawl, yet only after threatening violence of his own is he obeyed.

> Rebellious subjects, enemies to peace,
> Profaners of this neighbor-stained steel–
> Will they not hear? What ho, you men, you beasts,
> That quench the fire of you pernicious rage
> With purple fountains issuing from your veins:
> On pain of torture, from those bloody hands
> Throw your mistempered weapons to the ground,
> And hear the sentence of your moved Prince. (1.1.75-81)

The power of the Prince is ineffectual even when the lives of his own kinsmen, Mercutio and later County Paris, are at stake. In fact, the firebrand Mercutio is at least partially responsible for picking a fight with Tybalt when Romeo initially refuses to answer Tybalt's challenges. A deadly fracas ensues even after the Prince had earlier given severe threats of torture and death for anyone who dared defy his command to end all violence: "If ever you disturb our streets again / Your lives shall pay the forfeit of the peace" (1.1.89-90). Here we have a "father" unable to exert

effective control within the state and within his own extended family without resorting to violent retribution.

The threat of capital punishment seems to have finally cooled Capulet's rage enough that he counsels his nephew Tybalt to refrain from violence when it is discovered that Romeo has come uninvited and disguised to the Capulet feast. However, even in his own house he needs to speak forcefully in order to dissuade Tybalt from quarreling with Romeo. "He shall be endured," Capulet states when Tybalt dares to contradict his command (1.5.74). "Am I the master here or you?" (1.5.75). This question belies Capulet's own anxieties as the head of his family that is manifested in much stronger ways when his own daughter dares contradict him.

Some have suggested that the conflict between father and daughter in *Romeo and Juliet*, as with most of the fathers and daughters in Shakespeare, stems from the father's desire to contain his daughter and the equally strong impulse by the daughter to break away from her father. Lynda Boose suggests that "consciously or unconsciously, overtly or implicitly, the father of the bride in most of Shakespeare basically wants...to retain, withhold, lock up, and possess his daughter" (331). However, she goes on,

> Prevented by law, custom, and ritual injunction from taking any of these actions, the only satisfaction available to him is to arrogate to himself the choice of her husband, most often insisting on someone she does not want, lest a desired husband usurp the father's primary position in the daughter's life. (331)

Shakespeare's portrayal of the father, Boose suggests, is overbearing, controlling, and at times voyeuristic and incestuous in his intentions (333-35).

Diane Dreher, in her book *Domination and Defiance: Fathers and Daughters in Shakespeare*, takes a more sympathetic view of the father. To Dreher, the father suffers from classic empty nest syndrome and a mid-life crisis. "Repeatedly [Shakespeare's] plays depict the father at middle life, reluctant to release his daughter into adulthood and face his own decline, while she stands at the threshold of adult commitment in marriage" (1). Dreher, however, also recognizes that much of the father's reluctance revolves around a desire for control. The daughter represents, after all, a "controllable female, one he can mold to his image of the ideal woman" (2).

Early in the text there is evidence that Capulet shows reluctance to marry off his fourteen-year-old daughter. In fact it is her young age that appears to concern him about consenting to a union between Juliet and Paris. He suggests that Paris delay two more years and, during that time, seek to win Juliet's heart. "But woo her, gentle Paris, get her heart; / My will to her consent is but a part, / And, she agreed, within her scope of choice / Lies my consent and fair-according voice" (1.2.14-17). It is hard to read in the text anything more than a doting father who is concerned for the well being of his daughter. There seems little evidence that he merely wishes to control or, in the words of Boose, "lock up" Juliet. It should be noted, however, that Capulet directly dispatches his wife to feel Juliet out on the prospects of marrying Paris. Despite his protestations to Paris, he is clearly interested in pursuing the possibility of a future match. One might suggest that Capulet is merely holding out for better terms from Paris or hedging himself for the possibility of a better suitor. The idea carries more weight when Capulet has a sudden change of heart and desperately desires to marry her off immediately.

Before we address the violent shift of Capulet's sentiments, we should examine the issue of consent. Capulet's insistence that Paris "woo" Juliet highlights a distinctive feature of matrimony in England. Social historian Alan Macfarlane states

that according to ecclesiastical and common law, consent between the two individuals was required: "marriage, like any other contract, was not valid without the free consent of the partners to the contract themselves. All that was needed for valid marriage was a 'full, free and mutual consent' but without such consent there was no marriage" (129). He traces this stipulation at least as far back as the twelfth century although there is evidence that it was codified in Anglo-Saxon law even centuries earlier (130-31). At any rate, Capulet indicates that he is fully aware of this requirement in his initial negotiation with Paris.

This stipulation he either forgets or deliberately ignores when it becomes advantageous for him to marry Juliet to Paris without delay. Ironically, it is Romeo who unwittingly helps bring about Capulet's urgent need for a marriage alliance with someone related to the Prince such as Paris. Capulet's nephew Tybalt mortally wounds Mercutio, the kinsman of the Prince, in a duel. Romeo then kills Tybalt in revenge. The bloody event places Capulet in potential peril as well as opportunity. He faces the possible wrath of the Prince for the death of Mercutio at the hands of one of his own kinsman. On the other hand, Mercutio's death leaves the Montague family without a valuable ally in its dealings with the Prince. If Capulet can exploit the desire of Paris for Juliet's hand in marriage, it will not only help deflect the anger of Prince Escalus, but could also place Capulet in the Prince's confidence.

It is at this point that Capulet disregards concerns about consent. He desperately needs an alliance and Juliet will not stand in his way.

> But fettle your fine joints 'gainst Thursday,
> Or I will drag thee on a hurdle thither.
> Out you green-sickness carrion! Out, you baggage,
> You tallow-face! (3.5.153-57)

This passage contains nearly the first words Capulet has said directly to his daughter. His usual mode of communication with her is through Lady Capulet or the Nurse. When Juliet begs for an opportunity to respond, "Hear me with patience but to speak a word" (3.5.159), he viciously silences her. "Speak not, reply not, do not answer me" (3.5.163). In fact, he also abruptly silences the Nurse when she seeks to intervene, "Peace, you mumbling fool, / Utter your gravity o'er a gossip's bowl, / For here we need it not" (3.5.174).

