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Eloquence in Talke and Vertue in Deedes: Education and Discontent in Early Modern England

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**ELOQUENCE IN TALKE AND VERTUE IN DEEDES:
EDUCATION AND DISCONTENT IN EARLY MODERN
ENGLAND**

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of English

by

Mary Alison Webb

B.A., University of Arkansas at Little Rock, 2014

M.A., University of Chicago, 2016

August 2021

Here now have you ... this idle work of mine, which, I fear, like the spider's web, will be thought fitter to be swept away than worn to any other purpose ... I hope ... it will be pardoned, perchance made much of, though in itself it have deformities; for, indeed, for severer eyes it is not, being but a trifle, and that triflingly handled... Read it, then, at your idle times, and the follies your good judgment will find in it blame not, but laugh at; and so, looking for no better stuff than, as in a haberdasher's shop, glasses or feathers, you will continue to love the writer, who doth exceedingly love you, and most, most heartily prays you may long live ...

—Sir Philip Sidney
The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia

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To write acknowledgements is to delve into a strange genre. To thank everyone is impossible; to even try is more futile. If I have ever promised in passing to thank you in my “Acknowledgments Section,” consider that sorted. I will specifically mention Andy, Tiffers, Darby, Vicki, and Kathie for support, distraction, free food, and company during Razorback games. WPS!

I would like to offer thanks to the English department at Louisiana State University – especially Emily King and Chris Barrett. I would also like to offer thanks to Kate Jensen from the French department. For my undergraduate thesis I got the following feedback: “you said ‘patient’ twice. It sounds insincere.” I won’t make that mistake again so if you have been patient, know that I appreciate it.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to Hunter Parham, who wanted to trap me in a bottle for being a witch when we were at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and at the same time wanted me to use my “witchy powers” to make it snow so he could go snowboarding. Maybe Zabelle Stodola should not have assigned him a paper on Cotton Mather; it turned him into a regular Matthew Hopkins.

This project and, in fact, all my writing is influenced by bacon and eggs and concrete trucks. And because I promised: Hey David Koon, son of Wexstan, Shakespeare wrote his plays!

Table of Contents

| | |
|---|-----|
| Acknowledgments..... | iii |
| A Note on Spelling..... | v |
| Abstract..... | vi |
| Chapter 1. Setting the Stage..... | 1 |
| Chapter 2. The Performance of Pedagogy in <i>Love's Labour's Lost</i> | 24 |
| Chapter 3. Dangerous Rhetoric..... | 68 |
| Chapter 4. "Brutish Utteraunce": Barbarism and Imitation in <i>Titus Andronicus</i> | 112 |
| Chapter 5. Conclusion..... | 161 |
| Bibliography..... | 170 |
| Vita..... | 219 |

A Note on Spelling

I have opted to retain the original orthography when quoting from primary texts and scanned documents. An exception to this is the long S. The reasons for this are both functional – my keyboard does not have such a character – and for reader clarity. I have, additionally, modernized i j, u, v, vv, and uu. I’ve changed “y^e” to “the” and made additional changes to the printing practice of substituting a “-” for an “n.” In such cases, I’ve removed the dash and added the “n.”

In other, edited, editions I have followed suit with the particular book’s editorial decision where they have either modernized the spelling or retained the original spelling. The standard for standardization in these cases has been deferred to the original editor.

Abstract

The title for the project, *Eloquence in Talke and Vertue in Deedes*, comes from educational theorist William Kempe's claim that the early modern humanist educational system was guaranteed to produce eloquence and virtue. It is, however, my argument that the educational failed in its promises. This project seeks to dissect the educational practices of the early modern period and reanimate the pieces to show how these practices were regularly critiqued on the early modern stage. More than showing the influence of the educational system in the production of drama, I point out that these practices are re-represented as rebuttals of the educational system. As such, *Eloquence in Talke, and Vertue in Deedes* is a series of essays united by the theme of discontentment with an educational system that failed to meet its promises.

