“A new Phoenix, of the more worthier gender”

Reinforcing the Gender Hierarchy and Patriarchal Orthodoxy on the Jacobean Stage, 1603-1606

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Abstract

Focusing on the early years of James I's reign in England – specifically, 1603 to 1606 – I explore how, after more than half a century of female rule in England, the restoration of *male* monarchy in England foregrounded misogynistic gender expectations, and how the early modern theatre had a hand in the reinforcement of the gender hierarchy and patriarchal orthodoxy. Analysing thirteen extant plays first performed professionally in London theatres within this date range, this project explores how early modern ideas of 'masculinity' and 'femininity' played out on the stage at a time when a female to male transition of monarchical power promoted a heightened awareness of, and anxieties regarding, gender and the gendered social order. I also examine how violations of the gender hierarchy and social order were framed, theatrically, as transgressive and dangerous, and how, in some instances, these social threats were 'contained' so as to consolidate patriarchal orthodoxy.

Employing a broadly new historicist approach, my analysis of the plays is complemented by research drawing on a range of early modern English discourses which equally informed and were informed by the patriarchal hierarchies underpinning social thought at this time. These include the sumptuary laws and regulations, humoral theory and pseudo-medical treatises, anti-theatrical tracts, political treatises and speeches, topical pamphlets, poetry and panegyrics. These discourses showcase that the plays under examination in this research project are a product of a historic moment preoccupied with the maintenance and preservation of a social order that revolved around patriarchal power. Ultimately, this thesis will demonstrate that the plays themselves implicitly and explicitly maintained and preserved this patriarchal order. However, my research identifies a surprising nuance in the reinforcement of this power/order, demonstrating that the binary gender hierarchy was complicated by the early modern recognition of subtle gender differences *within* a sex.

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Introduction

In his summary of "[t]he wonderfull yeare [of] 1603," popular pamphleteer, poet, panegyrist and playwright Thomas Dekker wrote that the devastating news of Queen Elizabeth I's death hit her kingdom "like a thunder-clap" – it was a report "able to kill thousands, [for] it took away hearts from millions."[1] With Elizabeth having reigned just shy of forty-five years, few of her subjects had known a time before female rule, and Dekker's pamphlet serves to remind us that many "neuer sawe the face of any Prince but her selfe" because she had "brought vp (euen vnder her wing) a nation that was almost begotten and born vnder her[.]"[2] Prior to Elizabeth, the infamously grisly reign of her half-sister, Mary I (or 'Bloody Mary', who reigned from 1553 to 1558), as well as the short-lived and tragic reign of Lady Jane Grey (a fleeting nine days in 1553), contributed to England's half-century under female – or 'petticoat' – rule. With the declaration that Elizabeth's cousin, James VI of Scotland, was the new king of England (known thereafter in England as James I), English society and culture would be forced to navigate life under a new regime. As Dekker makes clear, having only known life as a subject of Queen Elizabeth, many "neuer vnderstoode what that strange out-landish word *Change* signified."[3]

This change would not just mean a new monarch and a new dynasty, but, crucially, the public return to patriarchy from gynarchy with the restoration of a *male* king. As this thesis will explore, the restoration of a *male* monarch and of *male* power in England proved an

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[1] Thomas Dekker, *The wonderfull yeare, 1603, Wherein is shewed the picture of London, lying sicke of the plague. At the ende of all (like a mery epilogue to a dull play) certaine tales are cut out in sundry fashions, of purpose to shorten the lives of long winters nights, that lye watching in the darke for us* (London: 1603), accessed July 28, 2021, https://www.proquest.com/eebo.

[2] Dekker, *The wonderfull yeare, 1603*.

[3] Dekker, *The wonderfull year, 1603*.

opportune moment to revive and reinforce attitudes regarding 'natural' gender roles and expectations, as well as conceptions of 'masculinity' and 'femininity'. Contemporary theatre took up a part in reflecting and sustaining these attitudes by normalising male superiority and female subordination, and reminding (or warning) audiences of the potential threat that disrupting this social order might entail. At the same time, the early modern gender hierarchy was not dichotomous, and the theatre responded to this ambiguity in performance. This thesis will, therefore, also consider where boys/young males and elderly males featured on the masculine-feminine spectrum and where, as a result, they featured in the gender hierarchy, and how the early modern stage handled this nuance. Throughout my discussion I demonstrate that the foregrounding of these normative gender perceptions on the stage was a multilaterally beneficial endeavour for the theatre: not only did it suit the phenomenologically male industry of theatre by affirming male power, but also (as I will explore), it served as a way to deflect negative attention from anti-theatrical attacks.

Concentrating on the initial years of James I's reign in England, this project is built around an examination of eighteen extant early modern plays that were first performed professionally in London theatres between 1603 and 1606.[4] These post-succession years are witness to the immediate effects of the transition from female to male rule, and this period sees a heightened awareness of gender on the stage. This thesis explores how that awareness played out. The immense popularity, diverse nature and cross-class appeal of the theatre are some of the reasons that early modern plays/theatre deserve the attention this thesis affords them. More than this, however, early modern plays from the public theatre are worthy of

[4] A full list of these plays can be found in Appendix 1. I note that this thesis does not give due attention to four of the eighteen extant plays – this does not mean to suggest that these plays do not reflect their social, political and/or cultural space, but that they did not award as strong a gender undertone as those that I have focused on appear to have awarded. The dates accompanying the plays' titles throughout this thesis are the dates of first performance and all adhere to Martin Wiggins, *British Drama 1533-1642: A Catalogue*, ed. Martin Wiggins and Catherine Richardson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015).

further attention because – in accordance with Jonathon Dollimore's new historicist view – they are a space where "State and culture most visibly merge[d]."[5] Dollimore notes that

> [a]n analysis by the new historicism of power in early modern England as itself deeply theatrical – and therefore of the theatre as a prime location for the representation and legitimation of power – has led to some remarkable studies of the Renaissance theatre as well as of individual plays[.][6]

This thesis looks to maintain this focus on the merging of power and culture in the space of the theatre, examining the early modern patriarchal orthodoxy and its reliance on the 'natural' gender hierarchy as an extension of State power – especially given the phenomenologically patriarchal overtones of male monarchy that were intensified with James' accession. Adopting this perspective, this thesis offers three chapters that investigate the interaction of patriarchal authority and the theatre within the context of the female to male monarchical transition in the early years of the seventeenth century.

Chapter One investigates how early modern ideas regarding gender differences bled onto the stage and into theatrical depictions of kingship and authority. It focuses on and provides close analysis of six plays from the Jacobean accession to examine theatrical representations of early modern ideas of 'good' and 'bad' kingship, and how concepts of archetypal 'masculinity' fed into these. The chapter initially explores early modern understanding of the physiological underpinnings of gender differences and the ways those beliefs informed, or justified, the early modern gender hierarchy. Then, with a consideration of both fictional rulers and recognisably 'Jamesian' figures (that is, figures who resembled

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[5] Jonathan Dollimore, introduction to *Political Shakespeare: New Essays in Cultural Materialism*, ed. Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985), 3.

[6] Dollimore, introduction to *Political Shakespeare*, 3.

King James), it questions to what extent the theatre passed its own judgements and warnings over 'good' and 'bad' kingship, and whether or not these theatrical depictions frame James as having lived up to, or fallen short of, England's hope for 'masculine' monarchy after half a century of female rule.

Continuing a consideration of early modern perceptions of 'masculinity', Chapter Two explores the use of metadramatic devices in theatre's response to non-masculine bodies invading male realms of authority and power. Focusing on five plays, the chapter poses an answer to the question: to what extent did the theatre use metadramatic devices to consolidate normative male power and authority? In doing so, the chapter splits the collective term 'theatre' into two separate categories, questioning whether or not the treatment of male authority played out differently for boys'/children's companies than it did for the adult companies. The chapter's discussion builds on Chapter One's treatment of the physiological underpinnings of gender differences in constructing the gender hierarchy, and complements this with an examination of contemporary anti-theatricalist ideas regarding manipulative, theatrical power. While the chapter questions whether boy players' invasion of adult male realms of power contradicted or slighted dominant ideas regarding the 'natural' gender hierarchy and social order that were being pushed with the restoration of male power in James, it ultimately finds that the theatre continued to reinforce the normative gender hierarchy, albeit in a nuanced and subtle way.

Finally, Chapter Three asks: to what extent did the early modern theatre co-opted the contemporary anti-theatrical anxieties over cross-dressing in order to consolidate normative male superiority and normative female inferiority? The chapter focuses on the theatre's representation of transgressive women whose cross-dressing behaviours and antics are framed as a danger to the social order for their breach of 'natural' social boundaries. It closely analyses a further six plays from the period to investigate the gendered double

standards apparent in plays that present the misuse of clothing for cross-gender- and cross-class-dressing purposes. It finds that the threat of subversive cross-dressing was 'contained' when *female* characters misused clothing in a dangerous way or to breach the confines of their social positions, while the same type of behaviour by male characters was either ignored or rewarded within the framework of the dramatic narrative.

Before delving into the chapters' close analyses of the plays, however, this Introduction will provide the historical context necessary for understanding why gender was of paramount concern at the time of James I's accession. As the thesis will ultimately suggest, James' accession to the English throne and its implicit reinforcement of the early modern gender hierarchy provided theatre with an enabling background to reiterate not only the early modern notion that masculinity was best suited to positions of authority, but also that women – and, significantly, any other socially subaltern members of society – who violated gendered social codes were manipulative, destructive, blasphemous, and a transgressive threat to the stability of the 'natural' social order.

That 'natural' social order in early modern England involved a conception of gender that stemmed from classical, physiological and Biblical authorities who positioned women as the inferior sex, under the dominion of men. The historians Jacqueline Eales and Eleanor Rycroft tell us that the early modern subjection of women was partly influenced by the teachings of classical theorists like Aristotle and Galen who theorised that the female form was a physically inferior, imperfect version of the male form.[7] These classical ideas coalesced with the physiological underpinnings of early modern humoral theory, which suggested that men had hotter, drier compositions, while women were "cold and moist, making them passive,

[7] Jacqueline Eales, *Women in Early Modern England, 1500-1700* (London: University College London, 1998), 3, 22; Eleanor Rycroft, "The Beard Maketh the Man," *History Today*, September 1, 2018, 18.

intellectually unstable and lacking in courage."[8] Eales explains that, by 1600, countries like France, Germany and Italy had advanced their anatomical knowledge, moving away from a belief in humoral theory – that is, the belief that humans' physical and mental health depended on the balance within their bodies of the four 'humours': black bile, yellow bile, blood and phlegm.[9] These developments, however, were "slow to penetrate England" where the most popular anatomical works – and, by extension, public understanding of gendered differences – were still heavily influenced by belief in the humoral system well into the seventeenth century.[10] In addition to physiological prejudices were prejudices derived from Scripture which blamed the Fall of Mankind on the weaker, female sex. For this reason, women were pushed out of the public sphere because they were considered ill-suited to positions of authority – as the Scottish theologian John Knox succinctly put it, it was considered "a thing most repugnant to nature, that Women rule and govern over men."[11] Aware of this, Elizabeth I's renowned address to her troops at Tilbury in 1588 during the Spanish Armada's campaign captures her valiant endeavours to construct herself as a masculine ruler, fit for government. Her famous line, "I know I have the body of a weak and feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king," has become the catchphrase at the centre of various depictions and discussions of Elizabeth's management of, and attempts to overcome, gender politics during her reign.[12] Phenomenologically, however, Elizabeth was

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[8] Eales, *Women in Early Modern England*, 3.

[9] Eales, *Women in Early Modern England*, 3.

[10] Eales, *Women in Early Modern England*, 3.

[11] John Knox, *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women* (London, 1558; Project Gutenberg, 2003), accessed July 28, 2021, https://www.gutenberg.org/files/9660/9660-h/9660-h.htm.

[12] For the Tilbury Speech, see Elizabeth I, "Speech to the Troops at Tilbury, 1588," in *Leadership: Essential Selections on Power, Authority, and Influence*, ed. Barbara Kellerman (New York: McGraw Hill, 2010), 207-08. See also Carole Levin, *The Heart and Stomach of a King: Elizabeth I and the Politics of Sex and Power* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), *passim*; Aidan Norrie, "King's Stomachs and Concrete Elephants: Gendering Elizabeth I through the Tilbury Speech," *Royal Studies Journal* 6, no. 2 (2019): *passim*;

female and, as historian Judith M. Richards makes plain, "[t]here was a widespread, and unsurprising, preference for male rule, [and] for male supremacy more generally."[13] One reason for this was the ongoing insecurity surrounding the issue of succession that had troubled Elizabeth's reign.

By March 1603, having "put up an impressive resistance to what others saw as the inevitable outcome," the reality of the queen's deteriorating health made urgent the question of her succession – an uncertainty that had plagued Elizabeth's parliament and public throughout her reign.[14] Having modelled herself as the Virgin Queen, mother to her subjects, Elizabeth had failed to fulfil her womanly duty in producing an heir to secure both the Tudor dynasty and a seamless succession after her death. Richards reminds us that, because the transition from Elizabeth to James was ultimately so smooth, "it is difficult to recapture now just how long and deeply her subjects feared who might be her successor," and just how anxious her councillors and parliament were that the unmarried, childless state of her weak and vulnerable 'spinster rule' left England in a precariously heirless position, wide open to foreign infiltration.[15] These anxieties were frequently put back on the parliamentary table during her reign – pleas for her to address the question of a marriage were made on no less than four occasions, in 1559, 1563, 1566-67, and 1576.[16] It would appear that Elizabeth's councillors were unable to rely on their queen to confront the issue of her own succession and to secure England's future; the smooth transition from the Tudor line to the new Stuart dynasty could not be attributed to Elizabeth's future planning, but to the arguably treacherous

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Mary Beth Rose, "The Gendering of Authority in the Public Speeches of Elizabeth I," *PMLA* 115, no. 5 (2000): *passim.*

[13] Judith M. Richards, " 'To Promote a Woman to Beare Rule': Talking of Queens in Mid-Tudor England," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 28, no. 2 (1997): 102.

[14] Judith M. Richards, *Elizabeth I* (New York: Routledge, 2019), 183.

[15] Richards, *Elizabeth I*, 73.

[16] Richards, *Elizabeth I*, 72.

behaviour of her councillors. Historians generally agree that it was the behind-the-scenes work of ministers like Robert Cecil that made for the relatively low-profile passing of the baton after Elizabeth's death.[17] In back-and-forth letters between Cecil and the Scottish king, Cecil persuaded James to bite his tongue and, as historian Pauline Croft puts it, "bide his time until the queen dies."[18] When that time came, James wasted little time before departing for London. As historian Bruce Galloway tells us, his eagerness and speed to reach London "was a natural reaction of a new king distant from his capital and anxious to secure his crown."[19] His apprehension here was not unjustified, nor was that of an English people anticipating a chaotic transfer of sovereignty.[20] Simply, the Scottish king's accession to the English throne had never been a sure thing, but his gender certainly played to his advantage.

Croft has analysed the forces that worked against James' claim, from statutes and royal wills, to legitimate challengers.[21] Not only did Henry VIII's will (1547) explicitly exclude his Scottish relations from inheriting the English throne, but the Aliens statute (1351) and the Act of Association (1584) respectively barred foreign successors and those attached to conspiracy or treason from inheriting the English throne.[22] A Scottish king whose mother was executed

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[17] Richards, *Elizabeth I*, 184; Pauline Croft, "The Reign of James VI and I: The Birth of Britain," *History Compass* 1, no. 1 (2003): 2-3; Kevin Sharpe, *Image Wars: Promoting Kings and Commonwealths in England, 1603-1660* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2018), 12-14.

[18] Croft, "Birth of Britain," 3.

[19] Bruce Galloway, *The Union of England and Scotland, 1603-1608* (Edinburgh: John Donald Publishers, 1986), 15.

[20] On James' apprehension, see Croft, "Birth of Britain," 2; Susan Doran, "James VI and the English Succession," in *James VI and I: Ideas, Authority, and Government*, ed. Ralph Houlbrooke (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 27. On England's apprehension, see Ian W. Archer, "Royal Entries, the City of London, and the Politics of Stuart Succession," in *Stuart Succession Literature: Moments and Transformations*, ed. Paulina Kewes and Andrew McRae (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 262; Richard A. McCabe, "Panegyric and its Discontent,." in *Stuart Succession Literature: Moments and Transformations*, ed. Paulina Kewes and Andrew McRae (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 22.

[21] Croft, "Birth of Britain," 2.

[22] Croft, "Birth of Britain," 2.

for conspiracy and treason against Elizabeth, therefore, fit the description of the type of person for whom these statutes were initially passed. James' cousin, Lady Arbella Stuart, on the other hand, had a similar genealogical claim to James, but an English-born status and a family untouched by conspiracy made Arbella's claim particularly attractive and less open to dispute.[23] Across the seas on the continent, Phillip II of Spain had, in 1588, proclaimed his daughter, the Infanta Isabella, as the rightful queen of England by virtue of her distant descent from Edward III.[24] While the English Arbella Stuart would have been appealing to those unnerved by the possibility of a foreign ruler, Isabella would have been a popular option among her Catholic co-religionists in England.

Ultimately, however, it was English prejudices regarding gender that gave James the upper hand. As Croft explains: "There was little English support for the unmarried Arbella and the childless Isabella […] In England, after so many years of spinster rule there was a deep desire for a male monarch […] and a married man with three children who could secure the English succession into the next generation was seen as the 'natural' future ruler."[25] Expanding on the suggestion that James had an advantage because he was male, the critic Sara Jayne Steen further notes that Arbella Stuart was subject to the authority of her "ranking male relative" (James) who automatically superseded her simply by means of his gender.[26] It is notable that Steen repeatedly refers to James as the "male relative," as though to foreground the importance of his gender in that power dynamic. One month prior to Elizabeth's death, the Venetian Ambassador in England, Giovanni Carlo Scaramelli, recorded

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[23] Croft, "Birth of Britain," 2; Mark Hutchings and Berta Cano-Echevarría, "The Spanish Ambassador's Account of James I's Entry into London, 1604," *The Seventeenth Century* 33, no. 3 (2018): 263-64; Sara Jayne Steen, "The Crime of Marriage: Arbella Stuart and the Duchess of Malfi," *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 22, no. 1 (1991): 63.

[24] Croft, "Birth of Britain," 2.

[25] Croft, "Birth of Britain," 3.

[26] Steen, "The Crime of Marriage," 63.

his understanding on the matter of succession gender politics, first acknowledging that *both* "James and Arabella are the real claimants to the crown of England," before revealing that

> [i]t is, however, a fixed opinion that the Ministers, being convinced that this kingdom [England] is strong rather in reputation than in actual forces, are resolved among themselves not to be governed by a woman again, but to give the [C]rown to the King of Scotland, as they cannot judge the future except by its consequences.[27]

As my analysis of Thomas Middleton's play *The Phoenix* (1604) in Chapter One suggests, for many, James' accession inspired hope in England *because* of his gender. The critic Richard A. McCabe explains how "the resulting sense of excited opportunity" was captured by avid letter-writer John Chamberlain: "these bountiful beginnings," he wrote, "raise all mens spirits and put them in great hopes, insomuch that not only protestants, but papists and puritanes, and the very poets with theyre ydle pamflets promise themselves great part in his favour."[28]

That said, news of James' accession created an unsurprising sense of confusion for some in England given that, as Dekker highlights, "[v]pon Thursday [24th March, 1603] it was treason to cry God saue king *Iames* king of *England,* and vppon Friday hye treason not to cry so."[29] James was a foreign king – from a previously enemy state, no less – that many in

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[27] Giovanni Carlo Scaramelli, "Venice: February 1603, 16-28," in *Calendar of State Papers Relating To English Affairs in the Archives of Venice, Volume 9, 1592-1603*, ed. Horatio F Brown (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1897), 541-542. *British History Online*, accessed June 29, 2021, http://www.british-history.ac.uk/cal-state-papers/venice/vol9/pp531-548.

[28] McCabe, "Panegyric and its Discontents," 21; John Chamberlain's letter quoted in McCabe, "Panegyric and its Discontents," 21.

[29] Thomas Dekker, *The wonderfull yeare, 1603*.

England were entirely unfamiliar with: he spoke with an accent, and his mother, Mary Queen of Scots, had been executed for treason against England's late queen. To manage this, James needed to make both himself and his ideas of kingship more accessible and knowable in order to boost familiarity between himself and his subjects, and to gain popular approval in England. The new king deployed a handful of methods to achieve this – some of which aggrandized him and his gender by belittling women.

One way that the new monarch's English subjects gained insight into the kind of king James might become in England was via the political thoughts he expressed in his essays and treatises. Following the proclamation of James' accession, many looked to these as the only resources available to try and understand the character of their new king. As a consequence, some of James' early writings were rushed to republication as revised and enlarged Anglicized versions which were avidly consumed by a largely metropolitan readership.[30] Texts like *Daemonologie* (1597) and *The True Law of Free Monarchies* (1598) respectively indicated the new king's standing on witchcraft and the supernatural, and on divine rule. *Basilikon Doron* (1599), meanwhile, provided an understanding of what the King considered as general guidelines to follow to be an efficient monarch; significantly, *Basilikon Doron* presented James' own attitudes towards the perceived dangers of female rule and his advocation of the subordination of women. As my analysis of Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *King Lear* in Chapters One and Two will go on to discuss, given that this treatise was so widely republished in London – approximately 10,000 copies being printed in the first year following James' accession – these attitudes concerning gender roles and expectations moved to the forefront of public thought.[31]

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[30] Archer, "Royal Entries," 264; McCabe, "Panegyric and its Discontents," 21.

[31] On the republishing of *Basilikon Doron*, see Archer, "Royal Entries," 264; Carole Levin, *Heart and Stomach*, 158; McCabe, "Panegyric and its Discontents," 21.

Another way James sought to make himself known was via The Royal Entry procession. This acted as another platform in which the public could see and understand James, and served as an opportunity for citizens to catch a first sight of their new king. After a period of plague-induced seclusion, the Royal Entry took place on 15th March 1604, and its narrative focused on the legitimacy of James' descent from Henry VII, while symbols that would have been well-known to upper and lower sorts alike, like the Ovidian phoenix – symbolising rebirth/regeneration – were attached to the new king. Designed as political communication, the Entry saw James *perform* his intentions and ideas of kingship to his new subjects. It drew attention to the theatricality of monarchical display, having been designed as a procession punctuated with pageants of street theatre and music, accompanied by speeches and poetry/panegyric readings, and staged on wooden arches dotted along the procession route between the Tower of London and the City's western boundary of Temple Bar.[32] Scripted by the playwrights Ben Jonson, Thomas Dekker and Thomas Middleton, the Entry was essentially – as critics Mark Hutchings and Berta Cano-Echevarría describe – "a performance choreographed on a grand scale."[33] Crucially, this theatricality of initial monarchical display would eventuate in a theatricality of monarchical authority/power throughout James' reign. This can be seen in the way James framed his power in the beginning of his reign and explains why contemporary playing companies were correspondingly presenting plays which explored the gender hierarchy via metadrama and metadramatic depiction of power – concepts that Chapter Two will go on to discuss.

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[32] Archer, "Royal Entries," 257; Anne Lancashire, "Dekker's Accession Pageant for James I," *Early Theatre* 12, no. 1 (2009): 39; Heather C. Easterling, "Reading the Royal Entry (1604) in/as Print," *Early Theatre* 20, no. 1 (2017): 47.

[33] Archer, "Royal Entries," 257, for the detail of the playwrights; Hutchings & Cano-Echevarría, "The Spanish Ambassador's Account," 256.

One of the images that James pushed in the performance of the 'Entry' – an image that would become a ubiquitous motif throughout his reign – was that of the 'peacekeeper'. Although James had no initial involvement in it, The Treaty of Mellifont – which ended the Nine Years' War (1594-1603) with Ireland – would usher in James' 'peaceful' reign on March 30th 1603. Maintaining momentum, the Treaty of London would bring an end to the Anglo-Spanish war in August 1604. There had never been a formal declaration of war by either side, but friction between Spain and England had been rife since 1585.[34] Croft mentions that it confirmed the "success of the Stuart dynasty" in England because it "was seen as bringing much needed peace and commercial prosperity to England, Spain and Flanders.[35]

Yet other historians have argued that James' obsession with pushing his peaceful persona neglected to consider how the English might react to the parley. As Croft suggests, Cecil was aware that "the long war in Ireland had exhausted the goodwill and resilience of the English population," but the conflict with Spain, which had lasted much longer, was not generally viewed as being a thorn in the side of the English.[36] Historian Carole Levin suggests that James ultimately became unpopular for various reasons, but a dominant reason was that people could not forget his peace with the enemy.[37] Similarly, critic Sophie Shorland suggests that James might have been perceived as betraying Elizabeth's legacy with the Anglo-Spanish peace, while historian Andrew Thrush observes that not only was there an extra-parliamentary opposition to a peace with Spain, but there was also hostility expressed

[34] Pauline Croft, "England and the Peace with Spain, 1604," *History Review*. September 1, 2004, 19.

[35]Croft, "Birth of Britain" 248; Croft, "Peace with Spain," 23; Christopher Durston, *James I* (London: Routledge, 1993), 45.

[36] Croft, "Peace with Spain," 21.

[37] Carole Levin, *Heart and Stomach*, 168.

in parliament to the conclusions of the 1604 treaty.[38] According to Shorland and historian Christopher Durston, what James failed to realise was that his subjects were still under the impression from Elizabeth that she had presided over a period of glorious and national success, and the war with Spain played into that idea of glory and success.[39] Durston suggests that many English subjects "considered an intense hatred of Spain to be a core element of their political and religious heritage."[40] As Chapter One will discuss, James' Anglo-Spanish peace policy would play a vital role in how the theatre responded to ideas of masculinity, femininity, and gender roles and expectations around the time the treaty was on the table. As the chapter explores, the image of 'peacekeeper' that James so ardently promoted would come to be at odds with the expectations of 'masculinity' overhanging his kingship, leading his subjects to question whether or not the new king had lived up to, or fallen short of, the archetypal masculine rule that early modern England came to desire.

Given the literary genre at the centre of this thesis, due attention should also be given to James' establishment of himself during the early years of his reign as a patron of the theatre. Within days of assuming the English throne, James declared that he would sponsor and assume patronage of London's most reputable playing company. On 19th May 1603, the playing company previously known as the Chamberlain's Men was awarded a patent that would thereafter see the troupe known as the King's Men. The King's Men were the adult playing company in residence at the Globe theatre, with Shakespeare as their resident playwright. Assuming royal patronage positioned the alien king within a familiar, accessible and popular public arena, and directly aligned the monarchy with theatrical performance. For

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[38] Sophie Shorland, " 'Womanhood and Weakness': Elizabeth I, James I and Propaganda Strategy," *Renaissance Studies* 34, no. 2 (2019): 272; Andrew Thrush, "The Parliamentary Opposition to Peace with Spain in 1604: A Speech of Sir Edward Hoby," *Parliamentary History* 23, no. 3 (2004): 302.

[39] Shorland, "Womanhood and Weakness," 273; Durston, *James I*, 45.

[40] Durston, *James I*, 45.

James, this alignment was conceptual as well as literal: in *Basilikon Doron*, he claimed that "Kings being publike persons, by reason of their office and authority, are as it were set (as it was said of old) upon a publike stage, in the sight of all the people".[41] The theatre both responded to and reflected the performative nature of the monarchy and *Basilikon Doron*'s (widely read) opinions about the performative nature of kingship, and this notion is afforded further attention in Chapter Two.

Perhaps following the precedent set by James, other playing companies were also transferred into royal patronage in the first year of James' reign, indicating an apparent appreciation for the arts amongst the new royal family. As the historian Andrew Dickson remarks, the new king and his court were voracious consumers of theatre. In the 1603-4 Christmas season, the King's Men gave the first six performances of the season, and a total of eight performances altogether, compared to five performances given by the Prince's Men, two by the Queen's Men/Servants, and one each by the Queen's Boys and Paul's Boys.[42] Eyewitness accounts suggest that the king may have been an unruly audience member, loudly interrupting performances to express his approval or disapproval.[43] As my discussion in Chapter Two gives further attention, however, such behaviour was not uncommon: in the indoor playhouses – and especially amongst the more elite members of an audience – the obnoxious behaviour of overly empowered audiences indicated a power dynamic, and as I demonstrate, this dynamic was once again inflected by gender hierarchies. Regardless of

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[41] James VI and I, "Basilicon Doron," in *King James VI and I: Selected Writings*, ed. Neil Rhodes and Jennifer Richards (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 202.

[42] Andrew Dickson, "Royal Shakespeare: a playwright and his king," *British Library*, last revised 15 March, 2016, https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/royal-shakespeare-a-playwright-and-his-king; Andrew Gurr, *The Shakespearian Playing Companies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 114-15.

[43] Gurr, *Shakespearian Playing Companies*, 115; Peter R. Roberts, "The Business of Playing and the Patronage of Players at the Jacobean Courts," in *James VI and I: Ideas, Authority, and Government*, ed. Ralph Houlbrooke (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 82.

James' indecorum, critic Peter R. Roberts suggests that "there is no reason to doubt that it was the king who had taken the initiative in domesticating the principal companies at court" and that, while the king was not always present for the performances, the players always received an additional award when the king did attend.[44] For a king determined not to alienate any key figures or factions, however, assuming patronage of one of the perceived vices of London life would have turned heads for those in the vociferous and largely Puritan anti-theatrical community.

Preoccupied with fashioning his 'peacemaker' image, James extended an olive branch to the Puritan community with the organisation of the Hampton Court Conference in 1604 to hear their concerns over the "enormities" – that is, the immoral behaviours – they believed were rampant in London. Begging for the "reformation of manners," Puritanism advocated for improved morality in the public sphere and denounced corruptive behaviour that endangered the maintenance of a godly community.[45] Among those behaviours were dancing, swearing, gambling, drunkenness, fornication, showy dress, infringements of Sabbatarianism – and theatre.[46] Puritan anti-theatrical diatribes condemned theatre for various reasons, including the way it encouraged the spread of disease, that playhouses operated on Sundays, and the way theatre infected the minds of susceptible spectators. Chapters Two and Three of this thesis further explore some of the themes of this anti-theatrical rhetoric and how the theatre co-opted aspects of these attacks in order to defuse other criticism. The chapters explore theatre's use of the anti-theatricalists' own arguments to deflect attention away from the actors' own transgressive behaviour by targeting – within the dramatic narratives of the

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[44] Roberts, "Business of Playing," 82.

[45] Tom Webster, "Early Stuart Puritanism," in *The Cambridge Companion to Puritanism*, ed. John Coffey and Paul C. H. Lim (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 54; Ivo Kamps and Karen Raber, "Geography and Religion," in *William Shakespeare's Measure for Measure: Texts and Contexts*, ed. Ivo Kamps and Karen Raber (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2004), 330.

[46] Webster, "Early Stuart Puritanism," 54; Kamps & Raber, "Geography and Religion," 330.

plays presented – the transgressive behaviours of those breaching the confines of their 'God-given' social positions (which were often tied to their gender). While Chapter Two is interested in the anti-theatricalist anxieties over the manipulative power of theatre, Chapter Three focuses on the theme of cross-dressing and the misuse of clothing. Anti-theatricalists did not underestimate what they considered to be the "transformative power of the stage," and worried that audiences exposed to the idea of changing or challenging gender or status would be infected with similar ideas outside theatre walls.[47] Their anxieties persisted as the Hampton Court Conference offered them little in the way of victory, with historians agreeing that James picked the low hanging fruit of reformation and agreed to the bare minimum – such as minor amendments to the Book of Prayer, extensions of the Prayer Book catechism, and the onset of a translation of the Bible (the origins of the King James Version) – rather than any meaningful sanctions of London's "enormities" – theatre included.[48]

Throughout the subsequent chapters, the historical context outlined above can be seen feeding into the plays first performed in James' post-succession years. Normative male superiority and normative female subordination would recurrently feature as quasi-motifs on the stage and this was due to the events of James' accession that encouraged a heightened awareness of gender roles, expectations and confines. James' victory (by virtue of his gender) over the female contenders Arbella and Isabella in obtaining the throne fuelled these themes and convictions on the stage, as did the peacemaker image he pushed that increasingly connoted an undesirable effeminacy. His image as England's new Phoenix would feed into the storylines of plays that celebrated the new king, before plays highlighting the desirable

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[47] Edel Lamb, "Shakespeare and the Renaissance Stage," in *The Edinburgh Companion to Shakespeare and the Arts*, ed. Mark Thornton Burnett, Adrian Street and Ramona Wray (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2011), 267.

[48] Alan Cromartie, "King James and the Hampton Court Conference," in *James VI and I: Ideas, Authority, and Government*, ed. Ralph Houlbrooke (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 66; Frederick H. Shriver, "Hampton Court Revisited: James I and Puritans," *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 33, no. 1 (1982): 69.

masculinity of warmongering conveniently coincided with James' peace treaties', thus providing an implicit critique of the monarch. Even the new king's alignment with the theatre, arguably, was couched in the reinforcement of normative male supremacy: why, for example, did England's most prominent, male authority align himself with an adult company, rather than a boys' company? Could it have anything to do with the perceived non-masculinity of boys during this period, and the king's endeavours to align himself with masculinity given England's desire for a masculine monarch? Either way, as this thesis will explore, plays first performed in the three years following James' accession appeared to respond to the Zeitgeist, using the public space of the theatre to reinforce the gender hierarchy and patriarchal orthodoxy at a time when England was learning to navigate life under a king whose female predecessor would be shown to be more masculine than him.