Whether this is Capulet's standard mode of enforcing his authority or merely done out of desperate self-preservation I can only speculate. There are hints in the text, however, that Juliet is used to keeping her own counsel. When first approached by Lady Capulet about a possible match with Paris, Juliet responds with an enigmatic "It is an honour that I dream not of" (1.3.68). Although she does confide in her nurse, she prevents the Nurse from encountering Romeo in the first balcony scene. One could also argue that when Juliet does confide in the Nurse it is out of necessity. The Nurse is able to act as Juliet's messenger and enter parts of the city Juliet would not be free to go. At any rate, as a surrogate parent, the Nurse is hardly successful. After her initial show of defiance in the face of Capulet's rage, the Nurse reconsiders her position and plays the pragmatic: "Romeo / Is banished, and all the world to nothing" (3.5.213), she tells a shocked Juliet after Capulet storms out. "Then since the case so stands as now it doth, / I think it best you married with the county. / O, he's a lovely gentleman!" (3.5.216-18). The Nurse ignores the fact that for Juliet to do so would be an act of bigamy and, ultimately, adultery.

One wonders at this point why someone doesn't just blurt out to Capulet the truth; Juliet is already married. Lynda Boose suggests that reciprocal inversions take place in Juliet's marriage and Capulet's attempts to marry her off: "Capulet repeatedly 'gives away' his daughter without her consent and Juliet is

repeatedly 'married' without the blessing of her marriage" (328). She points out the irony that while Romeo and Juliet are consummating their vows upstairs, downstairs Capulet is giving her to Paris. The problem, Boose suggests, is that "although each scene includes a groom, each is missing a crucial figure–either the father or the bride–and a crucial sequence, the daughter's transition from one male domain to another" (328). Boose implies that if the truth were known, Capulet would merely "invalidate her right to choose" and force her to marry Paris anyway (328). But could he?

There is, as I already mentioned, the issue of mutual consent. However, there is also another key feature of the English marriage system. According to Alan Macfarlane, if a couple were to marry outside of the blessing of their families, the marriage would still be considered legal barring any other impediments or claims (125). He cites F. W. Maitland from his book *The Forms of Action at Common Law*:

> after some hesitation the church ruled that, however young the bridegroom and bride might be, the consent of their parents or guardians was not necessary to make the marriage valid...Our English temporal law, though it regarded 'wardship and marriage' as a valuable piece of property, seems to have acquiesced in this doctrine. (qtd. in Macfarlane 126)

In other words, Juliet would have been within her legal rights and could have asserted them in this case, something a fourteen-year-old girl may or may not have understood.

Whatever the reason for Juliet not stating her claim to an existing marriage, she received no counsel, neither from the Nurse nor the Friar, to do so. Could her alternate parents not have known about the finer points of the law? Or could it have been that they both feared severe sanction from Capulet if he were to

discover their part in the elopement? Nevertheless, the failure of Capulet to consider the needs of his daughter forces Juliet to seek counsel outside her family which places her in the hands of equally inept alternative parents–at the cost of her life.

In conclusion, Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet* is a troubling portrayal of patriarchal systems, both at the domestic and the state level. The idea of the father-king maintaining social order in society is undercut by the very father-kings themselves. In the case of the Prince, the patriarchy is unable to assert meaningful controls that guarantee public safety except through threats of violence that in retrospect seem empty. When examining Capulet we find a dual failure both as a citizen and a father. As a citizen of the city, Capulet ignores repeated entreaties from his father-king the Prince. In the domestic sphere, Capulet resorts to angry authoritarianism that denies any other voice but his own. More specifically, Capulet manipulates the letter of the law regarding matrimony only as it benefits his political position. If it is more advantageous to him to ignore the rules of the marriage system, he will do so even at the peril of his own kin.

Works Cited

Aughterson, Kate. *Renaissance Woman: Constructions of Femininity in England, A Sourcebook.* New York: Routledge, 1995.

Boose, Lynda E. "The Father and the Bride in Shakespeare." *PMLA* 97.3 (1982): 325-47.

Dreher, Diane Elizabeth. *Domination and Defiance: Fathers and Daughters in Shakespeare.* Lexington: UP of Kentucky, 1986.

Greenblatt, Stephen. Introduction. *The Norton Shakespeare.* Ed. Stephen Greenblatt. New York: Norton, 1997. 1-76.

Macfarlane, Alan. *Marriage and Love in England: Modes of Reproduction 1300-1840.* Oxford: Blackwell, 1986.

Shakespeare, William. *Romeo and Juliet. The Norton Shakespeare.* Ed. Stephen Greenblatt. New York: Norton, 1997. 872-941.

Sundelson, David. *Shakespeare's Restorations of the Father.* New Brunswick: Rutgers UP, 1983.

Notes on a Work in Progress: Teaching Genre in Early Literature and Film (Or Odysseus and Sir Gawain meet Gary Cooper, Clint Eastwood, Arnold Schwarzenegger and Sigourney Weaver)

Bob De Smith
Dordt College

This presentation is an act of either great hubris or great humility. What I want to explore with you is a Special Topics course I am currently teaching. It is called **Genre in Literature and Film**; it has eleven students, the majority of them

English majors. Only two of the students are male. We meet for 75 minutes on Tuesdays and Thursdays, and we negotiate evening viewing times between jobs and family commitments (my own and my students'–one has a young son). The hubris comes from my presumption both that I can teach a group of mostly teachers and that I can sling *Sir Gawain* and the classic western *Shane* (1953) together and make something happen that has integrity (that isn't just "cool"). The humility comes from opening up for you what I'm in the middle of, recognizing that, as with any course you teach for the first time, especially if it is not one like others you have taught, everything doesn't work. What I hope I can accomplish is to invite you to think with me about how early literature can be taught in a cross-disciplinary context, one that bounces it off contemporary cinema and considers both literature and film from the point of view of genre.

WHERE DID THIS COURSE COME FROM?

If you teach early literature, you do not need to be convinced that the best way into the study of anything contemporary is, of course, Early British Literature. Further, you probably share with me the habit of being interdisciplinary. To engage students in early British lit. you most likely truck in tape recorders, slides, and (these days) VCRs and laptops connected to projectors to have students listen to music and look at paintings, costumes, or reconstructions of the Globe Theatre. So working by analogy makes sense to you.

More personally, two observations from my teaching experience fed into my dreaming up this course. First, I find that students (majors and non-majors alike) do not understand well–or respond well to–the concept of genre. They do not often consider how a piece of literature (comedy, epic, sonnet, or play) evokes a set of expectations or plays by certain rules (sonnets have 14 lines, for instance). More importantly, they do not often use their generic expectations as a way into what they are reading. If

Heather Dubrow is right that genre "functions much like a code of behavior established between the author and his reader" (2), then understanding that code can help students feel at home with the literature they are reading.