Chapter 1. Setting the Stage

Introduction

Advocates of the early modern educational system had lofty goals and expectations for their program of study. For some, education produced an eloquence that could be put in the service of a broader public. William Kempe, schoolmaster at Plymouth, suggests that the goal of education was to “teach all things, framing him to eloquence in talke, and vertue in deedes” (*Education of Children* E6).¹ Education, for Merchant Taylors’ schoolmaster Richard Mulcaster, equips students to “execute those doings in life, which the state of his calling shall employ him unto, whether publike abroad, or priuate at home, according vnto the direction of his countrie, where unto he is borne, and oweth his whole seruice” (*Position* 185). For others, education led specifically to skill in governance. Roger Ascham, tutor to Elizabeth I, says education can create students who are “easily ... brought well to serve God and country both by virtue and wisdom” (*Schoolmaster* 11). For Mulcaster, the goal for school is that students “be set to school to qualify themselves, to learn how to be religious and loving, how to govern and obey, how to forecast and prevent, how to defend and assail” (*Positions* 133). Juan Luis Vives, tutor to Mary Tudor and educational theorist, had a similar expectation. For Vives, “the fruit of all studies” is to “employ [education] for the common good” (*On Education* 283). Vives says that “study must be attuned to practical usefulness in life” and encourages students to “turn [their studies] to the use and advantage of other people” (*On Education* 284). For others, education was thought to lead to employment opportunities. Education, for rhetorician Leonard Cox, offered employment opportunities for those who will “be advocates and proctoures in the lawe,” those who will be in

¹ Similarly, Dean Colet claims the goal of education is for students to be “learned in Laten tung, but also instructe & informed in vertuose condicions.” Quoted from Michael F. J. McDonnell’ *A History of St. Paul’s School*, 14.

diplomatic service in case they are “sente in theyr prynces Ambassades,” and those aspiring “to be techars of goddes worde in suche maner as maye be moste sensible and accepte to their audience” (Cox 41-42). Perhaps, though, Kempe offers the simplest explanation when he suggests that the goal of education is to “set the common wealth in good order” (*Education of Children* D). For all of these, though, education was a means to a glorified end, one that was publicly visible and admirable.

Despite the promises the educational system offered, there is a marked lack of consensus among early modern theorists and recent critics alike about the success or failure of the early modern humanist educational system. Rebecca Bushnell suggests looking at the educational system with an “ambivalence” that “was a symptom of a world of uncertain hierarchies, shifting relations, conflicting authorities, and contradictory values” (19-20). Neil Rhodes proposes a different approach to understanding the success of the educational system. For Rhodes, the early modern education system failed to meet its most basic promises. Rhodes points out that the educational system was producing “increasing numbers of the unemployably eloquent” (46). Jeff Dolven, similarly, points out that those educated under the humanist system felt like “that they had been betrayed by that training and the promises it had made them” (3).² This type of ambivalence is not isolated to the retrospective gaze of twenty first century critics. Contemporary works also reveal the same kind of ambivalence. John Brinsley acknowledged that material gains were available for educated men. Brinsley specifically lists “riches, honours, dignities, favour,

² Dolven notes that “As early as the 1560s, the great success of humanism as a reform movement is accompanied by a gradually rising tide of dissatisfaction with its methods, dissatisfaction particularly with the ways its students were trained to read. Such restlessness stems at least partly from testing its program in an ever-wider field, and giving its students time to age into disillusionment. The consequence is a loss of faith in the forms of understanding that had been cultivated day to day in institutions where an increasing proportion of privileged Englishmen spent their formative years, and where they learned not only to read but (to the extent that these can be separated) also to write, and to think” (8). For more on the disillusionment of education and the overproduction of educated men in early modern England see Darryll Grantley’s *Wit’s Pilgrimage: Drama and the Social Impact of Education in Early Modern England*.

pleasures, and whatsoever their hearts can desire” as potential rewards for education (*Ludus Literarius* 285). Despite the promises of wealth and opportunity that an education promised, by the end of the sixteenth century there were concerns that a grammar school education was resulting in an excessive amount of overeducated job candidates. Mulcaster addressed the issue of over-enrollment in his *Positions*.³ He claims throughout the work that “all may learne to write and read [in English] without daunger,” but an education in Latin should be regulated. According to Mulcaster, too many graduates were “gaping for preferment” (*Positions* 137). In other words, the early modern education system was producing more educated students than the job market could accommodate.

This project is called *Eloquence in Talke, and Vertue in Deedes*, and the title comes from Kempe’s claim that the early modern humanist educational system was guaranteed to produce eloquence and virtue.⁴ Throughout the project, I examine how educational practices and theory are remediated in early modern drama. This project seeks to dissect the educational practices of the early modern period and reanimate the pieces to show how these practices were regularly critiqued on the early modern stage. More than showing the influence of the educational system in the production of drama, I point out that these practices are re-represented as rebuttals of the educational system. As such, *Eloquence in Talke, and Vertue in Deedes* is a series of essays united by the theme of discontentment with an educational system that failed to meet its promises. The stage’s own relationship to performing a fiction makes it especially well-suited to

³ Mulcaster claims that “there must be a restraint, and that all may not passe on to learning, which throng thitherwards, bycause of the inconueniences, which may ensue, by want of preferment for such a multitude, and by defeating other trades of their necessarie trauellours” (*Positions* 141).