Chapter One

Kingship on Stage: The Good, the Bad, and the Unmanly

In 1558, in a polemical pamphlet titled *The First Blast of the Trumpet Against the Monstrous Regiment of Women*, the Scottish Protestant reformer John Knox uncompromisingly attacked the rule of women. In no uncertain terms, Knox declared that women were "weake, fraile, impacient, feble and foolishe," and suggested that "experience hath declared [women] to be vnconstant, variable, cruell and lacking the spirit of counsel and regiment."[1] Forty-five years later, the emphasis on female inferiority shifted gears to a reiteration of male superiority as James I ascended the English throne. Admittedly less vituperatively than Knox, panegyrists and poets expressed the relief and hope that fresh, male monarchy inspired after more than half a century of 'petticoat rule.' For example, pamphleteer Radford Mavericke implied that more was expected of a male sovereign than a female sovereign in his pamphlet, *Three Treatises* (1603): he suggested that, from Elizabeth's ashes, "a new Phœnix of the more worthier gender" arose.[2] Meanwhile, poet Robert Pricket also homed in on those high expectations in *A Soldiers Wish* (1603), forecasting that the new king would "adde unto his glories now begun, / More then could by a mayden Queene be done."[3] With the restoration of male rule, reinforcing women as subaltern to men and unfit for rule became less cumbersome.

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[1] John Knox, *The First Blast*.

[2] Radford Mavericke, *Three Treatises Religiously Handled and Named According to the Seuerall Subiect of each Treatise: The Mourning Weede. the Mornings Joy. the Kings Reioycing. Published by R.M. Minister of Gods Word. Perused and Allowed* (London, 1603), 16, accessed July 28, 2021, https://www-proquest-com.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/books/three-treatises-religiously-handled-named/docview/2248561951/se-2?accountid=14574.

[3] Robert Pricket, *A Soldiers Wish unto his sovereign lord King James* (London, 1603), quoted in McCabe, "Panegyric and its Discontents," 29.

As discussed earlier, James' own book on kingship, *Basilikon Doron* (1599), contributed to re(in)stating the 'natural' gender hierarchy. When it was reprinted in London in 1603, English subjects were offered a sourcebook to make themselves more familiar with the character and theories of their new Scottish king. By reading this advice manual on good kingship, English readers became privy to James' own views on female inferiority. Echoing Knox, the new king wrote that "women are the frailest sex" before restating the 'natural' gender hierarchy that opposes women in positions of authority and asserts their subordination to men:

> [C]ommand her [a wife] as her Lord, cherish her as your helper, rule her as your pupill, and please her in all things reasonable; but teach her not to be curious in things that belong her not: Ye are the head, shee is your body; It is your office to command, and hers to obey… [4]

In fact, James went so far as to suggest that a female heir was less a matter of a king's misfortune, and more a punishment for his sinful behaviour:

> … the reward of [James V's] incontinencie, (proceeding from his evill education) being the suddaine death at one time of two pleasant yong Princes; and a daughter onely borne to succeed to him… leaving a double curse behinde him to the land, both a Woman of sexe, and a new borne babe of aage to reigne over them.[5]

[4] James VI and I, "Basilicon Doron," 239.

[5] James VI and I, "Basilicon Doron," 236.

The readers of those 10,000 copies of *Basilikon Doron* reprinted in London in 1603 were now conscious that their sovereign considered gynocracy a "cursse."

This bias against female rulers was seemingly reflected in popular opinion. Even when James found himself up against two legitimate and strong female contenders for the throne, it was the prejudices attached to gender that gave James the upper hand.[6] As previously discussed, Isabella of Spain's childlessness and Arbella Stuart's unmarried status garnered little support from an England that now deeply desired a male monarch. This sentiment was reiterated by Radford Mavericke who implied that English fervour for a king mirrored that of the Israelites in *The Book of Judges*:

> When the Iewes a long time had Iudges to rule ouer them, though some of them [were as] wise as *Debora…* yet they still cryed out, *Giue vs a King to raigne ouer vs, as all other Nations haue.* So long as our *Debora* [Elizabeth I] raigned (which was foure yeares longer then *Debora* iudged Israel) and thereby all peace and prosperitie heaped vpon vs, and our land, yet there were that cried out, *Giue vs a king to raigne ouer vs, as all other Nations haue.* Nowe God in his mercie hath giuen vs a king…[7]

Supplementing the notion of the "cursse" of gynocracy, Mavericke considered the prospect of male rule a "blessing" that "[Eng]land ha[d] not enjoyed […] [in] fiftie yeares".[8] England's expectations of James were automatically high due to his 'superior' gender and, with a man

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[6] Arbella Stuart boasted a similar genealogical claim as James but, unlike James, an English-born status and a family untouched by conspiracy; see Croft, "Birth of Britain," 2; Hutchings and Cano-Echevarría 263-64. Meanwhile, in 1588, Isabella had been proclaimed the rightful Queen of England by her father, Phillip II of Spain, by virtue of her distant descent from Edward III. As a devout Catholic, Isabella offered alliance to England's dormant Catholics; see Croft, "Birth of Britain," 2.

[7] Mavericke, *Three Treatises*, 20.

[8] Mavericke, *Three Treatises*, 20.

again sitting as the Head of State and the Head of the Church in England, the patriarchal orthodoxy was, once again, actualised. As a result, the denouncement of the subversion or inversion of gender norms was unproblematically legitimated, and the theatre was hasty to join in this crusade, and heavy-handed in doing so.

The initial years of James' reign proved an opportune moment for the theatre to present the early modern ideas of 'good' kingship as those which exhibited archetypal 'masculinity.' One approach to this was to outline modes of 'good' kingship by addressing and criticising antithetically 'unmanly' kingship on the stage. In this chapter, I argue that, in the plays from this time that feature a discernibly fictionalised, unfit male ruler, the theatre reinforced the gender hierarchy and patriarchal stereotypes of 'masculinity' and, by proxy, 'femininity' in their presentation and treatment of the unfit king. However, in plays first performed in 1604, immediately after James' accession, and which feature Jamesian figures, I argue that the theatre reflected the way that England's high hopes progressively dwindled as 'masculine' monarchy went undelivered. Ultimately I suggest that the theatre criticised the effeminate male ruler while it (somewhat hypocritically) reminisced over the reign of Elizabeth I as it became increasingly apparent that her male successor was failing to meet the expectations of a masculine king. In my discussion, I pay particular attention to six plays: William Shakespeare's *King Lear* (1605) and *Macbeth* (1606), Thomas Middleton's *The Phoenix* (1604), Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* (1604), and Thomas Heywood's two-part play, *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody* (1605, hereafter *1 If You Know Not Me*, and *2 If You Know Not Me*).[9] Even though there was not a unified approach to the presentation of monarchy in these plays, it would seem that they all reflect concerns regarding gender and kingship that, given the context of the female to male transition of monarchy, London

[9] The given dates for these plays (and the plays throughout this thesis) indicate when the plays were first performed, not when they were first published.

audiences would have been acutely conscious of.

I

Beware the Effeminate Ruler

To the early moderns, male monarchy proffered a propitious balance of what were considered innately masculine qualities of strength and reason.[10] Strength *of* reason, particularly, was the cornerstone of self-governance and the governance of others, and provided the foundations for patriarchal authority in early modern society. In fact, in the *Basilikon Doron*, James suggested that the employment and exhibition of reason were crucial for good government, advising his son and heir that he "should be ever mooved with reason, which is the onely qualitie whereby men differ from beasts."[11] Strength of reason, however, was perceived to be reserved for males who, credited with "stronger minds," had the potential for self-mastery and independence.[12] Notwithstanding, the state of manhood was considered a temporary life stage for males that could be equally entered and exited. Self-discipline, growth of reason and independence enabled boys and young men to reach archetypal masculinity – or 'manhood' – just as infirmity, which often afflicts mental and physical soundness, saw older men retire from it. Nonetheless, the sound male mind was one of the perceived qualities that distinguished males from females who were already viewed as "biologically inferior to

[10] Anthony Fletcher, "Manhood, the Male Body, Courtship and the Household in Early Modern England." *History* 84, no. 275 (1999): 422-23; Elizabeth A. Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex and Marriage* (Oxon: Routledge, 1999), 30; Jennifer Jordan, " 'To Make a Man Without Reason': Examining Manhood and Manliness in Early Modern England," in *What Is Masculinity?*, ed. John H. Arnold and Sean Brady (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 246.

[11] James VI and I, "Basilicon Doron," 255.

[12] Fletcher, "Manhood," 423.

men."[13] Before proceeding to an examination of the plays, it is important to identify how these perceived biological differences reinforced the early modern notion that male dominance governed the 'natural' social hierarchy and, thus, was crucial for maintaining social order.

Early modern ideas about biological distinctions between men and women were underpinned by the humoral economy, which drew on Classical theories of physiology. Humoral theory enabled the explaining-away of particular behaviours as either 'naturally' masculine or feminine. Gail Kern Paster explains that, generally, while "men's bodies were thought to be hotter and drier, women's bodies [were] colder, moister, [and] clammier."[14] Accordingly, early modern thought accepted that "heat and dryness generally produced a drier, harder body" and that rationality was a warmer state than irrationality, reinforcing the argument that men possessed greater strength and reason than women.[15] This was further exacerbated by the suggestion that the colder, moister body was more susceptible to emotional impropriety: quite literally, tears were perceived as a direct result of excessive moisture in the body, and considered "the excrementitious humiditie of the brayne" that enabled the body "to purge the head."[16] In his influential *Treatise of Melancholie* (1586), Timothy Bright suggested that women and children (including boys who, for not yet having reached manhood, were considered effeminate) were less capable of self-control and

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[13] Retha Warnicke, "Elizabeth I: Gender, Religion and Politics," *History Review*, September (2007): 30.

[14] Gail Kern Paster, "Unbearable Coldness of Female Being: Women's Imperfection and Humoral Economy," *English Literary Renaissance* 28, no. 3 (1998): 416. See also Eales, *Women in Early Modern England*, 3.

[15] Bernard Capp, " 'Jesus Wept' but did the Englishman?: Masculinity and Emotion in Early Modern England," *Past and Present*, no. 224 (2014): 76-77; Kern Paster, "Unbearable Coldness," 416-19; Eales, *Women in Early Modern England*, 3.

[16] Timothy Bright, *A treatise of melancholie Containing the causes thereof, & reasons of the strange effects it worketh in our minds and bodies: with the physicke cure, and spirituall consolation for such as have thereto adioyned an afflicted conscience* (London, 1586), 144-45.

governing their emotions because of their "moist, rare, and tender body, especially of brayne and heart."[17] As a result, "refined manners and emotional self-control were expected to accompany traditional manly attributes" because, alongside masculine heat and dryness, they sat in direct opposition to effeminate coldness and moisture.[18] In accordance with this physiological view, women were seen as "emotional and… incapable of autonomous action," making them unfit for authority.[19] Like children, they were "neither masters of themselves… nor fully adult," and this thinking sustained the notion that masculine dominance was critical to social order.[20] However, a belief in the permeability of these humoral distinctions heightened fears of effeminacy as "a dangerous and potent infection," and the early modern theatre capitalised on the perceived perils of this subversion in its depictions of kingship.[21] This can be seen in the two Shakespeare plays, *King Lear* and *Macbeth*.

Janet Adelman has previously considered the conflation of the 'masculine' and 'feminine' in *King Lear* (1605) in her discussion of the collapse of maternity and paternity into one identity, whereby Lear is forced to confront in himself the "*mother* [that] swells up toward [his] heart" (*Lear* 7.224, emphasis added).[22] As part of her discussion, Adelman highlights the early modern anxiety over the permeability of gender principles in noting "the dark female power that everywhere threatens to undermine masculine authority."[23] However,

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[17] Bright, *A treatise of melancholie*, 143.

[18] Capp, "Jesus Wept," 78; Anne McLaren, "Queenship in Early Modern England and Scotland," *The Historical Journal* 49, no. 3 (2006): 939.

[19] Warnicke, "Gender, Religion and Politics," 30.

[20] Fletcher, "Manhood," 423.

[21] Cynthia Herrup, "The King's Two Genders," *Journal of British Studies* 45, no. 3 (2006): 500.

[22] Janet Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays, Hamlet to The Tempest* (New York: Routledge, 1992); see specifically the chapter titled "Suffocating Mothers in *King Lear*," 103-29. For *King Lear*, quotations and scene and lines numbers are from William Shakespeare, *King Lear*, ed. Stanley Wells (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). This edition does not include act numbers.

[23] Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers*, 111.

I would add to this and suggest it is also the child within Lear, as well as the wicked or weak female, that sabotages his authority; indeed, it is in regard to these 'inner demons,' so to speak, that Shakespeare's *King Lear* doubles down on its criticism of emasculated kingship. On the one hand, Lear's divorce from reason in his old age indicates his regression from manhood to childhood. Not only does this reversion equate to an 'un-manning,' but the ruinous decisions of his infantile senility see a reversal of the patriarchal roles filled by Lear and his daughters. On the other hand, his slip into madness presents as emotional instability, which signals the king's degeneration into the inferior effeminate. By means of these failures of masculinity, the play stages the threat of the 'unmanly' king for the early modern audience. In doing so, the theatre cautioned against the subversion of patriarchal gender roles, and warned of the potential perils posed by a male monarch who falls short of his expected masculinity.

Remembering that manhood was considered a temporary stage of life, as a man "[f]ourscore and upward" (21.59), Lear has already begun the departure from his "man's estate."[24] As Kern Paster mentions, the humoral differences between males and females did not apply universally as "some men, especially old and melancholy ones, were [considered] colder than some women."[25] This sentiment echoes Henry Cuffe's 1607 tract on the stages of man's life; it argued that old age, which could be separated into two parts, was afflicted by a humoral imbalance:

> [T]he first wherein our strength and heat are evidently impaired, yet not so much, but that there remaineth a will and readinesse to bee doing; and this lasteth usually from our fiftieth yeere unto our three-score and five. The secund part of this last

[24] Jordan, "To Make a Man," 246.

[25] Kern Paster, "Unbearable Coldness," 416.

> part of our life, which they call decrepit old age, is when our strength and heat is so farre decaied, that not onely all abilitie is taken away, but even all willingnesse, to the least strength and motion of our bodie.[26]

Here, the notion that men in old age "lacked the physiological balance which manhood… required and on which reason and strength were founded" was supported by the widely accepted humoral model.[27] From this, the conceit of old age as the "second childhood" thrived and was reinforced on the early modern stage.[28] For example, *King Lear*'s Gonoril asserts that "Old fools are babes again" (3.19).[29] Meanwhile, Shakespeare's *As You Like It* (1600) has Jaques declare that the last stage of man's life "Is second childishness and mere oblivion" (2.7.165).[30] Jaques conveys the idea that old age is a state of infancy divorced from reason and, thereby, divorced from early modern masculinity. From this thinking we see an overlap between Knox's "weake, fraile, [and] feble" women and Lear as "a poor, infirm, weak and despised old man" (*Lear* 9.20). According to this theory, old men, like women and children, become unsuitable in positions of authority because the disappearance of their previously hotter, drier constitutions, and their progression towards colder bodies, indicates their regression from self-government. Naturally, then, the absence of self-government denoted an inability to govern others.

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[26] Henry Cuffe, *The differences of the ages of mans life together with the originall causes, progresse, and end thereof. Written by the learned Henrie Cuffe, sometime fellow of Merton College in Oxford. Ann. Dom. 1600.* (London, 1607), 120, accessed July 28, 2021, https://www.proquest.com/eebo.

[27] Jordan, "To Make a Man," 246.

[28] On the "second childhood," see Anthony Ellis, *Old Age, Masculinity, and Early Modern Drama: Comic Elders on the Italian and Shakespearean Stage* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 32; Matthew Harkins, "The Politics of Old Age in Shakespeare's *King Lear*," *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 18, no.1 (2018): 5.

[29] I follow Wells' edition's spelling of 'Gonoril.'

[30] Quotations are to act, scene and line numbers in William Shakespeare, *As You Like It*, ed. Alan Brissenden (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

For Lear, his infirmity and illogical behaviours and decisions put doubt in the minds of his subjects regarding his ability to govern, and this becomes a central theme that is given extensive attention in the play. From the outset, Lear's age is blamed for prompting questionable behaviour that sees his "majesty stoop to folly" (1.140), like abdicating his authority and dividing his previously united kingdom between his eldest daughters, Gonoril and Regan. It is worth noting that the division of kingdoms would have sat uneasily with members of the newly Jacobean audience who bought into James' argument in the *Basilikon Doron* that "by deviding your kingdomes, yee shall leave the seed of division and discord among your posteritie".[31] Perhaps the threat of "diuision and discord" is why the Earl of Kent pleads for Lear to "Reverse thy doom" (1.140); significantly, Kent simultaneously focuses attention on the king as an "old man" (1.137) alongside his declaration that "Lear is mad" (1.137). Thereafter, a myriad of attacks against old age highlight the king's "poor judgement" (1.280) as being the result of his elderliness: Gonoril and Regan agree that "'Tis the infirmity of his age" that incites his "rash" behaviour, and accept that they must "look to receive from his age… [the] unruly waywardness that infirm and choleric years bring with them" (1.285-88). Lear, too, voluntarily confesses that he is not of sound mind, but is plagued by "This tempest in [his] mind" (11.13). Eventually, his entire identity becomes subsumed by his senility as he is persistently referred to as "old man" or "the old man" (3.16, 7.446, 7.452) by his eldest daughters who clearly demonstrate a lack of respect – or expected "childlike office" (6.106) – towards their patriarch. Boasting sovereignty and authority over the now "scattered kingdom" (8.22), Gonoril and Regan concur that "[they] must do something, and i'th'heat" (1.296) to subsume their father's authority altogether. Consequently, *King Lear* sees a reversal of patriarchal roles as Lear, in his "second childhood," becomes his daughters' subordinate.

[31] James VI and I, "Basilicon Doron," 239.

As a result of his regression to a state of childish unreason and dependency, Lear is forced into a "relatively impotent role" underneath his daughters that subverts the patriarchal gender hierarchy by forcing Lear to become the 'daughter' and his daughters the father.[32] In a reiteration of Lear's apparently infantile state, Gonoril asserts that her elderly father requires parental guidance and supervision: "Old fools are babes again, and must be used / With checks as flatteries, when they are seen abused" (4.19-20). Only a few scenes later, Regan restates that Lear's degenerating old age is hindering not just his ability to govern, but to self-govern, and implies the need for external management:

> O sir, you are old.
> Nature in you stands on the very verge
> Of her confine. You should be ruled and led
> By some discretion that discerns your state
> Better than you yourself. (7.303-07).

Here, Regan makes the shift away from Gonoril's call for *parental* authority, calling instead for *monarchical* authority over her father, the king. Punning on the "state" of her father, Regan insinuates that it is both Lear's kingdom and his mental state that need to be "ruled and led" by an authority that sits more safely within the 'confines' of reason. In a complete twist of patriarchal structure, the ousted king is left feebly conceding to his newfound servility: "Here I stand your slave" (9.19). Even prior to this, however, allusions are made that foreshadow Lear's abasement and warn against patriarchal subversion when the play's Fool opines that "The hedge-sparrow fed the cuckoo so long / That it had it head bit off by it young" (4.207-08). Soon after, the Fool forces Lear to confront the reality of his impotence, while gesturing to the shame that such hierarchical inversion brings: "May not an ass know

[32] Harkins, "Politics of Old Age," 5.

when the cart draws the horse?" (4.215). Finally, in the ultimate recognition of the father-child transposition, Lear is demoted under the oxymoronic styling of "obedient father" (4.226). Critic Matthew Harkins is right to suggest that "[t]he inability to control one's subordinates was a key cultural marker of a patriarch in decline."[33] That said, the issue is not merely a patriarch in decline, but the upending of the patriarchal gender hierarchy. In the eyes of the early modern Englishman, what is arguably worse than the transposition of parent and child is that of father (adult/male) and *daughter* (child/female). What the overpowering of a male head of state by his doubly inferior daughter disconcertingly signals is the precarious possibility that, as critic Cynthia Herrup has suggested, "masculinity itself was a fragile commodity."[34] At the same time, while Lear's regression away from manly strength and reason and into childish dependency and subordination signals his failure to realize normative masculinity, his emotional instability pushes him further towards effeminacy.

Specifically, it is Lear's tearful tendencies that characterise him as womanly. The historian Bernard Capp asserts that, although "the physiological changes associated with old age increased [men's] own susceptibility" to melancholy, early modern Englishmen found tears to be "deeply problematic" because they "represented an embarrassing loss of self-control."[35] Complementing Capp, early modernist historian Anthony Fletcher explains that exhibiting behaviours which demonstrated a lack of self-control "reduced men, taking them back to childhood weakness or effeminacy prior to their seeking self-mastery."[36] Excessive or inappropriate emotions – especially crying – indicated an inability to self-govern and were seen as being feminine flaws. Capp goes on to suggest that even less tolerable were tears

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[33] Harkins, "Politics of Old Age," 13; see also Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 45.

[34] Herrup, "King's Two Genders," 499.

[35] Capp, "Jesus Wept," 75-77.

[36] Fletcher, "Manhood," 423; see also Foyster, *Manhood in Early Modern England*, 103.

triggered by self-pity or fear because they also suggested feminine weakness.[37] Lear's susceptibility to self-pitying weeping and emotional outbursts – qualities displayed by typically feminine, colder, moister bodies – signal a possible humoral imbalance that tip him away from the kingly ideal of masculinity, and into the realm of the feminine. While fighting off his own tears, Lear himself explicitly acknowledges crying as a feminine fault that tarnishes manhood: "O, let not women's weapons, water-drops, / Stain my man's cheeks!" (7.435-36). Earlier in the play, having failed to control his emotions, he berates himself for crying after Gonoril's maltreatment of him: "I am ashamed / That thou hast power to shake my manhood thus, / That these hot tears, […] break from me perforce" (4.286-88). In no uncertain terms, Lear affirms that his manhood – and manhood generally – is destabilised as a result of his unmanly, emotional reaction. Ruing his own tearful outburst – and admitting that he has no control over his eyes which, seemingly divorced from him, possess authority of their own – he chides his

> Old fond eyes,
> Beweep this cause again I'll pluck you out
> And cast you with the waters you make,
> To temper clay. (4.292-95)

Despite the admonition, Lear continues to react overly emotionally to incidents throughout the play, crying on no less than four other occasions at 7.435-36, 11.17-21, 20.184-85 and 21.44-46. Try as he may to repress his tears – "No, I will weep no more. […] Let me shun that. / No more of that" (11.17, 20-21) – he repeatedly finds himself plagued as "a man of salt" (20.184) whose "tears / Do scald like molten lead" (21.45-46). Given that "immoderate tears [offend]

[37] Capp, "Jesus Wept," 83.

against nature [and] reason," Lear's propensity to cry is yet another indicator of his regression from the heat of manhood.[38]

It is important that *King Lear* should align its effeminate king with disaster because it signals the link between effeminacy and 'bad' kingship. Even without this connection, the female behaviours that Lear exhibits were explicitly denounced by contemporary commentary as inappropriate in a governing capacity. For example, the seventeenth-century Whig bishop and historian Gilbert Burnet dismissed numerous tear-shedding public authorities as weak, base or hypocritical – including James and Charles II.[39] Meanwhile, *King Lear*'s own Earl of Gloucester stresses that, when Lear irrationally and frightenedly runs away from Cordelia's men, it is unspeakably inappropriate behaviour, especially for a king: "A sight most pitiful in the meanest wretch, / Past speaking in a king" (20.193-94). If that is not enough to convince the audience that Lear's effeminacy makes him unfit for a position of authority, then it is significant that the decisions of a king characterised as exhibiting typically feminine behaviours should incite such tragic ends. The notably effeminate king is presented as the "cursse" that James warned of to both Lear's kingdom – plagued by division, discord and war – and to his friends, family and subjects who meet such brutal and bloody ends. Via such a negative presentation, patriarchy's perpetuation of female subordination under male dominance is reinforced under the pretence that feminine weakness and unreason have no place in positions of authority because of their propensity to generate disorder, division and destruction.

King Lear is not an isolated play in equating effeminate kingship with 'bad' kingship in the early years of James' reign. *Macbeth* (1606) also drew on the humoral model's ideas

[38] Capp, "Jesus Wept," 82.

[39] Capp, "Jesus Wept," 84.

about the gendered nature of tenderness, irrationality and reason to present a similar comparison, while simultaneously directing attention to other early modern markers of masculinity that its usurping male ruler failed to meet, like virility and violence. Violence was a badge of manhood and masculinity that was tied up in gentlemanly codes of conduct and, while Macbeth begins his stage life as the stereotypical, virile warrior, his hold on this masculine quality progressively weakens.[40] Gender historian Alexandra Shepard has noted how "violence was centrally bound up with notions of honour" and, indeed, Macbeth's behaviour initially fulfils such expectations.[41] The audience are first introduced to him as "brave Macbeth" (1.2.16) and a "valiant cousin" (1.2.24):

> Disdaining Fortune, with his brandished steel,
> Which smoked with bloody execution,
> Like Valour's minion carved out his passage
> Till he faced the slave – (1.2.17-20)[42]

Immediately, and in accordance with the masculine codes of violence and bloodshed, Macbeth's ability to administer a "bloody execution" is celebrated as "valiant" and "brave." Alongside this, Duncan's opening line – "What bloody man is this?" (1.2.1) – neatly marries bloodshed to definitions of manhood. The critic Carolyn Asp has argued that "Macbeth… accepts the narrow definition of manhood that the male stereotype imposes" and that he "is not in conflict with his [masculine] nature."[43] However, I would rebut this: Macbeth must, to

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[40] On violence and masculinity, see Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, 140; Michael B. Young, "James VI and I: Time for a Reconsideration?" *Journal of British Studies* 51, no. 3 (2012): 105.

[41] Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, 140.

[42] Quotations and act, scene and line numbers from William Shakespeare, *Macbeth*, ed. Nicholas Brooke (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990).

[43] Carolyn Asp, " 'Be bloody, bold and resolute': Tragic Action and Sexual Stereotyping in *Macbeth*," in *Macbeth: Critical Essays*, ed. S. Schoenbaum (Oxon: Routledge, 2015), 378.

some extent, be in conflict with his masculine nature given that he handles his violence against Duncan and the servants so poorly, plagued by utter fear and tender guilt.

Even before the murders, Lady Macbeth alludes to an established feminine imbalance within Macbeth. Seen also in Gonoril's remark about her husband's "milky gentleness" (*Lear* 4.322), Lady Macbeth's declaration that she "fear[s] [Macbeth's] nature, / […] is too full o'th' milk of human kindness" (*Macbeth* 1.5.15-16) alludes to her husband's overly feminine nature and its qualities of maternal compassion and tenderness. Through the course of the play, she remains instrumental in not only reiterating the definitions of manhood, but highlighting that Macbeth consistently fails to adhere to those definitions. When Macbeth pulls away from their plot to assassinate Duncan, Lady Macbeth questions his manhood by chastising him for being "afeard" (1.7.39) and a "coward" (1.7.43), declaring that it was only when Macbeth agreed to murder Duncan that he adhered to the definition of manhood: "When you durst do it, then you were a man" (1.7.49). She also reasserts the connection between violence and masculinity as she pins the stereotypically masculine terms "valour" (1.7.40) and "courage" (1.7.61) to their violent and bloody plot. Even once Duncan is slain and Macbeth confesses he regrets the "sorry sight" (2.217), Lady Macbeth again criticises him, stating that his womanly grief does "unbend [his] noble strength" (2.2.44) and insinuating that he should feel "shame / To wear a heart so white" (2.2.63-64). She even accuses him of childish fright, which might be recognised as a gibe at his masculinity along the lines of those seen before in *King Lear*: "'tis the eye of childhood / That fears a painted devil" (2.2.53-54). In flagging Macbeth's unmanly angst, an image of powerlessness and fragility is created around his character that contradicts the strength of the masculine ideal perceived to be best suited – as the "worthier gender" – to kingship. At the same time, Macbeth's paternal status – or lack thereof – leaves him equally exposed to criticisms of patriarchal powerlessness.

Between them, the discussions of Jennifer Evans, Helen Berry and Elizabeth A. Foyster on the sexual health and paternal status of the early modern male offer a springboard for the examination of masculine anxieties surrounding childlessness in *Macbeth* and how childlessness contributes to the emasculation of the titular male ruler.[44] In early modern England, fatherhood was considered a key part of masculine identity because it marked the attainment of various masculine principles – such as virility and potency – and it stimulated crucial operations that patriarchal society depended on, like the operation of inheritance and the domestic application of male authority.[45] The latter, especially, alluded to patriarchal capacity at a social level, whereby conquering the domestic microcosm might be considered a successful step in the direction of political authority. As Evans explains, then, "men without children were… unable to fulfil the status and duties expected of them."[46] As a result, the "honour, reputation and credit" of the childless man – especially a married one – were on the line.[47] Indeed, some men suffered humiliation and ridicule at the hands of their peers if they did not father children in marriage; Berry and Foyster disclose how one early modern commentator felt about the childless man: " 'he shameth to accompany with men, as seeming himself to be lesse then a man.' "[48] In *Macbeth*, it is explicitly announced of the married Macbeth that "He has no children" (4.3.216), leaving him wide open to the early modern criticisms against the perceived 'unmanliness' of the man who does not fulfil his patriarchal status or fatherly duty. Not only did childlessness curb men's attainment of 'proper' man

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[44] Jennifer Evans, " 'They are called Imperfect men': Male Infertility and Sexual Health in Early Modern England," *Social History of Medicine* 29, no. 2 (2014): *passim*; Helen Berry and Elizabeth A. Foyster, "Childless Men in Early Modern England," in *The Family in Early Modern England*, ed. Helen Berry and Elizabeth A. Foyster (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 158-83.

[45] Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers*, 107; Evans, "Imperfect Men," 313-14; Berry and Foyster, "Childless Men," 160, 178, 183.

[46] Evans, "Imperfect Men," 313-14.

[47] Berry and Foyster, "Childless Men," 178; Evans, "Imperfect Men," 313-14.

[48] As quoted in Berry and Foyster, "Childless Men," 165.

status on a social level, but, as Berry and Foyster articulate, "[w]ith no children to prove their potency, it could even be suggested that childless men would make inept politicians."[49]

It has been argued that it does not pay to speculate on the reproductive history of the Macbeths; indeed, the influential literary scholar A. C. Bradley stated: "Whether Macbeth had children or… had none, is quite immaterial."[50] Nevertheless, just as critic John Britton retorted, "the text offers the problem" of Macbeth's childlessness, presenting it as a legitimate element of anxiety in the play.[51] It is made all the more significant given the early modern stigma against the childless married man that drags Macbeth's masculinity into question. After all, it is Macbeth's angst about his childlessness – his "fruitless crown" and "barren sceptre" (3.1.60-61) – that provokes his erratic, murderous plot against Banquo. Not only does this reaction reflect the early modern idea that childless men were considered "more likely to show anger and pick fights with others," it signals the exceedingly anxious masculinity associated with childlessness, evident in the fact that it is Banquo's contrasting paternal status that leaves Macbeth feeling threatened.[52] In a vein similar to that in *King Lear*, the gender binary is so fundamental and compelling in early modern England that by failing to attain the patriarchal role of fatherhood, Macbeth automatically falls to womanliness: as Evans explains, "[i]mpotent men highlighted the role of virility to masculinity and were ridiculed as womanly, irrational and highly emotional" – qualities that Macbeth certainly exhibits.[53] Murdering Banquo, for example, is a highly emotional and anxiety-induced reaction to threatened masculinity, but sparks only the beginning of Macbeth's divorce from rational thinking.

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[49] Berry and Foyster, "Childless Men," 177-78.

[50] As quoted in John Britton, "A. C. Bradley and the Children of Lady Macbeth," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 12, no. 3 (1961): 350.

[51] Britton, "A. C. Bradley," 351.

[52] Berry and Foyster, "Childless Men," 178.

[53] Evans, "Imperfect Men," 314-15.

Unfortunately, it is because of Macbeth's fear and guilt over the murders of Banquo and, before him, Duncan, that he loses his grip on reason – thereby further losing his grip on manhood.

As in *King Lear*, *Macbeth* draws on the early modern equation of masculinity with reason when Macbeth's hallucinatory "fit" (3.4.55) casts his status as a man into question. When the inhuman world breaks in on Macbeth in the form of Banquo's ghost, Lady Macbeth is quick to stress that Macbeth's nonsensical behaviour jeopardizes his manhood. Just as Lear became inclined to "unconstant starts" (*Lear* 1.289), Lady Macbeth declares that her husband's "flaws and starts" (*Macbeth* 3.4.63) see him "unmanned in folly" (3.4.74). Afflicted by a state of delirium, Macbeth's torturous visions of ghosts, and his accompanying emotional outbursts, indicate an irrationality and divorce from reason that humoral theory attributes to womanliness – as does Lady Macbeth:

> O these flaws and starts,
> Impostors to true fear, would well become
> A woman's story at a winter's fire,
> Authorized by her grandam – (3.4.63-66)

In self-recognition of his "strange infirmity" (3.4.87) – notably resembling Lear's unmanly, unsound mind of old age – Macbeth cannot deny the compromised state of his manhood. In an articulation of the "shame" (3.4.66, 75) that Macbeth's hysteria inflicts upon him, Lady Macbeth disparagingly asks, "Are you a man?" in a way that questions the validity of his manhood given his current state of unreason. Indeed, it is only once his irrational hallucination subsides that Macbeth can admit: "I am a man again" (3.4.109) – thus indicating his momentary lapse out of manhood and (given that the male/female binary in early modern England was so strong) into diametric womanhood.