I find this problem especially acute with respect to comedy. Limited by a fuzzy definition of comedy as "something funny" and "having a happy ending," students do not easily discover either the social role of comedy (as complex as that may be) or the essential patterns which organize a comic plot. In fact, students often find it illuminating simply to talk through the two basic possibilities which follow the inevitable "boy meets girl" of romantic plots, whether Shakespearean or Nora Ephronian. You know them: either the two fall in love, and then must overcome any number of obstacles–usually social and parental–before their love is fulfilled; or they fall in hate, and then must be that last ones to learn how inevitable their love is. This very basic pattern can allow students (and teachers as well) to begin to organize their VCR shelf and, hopefully, begin to consider how a writer or filmmaker develops a story from a predictable pattern. I was looking for an opportunity to help students understand the role of genre in understanding, interpreting, and enjoying literature–especially early literature.

The second observation is that I find myself, more and more, relying on analogies from popular culture in order to help students understand themes and concepts from early literature. Thus I might play "Why Do Fools Fall in Love?" announcing it as the theme of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. For freshman students, I often introduce that play by spending a day talking about Ron Howard's science fiction film, *Cocoon* (1985), suggesting to my students that the fairies which inhabit Shakespeare's woods are no more or less strange than the aliens which inhabit a whole genre of films and our popular imaginations.

And I have found no better way to get students to see the variety of responses to warfare represented in *The Battle of Maldon*–from "then there returned from the battle those who did not wish to be there" to "Purpose shall be the firmer, heart the keener, courage shall be the more as our might lessens" (74-75)–than the climactic firefight in Oliver Stone's *Platoon* (1986). While under intense attack, the character played by Charlie Sheen rises from his foxhole, machine gun blazing, screaming that the firefight is "beautiful!" In Anglo-Saxon terms, he has gone *berserk*, that technical term for the warrior who works himself into a battle frenzy to the degree that he becomes almost invincible. Meanwhile, another character cowers beneath the bodies of dead adversaries, and still another later stabs himself in the thigh when he discovers that he has come through the battle unharmed. The film even has a platoon member named Rah, who carries a big stick and thumps his chest like some epic warrior when the helicopters take off, evacuating the wounded. Putting *The Battle of Maldon*–or *Beowulf*–alongside films like this one can help us explore our culture's propensity for media-generated heroes, as well as any culture's urge to embody its values and beliefs in heroic figures.

Now, I am either adulterating great literature–and my students' minds–by allowing popular media to seep into my classroom–or I am recognizing that film is the most intriguing, most powerful storytelling medium of this verge-of-the-millennium era. But what I hope to do is deepen students' experience both of early literature and of contemporary culture. And genre has become for me the link, allowing us to move between early literature and film with some facility.

WHAT DOES THE COURSE LOOK LIKE?

I've provided you with copies of my syllabus for the course, and I would like to talk you through it as a way of giving you a picture of the course as I developed it.

Opening Statements

"Learning is not a spectator sport": I designed this course to be "assignment driven" and exploratory. Discussion–of literature and film–takes up the majority of our class time. And the major assignments were designed, after an introductory one analyzing the shots of a piece of film, to summarize and build on what we learned in each section of the course. The projects, one each on epic, romance, and comedy, tested student mastery of what happened in class and asked them to run with that knowledge.

"Nothing matters but the kingdom of God": I teach at a Christian college, and I sometimes need to remind my students that their beliefs should not hinder them from reading literature or viewing film but instead should encourage them to rappel down steep slopes, depending on the firmness of their crampons.

Description and Goals

If you want a brief version of what I'm saying, here it is. I tried to emphasize here the idea of genre as a link between literature and film; the need to work inductively; a broadness in time ("literature and film of various time periods") and a broadness in approach (the works we studied "use and adapt" genre), and I gave some examples (heroes, quests, and impediments to love). I sneak in the idea of film history as kind of a bonus.

The first three goals are the most comprehensive, describing genre studies as a means for studying literature and for exploring the relevance of early texts. It also suggests ancillary interests in storytelling, film history, and film analysis.

Required Texts

Bernard Dick's *Anatomy of Film* worked well for a number of reasons. Dick's early chapters on the elements of film

are direct and readable; he balances references to classic and recent films; he includes a chapter on "Film Genres," which gave students both an overview and some thumbnails of genres like screwball comedies, horror, science fiction, and westerns. Finally, his analysis of film subtext includes discussions of *Shane* as a savior, a Hercules, and a "knight-errant," discussions which were directly applicable to our study.

Fagles's translation of *The Odyssey* was a high point of the reading in the course. As one student put it, "We had to read *The Odyssey* in high school, and I hated it. But this reads like a novel. I couldn't put it down!" Now, maybe this student had grown a bit since high school, but Fagles's translation is lively, verbally interesting, yet very, very, readable. I chose *The Odyssey* over *Beowulf* mostly because most of my students had read *Beowulf* with me last semester; I wanted to use this course to expand their reading a bit.

I almost included either Abram's *Glossary of Literary Terms* (which is fuller; most standard) or the *Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms* (which is briefer but includes references to film). I couldn't decide which I preferred, so I relied on photocopied pages.

The other items don't need comment.

Course Schedule

After some introductory work on both genre and film viewing (on the first day we played a game, which occasioned talk about rules and expectations; and we talked about Shakespeare's "My Mistress's Eyes" as it evokes and overturns generic expectations). Then we embarked on a study, successively, of three genres: the epic, romance, and comedy (I

had planned to include tragedy, but there weren't enough slots in the syllabus). We characteristically began each section of the course by reading a central work (*The Odyssey* or *Sir Gawain*); then we used that work to describe the genre at hand; finally, we branched out from the work into a variety of films which picked up on the themes and patterns we were becoming familiar with.

In the section on romance, for instance, we made the transition from the medieval work by means three classic film series: *Star Wars, Indiana Jones,* and *Star Trek* (which we discussed without viewing), where the episodic structures, quests, and light saber sword fights were easy to connect to the patterns of romance. I avoided a film that attempted to be medieval (like *Braveheart* or *First Knight*), instead exploring *The Fisher King* (1991), which deals on a number of levels with the romance theme of redemption, and *Bonnie and Clyde* (1967), where asking what kind of quest these characters are on and what happens when the knight becomes an outlaw helped to illuminate that film's subtexts. Finally, a segment of the class devoted to westerns helped to bring together the epic and romance.

In the section on comedy, which I am in the middle of, I am using *The Comedy of Errors* to establish a distinction between farce and romantic elements in ways which are right on the surface. In addition, the play's ending, which piles good news on good news, and discovery on discovery, illustrates well the essence of comedy's happy ending. In addition, our focus on genre invited us to ask this question about the plays' first scene: "What's a tragedy doing in this comedy?" Answering that question about Egeon's heart-tugging story of loss and hopelessness helped us to see that comedy often deals with very serious issues (even our worst fears)–loss of children, aging, the power of money, to name a few pertinent to this play–but comedy does so in a non-threatening, non-lethal way. Supported by the expectation that all will be well, we can explore any number of serious issues playfully. This is one of the important social roles

of comedy, and one that it is important to discover both in Shakespearean comedy and films like *Bringing Up Baby* (1938) or *While You Were Sleeping* (1994). We are at present happily engaged in looking for these patterns in a variety of films.