⁴ This project focuses on grammar schools. For more information on colleges and universities after the reformation see Leach’s *English Schools at the Reformation*, Lawrence Stone’s “The Educational Revolution in England, 1560-1640,” “Literacy and Education in England 1640-1900” and *The University in Society, I, Oxford and Cambridge from the 14th to the Early 19th Century*.

dramatizing gaps between dream and reality. As such, the stage is well positioned to critique educational practices.

Educational Material Early Modern Edition

For this project, I have consulted a number of historical sources that influenced or informed the humanist educational system. I have included the pedagogical treatises of humanist theorists Desiderius Erasmus and Juan Luis Vives.⁵ Both Erasmus' *A Declamation on the Subject of Early Liberal Education for Children* (1529) and Vives' *Instruction of a Christian Woman* (c1523) were influential in establishing a uniform humanist educational system in England. I have also consulted several pedagogical works written by English authors. In selecting texts by English authors, I have chosen to consult treatises dedicated to both private and public education. As such, I have turned to Thomas Elyot's *The Book Named the Governour* (1531), which addresses the education of the aristocracy, and Roger Ascham's *The Scholemaster* (1570), which is a treatise on the private education of gentleman.⁶ I have also examined a number of texts written by schoolmasters designed for use in the public school: these include Richard Mulcaster's *Positions Concerning the Training Up of Children* (1581), John Brinsley's *Ludus Literarius or The Grammar Schoole* (1612), and William Kempe's *The Education of Children in Learning* (1588).⁷ Additionally, this project relies on several grammar school textbooks. I have consulted Vives' dialogues, *Linguae Latinae Exercitatio* (1539), and Erasmus' *Colloquia* (1519).

⁵ Both Erasmus and Vives had close ties to Henry VIII, and both were influential in sixteenth-century English pedagogical circles.

⁶ Roger Ascham's *The Scholemaster* was published in six editions by 1589.

⁷ Mulcaster was the headmaster at Merchant Taylors' for twenty-five years and was then at St Paul's for twelve years. Brinsley, who was a headmaster in Leicestershire, wrote *Ludus Literarius or The Grammar Schoole* as a manual for schoolmasters in poor country schools. Kempe wrote *The Education of Children in Learning* while he was working as a schoolmaster at Plymouth Grammar School.

In addition to pedagogical treatises, I have consulted several rhetoric manuals. Among these rhetoric manuals I have included: Henry Peacham's *The Garden of Eloquence* (1593), Richard Rainolde's *A booke called the Foundacion of Rhetorike* (1563), Abraham Fraunce's *The Arcadian rhetorike* (1588), Thomas Wilson's *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1560), Richard Sherry's *A treatise of schemes [and] tropes* (1550), and George Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589).⁸ This list is not meant to act as exhaustive sample of the rhetoric books available during the period. James J. Murphy suggests that there were over a thousand rhetoric manuals published in Europe during the early modern period.⁹ My selection of these texts is based on their availability in the vernacular. The educational treatises and rhetoric manuals selected for this project are, for the most part, available in English and are thus accessible to the literate population. I have also selected these rhetoric books because their authors are connected to each other and with educational theorists by their expressed desire to benefit the country.

Both Peacham and Rainolde are explicit in their goal to strengthen the commonwealth. In the prefatory section of *The Garden of Eloquence*, Peacham explains that his manual was written "to profyte this my country" (Aiiiiv). Rainolde offers a similar sentiment when he claims that his "ende and purpose" is to produce a "worke profitable to all tymes, my countrie and commonwealthe." (Aiiv). The benefit to the commonwealth, at least for the writers of these rhetoric books, was to increase the use and reputation of English and elevate the language to the idealized standards of the Latin classics. Sherry, in *A treatise of schemes and tropes*, is specific

⁸ Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* promises to pull its readers from the "carte" to the "Court" (304). Puttenham explains that his intent is "to make this Art vulgar for all English mens vse." (40). As such Puttenham describes the "English tong" as the language that is "fully fashioned to the common vnderstanding, and accepted by consent of [the] whole countrey and nation." (156).