Subsequently, in a patriarchal role reversal akin to that seen between Lear and his daughters, Macbeth's perceived feminine weakness places him in a subservient role to his harshest critic: his wife. Much scholarly attention has been given to Lady Macbeth's subversive rejection of her femininity and maternity in favour of masculine ambition and violent tendencies.[54] While her husband manifests effeminate fear, impotence and irrationality, Lady Macbeth commandeers the 'naturally' dominant masculine position in the masculine-feminine dichotomy as she assumes the role of their partnership's authoritative figure. As though Macbeth is a child in need of direction, Lady Macbeth declares she will "chastise [him] with the valour of [her] tongue" (1.5.26) in a line that – given her invocation of the masculine quality of "valour" – sees her assume not merely a parental authority over Macbeth, but a paternal, patriarchal authority over her husband. For many whose views aligned with, or were influenced by, the patriarchal rhetoric of Knox and/or the new king, the promotion of female superiority or dominion subverted order because 'natural', God-ordained female subjection, "understood by many to be that of the wife to the husband," saw that woman was "made to serve and obey man, not to rule and command him."[55] In her refusal to obey her husband's command to "proceed no further in th[e] business" (1.7.31) of Duncan's assassination, and her subsequent manipulation of Macbeth to agree to proceed, Lady Macbeth's control over her husband engenders the reversal of patriarchal authority between a husband and wife, and between a man and a woman. This "subversion of good order," Knox opined, leads only to "the destruction of every commonwealth where it is received."[56]

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[54] Stanley Wells, introduction to *Macbeth*, ed. Stanley Wells (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 77-78; Asp, "Be bloody, bold, and resolute," 159-160; Sandra M. Gilbert, " 'Unsex Me Here': Lady Macbeth's 'Hell Broth'," *British Library*, last modified March 15, 2016, https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/unsex-me-here-lady-macbeths-hell-broth.

[55] Knox, *The First Blast*.

[56] Knox, *The First Blast*.

This subversion of patriarchal orthodoxy is largely engendered by Macbeth's effeminacy and, just as Knox had warned, foments the play's destructive, tragic end. Not only does the theatre reinforce the patriarchal gender hierarchy by punishing its masculine female – via the insanity and ultimate suicide of Lady Macbeth – but, more importantly, it criticises and warns against the effeminate male ruler. The weak kingship of Macbeth is bound up in the effeminacy of his tenderness, impotence and lack of self-government that see him overpowered and forced into a position subordinate to his wife. Here, "the common comparison between the household and the nation-state or commonwealth" comes into play in *Macbeth* as it did in *King Lear*: the king's inability to assume authority within the domestic patriarchy connotes a similar incapability within his patriarchal state.[57] Macbeth's inability to achieve the masculine ideal forewarns of his inability to achieve the kingly ideal, and this failure is further realised as the ruler divorced from manhood becomes tyrannical in his murderous rampages before meeting his own destruction. Herrup has explained that, "to many commentators, tyranny was the consequence of effeminacy" because it gave into feminine unreason:

> To Seneca, tyrants were princes who gave into 'womanish rage'; for Machiavelli, they were princes who were 'inconstant, frivolous, [and] effeminate.' According to Erasmus, the greatest disaster to befall a people was to be ruled by either a child or 'girlish weaklings.'[58]

In Macbeth, Scotland has a ruler susceptible to 'womanish rage', inconstancy, and who, I have already established, is effeminately childish and weak, especially when up against his domineering wife. All in all, it is these feminine flaws, in conjunction with irrational paranoia,

[57] Harkins, "Politics of Old Age," 13.

[58] Herrup, "King's Two Genders," 499.

that provoke Macbeth's tyrannous onslaught against Banquo, Fleance and Macduff's family which, subsequently, leads to his own demise and death. Here can be seen again King James' arguments warning against the "cursse" of female rule, realised in the bloody anarchy and tragedy incited by the overly effeminate Macbeth who, ultimately, proves the "greatest disaster" to befall the Scotland of the play.

Between *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, the audience is left grappling with the tragedies wrought by the failures of male rulers whose hazardous flaws were widely accepted as the cause of the colder, moister physiological composition intrinsic to the female state. The literary critics Cynthia Herrup and Marilyn French have both discussed how monarchy's "best face" welcomed a combination of 'masculine' and 'feminine' principles.[59] "A humane and harmonious world," French explains, "was possible only when 'masculine' and 'feminine' were 'married'."[60] For example, *Macbeth*'s admired kings, Macduff and Duncan, both "perfectly" combine masculine and feminine principles, between them able to embrace both feeling and vengeance, and exhibit both nurture and authority.[61] As French observes, however, marriage is as unequal as the patriarchal gender hierarchy at its core, and the combination of 'masculine' and 'feminine' principles within monarchy is expected to maintain that imbalance in such a way that sees masculinity prevail over femininity.[62] When the imbalance favours the 'weaker' feminine, then – as it does in both Lear and Macbeth – the ideal order is dislocated or disrupted, threatening government (be it domestic or state) as the masculine principles of authority, self-control, strength and reason are weakened, even quashed, by feminine high emotion and irrationality. Thus, as Adelman explains, 'bad'

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[59] Herrup, "King's Two Genders," 499; Marilyn French, "Macbeth at My Lai: A Study of the Value Structure of Shakespeare's *Macbeth*," *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 58, no. 1 (1975): 54-64.

[60] French, "Macbeth at My Lai," 54.

[61] French, "Macbeth at My Lai," 62.

[62] French, "Macbeth at My Lai," 54.

kingship is that which surrenders to the "looming female presences who threaten to control one's actions and one's mind."[63] At their ends, both *King Lear* and *Macbeth* delineate "a world gone insane" as a result of an overly effeminate ruler, finally forcing the danger of feminine rule home as "murder follows murder until the entire country is a death camp."[64] Ultimately, in the wake of female rule, the tragedy and disaster of effeminate rule in *King Lear* and *Macbeth* saw the Jacobean theatre foreground the safety, stability and desirability of masculine rule. However, given that these plays were first performed roughly three years into James' reign, whether or not *King Lear* and *Macbeth*'s criticism of female rule might be construed as a celebration or – as the following section considers – a questioning of James' masculinity is contingent on the behaviour and decisions of the new king during those inaugural years.

II

From High Hopes to Dashed Dreams

In the context of the two plays discussed above, Shakespeare tackled the perceived dangers of effeminate male kingship via *fictionalised* kings (albeit ones drawn from ancient history), but contemporaneous plays which presented an arguably recognisable, closer-to-home ruler appeared equally concerned with similar anxieties. In particular, Thomas Middleton's *The Phoenix* and Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure* (hereafter *Measure*), both first performed in 1604, grapple, respectively, with the ideas of 'good' and 'bad' male kingship through their central 'Jamesian' figures: *The Phoenix*'s ruler-to-be, Prince Phoenix, and *Measure*'s ruling figure, Duke Vincentio. Between them, the plays explore models of male kingship, but where

[63] Adelman, *Suffocating Mothers*, 131.

[64] French, "Macbeth at My Lai," 62.

Prince Phoenix appears to achieve the right balance of masculinity-over-femininity, Vincentio is left falling short. This may be due to the fact that *Measure* was first performed *after* James' unpopular and 'feminine' foreign policies – namely, the Anglo-Spanish peace talks – were finalised. With the events of almost an entire year separating their first performance dates, it can be argued that *The Phoenix* (February 1604) presented the refreshing and idealised masculine James that England envisioned, while *Measure* (December 1604) offered a more disenchanted reflection of the increasingly effeminate king that England was coming to know.

Partly due to the delay of the 'Royal Entry' procession, the new king remained a relatively obscure figure to his English subjects – those who were not reading the *Basilikon Doron* or the other treatises he had authored – and was left open to presumptive characterisations by popular culture. The 'false start' to his reign allowed people to hold onto their initial expectations and hopes for male monarchy throughout 1603 and into 1604 as they waited for the royal presence and the recommencement of public and court life in London. The highly regarded but assumed hypermasculinity of James' "worthier gender" directed much of England's characterisation of the new king in his first, absent year of rule, and Middleton's *The Phoenix* is one example of how popular culture embraced this characterisation and reiterated these expectations. The conflation of the new king and the play's titular prince can be discerned not only in the play's utilisation of the phoenix that had become a symbol increasingly associated with James, but also in the play's characterisation of the prince's Elizabeth-esque predecessor, the Duke of Ferrara. These points, especially, have been dominant contributors to the 'Phoenix-as-James' rhetoric that has come to surround Middleton's play and I maintain this theory as part of my discussion.[65] *The Phoenix* appears

[65] Kevin A. Quarmby, *The Disguised Ruler in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (London: Routledge, 2012), 144; Marilyn L. Williamson, "The Phoenix: Middleton's Comedy de Regimine Principum," *Renaissance News* 10 (1957), *passim*.

to signal English desires for the new king – a strong king – to exhibit patriarchal authority and good judgement, and reiterates the synonymity of valour and ideal masculinity. In addition, however, a significant part of *The Phoenix*'s method in celebrating Phoenix – and, by extension, James – as the highly anticipated and desired masculine king was to present him as the agreeable solution, or even saviour, in the face of the old Duke's effeminate weakness.

Although the Duke is not presented as a 'bad' ruler per se, he is presented as an undesirably weaker ruler because of flaws at odds with masculinity. Firstly, it is indicated that his age is leading the Duke towards the same regression into 'second childhood' and powerlessness that is seen in *King Lear*. Prince Phoenix observes that his "father has a heavy burden / Of years upon him" (1.1.75-76) that "make[s] him stoop" (1.1.77) and "bow unto his grave" (1.1.79), creating the image of a weak, feeble and submissive Duke – an image that mirrors Knox's "weake, fraile" woman, and contrasts with the idealised strength of a masculine ruler.[66] Instead, the Duke appears decrepit and small as he bows and stoops like a subordinate to their master, as though he is surrendering his earthly authority. Significantly, the comments that follow these lines indicate that the Duke has become susceptible to manipulation by his councillors, as though he has unknowingly surrendered authority to his inferiors:

> … I wonder much
> Which of his wild nobility it should be –
> For none of his sad council has a voice in't –
> Should so far travel into his consent
> To set me over into other kingdoms

[66] Quotations are to act, scene and line number in Thomas Middleton, *The Phoenix*, ed. John Bradbury Brooks (London: Garland Publishing, 1980).

Upon the stroke and minute of his death? (1.1.79-84)

Secondly, the audience are presented with a Duke, like Lear, who is sensitive to the tearful tendencies that humoral theory attributes to feminine moisture: "I weep that you are my son, / But virtuously I weep" (1.1.36-37). The Duke's tenderness here is in keeping with his final, self-confessed feminine flaw: a tenderness which ensures that he "*gently* ruled [his] dukedom" (1.1.7, emphasis added). Although he tries to justify his soft and lenient approach, the justification appears to be more of a confession that he was unable to achieve the right or desired balance of femininity and masculinity best suited to masculine rule:

Pray heaven it be no fault,
For there's as much disease, though not to th' eye,
In too much pity as in tyranny. (1.1.8-10)

Rather than successfully executing an excuse, the Duke appears to admit that his rule gave into one of the innately feminine and dangerous imbalances of either "too much pity" or "tyranny," and that he should "Pray heaven it be no fault" hints at his acknowledgement of the fact that this was, indeed, a fault.

If only in a fleeting comment, the play also explicitly binds the reigns of Elizabeth and the Duke. Less than a year after a monarch's death had, in the Duke's words, "show[n] that kings have mortal bodies" (1.1.13), London audiences encountered a familiarly aging, weak, weeping, womanish ruler succeeded by a 'Phoenix' whose predecessor boasted "[f]orty-five years" of reign (1.1.7). Though the "[f]orty-five years" comment is a brief one, it is a crucial one that signals a seemingly deliberate correlation between the Duke and Elizabeth; while it might be unorthodox to cling onto one clue when conflating a literary and real-world figure,

as N. W. Bawcutt has noted, "it is hard to believe that a contemporary audience would not have noticed the significance of so definite a figure."[67] Sharing the sentiment, critic John Bradbury Brooks holds that "[m]aking the length of the old duke's reign forty-five years, the same as Elizabeth's, would seem to be more than just an arbitrary stroke on the part of Middleton".[68] Thus, it is not implausible that *The Phoenix*'s womanly Duke might be an intentional reflection of James' own predecessor, but, given that James "was well known to be touchy about critical portrayals of recent or contemporary monarchs on stage," it is doubtful that Middleton would have given himself over to crass criticism of the recently deceased queen.[69] Instead, the characterisation of the effeminate ruler does not appear to be a vilification of Elizabeth, so much as it sets up a play that highlighted English hopes for masculinity from the new male king.

As part of her discussion on early modern masculinity and monarchy, historian Susan Doran has suggested that one of the immediate ways that James "made a manly impression" on his journey from Edinburgh to London was in "issuing orders for reform".[70] This call for reform, which Doran casts as "masculine decisiveness," is eagerly shared by Prince Phoenix and quickly establishes his patriarchal authority.[71] Concerned about the "infectious dealings in most offices, and foul mysteries throughout all professions" (1.1.109-10), Phoenix discloses that he will "look into the heart and bowels of this dukedom, and in disguise mark all abuses ready for reformation or punishment" (1.1.102-03). It is conceivable that, for an audience in

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[67] N. W. Bawcutt, "Middleton's 'The Phoenix' as a Royal Play," *Notes and Queries* 3, no. 7 (1956): 287.

[68] John Bradbury Brooks, introduction to *The Phoenix*, ed. John Bradbury Brooks (London: Garland Publishing, 1980), 19.

[69] Sandra Clark, "Spanish Characters and English Nationalism in English Drama of the Early Seventeenth Century," *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 84, no. 2 (2007): 139.

[70] Susan Doran, "Monarchy and Masculinity in Early Modern England," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Masculinity and Political Culture in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Christopher Fletcher et al. (London: Palgrave Macmillan: 2018), 214-15.

[71] Susan Doran, "Monarchy and Masculinity," 215.

1604, Phoenix's promise for "punishment" here might have chimed with James' "masculine decisiveness" that commanded the summary execution of cutpurses and other criminals during his journey to London.[72] Such application of "disciplinary violence," Shepard explains, played a mundane but crucial role in maintaining patriarchal order because it functioned as a tool for both microcosmic household correction and wider state correction.[73] Thus, not only do the reforming ambitions of James and Phoenix conform to the phoenix's connotation of regeneration (in this instance, of social and ecclesiastical behaviours[74]), but this desire for state "correction" also indicates a patriarchal, paternal authority believed to have befitted strong government in early modern England: as the audience is told at the play's onset, "Who labors to reform is fit to reign" (1.1.137).

As previously discussed, embedded in early modern ideas of patriarchal authority were the masculine principles of reason and, by extension, good judgement that were considered ideal attributes that made men capable of superior government. In *King Lear* and *Macbeth*, part of the characterisation of the plays' titular rulers as weak, effeminate kings was the ebbing away of their sound reason and good judgement; mirroring this idea, part of *The Phoenix*'s characterisation of Phoenix as an effective and strong ruler is that he very clearly exhibits these masculine traits. The Duke credits Phoenix's "serious studies, and those fruitful hours / That grow up into judgement," noting that they "well become / [the prince's] birth" (1.1.34-36), and one of the virtues that the Duke and his noblemen "all do boast of" (1.1.16) in the prince is that "His judgement is a father to his youth" (1.1.18). Indeed, one of the implications of this last comment is that Phoenix embodies the patriarchal, paternal role that was considered an avenue towards good government; not only does he possess this high-

[72] Susan Doran, "Monarchy and Masculinity," 215; Herrup, "King's Two Genders," 503.

[73] Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, 132.

[74] Susan Doran, "Monarchy and Masculinity," 215; Herrup, "King's Two Genders," 503.

calibre "judgement" that commands a personified authority of its own, but, from it, his ability to self-father – to self-govern – indicates that he is capable of fulfilling the patriarchal role of governing the self and others that is intrinsic to good kingship. In fact, at the play's end, it is Phoenix's good judgement that sees him prematurely inherit the throne after his father's abdication:

> State is but blindness, thou hadst piercing art:
> We only saw the knee, but thou the heart.
> To thee then power and dukedom we resign;
> He's fit to reign whose knowledge can refine. (5.1.180-83)

Here, the implication is not just that the Duke's successor has proven a better fit for rule than he, but that it is Phoenix's demonstration of good judgement – an innately masculine quality – that makes him the better fit.

Just as the play makes explicit comments declaring that good judgement reinforces felicitous rule, similarly explicit comments suggest that the exhibition of 'manly' courage also enables good leadership. This was especially significant given the contemporary English conversations about James' potential peace negotiations with Spain, a fact that has contributed to the critical arguments that *The Phoenix* behaved as a medium for advice on – or at least a reiteration of – the quality of kingship and government that England expected of its new king.[75] The Anglo-Spanish peace treaty would not materialise until six months after *The Phoenix* was first performed, but this gave the time and space for the play to present war in a 'manly' light when peace still seemed a mere possibility open to discussion in England –

[75] Bradbury Brooks, introduction to *The Phoenix*, 20; Williamson, "The Phoenix," *passim*.

discussion stemming from the early modern coupling of warlike valour and masculinity.[76] As part of his discussion of contemporary perceptions of James as feminine, historian Michael B. Young explains that early modern thought expected "[r]eal men, perhaps especially real kings… to be physically strong, inclined to war, and courageous," and this supposition is reproduced in the play's pithy remark that "A man so resolute in valor as a woman in desire were an absolute leader!" (1.5.32-33).[77] Later, using the same associative terminology used by Lady Macbeth when she chides the 'unmanly' behaviour of her "afeard" (*Macbeth* 1.7.39) husband, *The Phoenix* makes subtler comments that construct a retreat from war as negative behaviour: in his commentary, Bradbury Brooks proposes that Phoenix puns on a retreat from the battlefield when he states that that which "comes off easily" is "just like a coward" (2.2.207-08). For many early modern English citizens, a peace treaty could be construed as a retreat from war, and the Anglo-Spanish treaty does not appear to have been popular for many who expected England's new monarch to exhibit masculine valour. Middleton's play, therefore, might be considered the theatre's input on the matter – especially since it was first performed at Court in front of James and, as Bradbury Brooks suggests, given that "the play was presented at a time when James was still in a mood to listen to all kinds of well-intentioned advice from his subjects."[78]

First performed when England was still largely unfamiliar with the kind of king that the foreign James would prove to be, *The Phoenix* presents the kind of 'Jamesian' ruler that England hoped for: decisive, a disciplinarian, showing strength of reason and strength in courage – masculine. *Measure*, on the other hand, presents the kind of 'Jamesian' ruler that England actually received. The following paragraphs provide a brief contextual discussion on

[76] Bradbury Brooks, 15-16; Bawcutt, "Royal Play," 287.

[77] Young, *King James and the History of Homosexuality* (Oxford: Fonthill, 2016), 105.

[78] Bradbury Brooks, introduction to *The Phoenix*, 20.

the perceived femininity of peace-keeping, passivity, and cowardice. This context is key for understanding the ways in which both James and Duke Vincentio – *Measure*'s 'Jamesian' figure – could have been construed by the early modern audience as exhibiting the effeminate behaviours that dashed England's dreams for a 'good', masculine king.

As 1604 drew to its close, the signed and finalised peace treaty with Spain earlier in the year contributed to the series of events that "had started to sour the initial relief many felt at the succession of James".[79] A major contributing factor to this souring was the perceived femininity of peace-making. Critics Sophie Shorland and Michael B. Young have given due attention to the way in which James' foreign peace policies contributed to public perceptions of his effeteness, and how they damaged his image as the masculine king that England had desired after its half century of 'petticoat rule'.[80] Although James' gender was seen as one of his strengths as a contender for the English throne, by engaging in peace negotiations with "the nation's favourite enemy" and concluding the conflict that England had become so embedded in, James failed to become the "ideal masculine creature" that England desired because – as Shorland puts it – "his public persona did not fit the popular expectation of a masculine, aggressively warlike king."[81] Young adds to this by reiterating that the early modern, "traditional concept of manhood… required a 'willingness to engage in violence with other men'," supporting his assertion that the idealised, masculine king would boast an inclination to war.[82] Concerns regarding James' 'effeminate' reaction to the conflict with Spain were aggravated by the accusations of cowardice that spun around the new king.

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[79] Andrew Hadfield, "The Power and Rights of the Crown in *Hamlet* and *King Lear*: 'The King: The King's to Blame'," *The Review of English Studies* 54, no. 217 (2003): 581.

[80] Young, *History of Homosexuality*, 92-105; Shorland, "Womanhood and Weakness," 272-74.

[81] Shorland, "Womanhood and Weakness," 272, 274.

[82] Young, *History of Homosexuality*, 105.

Young suggests that "James' aversion to war was probably a natural product of his insecure and violent childhood."[83] Historian Christopher Durston explains that James was afraid of all forms of violence and was "uneasy when in the presence of knives" and other weapons, struggling with constant fear of assassination.[84] James was reported to have worn "especially thick clothes to protect himself from knife attacks" and, at times, piled up furniture against his bedchamber door at night.[85] As Durston mentions, "[t]he thought of going to war filled [James] with alarm."[86] In fact, James himself alluded to this angst in his widely read *Basilikon Doron* when he wrote that

> when [a Prince] shall have adoe with warres upon the fields […] I thinke it meeter that you goe both cloathed and armed, than naked to the battell, except you would make you light for away-running: and yet for cowards, *metus addit alas* [fear provides wings].[87]

Unfortunately for James, his fear and perceived cowardice (exacerbated by his king-to-heir advice of wearing light armour in battle to facilitate "away-running"), in conjunction with his peace policies, did not match well with early seventeenth-century expectations of kingship. By the time *Measure* had its first performance at Christmas, James' critics, Young notes, were misconstruing his pacifism as "passivity or, worse, cowardice."[88] Around the same time, *Measure*'s first performance depicted a passive, even cowardly, ruler whose grip on patriarchal authority had weakened.

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[83] Young, *History of Homosexuality*, 98.

[84] Durston, *James I*, 9.

[85] Durston, *James I*, 9; see also S. J. Houston, *James I*, 2nd ed. (Oxon: Routledge, 1995), 26.

[86] Durston, *James I*, 9.

[87] James VI and I, "Basilicon Doron," 249.

[88] Young, *History of Homosexuality*, 97.

One of the first impressions of Duke Vincentio's kingship given to the play's audience is his irresolution in the public eye. In the most charitable reading, he is presented as shy or modest – characteristics usually pinned to, or expected of, the early modern woman – and this understanding of Vincentio has certainly leaked into public perception: "A shy fellow was the Duke", says Lucio (3.2.124-25).[89] In a less charitable reading, however, he appears *cowardly* – a quality as effeminate as shyness, but more dangerous – and reluctant to assume the unavoidably highly public life that comes part and parcel with his office. The Duke admits:

> I do love the people,
> But do not like to stage me to their eyes;
> Though it do well, I do not relish
> Their loud applause and aves vehement (1.1.67-70)

For the Jacobean audience, the remarks would have appeared to recall the comments and behaviours of James himself. For example, in the *Basilikon Doron*, James expressed similar reservations about being in front of the "beholders eyes" on the "publike stage".[90] Similarly, the Duke's decision to retreat "privily away" (1.1.67) from the "loud applause and aves vehement" appears a pseudo re-enactment of James' movements during the preparations for his Royal Entry into London: Gilbert Dugdale's account of the scene claims that when a "wylie Multitude perceiuing something, began with such hurly burly, to run vp and downe with such vnreuerent rashnes," the King retreated to the Exchange and was "glad to shut the staire dores to kéepe them out" so that he could look upon the preparations "priuately at his

[89] Quotations are to act, scene and line numbers in William Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, ed. J. M. Nosworthy, rev. Julia Briggs (London: Penguin Books, 2005).

[90] James VI and I, "Basilicon Doron," 202.

owne pleasure".[91] James' desire to "passe vnknowne" among his subjects at this event is shared by Vincentio who asks Friar Thomas to "Supply [him] with the habit" (1.3.46) so that he "may formally in person bear / Like a true friar" (1.3.47-48), and "Visit both prince and people" (1.3.45) in disguise. Like *The Phoenix*, *Measure* employs the 'disguised ruler' motif that critics have noted followed on the heels of James' accession.[92] Unlike with *The Phoenix*, however, *Measure*'s ruler-in-disguise motif proves problematic as it initially characterises its ruler as unassertive and therefore unmasculine.

Anxious about being in the public eye and about his public image, the Duke hands his responsibility for reform to his deputy in a decision that sees the him assume a passive role that contrasts with the same "masculine decisiveness" that audiences witnessed in Phoenix, and many had hoped for in James. The *Basilikon Doron* highlights James' worries that a leader often has to juggle public scrutiny while balancing on the tightrope between popularity and stringent government:

> [A] King is as one set on a stage, whose smallest actions and gestures, all the people gazingly doe behold: and therefore… the people, who seeth but the outward part, will ever judge of the substance, by the circumstance…[93]

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[91] Gilbert Dugdale, *The time triumphant declaring in briefe, the ariual of our soueraigne liedge Lord, King James into England, his coronation at Westminster: together with his late roual progresse, from the Towre of London through the Cittie, to his Highnes manor of White Hall. Shewing also, the varieties & rarieties of al the sundry trophies or pageants, erected… With a rehearsal of the King and Queenes late coming to the Exchaunge in London. By Gilbert Dugdale.* (London, 1604), accessed July 28, 2021, https://www.proquest.com/eebo.

[92] Quarmby, *Disguised Ruler*, 3; Jonathan Goldberg, *James I and the Politics of Literature* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1983), 231–39.

[93] James VI and I, "Basilicon Doron," 247.

Measure's Duke is equally troubled by public scrutiny and eager to maintain his positive public image; as Friar Thomas explains, calls for strict reform from "[the Duke] more dreadful would have seemed / Than in [his deputy] Lord Angelo" (1.3.33-34). But the friar's disguise provides him with a protective barrier so that someone else can "strike home" (1.3.41) while the Duke can remain seemingly uninvolved and, therefore, without blame for any undesirable consequences. Both *The Phoenix* and *Measure* use the disguised ruler motif, but what separates Phoenix from the Duke is that the former plans on using his disguise to "mark all abuses ready for reformation or punishment" (*Phoenix* 1.1.103) and actively address those abuses *himself*. Duke Vincentio, however, uses a disguise to step back from an active role in reforming his dukedom, and instead passes the buck to his deputy so as to preserve his reputation. Although Vincentio is eventually the one to dole out 'justice' and punishment in Act 5, this comes only once he has used Angelo as a scapegoat to get a feel for public reaction to potential reform. On the one hand, it could be argued that the Duke, much like Phoenix, uses a disguise to systematically protect his subjects by instigating reform via "the benefit of a private gentleman / … [who] notes all, / Himself unnoted" (*The Phoenix*, 1.1.62-64). On the other hand, the Duke's disguise appears to be employed less to protect others and more to protect himself, becoming a shield against the feared accusations of being "too dreadful" (1.3.34) that would be cast by those outraged by unreasonably stringent reform. In this way, the Duke's disguise mimics the "especially thick clothing" that James wore for protection – only, the weapon that the Duke appears in fear of is public censure. The Duke's insecurity exacerbates the perception that he is weak, and the concern that this weakness would permeate and destabilise the Duke's patriarchal authority (required to maintain social order) is a concern that has already come to fruition in *Measure*'s Vienna. Indeed, it is the Duke himself who admits that the disciplining "rod" (1.3.26) of his authority has become

> … more mocked than feared, so [his] decrees,
> Dead to infliction, to themselves are dead,
> And liberty plucks justice by the nose;
> The baby beats the nurse, and quite athwart
> Goes all decorum. (1.3.27-31)

It is also worth noting that, unlike in *The Phoenix*, the Duke's desire for reform in Vienna (albeit with good intentions) delivers fruitless outcomes. While Phoenix manages to hold his immoral perpetrators and traitors accountable and divvy out punishments accordingly, the Duke halts Angelo's restorative programme and pardons those that Angelo targeted for their immoralities. The Duke's reluctance to commit to reform speaks to the promises for reform that James made – or, at least, alluded to – to various factions in the early years of his reign. The fruitless Hampton Court Conference in 1604 had given a false sense of hope to both the Puritan and Catholic factions in England that James would be the advocate for the reform they each desired. As discussed in the Introduction, not looking to alienate any major communities in England from the onset of his reign, James agreed to the bare minimum of reforms so as to appease his subjects without estranging others.[94] Again, James – like Vincentio – appears more preoccupied with preserving his reputation than in seeing through the reformation (which may have been more necessary in Vienna than in England). Both rules exhibit a lack of active, "masculine decisiveness", which in the case of Vincentio is exacerbated by having his deputy do his dirty work.

Further significance can be found in the breezed over peace-talks storyline in *Measure* in which the Duke is understood to be seeking a "composition with the King of Hungry"

[94] See page 21 of this thesis.

(1.2.2).[95] This detail resonates suspiciously closely with the peace-talks that had occurred between England and Spain only months prior to *Measure for Measure*'s first performance. Friction between Spain and England had been rife since 1585 and had become ingrained into English nationalism.[96] As a consequence, Andrew Thrush tells us, "when peace was finally concluded in August 1604 there was no public rejoicing," indicating the treaty's unpopularity amongst the English.[97] In fact, "in most London parishes," Thrush continues, "prayers were offered for the Dutch, who were left to continue the struggle alone" against the Spanish.[98] This sentiment was shared by Noel Caron, an agent in England for the United Provinces under Elizabeth and James, who recorded popular feeling in London at the time of the Treaty:

> … no promulgation was ever received in London with more coolness, yes – with more sadness. No mortal has shown the least satisfaction in words or deeds, but, on the contrary, people have cried out openly, 'God save our good neighbours the States of Holland and Zeeland, and grant them victory! … The people were admonished to make bonfires, but you may be very sure not a bonfire was to be seen. … The English clap their hands and throw their caps in the air when they hear anything published favourable to us, but, it must be confessed, they are now taking very dismal views of affairs.[99]

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[95] N. W. Bawcutt's interpolations for this line suggest that 'composition' is an "agreement over a truce or peace-treaty"; see William Shakespeare, *Measure for Measure*, ed. N. W. Bawcutt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 91.

[96] Croft, "Peace with Spain," 19.

[97] Thrush, "Parliamentary Opposition," 302.

[98] Thrush, "Parliamentary Opposition," 302.

[99] As quoted in Shorland, "Womanhood and Weakness," 273.

Given England's dissatisfaction with the peace, the fact that *Measure*'s ruler – framed as cowardly and irresolute – should be presented as entering unpopular peace-talks with a foreign enemy speaks of concern about behaviour that mirrored James' earlier that year. The Duke's subjects are under the impression that his withdrawal from Vienna is so he can travel abroad to enter peace negotiations with the King of Hungary, but the decision appears to dissatisfy some: "Heaven grant us its peace, but not the King of Hungary's!" (1.2.4-5). One gentleman attests that "[t]here's not a soldier of us all that, in the thanksgiving before meat, do relish the petition that prays for peace" (1.2.14-16). In fact, *Measure* does not stand alone as a contemporaneous play that appears to criticise the effects of peace-making: John Day's *The Isle of Gulls* (1606) even highlights the perceived femininity of peace in its claims that "men and warr were worne out of fashion both in a Sōmer"(4.1.11-12) as though the Anglo-Spanish treaty – finalised in the summer of 1604 – saw England (and James) retreat from masculinity when it/they retreated from war. In recreating such a familiar topic for English audiences on the London stage, it would appear that the theatre might have sought to communicate that peace policies did not always win the hearts of the people because, to some, peace-seeking connoted emasculation. As a result, the monarch was left wide open to what James had warned in *Basilikon Doron*: being unfavourably "judge[d] of the substance, by the circumstances[.]"[100]

As mentioned above, the initial relief at James' succession began to fade as he increasingly failed to embody the expected and highly anticipated masculinity of male monarchy. Though he, like *The Phoenix*'s revered successor, approached his reign with the initial "masculine decisiveness" of reform and a firm, patriarchal hand, his peace-talks with Spain, shyness in public, and underwhelming reforming policies suggested more the feminine passivity that audiences would come to recognise in *Measure for Measure*'s Duke.

[100] James VI and I, "Basilicon Doron," 247.

Eventually, the Venetian ambassador disapprovingly remarked of the new king: "Fear is, and ever was, his ruling passion!" and ultimately, as critic Jamie Gianoutsos mentions, the ironic argument was presented that "a woman, Elizabeth, had exhibited far more masculine qualities than her male successor, King James."[101] As a result, previously high hopes for masculine rule dulled, slowly becoming eclipsed by the glowing memory of Elizabeth's 'golden age.'

III

A 'Golden Age' of Masculine Balance

Given the high expectations accorded to his "worthier gender," James' passivity and perceived feminine foreign policy indicated that he was failing to fulfil the role of the masculine king that, as historian Pauline Croft suggests, England deeply desired. Although James took pride in his styling as *rex pacificus*, many of his subjects saw the peace with Spain as "a sad footnote to the glory days of the Armada."[102] As a result, the honeymoon period enjoyed after the accession of a male monarch fizzled out and, as Shorland has argued, "Elizabeth's reputation ascended while James' waned."[103] Indeed, the theatre had a hand in reprising the memory of 'good Queen Bess' as nostalgia for Elizabeth swelled, especially in the form of Thomas Heywood's two-part play, *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody; or*

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[101] For the Venetian ambassador's remark, see Young, *History of Homosexuality*, 98. Jamie Gianoutsos, "Criticising Kings: Gender, Classic History, and Subversive Writing in Seventeenth-Century England," *Renaissance Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (2017): 1372.