AN ILLUSTRATION FROM EPIC

As I teach this course, I commit myself to showing a clip in class of every film we discuss. (One reason for doing so is to remind ourselves that the language of film involves shots which are put together in a certain way.) So I would like to share just a small piece from the film *Aliens* (1986) which illustrates, I think, how an understanding of the conventions of the epic–here the arming of the warrior and a descent into the underworld–help us respond to this film.

Aliens is the second film in a saga (hear the epic term?) involving Ripley (Sigourney Weaver), a woman who in the first film is the lone survivor of an alien attack. In fact, in the early scenes of this film we see her homecoming–her *nostos*, to push the epic term–from that earlier adventure. But just as Beowulf had to confront two monsters, child and mother, so Ripley is persuaded to return with a crew of Marines to the planet, where the alien species seems to be making a comeback. While there, Ripley discovers a young child (Newt) who, like Ripley in the earlier adventure, is sole survivor. The aliens one by one eliminate the Marine platoon (it seems to smell testosterone) until only one Marine, an android, Ripley, and Newt are left. As the film reaches its climax (formally, we would say, its catastrophe), Ripley makes good on her promise to not leave Newt by turning back to recover her after she has fallen through an air shaft into the bowels of the planet's building. Ripley does so despite the fact that the superstructure on the planet has been programed to self-destruct in minutes.

The context I would like to invoke for this scene is that of Beowulf's fight with Grendel's mother. Here is how that scene is described:

> Beowulf put on his warrior's dress, had no fear for his life. His war-shirt, hand-fashioned, broad and well-worked, was to explore the mere: it knew how to cover his body-cave so that foe's grip might not harm his heart, or grasp of angry enemy his life. But the bright helmet guarded his head, one which was to stir up the lake-bottom, seek out the troubled water–made rich with gold, surrounded with splendid bands, as the weapon-smith had made it in far-off days, fashioned it wonderfully, set it about with boar-images so that thereafter no sword or battle-blade might bit into it....
>
> After these [boasting] words the man of the Weather-Geats turned away boldly, would wait for no answer: the surging water took the warrior. Then was it a part of a day before he might see the bottom's floor. Straightway that which had held the flood's tract a hundred half-years, ravenous for prey, grim and greedy, saw that some man from above was exploring the dwelling of monsters. Then she groped toward him, took the warrior in her awful grip....
>
> Battle-hardened, now swollen with rage, he pulled his deadly foe so that she fell to the floor. Quickly in her turn she repaid him his gift with her grim claws and clutched at him: then weary-hearted, the strongest of warriors, of foot-soldiers, stumbled and fell....Then the son of Ecgtheow would have fared amiss under the wide ground, the champion of the Geats, if the battle-shirt had not brought help, the hard war-net–and holy God brought about victory in war; the wise Lord, Ruler of the Heavens, decided it with right, easily, when Beowulf had stood up again. (Abrams, et al. 45-47)

Let's compare that description to a clip from the film in which Ripley straps on various armaments, descends by means of an elevator, and confronts a mother/monster.

In sum, I think the point here is that director James Cameron consciously evokes the tradition of the epic, including the specific conventions of the arming and descent, in order to structure our response to Ripley's actions. She *is*, we see, fully heroic, a fact which heightens the effect of the scene and perhaps excuses her violent action. But of course we notice differences as well as similarities: she has always been a reluctant hero, and Cameron is careful throughout the film to highlight Ripley's gender (there is an earlier scene in which Ripley is contrasted in the frame with Vasquez, a very macho woman Marine, and another, early one in which she is seen in a bathrobe, making coffee for two male visitors), leading us to ask what happens when the heroic tradition meets a woman. In fact, the film suggests that Ripley's human–and feminine–characteristics, not her proficiency with a grenade launcher, account for her survival.

This is a brief excursion into the interaction of genre, literature, and film. This clip is not enough to hang a course on, but it does, I hope, suggest some of the ways in which these topics may bounce off each other.

CONCLUSIONS?

The student evaluations are not in, and for me teaching a new course for the first time is both invigorating and disconcerting, the latter especially because nearly every word out of my mouth is new and because I never get more than a day or two ahead–and I'm always trying to find a time to watch another film.

But two things I have been hearing from my students are encouraging. First, in class they often say, "This may be stretching it a bit" as they attempt to describe the quest a character may be on or what a particular scene means. I hear that less when I am

teaching Shakespeare. Hopefully, the connections I invite my students to make, and the context I create which includes the analysis of works which students feel freer to interpret, will help them become more creative, more confident interpreters of whatever they read, view, or listen to. For instance, one student, in the assignment on epic, compared Scarlet O'Hara's leaving a burning, devastated Atlanta to Odysseus's descent into the underworld. A stretch? Maybe.

Secondly, students frequently say to me, "I saw this film in the theater, but when I watched it again, a lot more jumped out at me." Usually, that "a lot more" is related to the set of conventions and expectations which studying genre, as well as classic examples of various genres from early literature, has opened up for students. What the inquiry of the course is giving students, I think, is a tool that works like a can opener: asking the broad questions about genre–what kind of book or film is this? what do I expect? how are those expectations met or altered–helps students to become more adept readers and viewers. Further, the more specific questions they learned to ask–what kind of quest is this character on? how does the book or film deal with "heroic action," especially violence? is this comedy farce or romance?–also helped them to put what they were reading or viewing into some kind of perspective.

Do I wish I had done some things differently? Yes. On a very practical level, if I were to teach the course again, I would either teach it at night (a prospect I do not relish) or schedule a lab so that I know there is a time when everyone can see a film. But I also wish I my students had done more reading: I would like to have included a Western novel, and another play. I also found the shifts in the class from literature to film and back again more difficult than I had expected. I would try to smooth those transitions, perhaps by introducing comedy using film, not Shakespeare (reversing the pattern). In addition, I regret losing tragedy from the course, though I realize it is the genre which is

probably best understood by students and one they have the most opportunities for being exposed to in their course work. Still, it would be nice to pair tragedy and comedy and to explore how Hollywood deals with (or can't deal with) genuine tragedy. Perhaps getting to romance more quickly, twining it with epic more closely, would create some space.

Barry Sanders, who teaches at Claremont College, said this in an interview with Bill Moyers in a *Frontline* production, "Does T.V. Kill?":

> Inadvertently, through television [and I'm asking you to expand his topic to include film and other aspects of pop culture] we are creating a new kind of human.... We are producing generations of kids without imaginations, with the inability to conjure their own images...because television does it for them. And that's amazingly important if we ever care about anything like hope, I think....The best counter that a person has to images, let's say violence or notions of violence out in the world or of disease or of despair out in the world is being able to conjure the image of another world, of a different world. Of a world that's filled with hope.