[102] Shorland, "Womanhood and Weakness," 272. On James' '*rex pacificus*' styling, see Durston, *James I*, 45; Gianoutsos, "Criticising Kings," 1372; Pauline Croft, "*Rex Pacificus*, Robert Cecil, and the 1604 Peace with Spain," in *The Accession of James I*, ed. Glenn Burgess, Rowland Wymer and Jason Lawrence (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006): 140-54.

[103] Shorland, "Womanhood and Weakness," 274. On James' unpopularity due to foreign peace policy, see also Carole Levin, *Heart and Stomach*, 168; Young, *History of Homosexuality*, 97.

The Troubles of Queen Elizabeth (1605). Both focusing on female monarchs (Mary I and Elizabeth), these plays home in on the notion that the "best face" for monarchy was the appropriate balance of masculinity and femininity. *1* and *2 If You Know Not Me* suggest that, for Mary I, that balance was achieved only in the literal marriage of her femininity and her husband's masculinity, with Philip's gender trumping his undesirable nationality and religious affiliation. Elizabeth, on the other hand, appears to have achieved the correct balance in herself: these quasi-history plays – first performed a mere two years after James' succession – lauded Elizabeth's femininity, while simultaneously constructing and celebrating her as a masculine, war-like leader. Elizabeth's change in status throughout the action of the two plays led to a notable difference in the treatment of these principles in her, however: while still a princess, she is celebrated for her femininity, but she transitions to exhibit the perfect balance of masculinity-over-femininity when, crucially, she is crowned England's monarch.

The critic Teresa Grant notes that, by staging the stories of Mary I and Elizabeth I together, Heywood's *1 If You Know Not Me* "exploit[s] the direct contrast between the two female monarchs."[104] The first part of the two-part play – in which Elizabeth remains a princess for most of the play – not only pardoned Elizabeth's femininity, but honoured it in memorialising her mercy, compassion and the 'special relationship' with her subjects that quickly became "the stuff of legend."[105] What is noteworthy is that this celebration of femininity was achieved by denouncing what was arguably perceived as the 'wrong type' of feminine rule: Mary I is presented as tyrannous (which, as previously mentioned, Seneca, Machiavelli and Erasmus argued was the result of feminine irrationality), while Elizabeth is presented as virtuous.[106] The audience are immediately introduced to Mary as a rash and

[104] Teresa Grant, "Drama Queen: Staging Elizabeth in *If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody*," in *The Myth of Elizabeth*, ed. Susan Doran and Thomas S. Freeman (London: Palgrave, 2003), 122.

[105] Grant, "Drama Queen," 126.

[106] Grant, "Drama Queen," 122.

indulgent monarch who, left to her own devices, fails to administer the ideal kingly balance of reason, mercy and justice. When the loyal "Suffolke men that lifted [Mary] to the throne" (2.67) petition their queen to uphold the "promise [she] made them about religion" (2.68-69), Mary paranoiacally asserts her divine authority before unjustly and irrationally punishing the messenger:

> They shall know,
> To whome their faithfull duties they doe owe,
> Since they the lymbes, the head would seeke to sway,
> Before they gouerne, they shall learne t'obay:
> See it seuerly ordred[.] (2.88-92)[107]

Nor does she intervene with a request for a more suitable, milder penalty when the Suffolk man is ordered "vppon the pillory, three dayes to stand" (2.94). Albeit somewhat diluted, such a scene draws on the infamously tyrannous Marian reign in which 'Bloody Mary' used, what historian Gina Alexander calls, "the wrong weapons" in the re-Catholicization campaign that saw 284 Protestants burned alive for their beliefs – eerily resonating with the "death camp" seen before in *King Lear* and *Macbeth*.[108] In a similarly oppressive reaction to the request for clemency towards the Suffolk man, Mary snuffs out any contradiction from her subjects in the play: "Away with [Sentlow], ile teach him know his place, / To frowne when we frowne,

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[107] Quotations are to scene and line numbers in Thomas Heywood, *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody. Part I*, ed. Madeleine Doran and W. W. Greg (London: Oxford University Press, 1935). This edition does not include act numbers.

[108] Gina Alexander, "Bonner and the Marian Persecutions," in *The English Reformation Revised*, ed. Christopher Haigh (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 175. See also Eamon Duffy, *Fires of Faith: Catholic England Under Mary Tudor* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 79. On the "death camp," see French, "Macbeth at My Lai," 62.

smile on whome we grace" (2.122-23). More concerning, however, is how easily Mary is influenced by her ministers to react to the "sawcye impudence, / This Sentlow here presumes" (2.120-21), which worryingly highlights her feminine weakness.

The young Elizabeth, on the other hand, exerts nutritive compassion and mercy. For instance, although a prisoner herself, Elizabeth devotes her service to the English common people, choosing to "fall to huswiffry" and "spend [her] labors to releeue the poore" (10.808-09). Likewise, on the day of her coronation Elizabeth bestows mercy on her jailor:

> Be not asham'd man, looke me in the face,
> […]
> This is a day for peace, not for vengeance fit,
> All your good deeds wee'le quit, all wrongs remit. (22.1543, 1548-49)

As Grant notes, in juxtaposing "Elizabeth's saintly behaviour scene by scene with Mary's mean and faithless spirit," Elizabeth's queenship is accentuated as 'good', encouraging the audience to reminisce over the wholesome reign of 'good Queen Bess'.[109] Grant notes how Heywood seems to have paid "particularly close interest [to] what makes a woman great" – indeed, grace, compassion and mercy were qualities celebrated in Elizabeth because they were expected of a woman, and were not received as threatening when she was only princess, rather than England's sovereign.[110] However, because Mary is a queen (rather than just a powerless princess), her intrinsically feminine tyranny needed balancing out with a stronger and more rational, masculine counterpart.

[109] Grant, "Drama Queen," 122.

[110] Grant, "Drama Queen," 137.

With the femininity of the figure who is queen for most of the play, Mary I, dangerously jeopardising effective monarchy, the play depicts her husband, King Philip, as the masculine counterbalance steadying – even snuffing out – that feminine tyranny. Doran has suggested that the partnership between Mary and Philip saw them acting as one ideal monarchical face where Phillip's masculinity balanced out Mary's femininity – an idea conveyed by the image of one crown over both heads on the Marian coin.[111] Philip appears to steady Mary and encourage her to exhibit reason when he persuades the queen to "Looke on [her] sister with a smiling brow" (18.1234) and "Let [Elizabeth] be censur'd with lenity" (18.1236). Philip showcases honour himself when he advises his wife to demonstrate a rational and sensible level of mercy so as to avoid misjudgements in her treatment of the princess. Philip counsels his wife in his admission that, if he were responsible for dealing to Elizabeth, he would not wish to miscalculate and wrongly punish an innocent woman:

> We beare this mind, we errors would not feed,
> Nor cherish wrongs, nor yet see Innocents bleed. (18.1245-6)

1 If You Know Not Me's portrayal of Phillip as a "rational and honourable" king exhibiting reason to counterbalance Mary's rashness suggests that, even with a royal representative from England's "favourite enemy" infiltrating the English monarchy, the gender hierarchy was felt to be more natural, more reliable and more important than xenophobic suspicions; apparently, an untrustworthy male was still perceived to be more trustworthy in positions of authority than an autonomous female.[112]

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[111] Susan Doran, "Monarchy and Masculinity," 211-12.

[112] Clark, "Spanish Characters," 138.

1 If You Know Not Me sets the stage for its sequel's revival of England's glorious triumph over the Spanish Armada – a triumph of war (and, thus, masculinity) enjoyed under the female rule of Elizabeth.[113] In the lead up to the fond retelling, *2 If You Know Not Me* methodically reasserts the union between masculinity, militancy, and ideal kingship. Commemorating a well-known English mercenary, Thomas Stukley, praise is given that aligns warlike valour with idolised kingship:

> Stewkeley that renowned Englishman,
> That had a spirit equall with a King,
> Mad fellow with these Kings in war-like strife,
> Honor'd his Countrey and concluded life. (1292-95)[114]

That Stukley's gallantry in war should be revered as "equall with a King" speaks volumes about Jacobean expectations of dignified kingship. Also, Stukley's valour in war sees him described as a "renowned *English*man" (emphasis added) in a way that suggests the intrinsic Englishness of his warlike spirit. In fact, *2 If You Know Not Me* crafts English identity around war when an English Lord argues that "war-like sport" (2222) constitutes

> Such sports [that] doe fitly fit our Nation,
> That forraine eyes beholding what we are,
> May rather seeke our peace, then wish our warre. (2223-25)

[113] Grant, "Drama Queen," 121.

[114] Quotations are to line numbers in Thomas Heywood, *If You Know Not Me You Know Nobody. Part II*, ed. Madeleine Doran and W. W. Greg (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935). This edition does not include act numbers.

Thus, the play suggests that England is viewed internally and externally as an admirably war-like nation, and warms to the notion that war, and valour in war, are fundamental in the construction of English pride and identity. By the time the Captain has finished reciting the heroic highlights of the Armada's defeat, the fortuitous victory is fondly reminisced about as a pinnacle of England's history and remembered as a time when "Queene Besse" (2086) headed the country. The play's focus on England as an intrinsically masculine, 'warlike' nation sits in direct contrast to James' peace-making retraction from war; instead one of England's most illustrious moments of warfare is pinned to a woman.

Arguably one of the most significant characterisations of *2 If You Know Not Me* is that of Elizabeth who – in a period where theatre focused on archetypal masculinity as an attribute of 'good' kingship – is possessed of masculine valour and military leadership. Tellingly, this characterisation is reserved for when she has become England's monarch. Robert Cecil had described Elizabeth as "more than a man and in truth somewhat less of a woman," and Elizabeth's use of the doctrine of the monarch's "two bodies" allowed her to re-gender her identity as sovereign in a way that overcame the social concerns over her female inferiority.[115] This re-gendering culminated in her dubiously recorded but notorious 'Tilbury Speech' which declared: "I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England, too."[116] The speech sees Elizabeth acknowledge not just her differently gendered 'two bodies', but also herself as a masculine ruler; Heywood's play calls and recreates this Tilbury moment in which Elizabeth recognises masculinity within herself:

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[115] On the monarch's 'two bodies', see Herrup, "King's Two Genders," *passim*; McLaren, "The Quest for a King," 262; Carole Levin, *Heart and Stomach*, 121-48. On Robert Cecil's description, see Warnicke, "Gender, Religion and Politics," 35.

[116] Elizabeth I, "Speech to the Troops at Tilbury, 1558," 208.

Oh had God and Nature,
Giuen vs proportion man-like to our mind,
Wee'd not stand here fenc't in a wall of Armes,
But haue beene present in these Sea a larmes. (2545-48)

Though Elizabeth endures a female body, her warlike spirit indicates a tendency towards the militant masculine that is recurrently flagged in the Armada-centred scenes. In the 'Tilbury Speech', Elizabeth professes: "I am come amongst you… in the midst and heat of the battle to live or die amongst you all, to lay down… my honour and my blood even in the dust. […] I myself will be your general[.]"[117] Meanwhile, *2 If You Know Not Me* appears to fondly cite this battle cry:

Our Armies royall so be equall our hearts,
For with the meanest here ile spend my blood,
And so to loose it count my onely good.
A March, laed on: wee'le meet the worst can fall,
A mayden Queene will be your Generall. (2635-39)

The final line seems to bifurcate and blur Elizabeth's gender identity in a way that celebrates both her womanliness in her chastity, and her manliness as a war general. Elizabeth's monarchy combines the perfect balance of masculine and feminine principles whereby, in this moment, and given her more prominent image as a warrior in this scene, her masculinity outweighs her femininity. This, as French suggests, was ideal in the early modern monarch. Heywood's play thus embraces a warm nostalgia for the "best face" of Elizabeth's monarchy

[117] Elizabeth I, "Speech to the Troops at Tilbury, 1558," 208.

strikingly soon after James' unpopularly feminine foreign policy appeared to snuff the glory England had attained under the masculine Queen Elizabeth. So, while James misread public sentiment regarding England's war with Spain and called for a truce with the enemy, Elizabeth was theatrically presented as having known – and delivered – exactly the kind of masculine, warlike leader that England wanted in their monarch.

Given that it is symbolically "[a] mayden Queene [who] will be [England's] Generall", *2 If You Know Not Me* appears to disprove Robert Pricket's original prophecy that James would achieve "[m]ore then could by a mayden Queene be done".[118] In his "unashamedly hagiographical" play, Heywood sparks nostalgia for the late queen, allowing for both the celebration of her femininity as "England's Nurse" (1119), and the praise of her masculine militant leadership.[119] Importantly, Heywood's two-part play did not disappear amongst the masses of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century dramas. Rather, *1 If You Know Not Me* and *2 If You Know Not Me* enjoyed the "box-office successes and enduring popularity" that allowed the two parts to triumph as "the most printed play of the seventeenth century" which, as Grant notes, "is not a feat to be underestimated in the face of competition from some of the greatest playwrights the world has ever known."[120]

It was natural that a kingdom experiencing the transition from female to male monarchy should use cultural forms as a space to navigate this experience, and theatrical performances were one of the forms used to question effective and ideal kingship during this transition. Alongside poems and panegyrics, they highlighted England's hopes for masculine kingship after fifty years of female rule, but the plays seem to have carefully outlined exactly what

[118] As quoted in McCabe, "Panegyric and its Discontents," 29.

[119] Clark, "Spanish Characters," 137.

[120] Grant, "Drama Queen," 121, 139.

'masculine' kingship meant to the English. It was not synonymous with 'male' kingship – though all biologically male, neither King Lear, Macbeth, the Duke of Ferrara, or Duke Vincentio exhibit 'masculine' rule. It is worth confronting the fact that by the end of *Macbeth*, it is not Macbeth's womanly nature but his bestial nature that is to the fore; arguably he re-acquires his masculine aggression in his final fight with Macduff, but by that point he has crossed the line into inhumanity – signalled by Macduff's referral to him as "hell-hound" (*Macbeth* 5.7.33) – and, at this point, his actions can no longer be measured as masculine or feminine, but are rather to be judged as human or inhuman.

Lear, Macbeth, the Duke of Ferrara and Vincentio all exhibit feminine behaviours that early modern frameworks of kingship considered ill-suited and inappropriate in areas of government and authority – as Susan Doran suggests, the effeminate male king was worse than a female ruler, and this idea presents itself in the above plays.[121] The plays warn of the potential perils posed by a male monarch who falls short of his expected masculinity, and suggest that men who should be able to fulfil the masculine role of patriarch, but fail to do so, disrupt the social order. And even though nostalgia for Elizabeth and her reign kicked in fairly soon after James' accession, it appears to have done so not as a reaction to Elizabeth's greatness, but because James' popularity waned. As Richard A. McCabe remarks, eventually "disillusionment surpassed jubilation" and the hope inspired by a new name and a new monarch – a king, no less – began to dwindle.[122] As part of creating nostalgia for the late queen's reign, what *2 If You Know Not Me* is celebrating in Elizabeth's reign are the 'masculine' war narratives that Elizabeth apparently managed to embody during wartime – 'masculine' narratives that James started to unravel with his effeminate, peace-maker narrative.

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[121] Susan Doran, "Monarchy and Masculinity," 217.

[122] McCabe, "Panegyric and its Discontents," 34.

Finally, it should be noted that the suggestion that the "best face" of monarchy was the appropriate balance of masculinity *over* femininity relies on and perpetuates a normative male dominance considered essential to early modern, patriarchal orthodoxy. In the plays discussed in this chapter, the theatre can be seen using the context of James' restoration of male power in England, and the debates about the gendering of 'good' monarchy it provoked, to explicitly outline gender differences and the reasons for patriarchal, hierarchical social order, and to criticise behaviours that rejected, breached, or fell short of those that order expected. Significantly, this disruption to the social order is enacted equally by women – or other, non-masculine, subaltern bodies – who look to invade realms of normative male, patriarchal power, and this subversive invasion is discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter Two

Metadramatic Manipulation in Realms of Male Power

"[T]he King is over-Lord of the whole land: so is he Master over every person that inhabiteth the same, having power over the life and death of every one of them: … the same lawes whereby he taketh [life], are made by himself… and so the power flowes alwaies from him selfe." So wrote James in his 1598 treatise, *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies*, which – republished in London to coincide with his 1603 accession to the English throne – outlined the divine right of kings and advocated the absolutist idea that kings, appointed by God, are not subject to any earthly authority.[1] Perhaps, however, a more authentic delineation of James' expectations regarding the divine right of kings is presented in his speech given to Parliament only a few years later, in which he announced that

> Kings are justly called Gods, for that they exercise a manner or resemblance of Divine power upon earth: […] God hath power to create, or destroy, and to make and unmake at his pleasure, to give life, or send death, to judge all, and to bee judged nor accomptable [accountable] to none: To raise low things, and to make high things low at his pleasure […] And the like power have Kings: they make and unmake their subjects: they have power of raising, and casting downe: of life, and of death: Judges over all their subjects, and in all causes […] They have power to exalt low things, and abase high things, and make of their subjects like

[1] James VI and I, "The Trew Law of Free Monarchies," in *James VI and I: Selected Writings*, ed. Neil Rhodes and Jennifer Richards (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 271.

> men at the Chesse; A pawne to take a Bishop or a Knight, and to cry up, or downe any of their subjects…[2]

The language James uses here draws attention to the authorial nature of his monarchical power, casting himself as a quasi-creator or director of his subjects' fates. Here, a parallel can be drawn between King James (as monarch) and playwrights and playing companies who, holding "like power," appear as creators of their own worlds and directors of their own subjects' – or characters' – fates. James contends that kings have a "like power" to God, the creator, for "they make and unmake their subjects," but it can be argued that playwrights and players make and unmake their characters in the same way. Likewise, playwrights "have power of raising, and casting downe" their characters – promoting or demoting them, and deciding social climbs and social falls – just as they, with the help of players, have power "to give life, or send death" in the worlds they create.

With the help of James' idea of the divine rights of kings, monarchical and theatrical authority read as synonymous, especially, as I have touched on in the Introduction and as later discussion will cover, given James' own highly theatrical displays of his power. The conflation of these two realms of authority signals playing companies' power to command: to command characters' fates, players' actions, or audience reactions and emotions. However, just as James was acutely aware, authority rarely lay in the hands of one supreme entity and, as the present chapter will suggest, theatrical authority was not just reserved for playing companies on the stage.[3] Maintaining focus on plays first performed between 1603 to 1606,

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[2] James VI and I, "A Speach to the Lords and Commons of the Parliament at White-Hall, on *Wednesday the* XXI. Of March. Anno 1609," in *King James VI and I: Selected Writings*, ed. Neil Rhodes and Jennifer Richards (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 327.

[3] James' overemphasis on the divine right and authority/power of kings potentially stems from his anxieties regarding his dwindling authority/power as a monarch. An 'Anonymous Account' tells of an infamous outburst during the Hampton Court Conference of 1604, in which James expressed that he had had trouble with the

this chapter argues that, in the plays performed by the boys' company the Children of the Queen's Revels, metadramatic stage-orations and self-referential quips signalled an anxious playing company who, due to their inferior position in the gender hierarchy, were battling for authorial power (that is, a power of influence, or authorship, or creation, or production) within the walls of the theatre. While the boys only desired temporary power, limited time to the duration of a performance, it was nonetheless a power that the boys had no automatic claim to. As the previous chapter explored, physiologically, children (including boys) were considered effeminate because their 'moist' compositions meant that they were "neither masters of themselves... nor fully adult."[4] Although males were credited with the "stronger minds" that boasted the potential for self-mastery and independence, these masculine qualities were underdeveloped and not yet achieved in boys.[5] Consequently, some critics have argued that this created a level of gendered division between boys and men.[6] Forced to work harder to assert authority within the theatre walls, boys' companies often employed metadramatic stage-orations that recognised their submissive positions by pleading for mercy from the authoritative men in their authorial audiences. Additionally, the boys used these devices to draw attention to their inferiority and cut themselves down to size as a way of pre-empting criticism, thereby taking that power away from disdaining audiences.

Meanwhile, in the plays performed by adult company the King's Men, the focus on (and ultimate elimination of) manipulative *female* characters, who used their voices to

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Presbyterians in Scotland: "they began to question about my authority, in a maner to hold me for no competent judge over them"; see Shriver, "Hampton Court Revisited," 20. On James' dwindling power and Scottish Presbyterianism, see also: McCabe, "Panegyric and its Discontents," 28; J. Morgan, "Popularity and Monarchy: The Hampton Court Conference and the Early Jacobean Church," *Canadian Journal of History* 53, no. 2 (2018): 217.

[4] Fletcher, "Manhood," 423. See also pages 28-29 of this thesis.

[5] Fletcher, "Manhood," 423.

[6] Fletcher, "Manhood," 423; Will Fisher, "The Renaissance Beard: Masculinity in Early Modern England," *Renaissance Quarterly* 54, no. 1 (2007): 175.

overpower male hearers, signals a company deflecting accusations of unwarranted power onto transgressive women. Ultimately, I suggest that the theatre reinforced the patriarchal gender hierarchy because, while boy players battled their audiences for authority within playhouses, adult male players continued to justify female subordination by framing the authorial female as maliciously manipulative – instead of (as anti-theatricalists would have had it) the act of playing itself. In my discussion, I pay particular attention to five plays: George Chapman's *All Fools* (c. 1604-5), *Eastward Ho* (1605), collaborated on by George Chapman, Ben Jonson and John Marston, and John Day's *The Isle of Gulls* (1606), as well as the previously discussed *Macbeth*, and *King Lear*. The first two subsections provide the context necessary for understanding metadrama, the anti-theatrical arguments exacerbating the issue of theatrical authority, and the differences between the playhouses and performance styles of boys' and adult companies. This will lend a hand in understanding how the power dynamics differed between the two types of companies, and how this engendered distinct experiences with, and struggles for, power between players and audiences. While this chapter considers how the invasion of realms of male power by non-masculine bodies contradicted or slighted the ideas regarding the 'natural' gender hierarchy and social order that were being pushed with the restoration of male power in James, it concludes that, again, the normative gender hierarchy was reinforced with the transgressive offenders' ultimate submission and the containment of the threat they constituted.

I

"All the world's a stage"

The critics Paul Yachnin and Patricia Badir argue that the "world and the theatre are deeply interpenetrating realms" – an idea encapsulated by the term *theatrum mundi*, meaning 'world

as stage,' and foregrounded by Shakespeare himself in *As You Like It*'s familiar line, "All the world's a stage" (2.7.139).[7] The metaphor feeds into the theatrical device of metadrama, or metatheatre, which theatre historian Tiffany Stern explains are two terms "used particularly for the moments when [early modern] theatre comments on itself in some way" or draws attention to its illusory nature.[8] Some examples of this include staging plays-within-plays, references to the playhouse's physical structure, addresses to the audience (like epilogues, prologues, or soliloquies), or onstage audiences; as critic Bill Angus makes plain, at its core, metadrama is "drama about drama."[9] However, as Angus observes, as "drama became more rhetorically complex… the complexity of the metadrama kept pace."[10] Stern supplements this in her suggestion that

> [T]he nomenclature of 'metatheatre' and 'metadrama' comes with interpretative baggage. Sometimes Shakespeare's recourse to metatheatre is said to show that his plays are about dramatic form: that Shakespeare in his plays repeatedly and worriedly reflects on what drama means, [and] how reality can be moulded theatrically.[11]

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[7] Paul Edward Yachnin and Patricia Badir, *Shakespeare and the Cultures of Performance* (Oxon: Aldershot, 2008), 3.

[8] Tiffany Stern, " 'This Wide and Universal Theatre': The Theatre as Prop in Shakespeare's Metadrama," in *Shakespeare's Theatre and the Effects of Performance*, ed. Farah Karim-Cooper and Tiffany Stern (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2013), 14.

[9] Bill Angus, *Metadrama and the Informer in Shakespeare and Jonson* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016), 3; Stern, "Wide and Universal Theatre," 14.

[10] Angus, *Metadrama and the Informer*, 3.

[11] Stern, "Wide and Universal Theatre," 14.

Yachnin and Badir mention that the *theatrum mundi* metaphor draws attention to the idea that theatre is "dizzyingly built upon an emptying out of real life into 'mere' theatricality."[12] Stern complements this when she suggests that this 'master metaphor' of Shakespeare's canon is one that he "used to remind the spectators that they themselves were not much different from actors, with movements and will prescribed by God, or the Devil, or the King."[13]

Such an idea certainly feeds into James' idea of monarchical authority and validates his idea that his subjects are like "pawnes" under his prescription – although perhaps the analogous term 'puppets' might appropriately draw this power dynamic back into the realm of (meta)theatrical manipulation. A manipulative theatricality is a significant feature of the way James chose to conduct himself as a king, publicly displaying his authority and divine power in the form of ethically questionable trials. The critic Diane Purkiss writes about an occasion during the infamous 1591 North Berwick Witch Trials (which set a precedent for James' theatrical behaviour) where "James was inspired to go beyond the base level theatricality of a witch trial" when he directed an accused woman, Gillis Duncan, to perform her 'witchy' dance for him.[14] The king cast her "not as a witness but as an entertainer" when, as Purkiss explains, the woman was "asked to act out her own behaviour, to turn the case against her into a theatrical event".[15] Purkiss suggests that, in this moment, "James becomes the author of his own masque and antimasque."[16] Critic Craig A. Bernthal casts James in a similar role, suggesting that the spectacle of the 1603 Main/Bye Plot executions saw "the new king [step]

[12] Yachnin and Badir, *Cultures of Performance*, 3.

[13] Stern, "Wide and Universal Theatre," 16.

[14] Diane Purkiss, *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth-Century Representations* (London: Routledge, 1996), 199-200.

[15] Purkiss, *Witch in History*, 200.

[16] Purkiss, *Witch in History*, 200.

into the picture as actor, director, and playwright."[17] As the accused men – Sir Griffin Markham, Lord Cobham and Lord Grey – each took to the stage-like scaffold, neither they nor the audience before them expecting an execution foresaw the nail-bitingly last-minute scene rewrite that spared the lives of the condemned and enthralled spectators. Bernthal posits that "James had planned for a dramatic last second entry" when his messenger arrived – "barely in time to stop the axe from falling" on the first executionee's neck – with a royal pardon that had been drawn up in secret three days prior.[18] Manipulating the sequence of events by, essentially, writing the scenes on the pages of contradicting warrants, James directed his own action, and featured himself as the hero. Effectively, and unbeknownst to them, Markham, Cobham and Grey had become key players in the new king's highly theatrical display of power.

Given the context of James' theatrical power displays and the modelling of the king himself, it was natural that the playing companies around this time were presenting plays that foregrounded metadrama and metadramatic manipulation. However, the theatre depicted multiple levels of manipulation. On one level, the theatre recreated external manipulative power: it is noteworthy that the type of behaviour that James exhibited in the Main/Bye Plot executions is provocatively paralleled by *Measure*'s Duke Vincentio. In a scene mirroring James' orchestration of the Main/Bye Plot spectacle, *Measure*'s final act sees Duke Vincentio co-ordinate trial scenes in such a way that he, like James, is able to cast himself as the play's hero (albeit a dubious one) by calling upon his "hidden power" (*Measure* 5.1.389) of divine

[17] Craig A. Bernthal, "Staging Justice: James I and the Trial Scenes of Measure for Measure," *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 32, no. 2 (1992): 253. Importantly, however, Tiffany Stern notes that the term 'director' is an anachronistic term for the early modern period because, "between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, there was no 'director' or 'producer' in charge of production": see Tiffany Stern, *Rehearsal from Shakespeare to Sheridan* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 2.

[18] Bernthal, "Staging Justice," 251-52.

right to deliver and retract death sentences.[19] On another level, and as this chapter demonstrates, the playing companies appeared equally concerned with (meta)theatrically exploring the agency of other authorities – the spectators – that held their own manipulative, "hidden power" inside the theatre. When Stern likens actors to spectators at the mercy of one divine authority (God, the Devil, or the King), she appears to suggest that players' "movements and will" were also prescribed by one supreme authority – the playwright, perhaps? But to what extent does the employment of the *theatrum mundi* device (and other metadramatic devices) in the plays of this period revise the power narrative to suggest that, as much as spectators were "pawnes," they were also authorities themselves, especially in the playhouse? And to what extent did the restoration of (a highly theatrical) *male* monarch and *male* power complicate that power narrative in the playhouse for those actors positioned lower in the gender hierarchy? These are some of the questions that the present chapter will explore.

Finally, the players' embrace of metadramatically manipulative devices could be seen as an ironic riposte to anti-theatrical arguments that accused them of manipulating audiences. Theatre historian Leah S. Marcus notes that the basic contention of the anti-theatricalist argument was "that drama was a powerful medium that changed its audiences in ways that were dangerous and hard to control."[20] In his 1597 pamphlet, *The Theatre of God's Judgements*, committed Puritan Thomas Beard claimed that, at the theatre, "[t]he ears of young folk are […] polluted with many filthy and dishonest speeches; [and] their eyes are […] infected with many lascivious and unchaste gestures and countenances."[21] William Rankins' 1587 pamphlet, *A Mirror of Monsters*, meanwhile, insisted that players "are sent from their

[19] Bernthal, "Staging Justice," 253-54.

[20] Leah S. Marcus, "Antitheatricality: The Theatre as Scourge," in *A New Companion to Renaissance Drama*, ed. Arthur F. Kinney and Thomas Warren Hopper (Hoboken: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 183.

[21] Thomas Beard, "The Theatre of God's Judgements (1597)," in *Shakespeare's Theater: A Sourcebook*, ed. Tanya Pollard (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 167.

great captain Satan… to deceive the world, to lead the people with enticing shows to the devil to seduce them to sin[.]"[22] The general consensus that persisted into the early seventeenth century was that naïve audiences were vulnerable to the coercion of immoral playing companies.

With whom power lies inside the walls of the theatre was an issue up for debate in Elizabethan and Jacobean London. Anti-theatricalists like Stephen Gosson and Anthony Munday had criticised the manipulative power of poets and players because, as critic Farah Karim-Cooper explains, theatre was considered "a sensorium where the presentation of drama seemed to have the capacity to infect or affect its spectators, potentially producing changes in… emotional status and even their behaviour."[23] In his anti-theatrical pamphlet, *Plays Confuted in Five Actions* (1582), fear-mongering Gosson warned that

> [b]ecause the sweet numbers of poetry flowing in verse do wonderfully tickle the hearers' ears, the devil hath tied this to most of our plays, that whatsoever he would have stick fast to our souls might slip down in sugar by this enticement, for that which delighteth never troubleth our swallow.[24]

Munday's 1580 diatribe, *A Second and Third Blast of Retreat from Plays and Theatres*, meanwhile, suggested that poets and "[t]heir wanton speeches do pierce our secret thoughts,

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[22] William Rankins, "A Mirror of Monsters," in *Shakespeare's Theater: A Sourcebook*, ed. Tanya Pollard (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 126.

[23] Farah Karim-Cooper, "The Sensory Body in Shakespeare's Theatres," in *The Five Senses in Medieval and Early Modern England*, ed. Annette Kern-Stähler, Beatrix Buse and Wietse de Boer (Boston: Brill, 2016), 269.

[24] Stephen Gosson, "Plays Confuted in Five Actions (1582)," in *Shakespeare's Theater: A Sourcebook*, ed. Tanya Pollard (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 99.

and move us thereby to mischief".[25] While the words of poetry have been ascribed to the playwright/poet, it is important to recognise – as Karim-Cooper, Gosson and Munday seemingly do – that it is the sensory effect of those words in performance that have an equally manipulative power. As this chapter goes on to discuss, this anti-theatrical line (that words are manipulative weapons) is co-opted by the King's Men, but is reframed to target *women* using their words to wrongfully exact power.

Importantly, the attacks of Beard, Rankins, Gosson and Munday mark theatre as a homogenous industry, but this overlooks the gendered power dynamics experienced between, and within, the different types of playing companies. The early modern gender hierarchy was not categorically a male-female dichotomy, and the assumption of natural power within the theatre neglects the struggle for authority that boys' companies seem to have faced. For example, as this chapter will go on to explore, boys occupied an interstitial gender position, meaning that their place in the male/female hierarchy was problematized in such a way that saw boy actors backfooted in their struggle for (theatrical) authority against adult male audience members. Thus, the anti-theatricalists seem to have disregarded the powerlessness endured by boy players up against authoritative audiences predominantly composed of adult men who, due to their maturity, were higher than them in the gender hierarchy. This was an issue exacerbated by the type of playhouse that boys' companies typically occupied.

[25] Anthony Munday, "A Second and Third Blast of Retreat from Plays and Theaters (1580)," in *Shakespeare's Theater: A Sourcebook*, ed. Tanya Pollard (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 79.