Sanders offers strong defense of the imagination, one which we would certainly connect to the reading of imaginative literature, especially early literature. We might recall C.S. Lewis's advice that the best introduction to the *Faerie Queene* is with "a large–and, preferably, illustrated–edition" of the work, "on a wet day, between the ages of twelve and sixteen" (146). If the course I'm teaching makes it less likely that students will be able to "conjure their own images," then I'm going down the wrong road. But if it enables them both to gain some power over film images, by means of literary analysis, of genre studies, or of simple comparison between the worlds of imaginative fiction and of film, then what I am doing is valuable. And if students can see that *The*

Odyssey and *The Comedy of Errors* are relevant texts, since they use the same forms and deal with the same themes as modern, cinematic storytelling, then hopefully their experience of both will be enriched. You make the call.

Works Cited

Abrams, et. al. *The Norton Anthology of English Literature*. Vol. 1. 6th Ed. New York: Norton, 1993.

Aliens. Dir. James Cameron. Twentieth Century Fox. 1986.

Dubrow, Heather. *Genre*. The Critical Idiom 42. London: Methuen, 1982.

Lewis, C.S. *Studies in Medieval and Renaissance Literature*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1966.

Moyers, Bill. "Does T.V. Kill?" *Frontline*. PBS. 10 January 1995.

Platoon. Dir. Oliver Stone. Artisan Entertainment. 1986.

Appendix

Spring Semester, 1999-2000
FOC 226 ext 6296

Dr. Bob De Smith
rdesmith@dordt.edu

GENRE IN LITERATURE AND FILM

Opening Statements

"Learning is not a spectator sport. Students do not learn much just by sitting in class listening to teachers, memorizing prepackaged assignments, and spitting out answers. They must talk about what they are learning, write about it, relate it to past experiences, apply it to their daily lives. They must make what they learn part of themselves." (Chickering and Gamson 3)

"Nothing matters but the kingdom of God, but because of the Kingdom, everything, literally everything, matters." (Spykman, Gordon, "Kingdoms in Conflict." Commencement Address given at Dordt College, May 1988)

Course Description

The central aim of this course is to use the concept of genre as a link between the study of literature and film, a link which illuminates both kinds of art and which provides a means for understanding, enjoying, and evaluating both in the light of the Reformed faith. We will often work inductively; that is, we will not begin with a lecture on each genre, to be illustrated in the works which follow, but we will read to discover how genres work. Most often we will work from literature to film, allowing us to trace the development of a literary genre into various film variants.

This course will examine how literature and film of various time periods use and adapt the patterns of epic, romance, and comedy (tragedy would fill out this list, but we only have time for three). The features of each genre will be illustrated and explored using both film and literature; in addition, the concept of genre will be used to link literature to film. For instance, we might ask how contemporary action-adventure films reflect (or refract) the concept of the hero from a literary epic like *The Odyssey*. Students will become familiar with genre as a tool for understanding–and evaluating–both literature and film. They will be invited to explore how contemporary storytelling in film uses concepts like the quest (from romance, and in *Indiana Jones*) or the impediments to love (from comedy, as in *While You Were Sleeping*). Students will be encouraged to think creatively about both literary texts and film. They will also gain some insight into film history, as classic films like *Bringing Up Baby* and *Shane* are paired off with more recent films.

Goals

- Enable students to use genre studies as a means for understanding and enjoying literature.
- Enable students to understand the relevance of literary texts from a variety of centuries and cultures, using the resources of genre and the analogy of contemporary film.
- Equip and encourage students to apply the patterns and expectations of traditional genres (epic, romance, comedy, and tragedy) to film
- Explore with students how storytelling, whether in an ancient epic or modern action-adventure film, can be faithful or distorted, insightful or exploitative, true or false.
- Equip students with two things necessary to interpreting film: a sense of film history and the basic skills of analyzing the visual language of film.

- Invite students to consider (with Northrop Frye and J.R.R. Tolkien) how all stories reflect the divine story.
- Enable students to respond as Reformed believers to the worlds created by fiction writers and filmmakers.
- Equip students to respond intelligently to popular culture.

Required Texts

Dick, Bernard. *Anatomy of Film*. 3rd ed. New York: St. Martins, 1998.

Homer, *The Odyssey*. Trans. Robert Fagles. Intro. Bernard Knox. New York: Penguin, 1997.

Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. 2nd ed. Trans. and Intro. Brian Stone. New York: Penguin, 1974.

Shakespeare, William. *The Comedy of Errors*. Ed. Harry Levin. Signet Classic. New York: Penguin, 1989.

Tolkien, J.R.R. *The Tolkien Reader*. Intro. Peter S. Beagle. New York: Ballantine, 1966.

Requirements

1. Attendance and participation in all class activities
2. Completion of all assigned reading
3. Viewing of assigned films (those which will be viewed in class are indicated)
4. A shot, scene, sequence analysis of a portion of any film.
5. A project on the epic in film (essay or presentation)
   -analyze a film that makes use in some way of epic themes or conventions
6. A project on romance (involving independent reading or viewing)
   -read fantasy/romance (Lewis, Tolkien, Wangerin) or analyze a film like *Ever After* or *Mulan*

7. A review of a film which takes account of the genre of comedy; or a review of any recent film which related it to the study of genre.

Course Schedule

Tuesday	**Thursday**
1/12–Introduction: *How to Read a Book*, or *What's a Genre?* (Begin reading Homer)	1/14–Introduction: *How to Read a Film* Read Dick, vii-ix; 1-35; and 36-45 (Preface; "Graphics and Sound"; shots).
1/19–*How to Read a Film*, continued Read Dick, 36-45 (again) and 54-79. (These pages are your guide to doing a shot analysis) **Rough cut Assignment**: Do a shot, scene, sequence analysis of a brief, coherent segment of any film.	1/21–Continued exploration, presentation, and discussion of Shot, Scene, Sequence Analysis (finished analyses due 2/4). Read Dick, 45-54 ("Framing") and 80-88 (color and light).
1/26–Discuss Homer, *The Odyssey*	1/28–Discuss Homer, *The Odyssey*

2/2–Discuss Homer, *The Odyssey* See Dick 130-31 ("The Nature of Myth")	2/4–Read "The Homecoming of Beorthnoth" in *The Tolkien Reader* (3-27). A brief account of some other epics: *Beowulf*, *Paradise Lost*. What's an epic? **Finished Analyses Due.**
2/9– In class viewing: selections from early epic films: *Birth of a Nation*, dir. D.W. Griffith (1915) 187 m (1925). *The Battleship Potemkin*, dir. Sergei Eisenstein (1925) 70 m. See Dick 6, 18-19, 71-72, 193 (on *Birth*); 5, 46, 74-75, 175-76 (on *Potemkin*) Read Dick 128-61 S("Film Subtext")	2/11– *Lawrence of Arabia*, dir David Lean (1962). 222 m.
2/16–Epic themes in Monster movies: *Aliens*, dir. James Cameron (1986) 137 m. Read Dick, 122-23 ("The Horror Film")	2/18–Epic themes in science fiction: *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*, dir. James Cameron (1991) 135 m. Read Dick, 124-27 (sci-fi)

2/23–What is Romance? Some selections from Malory's *Morte D'Arthur* (handout) Begin reading *Sir Gawain*	2/25–Read *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.*
3/2–Read *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* **Assignment on Epic Due**	3/4– Discuss three classic films series: *Star Wars, Indiana Jones, and Star Trek* as a way to understand romance. You may bring your favorite scene to class
3/9–Read Tolkien, "On Fairy-Stories" (31-99), and (this is optional) "Leaf by Niggle" (100-120) *The Fisher King*, dir. Terry Gilliam (1991) 137 min.	3/11–*Bonnie and Clyde*, dir. Arthur Penn (1967) 111 min.; also, see *Thelma and Louise*, dir. Ridley Scott (1991) 128 min.

Spring Break: March 11 (noon) through March 22

3/23–Westerns as epics or romances: In class viewing: *High Noon*, dir. Fred Zinnemann (1952) 84 min Read Dick 97-103 ("The Western"); see also 6 (on *High Noon*)	3/25–*Shane*, dir. George Stevens (1953) 118 m and *The Searchers*, dir. John Ford (1956) 119 min. Read Dick 130-37 ("The Savior Myth in *Shane*) and 3, 52, 98-102, 194-95 (*Searchers*); 38, 68, 100-101, 248 (*Shane*)
3/30–No Class: Assessment Day	4/1–*Unforgiven*, dir. Clint Eastwood (1992) 131 min **Assignment on Romance Due** (no foolin'!)
4/6– Shakespeare, *A Comedy of Errors*, Acts 1-2	4/8– Shakespeare, *A Comedy of Errors*, Acts 3-5
4/13–*A Night at the Opera*, dir. Sam Wood (1935) 92 min.	4/15–Screwball comedy: *Bringing Up Baby*, dir. Howard Hawks (1938) 102 min See also: *It Happened One Night*, dir. Frank Capra (1934) 105 min; Read Dick 110-113 ("The Screwball Com.")

4/20–*While You Were Sleeping*, dir. Jon Turteltaub (1994) 100 min. See Dick 112-113	4/22– *Sleepless in Seattle*, dir Nora Ephron (1993) 105 min.
4/27–*Groundhog Day*, dir. Harold Ramis (1993) 101 min. and/or *Fargo* dir. Joel Cohen (1996) 98 min	4/29–What's your favorite comedy? Why? **Comedy (or other) Assignment Due.**

Philosophy and the Metaphor of the Mechanical Mind: Adam Smith on the Presocratics

Ken Blanchard
Northern State University

The topic of metaphor is one of those locations in the geography of ideas where students of literature and of philosophy are likely to bump into one another. The former of course approach metaphor first as one of the basic devices of communication. Like its anemic brother, the simile, it is primarily a vehicle for delivering some quality, good or bad, but in any cases descriptive, from an idea with which it is already closely associated to one with which is not. Or at least, not yet. For example, to say of President Clinton that, in his use of air power in foreign policy, he has been *promiscuous*, is to exploit one aspect

of his behavior in order to bring attention to another, and to do so without any risk of flattery. I believe it is true of the tribe of Literature Professors that they admire metaphor more than simile. They do so for the simple reason that metaphor has backbone. Metaphor does not hide behind the cautious qualifier. Metaphor knows a purple-hued maltworm when it sees one.

The matter stands differently for philosophers, in part because the stakes are higher. A philosophical metaphor is more than a means of painting something more or less familiar in new colors; it is often employed to introduce the reader or interlocutor to something for the first time. A good example of this is found in Aristophanes' famous play, *The Clouds*. This is the first and in my view still the best portrait of philosophy written by someone who was self-consciously not a philosopher but a poet. In that play Socrates is asked to explain what thunder and lightening are, if they are not caused by Zeus. He does so by claiming that thunder is a rumbling in the disturbed intestines of the clouds. And lightening? Well, what does happen when you fart on a lit match? To say that lightening is caused by the ignition of flatulence clearly does cast the heavens in a new light, diminishing them and robbing them of their power to enforce morality. But it does more than that: it proposes a new physics whereby the invisible things above and below the earth can be explained in terms of visible substances and familiar processes. For the philosopher, then, metaphor is primarily a claim not about how things are but about what they are. And this is what philosophers are concerned with: the deepest truths about the most important things.

Consequently the very aspect of metaphor that most appeals to the poet and literary critic, its brazenness, raises a difficulty for the philosopher. Every metaphor is strictly speaking, a lie. Time may be like a river but it is not really a river; just as the president is not really a baboon. This fact presents no difficulty in literature, for writers of fiction are liars by profession, and professors of literature are professional admirers of liars.

Philosophers by contrast are supposed to be professional tellers of the truth. To lead someone to the truth by telling a lie is uncomfortably close to destroying a village in order to save it. In spite of this problem, the greatest philosophical writers have never hesitated to deploy metaphors whenever strategy recommended them. It seems important then to understand the function of metaphor within philosophy not only in order to understand the difference between philosophy and poetry, but to understand philosophy for what it is.

This is what Adam Smith set out to do in a number of *Essays on Philosophical Subjects*. The first and longest of these essays is a rigorous and largely convincing history of astronomy from the Presocratics to Isaac Newton. The latter are short pieces on ancient Greek physics and metaphysics. These constitute fragments, presumably, of what was intended to have been a longer work to accompany his book on the foundations of morality. For the aim of these essays is neither the objects of science nor the history of science as such; though these provide the material out of which his argument is constructed. As in the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* Smith set out to identify the natural causes of such moral passions as pity and love, guilt and indignation, so in his *Essays on Philosophical Subjects* he sought after those forces natural to the human mind that have driven men to inquire into natural phenomenon, and to construct complicated theories to explain them. If I am right about the intention of the *Essays*, then Smith's project was ambitious indeed. The two works he published in his lifetime, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments* and *The Wealth of Nations*, cover what Aristotle would have described as practical wisdom. The first is directed to questions of morality and justice, the second, to questions concerning the common good. In the *Essays* he is turning to the other part of philosophy, the pursuit of theoretical wisdom. Had he completed this work he would have laid a new and distinctly modern foundation for the whole of the philosophical enterprise.