II

Playhouses, Playing Companies, and Playgoers

The style of playhouse in which a theatre company gave its performances indicated the type of audience member that players needed to navigate; who could go where (and why they could go there) affected how playing companies managed audience expectations and behaviours. The outdoor amphitheatre is, perhaps, the quintessential early modern playing venue. It is easy for the yards and galleries of open-aired theatres like Shakespeare's Globe – or, looking closer to home even, Auckland's Pop-up Globe – to spring to mind when imagining the performances of Elizabethan and Jacobean London. Theatre historian Andrew Gurr has estimated that the 'public' outdoor amphitheatre of the late-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries could accommodate approximately 3000 playgoers, where around 800 could squeeze into the yard (or 'pit') that hugged the stage, while the various galleries lining the auditorium could seat over 2000.[26] With so many paying customers, these playhouses could boast inexpensive entry fees that serviced all social classes: theatre historian David Kathman explains how patrons "first paid a penny to gain admission to the yard; those who wanted to sit paid an additional penny to enter the galleries; and those who paid a third penny could enter the most exclusive part of the galleries."[27] Due to the 'outdoor' nature of these unroofed amphitheatres, however, the yard-dwellers – or 'groundlings' – were exposed to the elements; those who paid more enjoyed the luxury of sheltered seating in the galleries. As a result, proximity to the stage became indicative of a playgoer's social status and bearing

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[26] Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 3rd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 20-21, 25.

[27] David Kathman, "Playhouses," in *A New Companion to Renaissance Drama*, ed. Arthur F. Kinney and Thomas Warren Hopper (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 212. See also Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London,* 19.

which, in a sense, materialised the social hierarchy: the poorest patrons were (financially) restricted to the 'pit' at the bottom and closest to the stage, while the gentry, nobility, and aristocracy climbed upwards towards the galleries' tops. The stage was raised above the groundlings who acted as the mass separating the stage from the gallery-dwellers. Thus, in the amphitheatres, the onstage action remained physically separated from the offstage audiences, and the removed and elevated positions of onstage actors meant that they could govern the attention of audiences. Additionally, although adult companies – who, prior to their acquisition of the Blackfriars theatre in 1608, predominantly performed at the outdoor amphitheatres – dealt with the sneers and hisses of authorial audiences, the structure of outdoor amphitheatres offered actors the upper-hand as they enjoyed a physical, spatial divorce from their audiences.

There were two different types of commercial London playhouse in early modern London, though, and, while the outdoor 'public' amphitheatres staged shows from the adult companies' repertories, in the early years of James' reign, indoor 'private' playhouses were utilized by the less rowdy children's companies.[28] Gurr explains how the "martial noise of drums and trumpets" that became "the characteristic noises of adult players" were not suited to the small enclosed playhouses that children's – or boys' – companies occupied.[29] Thus, the indoor playhouses – like the Blackfriars theatre – were used almost exclusively by children's companies like the Children of the Queen's Revels.[30] These indoor playhouses were constructed or adapted from large rooms or halls of existing buildings, and were modelled on

[28] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 29; Kathman, "Playhouses," 211; Lucy Munro, *Children of the Queen's Revel's: A Jacobean Theatre Repertory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 56; Michael Shapiro, "Boys Companies," in *A New Companion to Renaissance Drama*, ed. Arthur F. Kinney and Thomas Warren Hopper (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 269.

[29] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 29.

[30] Mary Bly, "The Boy Companies 1599-1613," in *The Oxford Handbook of Early Modern Theatre*, ed. Richard Dutton (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 138.

the banqueting halls of great houses where plays were often performed for banqueting guests.[31] Often referred to as 'private' playhouses, Gurr notes that the value of this term "lies chiefly in the way [it] indicate[s] the social snobbery" that separated the indoor 'halls' from the outdoor, 'public' amphitheatres.[32] This is because indoor playhouses could only accommodate about a quarter of the amphitheatre audience capacity, meaning that they were compelled to charge higher admission prices than the 'public' playhouses. As many scholars suggest, this meant that their "main clientele must have been the privileged, principally gallants, law students, the wealthier citizens and the nobility."[33] Just like in the amphitheatres, a playgoer's proximity to the stage was dependant on how many pennies they paid upon entry and, therefore, indicative of social stature; unlike in the amphitheatres, however, it was the positions *closest* to the stage – even *on* the stage – that were seen as more prestigious.

As Gurr notes, "the position which the most exhibitionistic of gallants tended to adopt in the indoor playhouses [was] on the stage itself."[34] For an additional sixpence, a playgoer could hire a stool and emerge with it from the tiring house to sit and watch the play on the stage alongside the players giving the performance. Adopting such an "exhibitionistic" position certainly suggests that these men wanted to parade themselves and be seen by society, which speaks to the metadramatic, *theatrum mundi* idea regarding the highly theatrical nature of the (early modern) world. Gurr explains that "[t]he practice of allowing the most important patrons to sit on the stage began with the first boy companies," and that, significantly, the "[a]dult players never allowed it at the open amphitheatres," which

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[31] Kathman, "Playhouses," 211; Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 14.

[32] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 14.

[33] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 31. See also Kathman, "Playhouses," 211; Munro, *Children of the Queen's Revels*, 56; Tanya Pollard, introduction to *Shakespeare's Theatre: A Source Book*, ed. Tanya Pollard (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), xii.

[34] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 34.

indicates that any arising issues from stool-sitting were predominantly a concern of the boy players rather than the adult players.[35] Theatre historian Lucy Munro has commented that those "who would sit on stools placed on the edge of the stage itself, thereby cross[ed] the boundary between spectator and spectacle."[36] Therefore, the attention-demanding authority that the elevated and removed onstage position had naturally afforded actors in the amphitheatres was not a prerogative that boy actors of 'private' playhouses exclusively enjoyed; rather, they now battled for such authority with their newly empowered stool-sitting neighbours.

In addition to the elite social statuses of their wealthier clientele, the boys' companies were also backfooted by issues of age and gender subordination in their struggle for authority in the theatre. Between 1603 and 1606, two boys' companies were in operation: the Children of the Queen's Revels and the Children of Paul's. Aged between 10 and 15 years old – or 10 and 14, as the Queen's Revels actors were in 1600 – the boys were phenomenologically children and, therefore, considered naturally inferior to adults.[37] More than that, however, young boys, though biologically male, were also considered to be naturally inferior on a gendered level: as my discussion in Chapter One explores, physiologically, young boys were not considered fully male, or fully masculine. Historian Eleanor Rycroft examines this further, explaining that boys were considered "imperfect" men because they lacked the humoral heat necessary to push out hair on the face, meaning that they could not attain the beards that were indicative of masculinity and manhood.[38] Importantly, as critics Siobhan Keenan and Mary Bly note, after the turn of the seventeenth century, the 'children's'

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[35] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 36.

[36] Munro, *Children of the Queen's Revels*, 7.

[37] Bly, "The Boy Companies," 142; Siobhan Keenan, *Acting Companies and Their Plays in Shakespeare's London* (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2014), 12.

[38] Rycroft, "The Beard Maketh the Man," 18.

companies began to be comprised of older boys: Nathan Field, a 'boy' player in the Children of the Queen's Revels company, was about thirteen when he first joined the company (then known as the Children of the Chapel Royal) in 1600-1, but was still performing with them in 1606, at the age of nineteen.[39] However, as Rycroft points out, "[p]uberty is known to have occurred later in the early modern era so men may have been seen as boys well into their late teens or early twenties" because of their smooth chins, which might contribute to the reason that, as Bly observes, the term 'boy' connotes childlike qualities.[40] Even into their teens and early twenties, then, 'boy' actors might have dealt with the fall-out of being considered under-developed, unmanly males and, therefore, hierarchically beneath the adult male players and adult male audiences whom they needed to manipulate into giving their performance a favourable reception.

As discussed earlier, anti-theatricalists believed that players wielded manipulative power over audiences, however modern scholarship tends to suggest that it was the audiences who were the power-wielding entities in the theatre. Critics have often compared the creative control of playwright and audience, arguing that audiences directed – or, at least, heavily influenced – the unfolding action within, or reception of, performances.[41] Angus has focused on an "audience's empowered interpretative position" under the intelligence systems and informer frameworks of early modern London, and explores how an audience's authority lay in the way audience misinterpretation had the power to make or break the success of a play.[42]

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[39] Keenan, *Acting Companies*, 14; Bly, "The Boy Companies," 142; Michael Shapiro, "Boys Companies," 277.

[40] Rycroft, "The Beard Maketh the Man," 19. See also Bly, "The Boy Companies," 143.

[41] Stern, *Rehearsal*, 13; Matteo Pangallo, " 'Mayn't a Spectator Write a Comedy?': Playwriting Playgoers in Early Modern Drama," *The Review of English Studies* 64, no. 263 (2013): 39-40.

[42] Bill Angus, "The Roman Actor, Metadrama, Authority and the Audience," *Studies in English Literature* 50, no. 2 (2010): 459. See also *Metadrama and the Informer in Shakespeare and Jonson* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2016); *Intelligence and Metadrama in the Early Modern Theatre* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2019).

In a similar vein, critics Matteo Pangallo and Tiffany Stern have both commented on the audience as producers of drama. Pangallo attests that, "whether by hissing at an actor, laughing at a clown, or demanding that a company change its intended repertory […] the audience had the power to revise or even create a play".[43] Likewise, Stern suggests that "[a]udiences were actively involved not simply in approving or condemning a play, but in revising it" because, in its performance, the play "was offered to the audience as a mutable text ready for improvement."[44] Thus, with stool-sitting an exclusive feature of the indoor 'private' halls, wrestling with the financially and socially empowered stool-sitter for theatrical authority and audience attention was one of the particular challenges that boy actors faced – along with their subsidiary statuses as minors and their interstitial genders. By demanding the attention and submissive silence of their socially superior audience members, the boys, therefore, appear to make a subversive claim for authority when they perform. The boy players thus needed to deploy a range of strategies to ensure this temporary transfer of patriarchal authority went smoothly, and to mitigate any potential discontent amongst the audience members. These strategies are most apparent in metatheatrical framing devices such as prologues, epilogues and inductions.

III

The Boys' Companies

When Stern suggests that the metadramatic *theatrum mundi* device was used to remind spectators that their "movements and will" were proscribed by a divine authority, she frames

[43] Pangallo, "Mayn't a Spectator," 39.

[44] Stern, *Rehearsal*, 13; see also Stern, *Documents of Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 86-91.

the spectator as a powerless subject.[45] As alluded to above, however, within the walls of the theatre, it was the spectator that wielded an authorial power that saw theatre companies at the mercy of the audience due to their "empowered interpretative position."[46] The interpretative position Angus mentions here comes down to the way audiences might receive a play (its content, characters, language, etc.) and how their response to it directly influences whether or not the play, and the company behind it, will be successful. More explicit context is given by Stern who notes that "the spectators' 'judgement', solicited at the end of the first performance [in a metadramatic address], would shape what was to be altered or cut from the play – and, more than that, would determine whether or not the play would 'survive' to be performed again."[47] With the ability to manipulate theatre companies in this way, audiences were positioned as a supreme authority in the theatre, and the players as (in James' words) their "pawnes" – or, 'puppets'. It would appear that boys actors were wary of this, and harboured anxieties about their *lack* of authority in the audience-player dynamic.

Of the four plays first performed between 1603 and 1606 with a surviving stage-oration – a prologue, epilogue, or induction (or any combination of the three) – three were performed by the same boys' company: the Children of the Queen's Revels, who performed at the private Blackfriars playhouse. The prologue of *All Fools* (1604-5), induction of *The Isle of Gulls* (1606) and epilogue of *Eastward Ho* (1605) directly address the audience in the transitional space between the reality of the playhouse and the imaginative performance. Between them, these plays not only use stage-orations and other metadramatic modes as a way to address and combat concerns over the boy players' junior social status, but also to encourage the potentially problematic, stool-sitting, male theatre-goers to consider more seriously the responsibility that

[45] Stern, "Wide and Universal Theatre," 16.

[46] Angus, "The Roman Actor," 459.

[47] Stern, *Documents of Performance*, 86.

came with their power and authority as members of an audience. At the same time, all three plays use the transitional spaces to draw attention to the ways in which boys' theatre companies were vulnerable to the judgement and favour of their patrons. In some instances, the boys themselves recognise their own non-masculine status and cut themselves down to size so that audiences did not feel compelled to do so, or to protest the show over the boys' subversive demand for authority. Importantly, Stern and Munro note that it is possible that prologues, inductions and epilogues were more likely to have been written on behalf of the players, and thus represented *players'* concerns over controlling audiences, rather than those of the playwright who did not have to go onstage and front the audiences.[48] These self-conscious devices were used to stress that, if anything – and contrary to anti-theatrical thought – the boy players were not power*ful*, but power*less* against playgoers.

It is important to first note that, even though female audience members had equal access to authorial power, a more immediate threat to the boys were the superior gentlemen – especially the stool-sitting gentlemen – of their audiences. For the boys' companies, the threat of women spectators was trumped by that of male spectators for two reasons. Firstly, as Gurr notes, "ladies did not sit on the stage itself," and so were not part of the stage-invading, attention-seeking category of stool-sitters who interfered with the boys' theatrical authority.[49] Secondly, as critic Richard Levin suggests, women were considered more charitable playgoers than men.[50] Levin articulates the early modern view that "women spectators are more easily pleased than the men and will help to win the men's approval of the play" – a belief that seems to present itself in two of the boys' plays.[51] *All Fools*, for example, suggests that women spectators are more easily pleased when it questions why plays

[48] Stern, *Documents of Performance*, 116-17; Munro, *Children of the Queen's Revel's*, 4-6.

[49] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 16.

[50] Richard Levin, "Women in the Renaissance Theatre Audience," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 40, no. 2 (1989): 167.

[51] Richard Levin, "Women in the Renaissance Theatre," 167.

> [S]ometimes fall farre short,
> Of the iust length and pleasure of your eares?
> When pure Dames, think them much less obscene (Prologue.21-23)[52]

The implication is that the "eares" belong to *male* audience members because of the "Dames" that explicitly opposes the addressee. Likewise, the epilogue to *Eastward Ho* bets that "the/ windows [will be] filled with *ladies*" (Epilogue.4-5, emphasis added) who gather in excited anticipation to receive and meet the players after the performance. Both of these plays have faith that women are more gracious, more forgiving customers, and address them as such.

The Isle of Gulls, however, does not address the charity of women, but instead targets the 'gentlemen' hearers as the problematic category of playgoer that the players must negotiate with. It is significant that neither the Induction nor the Prologue in this play mention the female customers that were undoubtedly scattered in the audience before them, but that both stage-orations specifically address the gentlemen of the audience.[53] Not only does the Induction recreate the obnoxious stool-sitting "gallants" – three gentlemen aptly named simply Gentlemen 1, 2 and 3 – that invade the boys' theatrical space, but it also sees the boy-Prologue character categorically ask: "*Gentlemen*, how ist possible to content *you*?" (Induction.83-84, emphasis added).[54] It is not the women he asks, because they are not the problem. Again, when the Prologue finally gets the chance to deliver his speech, he turns his focus to the gentlemen –

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[52] Quotations and act, scene and line numbers are from George Chapman, *All Fools*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans, in *The plays of George Chapman: the comedies, a critical edition*, gen. ed. Allan Holaday (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1970).

[53] For more on female presence in early modern theatre audiences, see Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 65-71.

[54] Quotations and act, scene and line numbers from John Day, "The Isle of Gulls," in *John Day's The Isle of Gulls: A Critical Edition*, ed. Raymond S. Burns (New York: Garland Publishing, 1980).

"judge it gentlemen" (Prologue.2) – who the boys perceive to be their greatest concern. It is clear that it is the male audience members that boy companies appeared most anxious about and disempowered by, and who fuelled the boys' use of metadramatic devices that challenged the extra-theatrical power narratives and gender hierarchies.

Like they do in many contemporary plays, the prologue and epilogue in George Chapman's *All Fools* broach the trouble that theatre companies had in satisfying fickle audiences.[55] When the boy-actor Prologue takes the stage, he insinuates that "[t]he fortune of a Stage" (Prologue.1) is susceptible to the "greatest iudgements" (Prologue.2) of theatregoers, and emphasises the precarious state of the theatre companies who battle with the unknowable, "hidden causes" (Prologue.3) of an audience's good or bad favour. The unknowability of audience taste remains a key theme of the Prologue's address as he rhetorically asks the audience to consider the predicament playing companies find themselves in when "none knowes" (Prologue.2) how to meet the audience's indecipherable standards:

> Who can shew cause, why th'ancient Comick vaine
>
> […]
>
> Should be exploded by some bitter splenes?
>
> […]
>
> Who can shew cause why quick Venerian iestes,
>
> Should sometimes rauish? sometimes fall farre short,

[55] Douglas Bruster and Robert Weimann have commented that "prologues (and epilogues as well) asked for and negotiated terms of an unwritten, unspecified contract offering gratification and promising acceptance and satisfaction to be expressed, finally, through applause"; see Douglas Bruster and Robert Weimann, *Prologues to Shakespeare's Theatre: Performance and Liminality in Early Modern Drama* (London: Routledge, 2004), 49. See also Bruce R. Smith, "Within, Without, Withinwards: The Circulation of Sound in Shakespeare's Theatre," in *Shakespeare's Theatre and the Effects of Performance*, ed. Farah Karim-Cooper and Tiffany Stern (London: Bloomsbury Arden Shakespeare, 2013), 193.

Of the iust length and pleasure of your eares? (Prologue.13, 16, 20-22)

Just as the unknowability of audience appetite fronts the play, so, too, does it return to deliver the play's bitter aftertaste:

Sometimes feastes please the Cookes, and not the guestes,
Sometimes the guestes, and the curious Cookes contemne them:
Our dishes we intirely dedicate
To our kinde guestes, but since yee differ so,
[…]
We can but bring you meate, and set you stooles,
And to our best cheere say, you all are ( ) welcome.

(Epilogue.4-7, 10-11)

On its surface, the play concludes on a comedic high as the expectation of a final rhyming couplet hints at a spontaneous revision by the Epilogue, whereby, it is assumed, he withdraws from pointing the finger at the unappeasable 'fools' before him. These potential 'fools' are those stool-sitters (for whom "stooles" have been "set") who were notoriously inconsiderate playgoers, there to be seen more than to see the play. Regardless of the apparent last-minute revision, the insinuation is there enough for the audience to infer the supposed original and insulting ending; it is a dubious word-trick and a veiled criticism that deals with insatiable, authorial audiences by mocking the gentlemen they are forced to share the stage with.

Indeed, the focus on the palatability of *All Fools* in its epilogue harks back to the prologue's mention of "bitter" responses which "exploded" plays, which itself denotes the potentially destructive influence that audiences had in the success – or lack thereof – of plays

and the companies performing them. Stern has commented that prologues and epilogues often radiated insecurity because a play's success hinged on audience judgement and, more importantly, satisfaction.[56] She suggests that stage-orations depicted companies as "conscious of, and terrified by, the opinion of the audience" because the power of sanctioning a play lay, literally, in the hands of the audience through their applause.[57] Other than bruising the theatre company's pride, the material stakes of audience disapproval teased the likelihood that the play would not make it to a second performance, meaning that the company's labour would have been in financial and creative vain. *All Fools* emits such insecurity, highlighting the all-important role of audience applause, not just in the success of the playscript, but in the treatment of the playing company presenting that script:

> For without your applause, wretched is he
> That undertakes the Stage, and he's more blest,
> That with your glorious fauours can contest. (Prologue.10-12)

Especially on the day of an opening performance, the threat of audience dissatisfaction would "haunt" theatre companies because of the potential it had to inhibit the chance of profiting from future performances – if the first performance had been a flop, audiences simply would not pay to attend a second.[58] As shown above, one of the functions of the prologue and epilogue was to implore the mercy of the judges deciding the fate of the play and, with it, the players and playwright behind it.

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[56] Stern, *Documents of Performance*, 86-89.

[57] Stern, *Documents of Performance*, 87. See also Bruster and Weimann, *Prologues to Shakespeare's Theatre*, 49; Smith, "Within, Without, Withinwards," 193.

[58] Stern, *Documents of Performance*, 86. See also Munro, *Children of the Queen's Revels*, 7.

Another function of these stage-orations, however, was to highlight to audiences the responsibility that came with their authority, and *All Fools* takes two approaches to achieve this. First, language choices see the boys explicitly acknowledge their submissive role in both the boy-adult and player-audience dynamics by conceding that "To your [adult's/audience's] inspired censure, ever we [boys/players] / Must needs *submit*" (Prologue.26-27, emphasis added). The play's Epilogue makes a similar confession on behalf of the playing company:

> Since all our labours are as you can like,
> We all *submit* to you; nor dare presume,
> To thinke ther's any reall worth in them[.] (Epilogue. 1-3, emphasis added)

This canny admission has an effect that is twofold: first, the boys bow to audiences (and public, anti-theatrical criticism) by reassuring that they do not seek to exceed their subordinate positions or, by extension, subvert patriarchal order; and secondly, by belittling themselves, the boys defuse negative judgement by pre-empting it, taking that power out of the hands of their audiences. As non-masculine bodies requesting (masculine) authority over masculine audiences, one of the ways the boys dealt with and achieved this temporary power was to acknowledge their inferiority.

Furthermore, the boy-players maintain a manipulative role as they force audiences to self-analyse and consider their positions of power over playing companies. This bleeds into the second approach taken in stage-orations of highlighting that power comes with responsibility. In a metadramatic turn, this approach sees the Prologue urge audiences to be conscious of their own authorial role in a play's reception, affording special attention to the attention-seeking, stool-sitting gentlemen invading the line of vision of the rest of the actual audience:

> … if our other audience see
> You on the stage depart before we end,
> Our wits goe with you all, and we are fooles[.] (Prologue.30-32)

Here, the Prologue iterates that the play proper is not the only activity being watched as the division between spectator and spectacle blurs – something the exhibitionistic stool-sitters who desired to be seen might have welcomed. The insinuation is that audience members – specifically the conspicuous, stool-sitting ones – who up and leave mid-play become a spectacle themselves, drawing the focus of their fellow audience members; where the onstage play being performed by the theatre company is the primary show, the leaving audience member becomes the secondary show that overshadows the players. The concern *All Fools* expresses is that the "other audience" offstage might infer that the exiting audience members are dissatisfied with the actual play, and then allow their own opinions of that play to be influenced by this assumption. The worry for the hierarchically inferior boy players, then, is that their superior and, thus, highly influential, adult, male audience members who appear discontented and critical might instigate a knock-on effect that dictates in what light the "other audience" members receive the play and the players presenting it. By forcing the audience's self-analysis, audiences (especially stool-sitters) are reminded that they hold the ultimate power over the boys and within the theatre, and are encouraged to use that power wisely.

The same boys' company behind *All Fools* also expressed concerns over the extent to which gentlemen audiences could dictate or modify a play's contents in John Day's *Isle of Gulls*, again using the transitional space of metadramatic stage-orations to address their struggle with an authorial audience for creative authority. In his discussion on 'playwriting

playgoers', Pangallo notes that "the concept of the playwriting playgoer generated a sense of professional anxiety" among theatre personnel as audiences increasingly possessed power in revising or improving a play, commanding particular genres, or "demanding that a company change its intended repertory" altogether.[59] While Pangallo focuses more on the anxiety experienced by the dramatist, critics Stern and Munro each shift their attention to the possibility that stage-orations represented players' concerns over controlling audiences.[60] As Stern mentions, "prologues and epilogues, spoken as they were by players, had a player's stake in the play's success, not a writer's," and the same can be applied to theatrical inductions which, as in *The Isle of Gulls*, frequently addressed the ways outspoken audiences crossed a participatory line. *The Isle of Gulls*' boys employ an induction in conjunction with a prologue to draw attention to their own inferior statuses as children, and reflect onto their audience an uncomfortable image of audiences' own authorial nature. In doing so, *Gulls*' boys, like *All Fools*', remind audiences of the responsibility that comes with their power.

Firstly, *Gulls*' induction sees its boy-actors draw attention to their childish statuses in terms of both the disempowered children that the audience sees them as phenomenologically, and the vulnerable children that they see themselves as. As Pangallo notes is "typical" of inductions, *The Isle of Gulls* depicts "three gentlemen spectators with expertise in play-going" invading the boy-Prologue's stage as they ready themselves to watch "[a] play by the name" of "The Ile of Gulls" (Induction.3-4).[61] Thus, it is revealed that the gentlemen (Gentleman 1, 2 and 3) are an in-play audience impersonating the gentlemen stool-sitters attending the same play; with this, the play sets up the foundation for stool-sitting audiences

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[59] Pangallo, "Mayn't a Spectator," 39-41. See also Katherine A. Craik and Tanya Pollard, "Imagining Audiences," in *Shakespearean Sensations: Experiencing Literature in Early Modern England*, ed. Katherine A. Craik and Tanya Pollard (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 1.

[60] Stern, *Documents* of *Performance*, 116-17; Munro, *Children of the Queen's Revel's*, 4-6.

[61] Pangallo, "Mayn't a Spectator," 57.

(and, to a lesser extent, audiences offstage) to be forced to confront a reflection of themselves, whatever that may entail. In the first instance, that reflection is the condescending and dismissive tendencies of male stool-sitters who outrank the boys and commandeer the authoritative space of the stage. It is these gentlemen, the induction would suggest, who customarily disregard the boy players' claims to (theatrical) authority. When the Prologue enters the stage, Gentleman 1 assumes superiority and dictates orders: "come boy, furnish us with stooles" (Induction.6-7). In the first reference to the actor that audiences hear, his subaltern status is emphasised in Gentleman 1's labelling of him as, simply, "boy" – a title which highlights the gulf between a 'boy' and a gentle*man*. Although the onstage audience (representing both the stool-sitting and actual audience) are inclined to remind the "boy" of his inferiority to them, the boy-actor Prologue seeks to reclaim control in asserting that his "office is to speake a Prologue, not to provide [them] stooles" (Induction.8-9). Gentleman 2 is equally quick to emphasise the actor's boyhood, similarly focusing on – and reducing the player's identity to – his age by addressing him as "youth" (Induction.11), even after the actor has announced his duty as prologue-speaker. It would appear to be proving difficult for the actor delivering the Prologue to convince his audience to overlook his non-adult status for the sake of the play, highlighting from the get-go the difficulties boy companies faced in demanding audience attention and being respected as a creative authority (if only temporarily, in the space of the theatre).

Later on in the induction, however, the same actor reclaims the issue of his child's status, drawing attention to his and his fellow actors' vulnerability as children in order to elicit the mercy of his comparatively empowered audience. As we have seen before in *All Fools*, *Gulls*' boys express concerns over early departers, as the Prologue urges the onstage gentlemen audience to see out the entire play so that fellow spectators – that is, the "other

audience" mentioned in *All Fools* prologue – are not influenced to judge the play and players unreasonably critically:

> Either see it all or none; for tis growne into a custome at plays, if any one rise (especially of any fashionable sort) about what serious business soever, the rest thinking it in dislike of the play, tho he never thinks it, cry mew, by Jesus vilde; and leave the poor hartlesse [disheartened] children to speak their Epilogue to the emptie seates. (Induction.114-120)

Again, the stool-sitting audience (and, by proxy, the actual audience offstage, too) are reminded of their power as consumers, and the unreasonable, unthinking decision to "cry mew" because they *think* someone else is not enjoying the show is condemned as audiences are disapproved of for behaving, in this way, "like a flock of sheepe" (Induction.121-22). More than this, however, by drawing attention to the boy players' vulnerable, disempowered standings as "poor hartlesse *children*" (emphasis added) left to abashedly deliver the remainder of their play to "the emptie seates" of a deserted theatre, the Prologue emotionally manipulates its audience into exhibiting not just mercy, but independent and reasonable judgement.

When the boy-player Epilogue wraps up *Eastward Ho* (1605), he appears mindful of audience satisfaction and reiterates that the success of a play and those behind it is dependent on this satisfaction. When the actor first speaks of the audience as "the multitude [who] are gathered together" (Epilogue.1-2) before him, he appears overly confident that, by the play's end, there should even be a "multitude" still assembled in "the streets and the fronts of the houses" (Epilogue.3-4) – as *All Fools*' Prologue suggested, customers were inclined to leave

if they were unimpressed with the show.[62] Yet the boy-player Epilogue encourages a "Sir" – an anonymous male audience member – to stay awhile because he asserts that the place is "stuck with people" (Epilogue.4) waiting especially to "view [their] coming out at the Counter" (Epilogue.2-3). Appearing hyperbolically presumptuous, the beginning of this epilogue contrasts with the more modest insecurity emanating from *All Fools*' own prologue and epilogue. However, the two concluding couplets of the Epilogue's sign-off see him seemingly withdraw from impudent presumption to cautious optimism:

> O may you find in this our pageant, here,
> The same contentment which you came to seek;
> And as that show [the Lord Mayor's election pageant] but draws you once a year,
> May this attract you hither once a week. (Epilogue. 7-10)

The boy remains hopeful that his audience will be satisfied with their performance, but his wishful thinking reiterates that power over the boys' success is out of their hands: it is audience satisfaction – not necessarily quality or skill – that directs success by authorising a second performance and weekly performances thereafter. Significantly, it is a "Sir" – a gentle*man* – he solicits the good mercy of, as though it is the *male* audience members who needed the most greasing up to ensure the play's success. Thus, both the boy players and the audience are ultimately reminded of the precarious position that playing companies – especially doubly outranked (in gender and age) boys' companies – find themselves in when at the mercy of authorial audiences.

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[62] Quotations and act, scene and line numbers are from George Chapman, Ben Jonson and John Webster, *Eastward Ho*, ed. R. W. Van Fossen (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1979).

Just as the Children of the Queen's Revels acknowledge their lower status in *All Fools* by agreeing to "submit" to the audience's authority, they use other self-aware, metatheatrical modes to acknowledge – even draw attention to – their subordinate status in *Eastward Ho*. For example, *Eastward*'s boys make self-referential allusions to their own non-masculinity and pre-manhood states. Fisher notes that in the same way "femininity was produced prosthetically onstage… masculinity might have been produced in a similar fashion" through the use of prosthetic beards.[63] *Eastward Ho* mentions theatre's use of prosthetic beards when Quicksilver suggests using "A sailor's gown and cap… / And a player's beard" (3.2.307-08) to disguise Winifred as a man and smuggle her onboard a ship. Fisher explains that the "boy actors used false beards to materialise masculinity on the stage."[64] Yet, having fabricated their masculinity on stage, there are points where *Eastward Ho*'s naturally bald-chinned boys consciously draw attention to the artificiality of their beards and, by proxy, their equally artificial masculinity. For example, where – as Fisher suggests – beards were representative of masculinity and virility, Gertrude uses the beard as a vehicle to criticise her father, Touchstone: "I have said your beard was a base one, father" (5.5.179-80). The remark would have undoubtedly spurred laughter in the audience because the boy actor representing Touchstone would, indeed, have been wearing a "base," false beard, so the boys appear to poke fun at themselves while audiences are reminded that the onstage world is a fabrication. In doing so, however, the boy players also remind their audience that they are *imitating* – not assuming – the masculinity of manhood, highlighting that they are not under any illusion of being otherwise than they are. The boys cut themselves down to size so that audiences do not feel compelled to do so or worry (and protest the show) over the threat of patriarchal subversion. On the one hand, it might appear that the boys do this as a way of defending

[63] Fisher, "The Renaissance Beard," 181.

[64] Fisher, "The Renaissance Beard," 180.

against accusations of imitative impropriety given the boy actors' cross-status dressing – an issue I explore in the subsequent chapter. On the other hand, this is an example of theatrical companies (and the theatre as an institution) reproducing gendered norms and categories.[65]

When boy players entered the stage, they implicitly subverted the normative power dynamics of the patriarchal order as they demanded the attention of audience members who, in many cases, outranked them in the gender and social hierarchy. For the most part, the boys' companies demonstrated that they acknowledged their subaltern position in these hierarchies, and, in some cases, drew attention to them by reminding audiences that their authority over the boy players came with responsibility. In other cases, however, the boys' companies demanded the amenable attention of their audiences, begging for the masculine response of reason, rather than mercy, from their not-so-silent judges. In all cases, the boy players of these three plays begged that the transitional space between the reality of the playhouse and the imaginative performance enable a handover of authority from adult audience to boy player, limited to the time spent inside the theatre walls.

IV

The Adult Companies

Adult playing companies, such as the King's Men, however, did not have to deal with the problem of their very existence subverting normative hierarchies; in fact, they replicated these hierarchies within their own companies. While gendered power dynamics were apparent between the playing companies in a way that saw the boys' companies striving for legitimacy as the adult companies did not have to, the same gender power dynamics existed

[65] Fisher, "The Renaissance Beard," 183.

within the adult playing companies themselves. Adult players enjoyed more independence – a sign and privilege of their manhood. Keenan notes that "[t]raditionally, adult troupes travelled under the name of an elite patron, but these patrons were not usually directly involved in the day-to-day organization or financing of the companies," meaning that adult troupes did not experience the same battle for authority that the boy players did.[66] Furthermore, most adult companies consisted of three categories of player: sharers, hired men and boy apprentices who varied in age from around 13 to 22.[67] The adult actor-sharers were the authorities of the playing company, and the hired men, as wage-earners, realised a level of independence.[68] The boy apprentices, however, did not usually enjoy such independence because they "did not usually receive wages, but just their food, lodging and training," and were under the dominion of adult entrepreneurs or 'masters' – a title telling of the power relationship at work.[69] These boys were not just socially inferior because of their statuses as apprentices to the 'masters' of their stage-playing trade, but because their perceived subaltern gender saw them outranked by the masculine adults of the company who often assumed the roles of the patriarchal authority within their companies.

As mentioned in the introduction to this chapter, within the gender hierarchy, boys were considered physiologically closer to the female state than the male state.[70] Accordingly, the adult companies made sure to remind the boy actors – and audiences – of the boys' inferior gender by casting them in the female roles.[71] As Fisher observes, "the roles assigned

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[66] Keenan, *Acting Companies*, 17.