The newness of this foundation is evident from the beginning the "The History of Astronomy." For Aristotle, the practical sciences are to be distinguished from the theoretical sciences primarily by their objects. The practical sciences aim at things that change with time and over which human beings have some measure of control–whether to make war, raise taxes, decriminalize marijuana. These matters always involve judgement calls. A wise decision may be informed by certain persistent truths, but will also be in some degree determined by circumstances. The theoretical sciences, by contrast, aim at things that do not change and are not subject to human control–what is the relationship between the hypotenuse of a triangle and its two sides, what principles account for the movement of the heavenly objects. In beginning his history, Smith shifts our attention away from the objects and toward the observer. What for Aristotle was obvious but unrevealing is for Smith the key fact: that both moral and theoretical questions are asked in order to satisfy some human need. It is the structure of human needs that will directly determine the structure of any science; the actual structure of the objects of that science will be determinative only in so far as it is related to those needs.

This shift in focus is scarcely visible in his *Moral Sentiments*, for in this branch of philosophy there is no quarrel. Both Aristotle and Smith recognize an ethics that is tailored to human needs and that nonetheless is informed by abstract and persistent principles. In fact, Smith differs from Aristotle in much the same way as did Plato, over the question of simplicity. In Smith's theory, all moral passions are ultimately derived from sympathy. The pains and pleasures of other human beings remind us of our own, and disturb or comfort us accordingly. This principle of our nature is all that interests us in the fortunes of others. Plato's Socrates was similarly reductionist, articulating in the *Republic* a notion of justice as the health of the soul. Aristotle viewed the soul as considerably more heterogeneous than did

either Smith or Socrates. But all would have agreed that the structure of the human soul indeed forms the foundation of the practical sciences. It should be noted that there is nothing subjectivist or relativistic in this: the question of what principles determine the operation of the reason, emotions, and appetites is itself an objective question. Still, in all cases it is what is internal, the nature of the soul, that is the model for understanding what is external, morality and politics.

It comes as something of a shock, however, when Smith approaches the science of astronomy in the same fashion. Whether one considers the sun to be a hot stone or a hot young god, the ancients did not usually believe that the movements of the heavens were tailored to their own needs and habits. Smith, however, begins his "History of Astronomy" with an extended discussion of the operations of the human mind, and proceeds to make these operations the basis both for the history and structure of astronomy. Smith begins psychology with a consideration of three key sentiments: surprise, wonder, and admiration. Surprise, Smith tells us in Section I, "is not to be regarded as an original emotion of a species distinct from all others" ("History of Astronomy" I.5). He means by this that the object of surprise is located not in the world but in the mind; it is the shock produced by the contrast between two successive emotional states. Anticipation renders the psychological effect of any event less severe by reducing the contrast between our emotional states before and after. "But the contrary of this happens when the object is unexpected; the passion is then poured in all at once upon the heart, which is thrown, if it is a strong passion, into the most violent and convulsive emotions, such as sometimes cause immediate death" ("History of Astronomy" I.2). The danger even of pleasant surprises is such that we go to great troubles to prepare someone for a shock. We do so by gradually broaching the subject, by creating a vague and uncertain impression of what is to come, by allowing suspicion to prepare the way for

confirmation. None of this is surprising, of course. The external senses are similarly affected by sudden contrasts of cold and hot, bitter and sweet, which we often try to mitigate by somehow managing the transition. If as Smith suspects our sentiments are only internal versions of the external senses, it is expected that the same things will be true for both.

But what does the topic of "surprise" have to do with astronomy? While there is to be certain the occasional comet or eclipse, no other field of empirical observation seems so uniformly regular over such long periods of time as the motion of the stars. But Smith is in fact engaged in preparing our minds for new doctrine; for in matters of philosophy where one is free to accept or reject an idea rather than merely absorb it, everything may turn on the preparation. In Section II he turns to the sentiment that is the prime mover of philosophical investigation, wonder. "It is evident," he informs us, "that the mind takes pleasure in observing the resemblances that are discoverable betwixt different objects" ("History of Astronomy" II.1). We are both "inclined and obliged" to arrange the things we encounter by classes, to place one class within another, and to multiply genera and species until everything has its place. And as our schemes of classification become more sophisticated, our curiosity becomes more demanding. Only a child would be satisfied to know that a new botanical specimen was a "thing" or "a plant." And as we are satisfied when any object can be comfortably tucked away into its category, we are disturbed and aroused by the appearance of an object that we cannot classify:

> The imagination and memory exert themselves to no purpose, and in vain look around all their classes of ideas in order to find one under which it may be arranged. They fluctuate to no purpose from thought to thought....It is this fluctuation and vain recollection, together with the emotion or movement of the spirits

> that they excite, which constitutes the sentiment properly called *Wonder*. ("History of Astronomy" II.3, his italics)

Here, as in the case of surprise, the sentiment is described in terms of psychological processes that can themselves be likened to more physical processes.

But why, precisely, do these processes disturb us? Why is classification comforting, and singularity disturbing? The answer seems to be that these motions of the spirits consume energy, and produce friction. This impression is confirmed when Smith turns from the topic of identity to that of cause and effect. We are not moved to philosophical wonder so much by the observation of unfamiliar objects as by the appearance of perfectly familiar objects at the wrong time and place. When a series of events have been constantly observed to follow one another in a certain order that series lays down as it were a track in the mind. Thereafter the pattern is easy to reproduce in fancy, and when the series is observed again the events

> appear all closely connected with one another, and the thought glides easily along them, without effort and without interruption. They fall in with the natural career of the imagination; and as the ideas which represented such a train of things would seem all mutually to introduce each other, every last thought to be called up by the foregoing, and to call up the succeeding; so when the objects themselves occur, every last event seems, in the same manner, to be introduced by the foregoing, and to introduce the succeeding. *There is no break, no stop, no gap, no interval. The ideas excited by so coherent a chain of things seem, as it were, to float through the mind of their own accord, without obliging it to exert itself, or to make any effort in order to*

> *pass from one of them to another*. ("History of Astronomy" II.7)

If the mind is fond of regular successions of events, which it comes to regard as "cause and effect," it is because it requires less mental energy to follow them. It is unsurprising then that the contrary happens when observations occur out of the expected order. Every object or event may in itself be perfectly ordinary, but if the mind is not accustomed to the sequence then it must exert itself, must hesitate, and will become fatigued by trying to follow the apparently unconnected events. Smith proposed that, were we transported to some other planet with different physical laws than our own, the mind would in short order be disabled by stress. And if a long, incoherent series of events may disable the mind, a single unconnected event will disturb it. Confronted with such an event, we will naturally seek some economical way of restoring the original sequence.

This, then, is the original and sustaining motive of philosophy. The first philosophers were those who, due to advanced subtly of observation, began to notice gaps in the familiar processes of nature. For example, the heavenly objects can easily be conceived of as divine beings, for they seem to move in undisturbed circles and to be impervious to decay. But at second glance the picture becomes more complicated: not all the heavenly objects move according to a uniform pattern and some, the unruly planets for example, actually reverse course from time to time as though they had dropped something and had to go back for it. The philosopher then searches about for

> something which may fill up the gap, which, like a bridge, may so far at least unite those seemingly distant objects, as to render the passage of thought betwixt them smooth, and natural, and easy. The supposition of a chain of intermediate, though invisible, events, which

> succeed each other in a train similar to that in which the imagination has been accustomed to move, and which link together those two disjointed appearances, is the only means by which the imagination can fill up this interval, it is the only bridge which, if one may say so, can smooth its passage from the one object to the other. ("History of Astronomy" II.8)

The Ionian physicists accomplished this feat in the case of the heavens by constructing in their imaginations a series of perfect crystalline spheres which turn about a single axis and to which the sun, moon, and stars are attached. In the case of the planets it was necessary to add another set of spheres related in new ways to the first set. In this way Philosophy attempts to represented in the invisible causes that bridge the otherwise discordant events of nature, and so restore to the mind that tranquility which is so easily disturbed by close observation. Or to put it somewhat differently, philosophy is the cure for such diseases as philosophy causes.

That philosophy aims, at least in part, at tranquility of mind is no novel idea. It suffices to mention the curious case of Socrates. What distinguishes Smith from the classical philosophers is that he divorces this quest from any direct concern with the truth. In his "History of Astronomy" he proposes to examine the various accounts of the heavens "without regard to their absurdity or probability, their agreement or inconsistency with truth and reality." He is interested in these theories only so far as they succeed or fail to pacify the mind; for it is this, and not its truth or falsehood, that explains the popularity of any theory or science. Astronomy has always had a large audience while chemistry, though more useful and, to judge by experience, closer to the truth, labors in obscurity; what can explain this except that the former addresses puzzles by which many minds can be

troubled whereas the former solves problems that disturb only chemists ("History of Astronomy" II.12).

This is not to say that Smith rejects the idea of progress in the sciences nor that he is uncertain of the superiority of modern sciences over those of the ancients. He speaks of the unifying principles of ancient physics as vague and undetermined and having no real existence, and says condescendingly that "they were such as might be expected in the beginnings of science" ("History of Ancient Physics" 8)." By contrast he speaks in rather reverent tones of Newton's system, and leaves us to wonder whether it does not represent the end and perfection of astronomy and not merely the most recent of its stages. Indeed Smith confesses, as he describes Newtonian mechanics, that his attempt to treat all systems of philosophy as "mere inventions of the imagination" fails in the case of Newton, and that he is "drawn in to make use of language expressing the connecting principles of this one, as if they were the real chains which Nature makes use of to bind together her several operations." The principle of union in Newton's system is "the gravity of matter," which is, "of all its qualities after inertness, that which is most familiar to us." His principles have, therefore, "a degree of firmness and solidity that we should in vain look for in any other system." Little wonder then that men do not look upon Newtonian mechanics as a useful fiction, but instead regard it as the discovery of "an immense chain of the most important and sublime truths" ("History of Astronomy" IV.76). Men scarcely help but regard the most satisfying account of nature as the true account.

The success of Newton's theory, its power to bind mysterious processes by forces that are familiar to everyone, explains why Smith employs it as a metaphor in his psychology of the sciences. For this is surely what he does. In his account, thought becomes a Newtonian object: it has weight and momentum; it is subject to friction and shock; to alter its velocity

requires an input of energy and a track must be constructed for it if it is to move efficiently. Of course, in providing this account Smith is himself building bridges and imagining invisible chains of causation; science is constructing what amounts to a self-portrait. This Newtonian metaphor applied to the mind is intended to do a double duty. In the first place it is expected to provide the most satisfying, most efficient account of mental processes. In the second place, it is intended to prepare the reader for a fundamental shift from one world view to another. From the soul as free and immaterial to the soul as mechanical and determined is about as sharp a contrast as one is likely to see. Smith skillfully employs his mechanical model in order to make the new view seem less surprising, to ultimately persuade us of its truth by first persuading us that we knew it all along. And, like Copernicus before him, Smith makes the relocation seem cheap by distinguishing between the utility of his theory and its truth. He allows us to have our cake and deconstruct it too. But I suggest that this is not entirely honest. The Newtonian account is, for Smith, the true account. And it is more. We recall that Smith had begun his psychology by mentioning three natural sentiments–surprise, wonder, and admiration. While he gives us mechanical accounts of the first two, he maintains a scrupulous silence regarding the third. Smith is well aware that there is another motive for philosophy than tranquility of mind. The new physics is also beautiful, worth contemplating for its own sake.

Philosophers employ metaphor in order to point the way toward the truth, and at the same time prepare the mind to receive it. The latter task cannot be fully analyzed apart from the historical circumstances in which the philosopher writes. In the history of philosophy there have been any number of minor metaphors but only two major ones: the organic and the mechanical. The Greek word for nature, which is reflected in our word for physics, had the same root as their word for plant. A flower or a tree was a growth, and all natural process were a kind

or species of growing or diminishing. Nature was that which is concealed within the seed, invisible at first, and emerging over time in ways that are never entirely predictable. In Smith's time the metaphor had shifted. The new dominant metaphor was that of mechanical production. Any process is mechanical if it can be broken down into its parts, the outcome made fully visible in the beginnings, and the outcome connected with the beginnings by a linear series of steps. Once the ball is rolling down the track, its arrival at the appointed time and place is inevitable. There is no emergence. In my own humble opinion–more opinionated perhaps than humble–we are now in the process of a return. In biology, Aristotle is hot again; in physics, information trumps matter; and in my field the social sciences, emergence is sexy. The task of philosophy is now to reconcile the organic and mechanical. For in spite of what the philosophers promise us, the possibility of philosophy has always turned on the expectation of harmony between the human mind and the world that it inhabits. This harmony is the object of all authentic philosophical metaphors.

Works Cited

Smith, Adam. "History of Ancient Physics." *Essays on Philosophical Subjects*. Ed. W.P.D. Wightman and J.C. Bryce. Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1982. 106-17.

—. "History of Astronomy." *Essays on Philosophical Subjects*. Ed. W.P.D. Wightman and J.C. Bryce. Indianapolis: Liberty Classics, 1982. 33-105.