[67] Keenan, *Acting Companies*, 17-19. Although some of the 'boy' players were older, their dependant statuses as apprentices prevented them from realizing 'manhood'.

[68] Keenan, *Acting Companies*, 17.

[69] Keenan, *Acting Companies*, 13-14, 20.

[70] Fletcher, "Manhood," 423; see also pages 28-29 of this thesis.

[71] Fisher, "The Renaissance Beard," 182; Munro, *Children of the Queen's Revels*, 2; Keenan, *Acting Companies*, 17; John H. Astington, "Playhouses, Players, and Playgoers in Shakespeare's Time," in *The*

to each member of the [adult] company were predicated upon his status within the hierarchy," punctuating this observation with the example that "boy actors, for instance, played the parts of women".[72] Thus, unlike the boys' companies, the adult troupes did not begin their performances doubly disadvantaged: they were already enacting the patriarchal gender hierarchy of the period, rather than subverting it like the boys' companies were. The adult companies did, however, continue to deal with lingering anti-theatricalist rhetoric, and needed to find a way to deflect its negative attention.

To do this, the male adult playing companies appear to have reframed the negative anti-theatrical narrative that accused them of audience manipulation away from themselves and directed it towards manipulative *women* within the dramatic frameworks of the plays they performed. In the early plays of the Jacobean succession first performed by professional adult playing companies, particular attention appears to be paid to vocal females who – just as anti-theatricalists accused stage players of – use their words to manipulate hearers. In doing so, not only do the King's Men use female characters as a decoy to deflect accusations of dangerously manipulative, theatrical power (that was otherwise phenomenologically male), but the company also reinforces the gender norms that warned against women invading the male realms of power. Essentially, the adult players created a distraction from their own manipulative behaviour by pitching a more worrisome, fictional, female threat to eclipse their own. In this section, I turn again to Shakespeare's *Macbeth* and *King Lear*, paying particular attention to the manipulative female characters. In examining the ill-fated women of these plays – whose respective powers are crucially constructed as authorial and theatrical for the way they use their voice/words to manipulate other characters – I suggest that the adult male

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Cambridge Companion to Shakespeare, ed. Margreta de Grazia and Stanley Wells (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 106.

[72] Fisher, "The Renaissance Beard," 182.

companies disguised their own immorality (in the eyes of the anti-theatricalists) by suggesting that the dangers of manipulative women far exceeded that of the male-dominated theatre. I then turn to the historical context of the early modern audience to consider the role women played as audience members and what power that might have afforded them, ultimately suggesting – as my own riposte to the negative portrayals of women onstage – that the theatre companies were aware of women's power and, even more so, how power held by women had the potential to be destructive in a way that directly affected them.

With London playhouses becoming a magnet for moral reformers, one of the baselines of early modern anti-theatrical propaganda was the concern for public safety and, as Munday feared, the way "those wanton words of theirs [i.e. poets] entice unto wicked life, and with a poisoned bait allure men to sin!"[73] In his consideration of the "hierarchy of senses," theologian Sean A. Otto explains that early modern understanding of the body linked the moral and the physical, and considered sight and hearing to be "the most powerful and noble of the senses," but also "the most open to abuse."[74] Because the eyes and ears were considered direct portals to the mind and soul, theatregoers were considered at high risk of manipulation because "what struck the eye and ear struck the mind with a material force that altered it… quite possibly damaging it."[75] As previously mentioned, Gosson criticised the way "the sweet numbers of poetry flowing in verse do wonderfully tickle the hearers' ears," and cautioned his readers against the theatre which

[73] Munday, "Second and Third Blast," 79.

[74] Sean A. Otto, "The Perils of the Flesh: John Wyclif's Preaching on the Five Bodily Senses," in *The Five Senses in Medieval and Early Modern England*, ed. Annette Kern-Stähler, Beatrix Buse and Wietse de Boer (Boston: Brill, 2016), 164, 166-67.

[75] Marcus, "Theatre as Scourge," 184.

> is so set out with sweetness of words, fitness of epithets, with metaphors, allegories, hyperboles, amphibologies, similitudes, with phrases so picked, so pure, so proper; with action so smooth, so lively, so wanton; that the poison, creeping on secretly without grief, chokes us at last, and hurleth us down in a dead sleep.[76]

Elsewhere, Gosson remarked that "by the privy entries of the ear" immoral ideas "slip down into the heart, and with gunshot of affection gall the mind."[77] Though published later in the period, William Prynne's 1633 pamphlet, *Histriomastix*, maintained Gosson and Munday's anti-theatricalist sentiments, blaming "the very poison and corruption of men's minds and manners" on "poisonous stage-plays."[78] In *Macbeth* and *King Lear*, the 'galled' minds of the titular characters – and their resulting downfalls – can be conveniently blamed on 'ear tickling' female coercion.

The suggestion that words have the potential to lull hearers into a "dead sleep" or malevolently transform and infect their minds brings to mind a hypnotic power that pushes this manipulation into the realm of the supernatural. In early modern London, the manipulative or hypnotic power of theatre gradually became synonymous with magic, as words like "charming", "enchanting", and "bewitching" frequented anti-theatrical pamphlets.[79] Shakespeare's *Macbeth* provides an antagonistic reflection of authorial power using this comparison between magic and manipulation, but does so with a female focus that

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[76] Gosson, "Five Actions," 99.

[77] Stephen Gosson, "The School of Abuse (1579)," in *Shakespeare's Theater: A Sourcebook*, ed. Tanya Pollard (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 25.

[78] William Prynne, "Histriomastix: The Player's Scourge (1633)," in *Shakespeare's Theater: A Sourcebook*, ed. Tanya Pollard (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 283.

[79] Gosson, "School of Abuse," 34; Prynne, "Histriomastix," 290; Munday, "Second and Third Blast," 76; Rankins, "Mirror of Monsters," 129.

distracts from the male playmakers' own manipulative agency. In her examination of *The Tempest* as Shakespeare's own anti-theatrical vision, critic Reut Barzilai contends that the use of magic in *The Tempest* presents Prospero as an authorial figure whose powers enable him to direct the action on the island he inhabits, and transform and manipulate the feelings and circumstances of other characters.[80] The conjuring witches – whose initial prophecies inspire the actions Macbeth takes, and which lead to his spiralling demise – assume this magical authorial role in *Macbeth*; so, too, does Lady Macbeth, who entreats the supernatural and exploits the authorial power of her transformative 'wanton words' which do 'slip down into the heart' of her husband, 'and with gunshot of affection gall his mind' – just as Gosson articulates.

Macbeth is susceptible to the corruptive, even hypnotic, power of the words and images delivered by the manipulative enchantresses surrounding him. Between them, the witches and Lady Macbeth assume authorial roles in that they manipulate Macbeth's emotions which, in turn, directs his actions and the action of the play. For example, the witches are the first to utter the prophecies that plant ideas of kingly destiny in Macbeth's head. In his highly influential treatise *Daemonologie* (republished twice in the first year of his reign), James described witches as "the detestable slaves of the Devill" who are guilty of "high treason against God."[81] Yet critic Deborah Willis argues that, in *Macbeth*, the witches' "most devastating magic is revealed to be little more than clever wordplay and con-artistry."[82] The witches are indeed guilty of spouting the "[fit] epithets" and amphibolous phrases that, as Gosson warns, act as a poison that "gall[s] the mind" of Macbeth and coaxes him into sin.

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[80] Reut Barzilai, " 'In My Power': *The Tempest* as Shakespeare's Anti-theatrical Vision," *Shakespeare* 15, no. 4 (2019): 379-97.

[81] James VI and I, "Daemonologie," in *James VI and I: Selected Writings,* ed. Neil Rhodes and Jennifer Richards and Joseph Marshall (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 149, 196.

[82] Deborah Willis, "Magic and Witchcraft," in *A Companion to Renaissance Drama*, ed. Arthur F. Kinney and Thomas Warren Hopper (Oxford: Wiley Blackwell, 2017), 178.

The soothsaying witches greet Macbeth with "great prediction / Of noble having, and of royal hope" (*Macbeth* 1.3.55-56) when they hail him "Thane of Cawdor" (1.3.49) and "King hereafter" (1.3.50). Macbeth initially reduces the witches' "supernatural soliciting" (1.3.131) to their capacity as "imperfect speakers" (1.3.70), recognising that the women's power lies merely in their manipulative wordplay. Yet he ultimately succumbs to the prophetic words and voices of the witches which, just as Munday himself prophesies, do "entice [Macbeth] unto wicked life" – in conjunction with those of his wife.

As critic Nicholas Brooke notes, "Lady Macbeth's sorcery seems to be purely verbal" as she relies on the transformative power of her words to direct Macbeth's actions and the action of the play.[83] Invoking the anti-theatrical anxieties regarding the susceptibility of playgoers' most noble senses, Lady Macbeth echoes Gosson's fears over the authorial power to infect minds "by the privy entries of the ear":

> Hie thee hither,
> That I may pour my spirits in thine ear,
> And chastise with the valour of my tongue
> All that impedes thee from the golden round (1.5.24-27)

With the image of the "valour of [her] tongue" connoting the potency of her words which she "pour[s]" – like a transformative potion or poison – into her husband's ear, Lady Macbeth confesses to abusing the ears to alter the mind. Indeed, her most explicit use of words to manipulate and alter Macbeth's mind comes after he retreats from their assassination plan. While he initially states that they "will proceed no further in this business" (1.7.31) of killing King Duncan, Macbeth retracts this to admit he is "settled" (1.7.80) and resolved to

[83] Nicholas Brooke, introduction to *Macbeth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990), 78.

undertake the murderous plot after Lady Macbeth wields hyperboles, similitudes and "phrases so picked, so pure, so proper" to hypnotise her husband into submissive accord. Using nothing but her words, Lady Macbeth coerces her husband by infecting his mind with the idea of his compromised manhood:

> Wouldst thou
>
> […]
>
> live a coward in thine own esteem,
>
> Letting 'I dare not' wait upon 'I would',
>
> Like the poor cat i'th' adage?
>
> […]
>
> When you durst do it, then you were a man;
>
> And to be more than what you were, you would
>
> Be so much more the man. (1.7.41-45, 49-51)

This scene appears to concurrently condemn both the power of words and the vociferous woman whose vocality is at odds with the image of the ideal 'silent' and 'obedient' early modern woman. When Macbeth demands silence from his wife – "Prithee peace" (1.7.46) – and instructs her to desist from her plots by commanding that they "will go no further in this business" (1.7.31), Lady Macbeth ignores her husband's order to be silent and, instead, becomes mouthier as she proceeds to berate him in the scene quoted above. From here on in, and working with little more than the words of witches and his wife, Macbeth becomes deceptive, murderous and treacherous as he tracks a slippery slope towards his own demise, having allowed the voices of these women to cloud his judgement.

The destructive power of words maintains its female focus in *King Lear* when, in a manner akin to *Macbeth*, King Lear's own downfall is instigated by the 'charm' of the manipulatively flattering words of his two eldest daughters, Gonoril and Regan. Just like Macbeth, King Lear's actions – and the resulting action throughout the play – are directed by the initial 'sweetness of words' of Gonoril and Regan in the play's establishing scenes. Lear's eldest daughters flatter their father with the extremely hyperbolical 'phrases so picked, so pure, so proper' that Gosson calls 'poison' in the ears of their hearers, and it would certainly appear that the daughters' respective speeches alter – even "infect" – the mind of their father and persuade him to make the decisions that fracture his kingdom and, ultimately, see him deposed.[84] As the eldest, Gonoril takes the stage first to proclaim:

> Sir, I do love you more than words can wield the matter;
> Dearer than eyesight, space, or liberty;
> Beyond what can be valued, rich or rare;
> No less than life; with grace, health, beauty, honour;
> As much as child e'er loved, or father, friend;
> A love that makes breath poor and speech unable. (1.49-54).

She concludes her nauseatingly overdone declaration of love to her father with the line, "Beyond all manner of so much I love you" (1.55). Regan emulates her sister when she claims: "I am alone felicitate [made happy] / In your dear highness' love" (1.69-70). This line

[84] Reut Barzilai commented that "the theatre's physical, emotional, and mental effects on playgoers are often described in the anti-theatrical corpus in terms of pollution or infection," 383. For examples of the use of language like this, see Rankins, "Mirror of Monsters," 133; Munday, "Second and Third Blast," 65, 70; Beard, "Theater of God's Judgements," 167; Gosson, "Five Actions," 107.

follows an equally excessive confession of her daughterly love that looks to compete with, and diminish, Gonoril's:

> Sir, I am made
> Of the self-same mettle that my sister is,
> And prize me at her worth. In my true heart
> I find she names my very deed of love –
> Only she came short, that I profess
> Myself an enemy to all other joys
> Which the most precious square of sense possesses (1.62-68).

The speeches, however, are just the daughters' means to manipulate the king, their father. Behind their façade of adoration, Regan and Gonoril guilefully proclaim their love for their father with the ulterior motive of obtaining the "largest bounty" (1.46) of their father's kingdom, recently "divided / In three" (1.37-38) for the daughters. Audiences might be able to see through the daughters' performance from the moment Gonoril alleges that her love is "A love that makes breath poor and speech unable" (1.54) – in this comical contradiction, Gonoril's love cannot be as poignant as the love she mentions given her verbose spiel. The audience are further helped along in discerning the daughters' deceptions by Kent; though he hopes "That good effects may spring from words of love" (1.174), Kent doubts the authenticity of the daughters' declarations: "your large speeches may your deeds approve" (1.173), where 'approve' means 'prove to be true'.[85] Kent criticises the king because his "power to flattery bows" (1.139), suggesting that the women's words have overpowered the king's phenomenologically male, monarchical power. Although Gonoril initially suggests

[85] See editor Stanley Wells' note for line 1.173.

that she "do[es] love [Lear] more than words can wield the matter" (1.49), the irony is that her words and Regan's have, indeed, wielded the matter by coercing the king to bow first to flattery and, later, to the authority of the two women once their acquisition of the "scattered kingdom" (8.22) sees Lear deposed. As seen before in *Macbeth*, the anti-theatrical anxieties over the power of words are actualised, but – crucially – by female characters. In doing so, attention is shifted away from the male players and onto the subversive female characters who, within the plays in which they appear, invade male realms of authority and power by means of their vociferous voices – a realm that Lear reminds audiences is ill-suited to women: "[Cordelia's] voice was ever soft, / Gentle, and low, an excellent thing in women" (24.268-69). Moving out of the dramatic world and into the world of the playhouse, it is worth considering whether these soft and gentle voices were something that the King's Men sought to encourage from their female audience members. If so, it might signal the playing company's awareness of their vulnerability to female power.

The critic Ann Thompson reminds us that, although women were not performing on the professional stage this early on in the period, "they nevertheless figured as patrons of the drama in two ways": as consumers and as the dedicatees of printed plays.[86] As critic Jean E. Howard highlights, it is thanks to the studies of theatre historian Andrew Gurr that "we now know that women were in the public theatre in significant numbers."[87] While the private halls occupied by boys' companies catered more to the wealthier 'ladies', the capacity and entry fees of the outdoor playhouses meant that they could accommodate a more diverse audience, and Gurr's study shows that this included a "high proportion of women" of varying degrees –

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[86] Thompson, "Women/'Women' and the Stage," in *Women and Literature in Britain 1500-1700*, ed. Helen Wilcox (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 109. See also Richard Levin, "Women in the Renaissance Theatre," 174.

[87] Jean E. Howard, "Scripts and/versus Playhouses: Ideological Production and the Renaissance Public Stage," *Renaissance Drama* 20 (1989): 34. See also: Thompson, "Women/'Women'," 110; Richard Levin, "Women in the Renaissance Theatre," 165.

from aristocratic ladies to citizen's wives, fishwives, apple-wives and prostitutes.[88] As Richard Levin points out, as paying guests, female playgoers had their own effect on the playing companies; as such, the adult companies were forced into a relationship with female authority in what was, otherwise, a typically male-dominated realm.[89]

As Richard Levin suggests, the adult companies were at least "aware of women as a distinct component of [the] audience that [they] had to please."[90] As previously discussed, consumers held a power in approving or condemning a play, affecting the success of the players and playing company behind it. With women comprising a significant part of the authorial audience, theatre delivered abnormal circumstances of female-over-male power: female consumers, as judging spectators, had an equal claim to authority over players – crucially, over *male* players. The adult companies – especially the ones associated with Shakespeare – appear to have been aware of this and took measures to address it. In his exploration of gender-focused addresses, Richard Levin has noted how the earlier epilogues and prologues of Shakespeare's plays (performed by the adult Lord Chamberlain's Men) addressed the audience via neutral terms like "gentles," "fair beholders," "gentle hearers," or "gentle spectators."[91] Unlike the boys in *The Isle of Gulls* who, via their boy-player Prologue, specifically address the more worrisome "gentlemen" (*Isle of Gulls* Prologue.2), Shakespeare's adult companies never speak only to the men, indicating an awareness that women wielded the same consumer power as men in the yards and galleries of the theatre.[92]

Even though women might have been in the theatre to (silently) see and be seen, there was a subversive power in that. To conclude his 1579 pamphlet, *The Schoole of Abuse*,

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[88] Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 65-71.

[89] Richard Levin, "Women in the Renaissance Theatre," 165.

[90] Richard Levin, "Women in the Renaissance Theatre," 167.

[91] Richard Levin, "Women in the Renaissance Theatre," 166-67.

[92] Richard Levin, "Women in the Renaissance Theatre," 166-67.

Stephen Gosson delivers a specific address "To the Gentlewomen Citizens of London," voicing his concerns over the safety and good reputation of women who choose to attend the theatre.[93] He argues that, by being at the theatre and entering an environment of watching, women freely and dangerously expose themselves to judgement as objects of desire, warning women that "[i]f [they] do but listen to the voice of the fouler, or join looks with an amorous gazer, [they] have already made [them]selves assaultable, and yielded [their] cities to be sacked."[94] As Richard Levin suggests, these "frequent complaints that women were corrupted there [at the theatre]" appear to predominantly reflect the "masculine conception of what women spectators should be concerned about."[95] In what Howard calls "a typically paternalistic form," Gosson assumes the role of the guiding patriarch when he writes to women's "sweet selves" because "[they] are weak" and need to be "commended and encouraged, as virtuous dames."[96] However, Howard and Thompson propose that Gosson's rhetoric is a response "not to a fear *for* woman, but *of* woman" as she takes up her own public place as spectator, consumer and judge in an institution that was, otherwise, a typically male-dominated arena.[97] By constructing women as the spectacle within the theatre, Gosson suggests that exposing oneself to being watched gives authority to the watcher – "the amorous gazer" – to judge and sack. If this is the case, however, female playgoers have equal access to that authority in the theatre as onlookers of both the onstage and offstage worlds in a way that transgresses the expected subordination of women; as Howard asks, "[i]s it possible that in the theatre women were licensed to look – and in a larger sense to judge what they saw and to exercise autonomy – in ways that problematized women's status as objects

[93] Gosson, "School of Abuse," 29.

[94] Gosson, "The School of Abuse," 30.

[95] Richard Levin, "Women in the Renaissance Theatre," 170.

[96] Howard, "Scripts and/versus Playhouses," 34; Gosson, "The School of Abuse," 30.

[97] Howard, "Scripts and/versus Playhouses," 36; Thompson, "Women/'Women'," 112.

within patriarchy?"[98] If the answer is yes, then even in their silent gazing, women had an equal power to men when in the theatre, the context of viewing promoting them to "positions potentially unsettling to patriarchal control."[99] All that the adult companies (and anti-theatricalists alike) could have hoped to do, then, was turn attention to the threat of power-wielding women by containing that threat, thereby – as Jonathan Dollimore suggests – perpetuating or 'consolidating' the dominant and "existing social order as natural and God-given."[100]

Significantly, it would appear that the adult playing companies audaciously deflected the accusations of corruptive theatrical power that they were charged with as a tool to deflect attention onto authoritative women. In his own contribution to the anti-theatrical debate, playwright Thomas Heywood defends the stage in his assertion that "[w]omen... that are chaste, are by [the theatre] extolled, and encouraged in their virtues" by the noble heroines of plays who become models of 'good' and godly behaviour.[101] Likewise, Heywood argues, "[t]he unchaste are by [the theatre] showed their errors" in the persons of various fallen women – "[w]hat can sooner print the modesty in the souls of the wanton than by discovering unto them the monstrousness of their sin?" Heywood wonders.[102] The suggestion seems to support the notion that theatre had the power to manipulate and infect the minds of its hearers and spectators, and alter their behaviour. *Macbeth* and *King Lear* both present their own fallen women as a means (if we take Heywood at his word) to "discover unto" women spectators the "monstrousness" of exchanging silence and obedience for manipulative power through words and voice. Crucially, these women are depicted as destructive for their

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[98] Howard, "Scripts and/versus Playhouses," 36.

[99] Howard, "Scripts and/versus Playhouses," 46. See also Thompson, "Women/'Women'," 112.

[100] Dollimore, introduction to *Political Shakespeare*, 10.

[101] Thomas Heywood, "An Apology for Actors (1612)," in *Shakespeare's Theater: A Source Book*, ed. Tanya Pollard (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 244.

[102] Heywood, "Apology for Actors," 244.

invasion of the realm of male power, and accordingly contained via elimination at the plays' ends: whether by suicide or murder, Lady Macbeth, Gonoril and Regan all meet their self-inflicted ends, while the witches dissolve into nothingness. Cordelia, on the other hand, is modelled as the epitomical, early modern woman, whose "soft, / Gentle, and low voice" makes her the play's putative heroine and, as Dekker suggests, a positive example of appropriate, submissive behaviour. While Cordelia's death is seen as tragically unjust, the deaths of the vocally manipulative women (Lady Macbeth, Gonoril and Regan) are seen as deserved, and framed as a step towards consolidating and restoring hierarchical and patriarchal order.

With the restoration of male power in James, playing companies and the public had a heightened awareness of the narrative that male power was, or should be, reserved for normative male or masculine bodies. And, even though James shied away from the public eye, he still employed some highly theatrical methods in exercising his power, thereby inadvertently drawing attention to an affinity between monarchical and theatrical power. Crucially, the affinity draw between monarchical and theatrical power rested in their abilities to establish, manipulate, alter and coerce subjects and spectators alike. With the comparison almost baiting anti-theatricalists, is it any wonder that enduring anti-theatricalist arguments should have continued to condemn the blasphemous and dangerous power of playing companies? Or that playing companies should have responded in the best way they knew how: (meta)theatrically?

When the playing companies did respond, however, it was not a unified response because theatre was not a homogenous industry. That said, the responses both reiterated the normative gender hierarchy, either by acknowledging and accepting it, in the case of boy players, or by reinforcing it in the containment of female transgressors, in the case of adults.

The boys' companies fought their audiences for theatrical power because, by dint of their youth and non-masculinity, the boys made a subversive claim for (male) authority when they demanded the attention of their masculine superiors. The boy players used the transitional space provided by metadramatic stage-orations to draw attention to the fabricated and, thus, superficial state of theatrical authority, and directly address the troublesome, adult, male audiences to solicit their charity. In this transitional space, they drew attention to their subordination, cutting themselves down to size, in a move that acknowledged and accepted the frameworks of the early modern gender hierarchy and patriarchal orthodoxy, and implored their senior, authorial audiences to use the authority that the 'natural' social order assigned them responsibly.

The adult males of adult playing companies, however, did not have to grapple with issues of social inferiority like boys. Instead, it would appear that adult companies deflected accusations of power and manipulation onto women (specifically, female characters played by subaltern boys) using the anti-theatrical arguments regarding the 'poisonous' effects of poetic words to create vocally manipulative women in the theatrical representations of Gonoril, Regan and Lady Macbeth. These theatrical representations depicted women who rejected their expected feminine silence and invaded male realms of vocal power. The plays in which these female characters appeared consolidated male superiority by targeting and condemning those manipulative women, framing them as destructive, and containing their subversion by extinguishing them. Indeed, the containment of transgressive women is a motif of the early modern plays of this period – a theme that the following chapter will explore further. In these vocally manipulative female characters, female audience members at plays performed by adult companies were given exemplars of negative female behaviour; by ultimately eliminating those vocally manipulative female characters within the dramatic narrative, adult male players deflected attention away from their own manipulative, theatrical

behaviour, and aimed to cow actual women into submission by showing them the undesirable consequences of such behaviour. This strategy partly responded to – and was problematized by – the fact that women as spectators did in fact wield power in the theatre, just as men did, so while the players were attempting to restate the gender hierarchy and patriarchal orthodoxy onstage, the judging female spectators occupying the off-stage locations of the amphitheatre playhouse simultaneously subverted these hierarchical structures. As Howard suggests, then, "the anti-theatrical polemicists were right to worry about women" – as, apparently, were the adult King's Men who, it might appear, managed their anxieties by smothering the female threat.[103]

[103] Howard, "Scripts and/versus Playhouses," 47.

Chapter Three

Dressing Down the Female Cross-Dresser

The theatre historian Tanya Pollard has previously commented that while the Elizabethan period is popularly considered the "golden age" of theatre, "the same historical moment… saw some of history's most furious attacks on the theatre."[1] With the explosive rise of professional theatres in sixteenth-century London, the theatre became a body in motion and anti-theatricalism became its equal and opposite reaction. Subsequently, numerous tracts were published condemning playwrights, players and playgoers for their respective roles in society's moral, religious and social degradation. In the previous chapter, I introduced one of the themes of the anti-theatrical rhetoric and discussed its writers' anxieties regarding the manipulative – even bewitching – power of playing companies who, according to the tracts, targeted the body's most noble and vulnerable senses to alter the mind. But anti-theatricalism was not monothematic; rather, theatre-going and involvement with the theatre found themselves generating a long list of corruptive behaviours and pastimes that were perceived as endangering the maintenance of a godly community.[2] Jonas Barish has pointed out that "playgoing ranked abnormally high in the hierarchy of sins" and, subsequently, theatres were subjected to attacks from multiple angles.[3] In a 1577 dialogue between Youth and Age, anti-theatricalist preacher John Northbrooke criticised the way theatres would "bring men and women into [Satan's] snare of concupiscence and filthy lusts of wicked whoredom," thus

[1] Pollard, introduction to *Shakespeare's Theater: A Source Book*, x.

[2] Webster, "Early Stuart Puritanism," 54; Kamps and Raber, "Geography and Religion," 330.

[3] Jonas A. Barish, *The Anti-theatrical Prejudice* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1981), 80.

tempting them away from wholesome and honest work.[4] Anthony Munday's 1580 pamphlet, meanwhile, condemned what he believed was the deceptive nature of playwrights: "The notablest liar is become the best poet."[5] Although Munday would eventually overcome his disgruntlement with the theatre and become a successful playwright himself, the shadow cast by tracts like his was long and unmoving. Despite many of these tracts appearing before the dawn of the Jacobean era, playwrights continued to respond to these arguments several years – even decades – on.

One of the most enduring anti-theatrical arguments concerned itself with cross-dressing: specifically, the misuse of clothing and costuming on the stage.[6] The dangers of dressing both contrary to one's gender and to one's status were repeatedly highlighted: in 1582, anti-theatrical pamphleteer Stephen Gosson wrote that

> [t]he proof is evident… that in stage plays for a boy to put on the attire, the gesture, the passions of a woman; for a mean person to take upon him the title of a prince, with counterfeit port and train; is by outward signs to show themselves otherwise than they are, and so within the compass of a lie, [which] is naught of itself, and to be fled.[7]

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[4] John Northbrooke, "A Treatise Against Dicing, Dancing, Plays, and Interludes, with Other Idle Pastimes (1577)," in *Shakespeare's Theater: A Source Book*, ed. Tanya Pollard (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 2-3.

[5] Munday, "Second and Third Blast," 78.

[6] While the term 'cross-dressing' has routinely been associated specifically with cross-gender dressing, for the purposes of this chapter (and where not specified) it will service as a catch-all term for both cross-class dressing and cross-gender dressing.

[7] Gosson, "Five Actions," 110.

Similar sentiments were echoed in 1599 by the Puritan preacher John Rainolds who – in a pamphlet entitled *The Overthrow of Stage-Plays* – remarked that "[i]t is a commandment therefore of the moral law, that women shall not attire themselves like men, neither men like women"; to do so, he suggested, was "a notorious and detestable evil" and an "abomination to the Lord thy God."[8] As Gosson's and Rainolds' comments attest, controversies regarding the on-stage treatment of clothing and costuming made up a significant share of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century rhetoric assailing the theatre. They also reflected ideas already encoded in sumptuary laws which regulated the wearing of various clothing and fabrics based on income and status.[9] Anti-cross-dressing sentiments were widespread and weighty enough to elicit responses from the period's popular culture.

While the stage was itself the target of costume-concerned attacks, it seemed just as willing to criticise and deter certain misuses of clothing outside the theatre walls. In this way, playing companies helped to maintain the status quo denouncing cross-dressing while continuing to subvert it themselves. As critic Cristine M. Varholy indicates, "dramatic representations of female cross-class dressing still framed such behaviour as inherently dangerous."[10] As seen before in *King Lear* and *Macbeth*'s focus on vocal women as a transgressive danger to the social order, in focusing on the female cross-dresser, the theatre's playwrights and players shielded themselves from attacks of immorality by hiding behind

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[8] John Rainolds, "The Overthrow of Stage-Plays (1599)," in *Shakespeare's Theater: A Source Book*, ed. Tanya Pollard (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), 172.

[9] Wilfrid Hooper, "The Tudor Sumptuary Laws," *English Historical Review* 30, no. 199 (1915), *passim*; Jean E. Howard, "Crossdressing, the Theatre, and Gender Struggle in Early Modern England," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 39, no. 4 (1988): 421; Liz Picard, "Clothing in Elizabeth England," *British Library*, last modified March 15, 2016, https://www.bl.uk/shakespeare/articles/clothing-in-elizabethan-england.

[10] Cristine M. Varholy, " 'Rich Like a Lady': Cross-Class Dressing in the Brothels and the Theaters of Early Modern London," *The Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies* 8, no. 1 (2008): 9.

misogynistic attitudes that enforced the period's patriarchal ideologies. By falling back on attitudes deriving from Eve's role in the Fall of Man, playing companies seemingly looked to shift attention away from theatrical vice and towards female transgression.

Affording consideration to six plays first performed between 1603 and 1606, this chapter argues that, in the inaugural years of James I's reign in England, there was an arguably unsubtle disparity between the treatment of female and male cross-dressers on the stage. While the female cross-dressing character was often punished for her perceived transgressions, male cross-dressing was presented as inconsequential, with the male cross-dressing character recurrently emerging triumphant. The plays to which I first turn my attention, and which primarily concern the representation of female cross-dressers, include *Eastward Ho* (1605), Thomas Dekker and John Webster's *Northward Ho* (1605), and Dekker and Middleton's *The Honest Whore: Part One* (1604, hereafter *1 The Honest Whore*). I shall then shift my focus to the representation of male cross-dressers in Dekker and Webster's *Westward Ho* (1604), *The Isle of Gulls* (1606), and George Chapman's *May Day* (1604).[11] Whether the effect was intended or unintended, between them, these plays managed to reinforce early modern sartorial and societal standards by supporting the notion that female cross-dressing was transgressive, while simultaneously endorsing male cross-dressing. In doing so, playwrights and players protected themselves and their industry against the slander of anti-theatrical diatribes. First, however, it is important to recognise that the concerns regarding the misuse of clothing during this period were not isolated to the anti-theatricalists.

[11] The date of first performance for George Chapman's *May Day* is disputed among theatre historians: see Albert H. Tricomi, "The Dates of the Plays of George Chapman," *English Renaissance* 12, no. 2 (1982): 245; Thomas Marc Parrott, *The Plays and Poems of George Chapman: The Comedies* (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1914): 731. However, the date I have provided has been taken from Wiggins', which I have also used for the other plays throughout this thesis.

I

Sumptuary Laws and Sartorial Transgression

The residual echoes of state-authorised proclamations (issued in the latter half of the sixteenth century) that regulated clothing contributed to the Jacobean sentiments that clothing indicated identity. The objective of these regulations – which became known as the sumptuary laws – was to evade social disruption and safeguard hierarchical order. As many historians have discussed, early modern thought considered attire a primary indicator of identity and status, thereby signalling a person's position in the natural, God-ordained hierarchy.[12] Cross-dressing was, therefore, considered a subversion of these principles, and threatened the distinctions between social strata. The dress regulations were designed "precisely," as critic Jean E. Howard has noted, "to keep people in the social 'places' to which they were born."[13] The enduring Tudor sumptuary laws and Elizabeth I's Royal Proclamation against the excess of apparel looked to "restrain those who desired to dress above their stations" within that social hierarchy.[14] These sumptuary proclamations outlined who could wear certain colours, fabrics and adornments. For example, a 1554 act of apparel regulated the wearing of "silk of any kind… by persons beneath the rank of son and heir-apparent of a knight, or possessing less

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[12] Varholy, "Rich Like a Lady," 6; Peter Hyland, *Disguise on the Early Modern English Stage* (London: Routledge, 2016), 11, http://ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/login?url=https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/9781315577562; David Cressy, "Gender Trouble and Cross-Dressing in Early Modern England," *Journal of British Studies* 35, no. 4 (1996): 441-442; Anna Bayman, *Thomas Dekker and the Culture of Pamphleteering in Early Modern London* (Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 81-82, https://www-taylorfrancis-com.ezproxy.massey.ac.nz/books/9781315551067.

[13] Howard, "Crossdressing," 421.

[14] Dave Postles, " 'Flatcaps', Fashioning and Civility in Early-Modern England," *Literature and History* 17, no. 2 (2008): 1.

than the income [of £20 a year]."[15] Historian Wilfrid Hooper highlights that failure to adhere might have resulted in "a penalty of three months' imprisonment and a fine of £10 a day for each day's infringement" of the rules – a crippling sum for the period.[16] Over the next fifty years, similar sentiments were reiterated in no less than eight proclamations on the theme of "excesse of apparel," including in 1563, 1574, 1577, and 1597.[17]

Even after the disappearance of these laws in 1604, the suggestion that clothing denoted identity was an enduring mindset that bled onto the Jacobean stage. After multiple attempts and "protracted debate," the sumptuary laws were repealed early in James' reign.[18] Despite this, as Hooper points out, "[s]umptuary feeling, indeed, survived and permeated social opinion for generations to come."[19] Attempts were made to revive the laws in James' reign (and subsequent reigns) and, although the bills embodying the laws were never passed, "the debates upon them show that the age-long belief that dress was a legitimate topic for state regulation had lost little of its old sway."[20] Clothes became – and remained – precise indicators of identity as they helped to signify and differentiate degree and status, thus producing ordered boundaries that aided in the maintenance of appropriate social behaviour and representation. The sumptuary regulations signal how deep-rooted the ideas and concerns about cross-dressing were in the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth centuries, extending well beyond the realms of theatrical costuming and into the day-to-day life of all members of society. Nevertheless, the stage was a uniquely privileged and entirely logical place from which to engage with these ideas, given that assuming different identities via costumes was actors' stock-in-trade. Still, as Varholy mentions, "the fundamental assumption of such

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[15] Hooper, "The Tudor Sumptuary Laws," 436.

[16] Hooper, "The Tudor Sumptuary Laws," 436.

[17] See Varholy, "Rich Like a Lady," 9; Picard, "Clothing in Elizabethan England."

[18] Hooper, "The Tudor Sumptuary Laws," 448.

[19] Hooper, "The Tudor Sumptuary Laws," 449.

[20] Hooper, "The Tudor Sumptuary Laws," 449.

regulations was that clothing could and should accurately present the status of its wearers and thereby preserve social order."[21] From this thinking stemmed concerns that clothing, therefore, had the innate ability to alter identity – a theory that began to trickle into onstage observations and conversation.

In metatheatrically self-conscious remarks, onstage comments often drew attention to the relationship between clothing and identity. As Hooper and Varholy have outlined, the sumptuary regulations – or the social opinion encouraged by those laws – persisted throughout the second half of the sixteenth century and into the seventeenth, becoming humdrum homilies heard repeatedly by the masses.[22] For this reason, the newly Jacobean audience would have been conscious of social attitudes surrounding the dangers of dressing contrary to ordained status, and alert to allusions regarding the transformative power of clothes. In Shakespeare's *Macbeth* (1606), such allusions are made to clothing's power to alter identity when Macbeth equates his change in title – and, therefore, his identity – with the wearing of the ex-Thane of Cawdor's clothing: "The Thane of Cawdor lives; why do you dress me / In borrowed robes?" (*Macbeth* 1.3.109-10). The metaphor that clothing *is* identity is maintained throughout this play: in the final act, Angus criticises the new king's new "title [which] / Hang[s] loose about him, like a giant's robe / Upon a dwarfish thief" (5.2.20-22). Similar sentiments present themselves in Thomas Dekker and Thomas Middleton's *1 The Honest Whore* when an officer – mistaking Candido for his apprentice because he is wearing his apprentice's clothes – approaches Candido, explaining "Signior, you looke not like your selfe me thinkes / … y'are changde, y'are altred" (4.3.128-29).[23] The implication here is that

[21] Varholy, "Rich Like a Lady," 6.

[22] Hooper, "The Tudor Sumptuary Laws," 436; Varholy, "Rich Like a Lady," 9.

[23] Quotations and act, scene and line numbers are from Thomas Dekker and Thomas Middleton, "The Honest Whore," in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker,* ed. Fredson Bowers (London: Cambridge University Press, 1955).

the 'self' is externally constructed and, literally, fashioned by how onlookers perceive their subject; if Candido does not *look* like himself on the outside, then – the officer concludes – his person *is* changed. With the common perception that identity and degree were both assumed and performed through clothing, the fastest means of social mobility was, seemingly, to wear the clothes of the class or gender above one's own station. For doubly outranked lower-class women – outranked by men in the gender hierarchy and aristocratic women in class – cross-dressing teased the life of the other half. Yet theatrical depictions of cross-dressing lower-class women often culminate in their containment via ridicule or punishment, as the following analysis demonstrates.

In Chapman, Jonson and Marston's 1605 play, *Eastward Ho*, the cross-class dressing antics of the low-born Gertrude lay bare the association between fashion and fast-tracking social climbing, and demonstrate the way it is women, specifically, who are punished for this particular type of cross-dressing. Although goldsmithing was one of the more highly regarded trades of the period, it nevertheless positioned goldsmiths and their families as 'middling' tradesmen within the period's class hierarchy; as the daughter of a goldsmith, Gertrude obsesses over the lowly status of her family throughout the duration of the play. Within her first few lines Gertrude remarks on the "low-capped" (1.2.4) degree of her tradesman father, William Touchstone, where the low cap, or flat cap (head attire), as Dave Postles has explained, had become a "metaphor for the unfashionable and unmodish."[24] By association, the flat cap symbolised the less wealthy and less esteemed of urban citizenry; its wear, Postles continues, "extended outside the ruling caucus to the whole of the citizenry, reminding them of their common status and origins."[25] In some instances, the flat cap became an object of derision, just as Touchstone's prodigal and conceited apprentice, Quicksilver, regards it in his

[24] Postles, "Flatcaps," 5.

[25] Postles, "Flatcaps," 9.

endeavour to insult his master: "let's be no longer fools to this flat-cap Touchstone" (1.1.132-33). Gertrude, interpreting the world materially, recognises her family's lowly origins and degrades them, and focuses on her father's flat cap as the object of clothing symbolising the root of her humiliating social position. These sentiments are maintained in Gertrude's suggestion that her commonness brings her and her family shame, again signalling that it is her clothes that manifest her identity: awaiting the arrival of the newly-knighted Sir Petronel Flash, Gertrude frantically instructs her sister to help her "[o]ff with this [citizen's] gown for shame's sake" (1.2.6-7). She exhibits little regard for the dress, cursing it and pushing her sister to "tear 't, pax on 't… Tear 't off" (1.2.9-10), treating it with the same disrespect that she, in turn, treats the 'God-given' social order. Anti-theatricalists like Gosson and Rainolds would have been hostile to the notion that divinely ordained identity was something to be so explicitly and scornfully ashamed of, interpreting it as an insult to divine creation and power. Yet Gertrude continues to exacerbate these anti-theatrical anxieties with her antagonistic endeavours to disrupt class distinctions by moving up in society, and out of her citizen's dress, permanently.

In establishing her character for the audience, Gertrude voices her desires for social mobility early on. She declares that, while she comes from ignoble origins, she "must be a lady, and [she] *will* be a lady" (1.2.21, emphasis added), confessing her desperation to outrank, or "take place of" (1.2.123) her mother who, she implores, "must call [her] medam" (1.2.6). Longing "to line a grogram gown clean / through with velvet" (1.2.24-25) – a material that sumptuary legislation reserved for those no lower than a knight's station[26] – Gertrude scorns the "taffeta pipkins, durance petticoats, and silver bodkins" (1.2.28) that indicated her

[26] *The briefe content of the certayne Actes of Parliament, against th inordinate use of apparell*, Elizabeth I and Thomas Phillipps (London, 1577), accessed July 28, 2021, https://www.bl.uk/learning/timeline/item126628.html. See also Hooper, "The Tudor Sumptuary Laws," 436.

and her family's low income.[27] She has her tailor put her in the "lady-fashion" (1.2.70) to match her desired (and soon-to-be) status as a lady – achieved through her marriage to the knight, Sir Petronel – and it is in this scene that the power of a tailor to accommodate change and alteration outside of his shop is highlighted. If clothing can change a status or identity, a tailor wields a similar power, providing the means to enact such a change and the means for deception by adjusting or creating clothes to hide faults (be they physical or social faults), and deliberately misrepresent the wearer. With a concentrated focus on misrepresenting the *female* wearer, Poldavis, Gertrude's tailor, reinforces this perceived sartorial power:

> [the dress'] 'twill keep your thighs so cool and make your waist so small. Here was a fault in your body, but I have supplied the defect with the effect of my steel instrument [sewing needle], which, though it have but one eye, can see to rectify the imperfection of the proportion. (1.2.60-65).

While the revelation of Gertrude's apparently mockable figure makes for a comical line, it also reinforces the anti-theatrical worries about clothing's potential to enable the alteration of one's God-given physique. Anthony Munday articulates this exact concern in his 1580 pamphlet, *A Second and Third Blast of Retreat from Plays and Theatres*, with his assertion that "tailors, who having their shears in their hand, can alter the fashion of any thing into another form."[28] On the surface, Gertrude's rectified "fault" and "imperfection of the proportion" are physical, and a smaller waist deceptively creates the illusion of child-bearing hips. However, the worrying implication for anti-theatricalists is the suggestion that Gertrude's imperfection is her social status which does not match Sir Petronel's superior

[27] See editor Van Fossen's notes regarding line 28 in his edition of *Eastward Ho*, p. 81.

[28] Munday, "A Second and Third Blast," 78.

position. Her perceived "fault," then, is her citizenry, now obscured by the "lady-fashion" of her dress which, according to Munday, allows her to assume "another form." Gertrude's focus on clothing to redefine herself only seems to vindicate the early modern ideas "agaynst th'inordinate use of apparell"[29] and would, seemingly, feed the diatribes against the theatre. In this way, Gertrude represents everything immoral and anarchical about cross-dressing and sartorial social mobility.

It is in the way that *Eastward Ho* characterises Gertrude, and the cards that the audience sees dealt to her, that the dangers of cross-dressing are presented with a specifically female focus. Having strived to improve her status, Gertrude unwisely marries an empty title that leaves her deceived and bankrupt. Thus, the play substantiates the anti-theatrical arguments against the misuse of clothing by punishing the female cross-dresser and, crucially, Gertrude's punishment is tied up with the fact that she is a woman. As subsequent sections of this chapter will consider, this punishment is meted to cross-dressing women but not to men; by targeting the female cross-dressing characters while overlooking the male equivalent, dramatic representations of cross-dressing created a gendered double standard that would be maintained both on and off the stage. Before examining this further, however, due attention should be given to the argument that for the cross-dressing perpetrator to be deemed deserving of their punishment, they must first be portrayed as immoral.

It is in the stark opposition between the immoral Gertrude and her moral counterpart in her sister, Mildred, that Gertrude's sartorially-supported social climbing is presented as nefarious and her character as detestable. Gertrude is ambitious, marries up without her father's blessing and rubs salt in that wound by undertaking to outrank her father, demanding that "he must call [her] daughter no more now, but 'madam', 'and please you, madam', 'and please your worship, madam', indeed" (3.2.70-73). As the day to Gertrude's night, her sister,

[29] *The briefe content*, Elizabeth I and Thomas Phillipps.

Mildred, assumes the role of the 'good' and moral daughter: humble and unassuming, obedient to her father, respectful of her family's honest origins, living within her means and marrying within her class. To an early modern audience, Mildred is the epitome of an ideal daughter who welcomes the direction of her father – the head of the early modern family body – and recognises, without protestation, her subordinate position as a daughter in a patriarchal structure: "Sir, I am all yours: your body gave me life, your care and love happiness of life; let your virtue still direct it, for to your wisdom I wholly dispose myself" (1.2.186-89). By obeying her father, Mildred demonstrates that she is respectful and accepting of the family hierarchy and her place within it, implying that she holds the same attitude towards the social hierarchy.

When it comes to the rhetoric against the misuse of clothing, Mildred – as the role model for grace and virtue – has a responsibility to articulate the inappropriateness of class-jumping and to condemn the behaviour of the character who misuses clothing. Again, this is executed with a focus on how clothing symbolises status when Mildred renounces Gertrude's haste to disrespect their origins by changing her clothes and thereby her identity:

> Lord, sister, with what an immodest impatiency and disgraceful scorn do you put off your city [at]tire. I am sorry to think you imagine to right yourself in wronging that which hath made both you and us. (1.2.12-16).

Mildred continues, offering Gertrude a warning if she continues to pursue the class-crossing path that she does:

> Where titles presume to thrust before fit means to second them, wealth and respect often grow sullen and will not follow. For sure in this, I would for your sake I

> spake not truth. Where ambition of place goes before fitness of birth, contempt and disgrace follow. (1.2.37-42).

It is important that the personified 'good' and moral reproves the personified 'bad' and immoral to keep the audience on-side and influence their reception of Gertrude's behaviour. It is also important that Mildred makes clear her own opinions on social climbing and inappropriate cross-class marriages. This, too, is performed with a clear focus on the early modern suggestion that clothing *is* identity when Mildred declares that she "had rather make up the garment of [her] affections in some of the same piece, than like a fool wear gowns of two colours, or mix sackcloth with satin" (2.1.61-63). Not only does Mildred allude to Gertrude's folly, but she reminds the audience that clothing signifies status – where the sackcloth denoted those of lower incomes while satin denoted those of higher incomes – and to mix degrees in marriage makes the perpetrators, or wearers, foolish.[30] Mildred, the epitome of goodliness and godliness, keenly expresses how unnatural it is to want to exceed one's given position: "These hasty advancements are not natural," she cautions the audience, piously advocating that "[n]ature hath given us legs to go to our objects, not wings to fly to them" (2.1.74-77). Here, Mildred reminds the audience that God has decided within which means they shall live, and to want or expect to live outside of those means goes against the laws of nature. Between them, Mildred and Gertrude embody the two types of women that Thomas Heywood suggests are portrayed by the theatre as models for female audiences: Mildred is the noble heroine of *Eastward Ho* who encourages the female playgoer in their

[30] On the sumptuary regulations of sackcloth and satin, see "The briefe content." See also Hooper, "The Tudor Sumptuary Laws," 436; Howard, "Crossdressing," 421; Postles, "Flatcaps," 4. Between them, Postles and Howard explain how the use of different colours for fabrics differentiated between the classes, where blue became associated with those of lower incomes (like servants and prostitutes), while purple and crimson were reserved for royalty and dukes (see *The briefe content*). Hooper and Howard, meanwhile, highlight how silks and satins were prohibited for stations below knights (see *The briefe content*).

virtues, while Gertrude is the immoral, social-climbing woman who encourages the female playgoer to "[discover] unto them[selves] the monstrousness of their sin."[31]

It is worth noting, however, that *Eastward Ho* does not appear to be adverse to the notion of rapid social climbing. After all, Mildred's husband, Golding, rises in status implausibly quickly when he is promoted to the "high and prime honour" (4.2.69-71) of Master Deputy Alderman. Rather, the play seems to highlight that *female* social climbing is inappropriate, and that utilising clothing to achieve it is wholly wicked. In stark contrast, Golding's abrupt identity transformation is embraced as an altogether positive occurrence by Touchstone:

> Now, my dear and happy son! let me kiss thy new worship, and a little boast mine own happiness in thee. […] Chosen commoner and alderman's deputy in a day! […] Well, I will honour Master Alderman, for this act, as becomes me, and shall think the better of the Common Council's wisdom and worship while I live… (4.2.54-56, 61-62, 63-66).

Unlike the female character, male transformation is presented not as transgressive, but as an act of "wisdom" worthy of celebration. Indeed, the effect of Golding's promotion is twofold: not only is morality rewarded (whereby Mildred's husband's social elevation engenders her own elevation), but expeditious – arguably instantaneous – identity changes *for males* is validated. The effect of the latter, then, skirts the issue of the early modern male player dressing in costumes to signify their own (albeit temporary and onstage) identity change; by affirming male instantaneous identity changes in Golding, *Eastward Ho*, in turn, endorses the

[31] Heywood, "Apology for Actors," 244.

male actor. *Female* characters changing their identity, on the other hand, remains egregious and perilous.

As per Mildred's warnings, Gertrude's folly brings "contempt and disgrace" in its wake. For her obsessive "ambition of place," with disregard of her "fitness of birth," Gertrude meets an unfortunate end. As the play progresses, the audience learns of Sir Petronel's deceit as he confides in the prodigal Quicksilver, confessing (after the fact of his marriage to Gertrude) that "all the castles [he] ha[s] are built with air" (2.2.246-47) and that he is a penniless knight bearing an empty title. Married to an insatiably avaricious wife of "costly humours" (2.2.270-71), Sir Petronel plots to deceive Gertrude into handing over the "[one] hundred pound land her grandmother left her" (1.2.102-3) to finance a voyage eastward to the New World. The plot, the underhanded Quicksilver identifies, "goes down without chewing" (3.2.195) as Gertrude signs away her dowry, doltishly unaware that she essentially brings about her own bankruptcy. Recognising that her fraudulent husband "is now as good as no knight" (5.1.20), Gertrude faces her infelicity and is forced to confront the fact that her haste to marry up obstructed her from securing a good and honest marriage: Touchstone articulates that, because "she went witless to wedding, now she may go wisely a-begging" (4.2.173-74). Forced to sell her jewels and clothes – and, thereby, forced to sell the identity she thought she was obtaining – Gertrude is left only with the realisation that she "ha' been proud and lascivious… and a fool" (5.5.174) and that the consequences of such behaviour have brought misfortune.

Eastward Ho seems to demonstrate that, while Ben Jonson was known in his own time to have criticised some Puritan anti-theatrical arguments, the playwrighting trio behind this play were not *un*sympathetic to concerns regarding the misuse of clothing outside the theatre

walls.[32] *Eastward Ho* demonises the woman who uses clothing to alter or elevate her status, and whose ambition contradicts expected female behaviour and disrupts social order. By depicting Gertrude as odious and having her exhibit undesirable behaviour, female audience members are encouraged to distance themselves from similar behaviour. All the while, they remain unperturbed by the same identity-shifting behaviour in men.

II

The 'Sexually Grotesque' Cross-Dresser

Unsurprisingly, the female cross-dresser was often aligned with other early modern groups of women that were already perceived as anarchic as a way of doubling down on outlining immorality, especially in England's urban settings. Varholy has given due attention to the conjunction between the cross-dresser and 'whoredom' in early modern thinking:

> Bridewell Court did not distinguish between prostitution, as it is presently conceived, and other prosecutable sexual activities, such as fornication, adultery, and bigamy. All of these behaviors were labeled using the blanket term "whoredom," and that term also could be used to prosecute any of a variety of unruly female behaviors, from incest to scolding. Hence, while the records often provide evidence of commercial sexual activity, such activity is immersed in a wide variety of other practices that also could lead a woman to be charged with whoredom. One of those practices was the wearing of opulent clothing.[33]

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[32] Laura Levine, *Men in Women's Clothing: Anti-theatricality and Effeminization 1579-1642* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 3.

[33] Varholy, "Rich Like a Lady," 8.

Again, cross-dressing, as inherently perverse, was gendered in a way that specifically condemned the *female* wearer. In *Eastward Ho*, for example, the cross-dressing perpetrator personifies the "sexually grotesque" of Varholy's arguments. Gertrude, though not a prostitute, is portrayed as promiscuous and sexually explicit, often making pornographic allusions and provocative comments which only contribute to the "unruly female behaviour" characterising her as crass.[34] Gertrude intimates her interest in playing sport with her soon-to-be husband "[w]ith arm or leg or any other member" (1.2.96), as well as insinuating her adulterous desires regarding Quicksilver: "if he did not make me blush so that mine eyes stood a-water. Would I were unmarried again" (2.2.359-61). One especially economical comment sees the playwrights double down on Gertrude's run of sexual innuendos and the transformative power of tailors and clothing in one fell swoop: "I protest you tailors are most sanctified members, and make many crooked things go upright" (1.2.66-68). In like manner, *Northward Ho* and *1 The Honest Whore* seem to delineate cross-dressing as inherently whorish. Indeed, it is not insignificant that the plays' two prominent female characters who cross-dress are both prostitutes by trade.

In *Northward Ho*, the role that clothing plays in creating, reinventing, and misrepresenting identity follows seamlessly on from *Eastward Ho*, and reinforces the notion that female identity manipulation is dangerously deceptive. As seen in *Eastward Ho*, tailors – with their powers of sartorial transformation – serve as a flashpoint for anxiety about women's changeability. In an exchange with her tailor, Doll, the play's aforementioned prostitute, intimates that clothing can alter not only identity, but the physical body: "what

[34] Though Gertrude is not a prostitute, she does see the affinity between herself and a 'used and abused' prostitute after her husband deceives her into signing over her dowry and leaves her, referring to herself as "his punk" (5.1.31).

fashion will make a woman haue the best bodie[?]", she asks (3.1.44-45).[35] From Doll's question comes the suggestion that the female body was distinctly malleable, echoing the construction of Gertrude's illusory child-bearing hips. It further implies the malleability of female identity, before the play then shifts focus to the malleable identity of prostitutes, specifically. Allusions are made that run deeper into the realm of reinvention and misrepresentation with suggestions that seasoned prostitutes are able to refashion their virginity and resell their maidenheads. The play's bawd perfectly explicates this notion, describing:

> A comely country mayd, not squeamish nor afraid,
> To let Gentlemen touch.
> I sold her maiden-head once, and I sold her maiden-head twice,
> And I sould it last to an Alderman of Yorke.
> And then I had sold it thrice. (4.3.95-99).

Here, feminine wiles and female deception are rooted in identity alterations and misrepresentations. In a reiteration of Gosson's arguments against impersonation, the changeability of the female body/identity implied here is considered equally misrepresentative because it is considered the same as a person "show[ing] themselves otherwise than they are," which finds itself "within the compass of a lie, [which] is naught of itself, and to be fled." Again, the theatre reshapes the dangers of identity deception with an intrinsically female twist.

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[35] Quotations and act, scene and line numbers from Thomas Dekker and John Webster, "Northward Ho," in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker,* ed. Fredson Bowers (London: Cambridge University Press, 1955).

Before ensuring that it castigates its female cross-dressing culprit, *Northward Ho* also maintains *Eastward Ho*'s focus on the use of opulent clothing to assume stations above one's own. To Doll's question, "what fashion will make a woman haue the best bodie[?]", her tailor responds: "A short dutch wast with a round cathern-wheele fardingale: a close sleeue with a cartoose collour and a pickadell" (3.1.46-47). As critic Sarah A. Bendall observes, the farthingale was worn by female elites at court to show the high social position afforded them by their powerful families, and it began to be worn in urban areas as a means to climb the social ladder.[36] The "best bodie," then, is a socially elite body that the tailor insinuates can be embodied via the farthingale: an indicator of elite identity. Although her tailor does not fashion her such a dress, the conversation shows that Doll desires to have such luxuries afforded to her. Besides, the audience has already been made aware of the "taffaty gownes, and silke petticoats" (1.3.157) gifted to Doll by the gentleman Philip. Unfortunately, the wearing or possessing of such clothing was, for prostitutes, strictly prohibited by sumptuary regulations. In her examination of Bridewell Court records, Varholy points out that they are "filled with references to very specific articles of clothing received or worn by defendants," and include items which are described in detail, outlining their colours and materials such as silk, satin, velvet, and tufted taffeta.[37] "A woman's possession of such clothing," Varholy explains, "not only suggested that she was living beyond her apparent means, but also indicated her desire and ability to change her identity through clothing."[38] It was exactly this behaviour that the sumptuary legislations looked to thwart for fear that it enabled anarchical shape and status shifting. Doll is portrayed as deceptive for allowing her class-crossing to

[36] Sarah A. Bendall, " 'Take measure of your wide and flaunting garments': The farthingale, gender and the consumption of space in Elizabethan and Jacobean England," *Renaissance Studies* 33, no. 5 (2018): 716.

[37] Varholy, "Rich Like a Lady," 11.

[38] Varholy, "Rich Like a Lady," 11.

manipulate multiple men, and for disrupting clothing's ability to signify a stable class identity – and receives her comeuppance as a result.

In *Northward Ho*, cross-dressing functions as a means of trickery. It allows for the low-born prostitute Doll to impersonate a high-born gentlewoman to cozen money out of gullible suitors. Given that early modern thought pinpointed clothing as the primary signifier of degree and identity, it was arguably good business for bawds and prostitutes to use clothing to their advantage. For example, clothing could be used to appeal to clients wanting to "enact their fantasies of class ascendancy," as well as fantasies of exclusivity or obtaining a woman's virginity.[39] Just as in *Eastward Ho*, the significance of a tailor in aiding this recreation of female identity is winked at: *Northward Ho*'s bawd mentions that "[her] best customers are taylors" (4.3.84), which may allude to the notion that a tailor had the means to fashion the prostitute servicing them however they pleased and were, therefore, often satisfied and called for repeat business. As Varholy has identified, men would often gift opulent clothing to their mistresses or prostitutes to accommodate such fantasies, and – as with courting and matrimony arrangements – to indicate their power in their relationship as the provider or financer. "Clothing," in essence, "generally signified women's ties to the male figures who provided that attire," which, in turn, added to fantasies of exclusivity.[40] This buyer-seller agreement can be clearly observed in the play when Doll finds herself receiving gifts from gentlemen seeking to make her their mistress. One of those men, Philip, does not deny that he has spent good money on sartorial gifts for Doll:

Bellamont: I am told sir, that you spend your credit and coine vpon

[39] Varholy, "Rich Like a Lady," 6.

[40] Varholy, "Rich Like a Lady," 7. On the way gift giving symbolised women's financial dependency on men, see also Laura Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words, and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 159.

a light woman.

Philip: I ha seene light gold sir, passe away amongst Mercers.

Bellamont: And that you have layd thirty or fortie pounds vpon her back in taffaty gownes, and silke petticoats. (1.3.153-57)

Philip is privy to the reality of Doll's profession and status and, therefore, remains undeceived by Doll's cross-class dressing and impersonation. However, three other gentlemen – Hans van Belch, Allom and Captain Jenkins – are misguided and defrauded by Doll's cross-dressing antics. In seeing that it is "giuen out that [she's] a Gentlewoman, of such a birth, [and] such a wealth" (1.2.88-89), Doll manipulates the feelings of these men, and dupes them into relinquishing money to her and her accomplices, or lavishing her with luxuries usually reserved for the upper-classes. The gentlemen do so under the pretence that they are purchasing the favour of a lady, but, upon Doll's confession that she "haue bin an Inne for any guest" (4.1.166) and that she is a common prostitute, the men vow to "draw all [their] arrows of reuenge" and "hit her for her villany" (4.3.19-20).

At the play's conclusion, Doll – like Gertrude – is punished for her manipulative and deceptive cross-class dressing misbehaviour. The cross-dressing "Cunny-catcher" (5.1.485) becomes the butt of a joke when a plot fools another undesirable and devious character into marrying her. By *being* someone else's punishment, Doll receives her own punishment in the form of public humiliation and social ridicule. Rubbing salt in her wounds, the sentence is made even worse given the character of her new husband, Featherstone, who warns of his expected disloyalty:

> Come wench wee are ioynd… I haue some lands, those Ile turne into money, to pay you, and you, and any… (5.1.508-10)

Not only does Featherstone admit that he intends to continue paying for sexual services outside of his marriage, but he also reiterates Doll's lowly status as a prostitute. Featherstone makes it clear that, regardless of Doll's newlywed status, she enters a marriage with somebody who intends to remind her that she is, first and foremost, an unchaste "Bow that has beene shot in before" (5.1.506) and who offers sex in exchange for money. With it, Doll's marriage serves as a life sentence of derision. As with Gertrude, it is crucial that the woman misrepresenting herself is depicted as immoral. Similar connections are made in *1 The Honest Whore*, where it is implied that the inherent danger of female cross-dressing poses a multi-levelled community risk. As in *Northward Ho*, *1 The Honest Whore* maintains the notion that transgressive cross-dressing is intrinsically female, while ensuring that the perpetrating prostitute is punished.

In *1 The Honest Whore*, the cross-dressing of the titular prostitute, Bellafront, is presented as dangerous not in and of itself, but in that it is used in a way that puts other people at risk. Historian David Cressy provides further context with his analysis of the 1633 trial of Thomas Salmon who, disguised in women's apparel, was found to have been wrongfully present in a woman's birthing room. As Cressy has identified, "the child-bed room was a… privileged female domain" in which "[m]en had no place"; thus, "[a]ny male presence was transgression."[41] Though Salmon's cross-dressing was perceived as "outrageous" and "inherently disorderly," Cressy explains that "[w]hat the village community found truly offensive was not that the manservant dressed as a woman, but that he used this disguise to enter a place where he did not belong."[42] In doing so, Salmon's offense came down to "the potential harm he did to others" by impinging on a women's modesty and threatening the

[41] Cressy, "Gender Trouble," 447.

[42] Cressy, "Gender Trouble," 447, 464.

sanctity of childbirth.[43] In essence, the issue was that cross-dressed figures should not appear in particular spaces – in Cressy's example, that space was the female birthing chamber, but in Dekker's play it is the male bedchamber.

Thus, when Bellafront misuses clothing to get into Hippolito's bedchamber in *1 The Honest Whore*, it is not the act of Bellafront's cross-dressing that offends Hippolito as much as it is the use of cross-dressing to enable "the intrusion of inappropriate behavior into privileged space."[44] By cross-dressing as a male page, Bellafront's behaviour makes similar threats to those made by Thomas Salmon, and it is this that Hippolito is outraged by. Hippolito remarks that, by "let[ting] in a woman, in mans shape" (4.1.126) into his bed chamber, his servant has "let in the diuell" (4.1.122): "thou doost make me violate, / The chastest and most sanctimonious vow, / That ere was entred in the court of heaven" (4.1.140-42). By Bellafront having cross-dressed as a man and "infected" (4.1.130) Hippolito's bed chamber, Hippolito feels as though he has been tricked into violating the *de praesenti* marriage vow he made with his beloved, Infelice, and which, under early modern legal understanding, could constitute a legitimate marriage contract.[45] Further, in his consideration of Dekker's works, critic Guy Corinee has noted that "any woman, even a literary character, 'acting outside' of her socially prescribed role behaves grotesquely, even monstrously."[46] Although this is exacerbated by Hippolito's innate disgust at Bellafront's status as a whore – made clear in his relentless, ninety-nine-line rant summarising that prostitutes "are the miserablest Creatures breathing" (2.1.363) – Bellafront is demonised for her breach of gender and social boundaries. Ultimately, for jeopardising the sanctity of Hippolito's vows to

[43] Cressy, "Gender Trouble," 458.

[44] Cressy, "Gender Trouble," 464.

[45] N. W. Bawcutt, introduction to *Measure for Measure* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991), 7.

[46] Guy Corinee, "Dekker and Middleton's Carnivalized Societies and the Sexually Grotesque in *The Honest Whore*, *Part 1 and 2*, and *Women Beware Women*," *Mediterranean Studies* 19, no. 1 (2010): 129.

Infelice, Bellafront becomes monstrous and, therefore, worthy of the injurious "she-divell" (4.1.137) title that Hippolito pins on her.

As seen before in *Eastward Ho*, the danger posed by specifically female cross-gender dressing in *1 The Honest Whore* circles back to the notion that the misuse of clothing threatened the stability of the social hierarchy. As mentioned above, lowborn women were outranked not just by upper-class women, but also by men in the patriarchally constructed gender hierarchy. For Bellafront to dress as a male page equates to an attempt to misrepresent herself as a gender superior to her own, and Hippolito highlights that, in early modern England, gender was not malleable: "Woman I beseech thee, / Get thee some other suite, this fits thee not" (4.1.153-54). What is worse, not only is Bellafront cross-status dressing on a gendered level by dressing up – so to speak – as a male, but she is doing it in an ambitious, romantic pursual of a gentleman above her own station. Bellafront's cross-dressing violations, then, are threefold. Firstly, she misuses clothing to misrepresent herself as male and, therefore, above her subordinate position as a woman. Secondly, she uses this male disguise in a way that puts Hippolito's virtue at risk. Thirdly, she undertakes this cross-dressing enterprise in pursuit of a match that would destabilize the social hierarchy.

For her transgressive hat-trick, Bellafront, too, is chastened, and her subversion is contained. While Gertrude and Doll, between them, are fated to suffer misfortune and public humiliation, Bellafront is forcibly reminded of her lowly position. In the resolutions of the final act, the Duke orders Matheo, the original obtainer of Bellafront's "very rich iewell, calde a Maidenhead" (5.2.410-11), to marry Bellafront. For Bellafront, the order is a multi-layered correction. On the one hand, it serves as a forced moral redemption for her sinful lifestyle in that Matheo, who "didst first turne [her] soule black, / [might] Now make it white agen" (5.2.436-37). Ultimately, however, the romantically ambitious cross-dresser is cut down to size in her imposed marriage. While it might appear, at first glance, that a marriage to Matheo

offers a happy redemption for Bellafront, the reality of Matheo's unforgiving character foregrounds the longevity of Bellafront's punishment. After learning her fate, Bellafront declares her desire and determination to pursue a virtuous life: "I doe protest,/ Ime pure as fire now, chaste as Cynthia's brest" (5.2.437-38). In spite of this, Matheo restates Bellafront's status as "a common wench" (5.2.446), and conjectures that deception and cuckoldry are destined to be part and parcel of his future as a prostitute's husband: "The Cuckolds stampe goes currant in all Nations, / Some men haue hornes giuen them at their creations, / If I be one of those, why so" (5.2.443-45). In Matheo's last word on the matter, a sexual double entendre signifies his refusal to honour Bellafront's wishes for modesty in a final move that forces her back into the sexual arena: "Come wench, thou shalt be mine, giue me thy gols, / Weele talke of legges hereafter" (5.2.451-52). Here, "gols," a misspelling of "gules," is the tincture with the colour red in heraldry, but connotative of red lips in this comment; by requesting Bellafront give him her "gols," Matheo nods to their union of heraldic arms, but winks to sexual activity, a notion reinforced by his focus on their coming "talke of legges" (legs). Undermining everything Bellafront has said, Matheo brands her with whoredom's inescapable feminine stamp. In doing so, patriarchal orthodoxy and order are consolidated as Matheo maintains the misogynistic attitudes already vilifying the early modern female, and contains the transgressive female by locking Bellafront into her own loveless life sentence.

Promiscuity and overt sexuality oppose patriarchal expectations that women should be chaste, silent and obedient, and, for this reason, Gertrude, Doll and Bellafront become targets of ridicule and censure for the anti-cross-dressing rhetoric anxious about such transgression. In their presentation of these women, the plays discussed above redirect the focus on sartorial dangers away from cross-dressing, generally, and towards feminine wiles and *female* cross-dressing, specifically. In her discussion, Varholy references the 1563 state-authorised homily "Against Excess of Apparel," recognising that "the majority of the homily is devoted to

women's sartorial transgressions, focusing on the link between sumptuary excess and women's 'wanton, lewd and unchaste behaviour."[47] It is fitting, then, that the main cross-dressing characters of *Eastward Ho*, *Northward Ho*, and *1 The Honest Whore* were women antithetical to the ideal and godly early modern woman. By framing them as such, the plays' anti-cross-dressing rhetoric looks to deter such behaviour by, as Heywood suggested, showing women their "errors" and "the monstrousness of their sin": that all three cross-dressing and status-shifting women receive their comeuppance cautions women in the audience to avoid similar behaviour lest they should meet similar fates.[48] Again, drawing on Dollimore's discussion regarding theatre's consolidation of the dominant social through the containment of subversion, the subversive behaviours of the above discussed women are 'contained' in their respective punishments at the plays' ends, and the dominant patriarchal ideology – that of male superiority and female inferiority – is consolidated.[49] At the same time (and in a further consolidation of male superiority), male cross-dressing is staged as inconsequential and, thereby, the male cross-dresser, like the male actor, is affirmed.

III

Addressing the Double Standard

There are a few potential reasons to explain why male cross-dressing was more easily forgiven than female cross-dressing. For example, the wider societal gender hierarchy elevating adult males as the more reasonable and rational sex might suggest a less corruptive capacity than women; or perhaps James' decision to sponsor and assume patronage of

[47] Varholy, "Rich Like a Lady," 9.

[48] Heywood, "Apology for Actors," 241.

[49] Dollimore, introduction to *Political Shakespeare*, 10.

London's most popular playing company might indicate a royal sanctioning of theatre and its accompanying, cross-dressing (costuming) devices. Of course, theatre's inclination to defend against the anti-theatrical, anti-cross-dressing rhetoric and assure the *male* cross-dresser could be expected, given its status as an exclusively male industry, as well as the entire nature of acting as impersonation and identity-changing. As previously discussed, *Eastward Ho* authorises instantaneous identity shifting for men via the character of Golding, thereby authorising the male actor. In like manner, *The Isle of Gulls* (1606), *Westward Ho* (1604) and *May Day* (1604) each manage to trivialise male cross-dressing; in many instances, the male cross-dressing character even emerges triumphant. Whether through loopholes, overlooking or neglecting to punish the male cross-dresser, or outrightly rewarding the male cross-dressing character, each of these plays offer a self-serving defence of male cross-dressing.

John Day's *The Isle of Gulls* employs two different tactics with two pairs of male cross-dressers to achieve this defence. In the cases of the cross-gender and cross-status dressing princes, Lisander and Demetrius, *The Isle of Gulls* seeks to quash the notion that clothing possesses a transformative and deceptive power. In their pursuit of the hearts of Violetta and Hippolita, Lisander cross-dresses as an Amazonian princess, while Demetrius cross-dresses as a woodman – a station far below his own. However, in markedly different comments made in *Eastward* and *Northward Ho*, comments made in *Isle of Gulls* indicate the superficiality of clothing, and gesture to clothing's negligible contribution in the creation of identity. For example, Duke Basilius' wife, Gynetia, insinuates that it is not clothing that exposes identity, but the physical features and mannerisms of the wearer that are the more dominant indicators. Disputing the cross-dressed Lisander's gender, Gyentia firmly contends that, regardless of his clothes, his real gender is given away: "You are none, you are not [a lady], come you are not, / Your valor, lookes, gestures shew you are not" (3.1.115-16). Gyentia insists that Lisander's "manly brow, and [his] commanding eye" (3.1.117) show that he is not the woman he

misrepresents himself to be. Nor is Hippolita wholly fooled by Demetrius' class-crossing disguise: she compares Demetrius to

> a sweet almond in a rugged shell, the sun in a clowde, or a welthy diamond in a rock, indeed cleane contrary to the world, he weares the worst side outward, and is much better than he seemes. (3.2.92-95)

Although she cannot decisively pinpoint the issue, her comments reveal that she intuitively sees through the disguise. In the cases of the male Demetrius and Lisander, clothing has not altered their identities and the wearer stays the same person at their core. A loophole is thereby created in storylines concerning male cross-dressers which reframes the use of clothing to impersonate as insubstantial. In this way, concerns fuelling the anti-theatrical complaints vilifying the theatre are allayed, and the power of shape-shifting is taken away from the male misuser.

How, then, are the fates of the cross-dressing men different from those of the women? At first glance, they appear equally unfavourable and might seem to contradict the above arguments, but, with further analysis, it can be seen that they in fact reinforce them. It is true that Demetrius and Lisander meet unfulfilling ends when they are hoodwinked out of their prizes: their lovers and their statuses as victors. However, it is important to recognise that these unfortunate defeats were not a direct result of their cross-dressing antics per se, so much as they were of overconfidence and arrogance. The duo are circumstantially outwitted by the princes Julio and Aminter, and it is in this plot point that *The Isle of Gulls*' second defence of male cross-dressing can be seen: significantly, Julio and Aminter's own triumphs occurred as a direct result of misrepresenting their identities. Their cross-status disguises as Lacedaemonian intelligencers (often lower sorts informing or spying in exchange for money)

allow them to deceive Lisander and Demetrius and claim their undisputed rewards. Indeed, their enterprise is even legitimised and their behaviour upheld by Duke Basilius, the play's leading authority figure: "the liberty of our challenge was to all alike equally free, and since these by faire play have won em [Violette and Hippolita], it stands with our honor to see them peaceably possest of em, then surely take em" (5.1.363-66). Thus, the same cross-dressing behaviour (that was criticised when exhibited by female characters) goes unpunished when exhibited by the male characters, Lisander and Demetrius – or even rewarded, in the case of Julio and Aminter. As such, the cross-dressing double standard is, once again, foregrounded.

Like *The Isle of Gulls*, Dekker and Webster's 1604 play, *Westward Ho* utilises the loophole that clothing does not have a deceptive power so as to defend its male cross-dressing character. In the play, an overly paranoid and jealous husband, Justiniano, cross-dresses as his wife to find out if she has engaged in an adulterous relationship with the Earl. In this disguise, Justiniano meets with the Earl, but it is made abundantly clear that the Earl is not deceived by the cross-dressing. Although he, like Hippolita in *The Isle of Gulls*, cannot pinpoint the oddity of the situation, the Earl is certain that the person before him – though they are dressed in Mistress Justiniano's attire – is *not* Mistress Justiniano. The Earl repeatedly asks the person before him "what art thou" (4.2.57, 61, 68), and, though he implicitly confesses to courting and kissing Mistress Justiniano and gifting her a jewel, he rejects the notion that it was the person before him that he engaged in these activities with.[50] In the confrontation, the Earl concludes that he is not wholly fooled by the impersonator: "in that habit, / I lookt to find an Angel, but thy face, / Shewes th'art a Diuel" (4.2.62-64). Essentially, even though the person before him wears the "habit" of Mistress Justiniano, the Earl is not deceived into believing that clothing reliably signals the person wearing them. Thus, the danger of male cross-

[50] Quotations and act, scene and line numbers from Thomas Dekker and John Webster, "Westward Ho," in *The Dramatic Works of Thomas Dekker,* ed. Fredson Bowers (London: Cambridge University Press, 1955).

dressing dwindles and, in the scene featuring the male cross-dresser, the argument regarding clothing's ability to alter is deflated.

Again, like the cross-dressing male characters of *The Isle of Gulls*, Justiniano is not punished for his cross-dressing. If anything, the character who blatantly misuses clothes to deceive his wife, her accused lover, and to toy with his wife's friends is rewarded at the play's end in the peaceful resolutions with his wife. The theatre historians Peter Hyland and Leo Salingar have commented that early moderns did not usually take kindly to the use of disguise to enact deceptive behaviours; they explain that, for many among the early modern audience, disguise created discomfort due to its connotative sense of deception and trickery.[51] During this period, the general "attitude towards trickery" Salingar explains, was "morally cautious," and why the early modern audience was left with a sense of dark suspicion that distrusted the disguiser.[52] Justiniano certainly misuses clothing, disguising himself by cross-status dressing as a tutor and cross-gender dressing as his wife. Yet, this deceptive character goes unpunished. Justiniano's paranoid schemes and irrational behaviours are given barely any attention until the closing act, at which point Justiniano's cross-dressing antics are brushed off as "an olde wiues tale":

> Looke not strange at [my wife], nor at mee, the story of vs both, shall be as good, as an olde wiues tale, to cut off our way to London. (5.4.290-92).

While Doll and (arguably) Bellafront had used cross-dressing to deceptive ends and been punished accordingly, the end of *Westward Ho* sees the deceptive, cross-dressing

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[51] Hyland, *Disguise*, 71; Leo Salingar, *Shakespeare and the Traditions of Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), 122.

[52] Salingar, *Traditions of Comedy*, 171.

Justiniano return to his life in London having resolved his issues with his wife, no worse off for his actions.

For *The Isle of Gulls* and *Westward Ho*, who only have male cross-dressing characters, defending the male cross-dresser is easy. Neither of these plays finds itself having to navigate and juxtapose the treatment or presentation of cross-dressing by both sexes, and they can, therefore, focus their attention on trivialising this behaviour in men. George Chapman's *May Day*, on the other hand, juggles a handful of both female and male cross-dressing characters. Nevertheless, it, too, finds loopholes that allow it to maintain the gendered double standard with a heavy focus on affirming the male cross-dresser.

One of *May Day*'s cross-status dressing males, Lorenzo, escapes with little more than a slap on the wrist as his blatantly improper and amorously given misuse of clothing is overlooked. Lusting after the married Franceschina, the Venetian gentleman Lorenzo disguises himself in the "weeds" (2.1.503) of the chimney sweep, Snail, in a fraudulent move to gain access to Franceschina in "a privy place for herself, and [her husband] sometimes" (4.1.70-71).[53] Like Bellafront in *1 The Honest Whore*, Lorenzo uses cross-dressing to intrude into a privileged space in which Lorenzo is not welcome. Unlike Hippolito with Bellafront, Franceschina invites the chimney sweep in with the full knowledge of his true identity, but she does so reluctantly and cautiously in an attempt to extinguish Lorenzo's pursuit of her by making a mockery of him, saying to Angelo (the servant who is double-crossing Lorenzo):

> Angelo, give him not too much time with me, for fear of the worst, but go presently to the back gate, and use my husband's knock; then I will presently

[53] Quotations and act, scene and line numbers from George Chapman, "May Day," in *The Comedies of George Chapman*, ed. T. M. Parrott (London: George Routledge and Sons, 1914).

> thrust him into my coal-house; and there shall the old flesh-monger fast for his iniquity. (3.3.35-39)

Soon after, Lorenzo, as Snail, is discovered in the coal-house by Franceschina's husband, Quintilliano, and accordingly dragged out and lambasted. As similarly discussed before in regards to Lisander and Demetrius, however, it is important, again, to recognise that Lorenzo's knuckle-rapping from Quintilliano is not *because* of his cross-dressing as Snail. Rather, it is a direct result of his unwanted advances towards the married Franceschina and his endeavours to cuckold Quintilliano. In fact, even though other characters are aware that Lorenzo has used clothing to misrepresent himself and infiltrate a married woman's private space, given Bellafront's treatment for similar behaviour in *1 The Honest Whore,* arguably insufficient attention is afforded Lorenzo's immorality. Instead, he is given an underwhelming, disproportionately inconsequential telling off in a throwaway comment in the play's final scene. Looking to divert taunting attention away from himself, Lorenzo's nephew, Lodovico, calls out the unprincipled conduct of his peers:

> Nay, jest not at me, sweet gentles. I used plain and mannerly dealing; I neither used the brokage of any (as you know who did, Leonoro) nor the help of a ladder to creep in at a wench's chamber-window (as you know who did, Aurelio) nor did I case myself in a buckram and cry chimney-sweep (where are you, uncle [Lorenzo]?)… (5.1.292-97)

However, by calling out all of these misbehaviours together, focus on the immorality of Lorenzo's misuse of clothing is lost as it becomes just another item floating in a sea of sin. As a result, further conversation on the topic of his indiscretion – or Leonoro's or Aurelio's, for

that matter – is averted, and the matter is dropped. The gentlemen "strike hands" (5.1.352) before the call for audience applause amicably closes the play. Unlike with Bellafront, the audience is explicitly told that Lorenzo is an untrustworthy and threatening character when Franceschina asks not to be left alone with him for too long, "for fear of the worst"; yet, unlike with Bellafront, Lorenzo's use of cross-dressing to invade a private space goes unpunished.

All the while, the identity-switching operation of *May Day*'s second male cross-dresser, Lucretio, seems to go entirely unnoticed. Fleeing his "hard fortunes" (5.1.249) in Sicily, Lucretio cross-dresses as a woman and lives in disguise in Venice to protect himself. Lucretio – "which to fit this [woman's] habit / […] turn'd Lucretia" (4.2.138-39) – cross-dresses from the onset of the play, only revealing his true identity to both audience and characters as far in as the fourth act. This, however, is hardly acknowledged; it receives only a momentary murmur to straighten confused storylines. Lorenzo questions how "a she turned to a he?" in Lodovico's recount of his encounter with Lucretia, to which Lucretio – dressed as himself – responds: "Stand not amazed, nor disparage [Lodovico]. You see, sir, this habit truly doth suit my sex, howsoever my hard fortunes have made me awhile reject it" (5.1.248-50). Thereafter, like Lorenzo's own cross-dressing, the issue is dropped from further discussion. In the only attention the topic is afforded, Lucretio explicitly admits to having rejected his male identity via an act of cross-dressing; yet, when Gertrude rejects her sartorial identity as the daughter of a lower-class goldsmith, she suffers financial ruin, public humiliation, and a lifetime married to a man with an empty title who is willing to deceive her. Again, as with Lorenzo, a gendered double standard is created on the stage and projected to its audience that presents the female cross-dresser as a threat, and the male cross-dresser as unworthy of further conversation. Furthermore, the way that *May Day* frames its own female cross-dressers – even though they, too, escape censure – only sustains the double standard.

The unpunished female cross-dressers of *May Day* once more reinforce the preceding arguments, even though at first glance they seem to contradict them. While the play introduces its audience to Leonoro's male page, Lionello, the closing act sees Lionello reveal that he/she is really Lucretio's (female) lover, Theagine.[54] The couple's reunion blesses the pair, equally, with an auspicious conclusion, providing an antithetical outcome to the punishments and misfortunes of Gertrude, Doll and Bellafront. The difference between these four women, however, is that the latter utilize the misuse of clothing to immoral and disorderly ends, but Theagine does not. Unlike the female perpetrators of *Eastward Ho*, *Northward Ho* and *1 The Honest Whore*, Theagine does not use clothing to climb the social ladder, or attempt to marry up and out of her God-ordained social position. She is legitimately betrothed to Lucretio, and it is neither suggested that the lovers are imbalanced in class, nor that their arrangement has been impermissible or cause for concern. Rather, the couple and their union are "most gladly" accepted by Lucretio's adopted father, "and with no less care than [his] own protect[s them]" (5.1.277-78).

The same is true for *May Day*'s second female cross-dresser, Franceschina, who also escapes the play without incident. This is because she does not use clothing in a rejection of her social position, to pursue a romantic match above her own status, or as a maliciously deceptive device. Rather, "in man's attire" (4.4.124), Franceschina "becom'st a page excellent naturally" (4.4.115-14) in order to have Lorenzo think he had seen his daughter, Æmilia, with Franceschina rather than with her lover, Aurelio. Franceschina does not cross-dress for her own personal or immoral gain, but for a good end: to bring about the happy union of Aurelio and Æmilia. It is arguably significant, too, that Franceschina cross-dresses not of her own accord, but under male instruction. Ultimately, neither Franceschina nor Theagine look to

[54] While "Lionell" has been the typically accepted spelling for this *May Day* character, T. M. Parrott's edition consistently uses "Lionello." As this is the edition I am using, I have adopted Parrott's spelling throughout.

violate the confines of their gender – or the clothing society decreed as acceptable for their gender – in order to escape out of their social positions (or, more significantly, escape upwards); nor do they look to misrepresent or recreate themselves to deceive people – or, if they do, it is for protective and unifying ends. They therefore do not threaten hierarchical disorder or endanger others in their cross-dressing.

Between them, *The Isle of Gulls*, *Westward Ho*, and *May Day* manage to deemphasize the dangers of male cross-dressing in a way that altogether contradicts the written fates of their female counterparts in *Eastward Ho*, *Northward Ho*, and *1 The Honest Whore*. Each of the plays' cross-dressing men surface on the other side of their storylines none the worse for wear. In fact, not only are Justiniano and Lucretio not exposed to the same censure as Gertrude, Doll and Bellafront for the same behaviour, but the male characters are both rewarded in their respective plays' resolutions. Lucretio is happily reunited with his lover, Theagine, and Justiniano resolves his conflict with his faithful wife. Both Lucretio and Justiniano leave their respective stories in a better state than when they entered. So too do the *Isle of Gulls*' princes, Julio and Aminter, whose cross-dressing as Lacedaemonian intelligencers makes them victorious over Violetta and Hippolita's hearts and deserving of Arcadian rule. Nor is any permanent damage done to any of these cross-dressing men or any other characters as a result of their deceptive dress choices – remembering that Lisander and Demetrius are not *punished*, even though they do not ultimately win the hearts of those they pursue, and that Lorenzo and Francheschina barely hear a whisper of reprimand.

Written by those who feared for moral safety and social order, anti-theatricalist writings and sumptuary legislation drew on each other to reinforce the boundaries protecting the 'natural' social hierarchy, and to steer the public away from the anarchy of sartorial disruption. Between them, they outlined appropriate dressing behaviour and the social threat of the

misuse of clothing in a way that, by default, targeted the theatres and their use of costumes in misrepresenting both class and gender on stage. But, to allay the vociferous attacks against it, the theatre responded by co-opting specific parts of the anti-cross-dressing argument and applying a gendered twist that favoured the male cross-dresser and, thereby, the male actor. Via this strategy, a gendered double standard was created on the stage, and maintained both within and outside the theatre walls. By forcing gender into the debate and falling back on socially accepted misogynistic attitudes, playwrights and players managed to create a diversion that distracted from theatrical vice and shifted focus towards female transgression. Female cross-dressers were reminded of their status and position in the social hierarchy by being given a dressing down. What is more, their punishments are not limited to the temporary hardships of bankruptcy and social ridicule; rather, all three women are locked into lifelong marriages to unforgiving men.

The misuse of clothing in a transgressive, identity-altering manner (and as a means to escape one's social confines) was the kind of behaviour that patriarchal norms, with the help of theatre, looked to nip in the bud, and the restoration of male monarchy provided a suitable context to do so. Elizabeth, as a female monarch, had subverted and destabilised the patriarchal norms not just by simply existing as woman in a position of (supreme) authority, but by spending most of her life trying to construct herself (or cross-dress, even) as a 'masculine' king more than a queen. The unruly women of both this chapter and the previous chapter have two things in common. The first is that their respective transgressive behaviours can be perceived as their attempted invasion of realms of authority that they had no automatic claim to: for Gonoril, Regan and Lady Macbeth, this was the male realm of power (and, worse, power over other men); for Gertrude, Doll and Bellafront, this realm was male authority when cross-gender dressing, and social authority/superiority when cross-class dressing. The second is that, whether by the punishment of marriage, humiliation, or

elimination, those women's transgressive behaviours are all contained. These female characters served as a reminder to early modern audiences that breaching and subverting the confines and norms of the 'natural' social and gender hierarchies – especially when such subversion was executed by non-masculine (and therefore subordinate) persons – was an act unnatural, unwelcome and, frankly, disorderly and dangerous in an England where the patriarchal, masculine order had, finally, been restored – or so was thought.

Conclusion

I approached this project loosely inspired by James Shapiro's *1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare*, in which Shapiro delivers a narrative focusing on an exceptionally narrow, one-year window.[55] He considers how the events and conversations of 1599 may have involved and/or affected the playwright William Shakespeare and those close to him (professionally), and whether or not the plays written, produced and performed in that year present as an artistic reflection of the year's Zeitgeist. My initial research proposal for this study was to see if the plays first performed professionally between 1603 and 1606 reflected or responded to key events in James I's immediate post-succession years. I wondered to what extent the microcosm of the theatre spoke to its wider social and historic space, and if connections could be drawn between the two 'worlds' – either implicitly (in a play's themes, settings, or brief, throwaway comments) or explicitly (in characters eerily reflective of real life figures, dramatic language taken from contemporary writings/speeches, or the dangerously unsubtle recreation of actual events).

Once I had gathered my primary texts and begun the research process, however, it became clear that issues of, and allusions to, gender were at the fore of contemporary thought. And why would they not be? In medieval and early modern England, gender differences stemming from Biblical, Classical and pseudo-medical teachings justified male dominance and female subordination, manifesting as male government and female subjection, male strength and female weakness, and male power and female powerlessness. But Elizabeth's very existence had subverted those hierarchies for forty-five years, and her unmarried (and, thus, domestically ungoverned) status had exacerbated the anti-gynocratic arguments. Mary I

[55] James Shapiro, *1599: A Year in the Life of William Shakespeare* (London: Faber, 2005).

had kicked off an epoch in which women ruled in their own right for the first time in England's history, and this new, gynocratic England endured for more than half a century. Like so many in England, the majority of the playing community active at the dawn of Jacobean England were born under Elizabeth: though stories were told (including on the stage) of bygone years of male kings and English victories under male rule (Shakespeare's *Henry V* being a prime example), most had not actually known life without a woman on the throne. So, when Dekker wrapped up 'the wonderfull year' of 1603 by mentioning that many "neuer vnderstoode what that strange out-landish word *Change* signified," it is possible that what he partly meant was that, while the historical narratives of kingship favoured male rule and presented romanticized versions of it, few actually *knew* what to expect from it. With the idealised models to draw upon, public expectations were high and, for James, possibly unachievably so.

With the celebration of James' "more worthier gender" dominating succession discourse, it was inevitable that his every action and *inaction* should be couched in gendered undertones. Lending an ear to the Millenary Petition's calls for reformation hinted at the 'masculine decisiveness' appreciated in an effective patriarch; fruitless reform talks, then, punctured this 'masculine decisiveness', deflating it to a femininity "lacking the spirit of counsel and regiment."[56] If masculinity is 'warlike aggression' directed at "the nation's favourite enemy," a peace treaty with that enemy is not only unpopular, but weak, pacifistic, even cowardly – "the opposite values of manliness," according to Michael B. Young.[57] It is no surprise, then, that the nostalgia machine for Elizabeth kicked in as quickly as it did, as Chapter One's analysis of *1/2 If You Know Not Me* discusses. The fact that James' gender was, apparently, so important to the English opens up avenues worth further exploration: to

[56] Knox, *The First Blast*.

[57] Young, *History of Homosexuality*, 92.

what extent did James' alleged homosexuality or, at least, affectionate interest in (arguably) feminine men further problematize the new king's reputation as England's masculine "blessing"?[58] Does Basilius' attraction to an effeminate man (that is, a man presenting as womanly) in *The Isle of Gulls* speak to the idea of male kings exhibiting homosexual tendencies? If it does, perhaps this might bring some closure to the unsolved mystery of why – when Gynetia is so certain the 'Amazonian princess' is a man – Basilius continues to pursue her. Furthermore, how might Queen Anne's apparently "perverse" masques, that Young suggests explicitly favoured war, contribute to a scholarly focus on theatrical depictions of James' perceived dwindling masculinity? What is the relevance of his own wife potentially feeding that narrative? And, momentarily stepping away from issues of gender, how do the theatrical depictions of conceivably 'Jamesian' figures antagonise the anti-theatrical diatribes of Henry Crosse's *Virtue's Commonwealth* (1603), in which Crosse's main issue is with theatre's re-creation of royalty and other prominent figures? With the exception of this last question, these unanswered questions are centred on gender and *kingship* and, specifically, James' kingship. However, as this thesis has explored, the issues of gender swirling around James' accession permeated behaviours and attitudes in other social and cultural arenas of power.

Even though England would come to realise that their new male monarch would not necessarily be the 'masculine' king they desired, the restoration of male power had provided the perfect opportunity to revive and reinforce the Scripturally-, Classically-, and pseudo-medically-derived ideas of male superiority, and the theatre cashed in on this opportunity. My analyses of *King Lear* and *Macbeth* in Chapter Two, and *Eastward Ho*, *1 The Honest Whore* and *Northward Ho* in Chapter Three, show that, in some instances, the opportunity to push male superiority and, by extension, female inferiority, provided the means to deflect the anti-

[58] Mavericke, *Three Treatises*, 20; see also page 25 of this thesis.

theatrical attacks against theatre onto transgressive women. One of the primary concerns of anti-theatricalist diatribes still lingering in James' immediate post-succession years regarded theatre's ability – or power – to alter: using 'enchanting' words to alter the mind, and (mis)using clothes to alter identity. Craftily, co-opting the very arguments attacking them, playing companies (often the adult male companies) created and, crucially, contained female characters who exhibited these theatrical powers. Presenting them as subversive for their endeavours to breach their feminine (or other social) confines and, at times, pursue male authority/power, the companies shifted attention away from their own transgressions by suggesting that *women* exhibiting these behaviours were a far worse threat, more worthy of the negative attention that anti-theatricalists otherwise directed towards playing companies.

Additionally, the theatre's application of a gendered double standard, in which male theatrical (mis)behaviour was overlooked – even rewarded – indicates a male industry not only defending their own (mis)behaviours, but, simultaneously, reiterating that women are prone to transgression and need governing (containing) to keep them, and the social order, in check. Of course, it is easier to endorse theatrical behaviour in males when the country's supreme male authority – the king, who, not insignificantly, is highly theatrical in the performance of his own role – has assumed patronage of London's leading playing company, granting sponsorship and protection to the country's most innately theatrical males. The containment of disruption/disorder can also be extended to other subaltern groups: boy players, for example, needed reminding that their effeminacy positioned them lower in both the social and gender hierarchies, and also within the adult companies' microcosmic versions of these hierarchies – hence their casting as female characters. It would appear, however, that the boys were not inclined to forget their subalternity; how could they, when the stool-sitting gentlemen refused to let them? Constantly fighting for the theatrical authority necessary to demand audience attention and deliver performances successfully, the boy players of boys'

companies were forced to use the transitional spaces at the beginnings and ends of their performances to cut themselves down to size in order to, ironically, achieve that temporary authority. As the discussion in Chapter Two suggests, the prologues, epilogues, and inductions employed by the boys' companies served to remind the audiences that it was not the boys who needed reminding of their inferiority, but the adult males in the audience who needed reminding of the responsibilities that came with their superiority.

In considering the above afterthoughts, I am drawn to conclude that the research and conclusions generated by this project do, in fact, prove my original hypothesis: that the professional plays first performed in the initial years of James' succession did reflect the distinct events and attitudes that were characteristic of the period. Specifically, elements of all but five of the extant plays first performed between 1603 and 1606 can be seen speaking to: public hope for and celebration of James' gender following Elizabeth; his 1604 peace policies; the effeminacy of those peace policies; the perceived shyness and cowardice of the new king; the attitudes regarding masculine and effeminate kingship (given the late 'masculine' Queen Elizabeth I, and the increasingly effeminate James); theatricality and manipulative, theatrical authority (reflecting the affinity James' *Trew Law* presented between monarchical and theatrical power); women (and other feminine subordinates) breaching their social confines and invading realms of normative male power (just as Elizabeth, as queen, had until recently done); and, ultimately, the correction of this invasion, aided by the reiteration of normative male dominance with the restoration of male monarchy. Essentially, in the majority of the plays first performed in James' immediate post-succession years, enough commonalities can be seen between these plays and the time period they existed within to argue that the plays were a product of their historic moment. Specifically, they were a product of the gender anxieties at the forefront of public thought during the transition from female to male power in England.

The final question to consider is: why does it all matter? Why, after hundreds of years of scholarly attention, should further attention be afforded to the literary works of Shakespeare and his contemporaries? The short answer centres on the way the themes of this thesis can be seen to be analogous to the themes of our current social climate. Although my research appears dedicated to attitudes that existed over four hundred years ago, it is important to recognise that the gender expectations explored in this thesis, that present themselves in plays of early seventeenth-century England, continue to influence modern day life. The global coverage of women in positions of authority – like Kamala Harris, the United States' *first* female Vice President, and Jacinda Ardern, the *first* Prime Minister in New Zealand to give birth while in office – indicates that these 'firsts' for women are noteworthy moments of history because they signify how, in 2021, the Western world (not to mention the non-Western world) is still only in its infant years of seeing the disruption of gender roles and the gender hierarchy.

This is not to suggest that these gender assumptions were established in Elizabethan/Jacobean England, but to emphasise that attitudes regarding gender – including gendered double standards, the 'masculine', the 'feminine,' and gender roles and expectations – have been sustained for hundreds of years, and maintain their prominence in the direction and construction of social behaviour and life today. It is an issue for another project altogether but, four hundred-odd years ago, social thought managed to *somewhat* recognise that gender was not dichotomous. The humoral underpinnings of early modern thought tell us that social understanding of gender during this time categorised some males – young boys and elderly males – as, physiologically, feminine. As such, elements of early modern thought acknowledged gender as a spectrum that, to a degree, perceived gender as exclusive of sex. Such ideas speak to our own relatively recent acknowledgement of gender as a spectrum, demonstrating that, even once we move beyond thinking about gender binaries and patriarchal

hierarchies, an analogue can be found that, surprisingly, closes the gap between the perceived primitive thinking of early modern England and our own supposed progressive thinking. Gender fluidity has therefore endured no matter patriarchy's attempts to negate and quash its existence. The thought we are left with, however, is that those who identify as neither men nor women have experienced and grappled with an inimitable (in)access to power given that the patriarchal binaries afforded no place for the non-binary. If, over four hundred years ago, gender was not considered strictly fixed, then it is the job of current/feminist/politically attuned early modern scholarship to excavate gender fluid representation and experience in the literature from this period, and bring it centre stage.

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Appendix 1

Play title	**Author(s)**	**Date of first performance**	**Playing company of first performance**	**Wiggins' reference number**
The Merry Devil of Edmonton	Unknown	1602-4 *Wiggins' best guess: 1603*	Lord Chamberlain's Men	1392
Measure for Measure	William Shakespeare	1603-4	King's Men	1413
The Phoenix	Thomas Middleton	1603-4 *Wiggins' best guess: February 1604*	Children of Paul's	1420
If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody, or, The Troubles of Queen Elizabeth (Part One)	Thomas Heywood	1603-5 *Wiggins' best guess: 1604*	Queen Anne's Men	1427
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore, or, The Honest Whore: Part One	Thomas Dekker and Thomas Middleton	1604	Prince's Men	1431
If You Know Not Me, You Know Nobody (Part Two)	Thomas Heywood	1603-5 *Wiggins' best guess: 1604*	Queen Anne's Men	1433
Othello, or, *The Moor of Venice*	William Shakespeare	1601-4 *Wiggins' best guess: 1604*	King's Men	1437
May Day	George Chapman	1601-8 *Wiggin's best guess: 1604*	Children of the Queen's Revels	1439
The Tragedy of Philotas	Samuel Daniel	1600-4 *Wiggins' best guess: 1604*	Children of the Queen's Revels	1440
When You See Me, You Know Me	Samuel Rowley	1604-5 *Wiggins' best guess: 1604*	Prince's Men	1441

The London Prodigal	Unknown	1603-5 *Wiggins' best guess: 1604*	King's Men	1443
All Fools	George Chapman	Late 1604	Children of the Queen's Revels	1448
Westward Ho!	Thomas Dekker and John Webster	1604	Children of Paul's	1450
Eastward Ho!	Ben Jonson, George Chapman, and John Marston	1604-5 *Wiggins' best guess: 1605*	Children of the Queen's Revels	1473
Northward Ho!	Thomas Dekker and John Webster	1605	Children of Paul's	1483
King Lear	William Shakespeare	1605	King's Men	1486
The Isle of Gulls	John Day	February 1606	Children of the Queen's Revels	1491
Macbeth	William Shakespeare	1606-11 *Wiggins' best guess: 1606*	King's Men	1496