⁹ See James J. Murphy's "One Thousand Neglected Authors," in *Renaissance Eloquence* pp. 20-36. Brian Vickers, in *In Defense of Rhetoric*, uses the number of rhetoric manuals published to estimate that several million people in Europe between 1400 and 1700 had a foundational knowledge of rhetoric. See *In Defense of Rhetoric* p. 256.

that his goal is to take the classical tropes and figures and make them “speak English” (8). Similarly, Walter Haddon’s introductory poem for Wilson’s *The Arte of Rhetorique*, ironically written in Latin, suggest that the manual will teach Lady Rhetoric how to speak English. By looking at material available in English it is easier to see how the Latin-based humanist system was translated, both linguistically and culturally, into the vernacular. The texts written in English reflect both the educational system’s influence in England and England’s push toward the development of a national identity through the development of an eloquent language.

My decision to focus on material that was available, largely, in the vernacular is informed by two separate and intertwined ideas. First, as Jenny C. Mann notes, English writers “began to use the tools of their humanist education to nurture native pride” to “displace England’s barbarous past” (12).¹⁰ Secondly, their newfound national pride was instrumental in, as Richard Helgersen points out, producing “a postcolonial/colonializing dynamic, a dynamic in which the English came to think of themselves and their language both as having been colonized and as potentially colonizing others” (“Language” 289). Rhetoric and eloquence then emerge as what Robert Matz calls “a form of linguistic cultural capital” (195). Once language becomes a commodity, who has access to it and for what purpose becomes ideologically important. Richard Halpern points to education’s ideological work when he claims that humanism “sought to reform the behavior of ruling groups” and impose a particular “behavioral disposition” on a “relatively broad array of classes” (25–26). By thinking about English education and rhetoric in ideological

¹⁰ Mann notes that the production of rhetoric books in English connected the early modern educational system with a vernacular eloquence. According to Mann, the “central feature of Renaissance humanism was its reverence for classical Latin as the one true form of eloquent expression. Yet despite the cultural authority of classical literature, sixteenth-century writers increasingly came to believe that England needed an equally distinguished vernacular language to serve its burgeoning national community. For generations of literate English speakers who had been taught to read and write using Latin discursive techniques, this project required the elevation of the vernacular to the standards of idealized classical models. Thus, the translation of the art of rhetoric into English aimed to create a new vernacular eloquence, mindful of its classical origins but also self-consciously English in character” (2).

terms, I am following Wayne Rebhorn's observation that "rhetoric speaks culture" (12). For Rebhorn, rhetoric can thus be seen to contain, at the very least, "an anthropology, a sociology, a politics, an ethics, and a theology—all of which become visible as one examines its assumptions and assertions, its judgments and evaluations concerning human nature, the social order, the nature of power, and the workings of the universe" (12). In other words, as Mann notes, rhetoric and particularly vernacularized rhetoric was an instrument of "wider cultural significance" (10).

Methodology and Overview

I begin and end with Shakespearean plays. My choice to focus on Shakespeare for two thirds of this dissertation is motivated largely by Shakespeare's educational background.¹¹ Because my focus in this project is on grammar school education and the way the grammar school methods influenced the stage, Shakespeare is the ideal candidate for case study: Shakespeare did not attend a university after grammar school. Chapter two engages with *Love's Labour's Lost* and chapter four focuses on *Titus Andronicus*. In addition to Shakespeare's plays, I engage with Thomas Dekker, William Rowley, John Ford's *The Witch of Edmonton* and Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome's *The Witches of Lancashire* in chapter three. All the plays I have selected deal in some way with the educational system or rhetoric and public speaking. There are several early modern English plays that engage with the humanist's educational system in various ways and my selection is in no way exhaustive. The selection, however, reflects my interest in how humanist education (and the theater) set public terms for the construction of gender and race during the period.

¹¹ Ben Jonson's oft quoted remark that Shakespeare "hadst small Latine and lesse Greeke" inspired the title for T. W. Baldwin's two volume tome on the history of the grammar school in the sixteenth century. See Baldwin's *William Shakspeare's Small Latine & Lesse Greeke* Vol. 1 and 2.

These plays represent part of what I will call, following Jean Howard, a genre of anxiety.¹² A genre of anxiety, for Howard who is specifically referring to anti-theatrical tracts, includes works that express a “level of barely suppressed anger, fear, and intolerance that characterize their depictions of the practices and the social groups they attack” (Howard 23). In referring to these plays as a genre of anxiety, I am also following Stephen Greenblatt’s idea of salutary anxiety.¹³ For Greenblatt, the playwright creates a type of anxiety, staged for the audiences’ pleasure. My definition of a genre of anxiety differs slightly from both Howard’s and Greenblatt’s. Anxiety is ultimately an emotion. However, anxiety can be felt by individuals and their expressions of this emotion can be collected in a corpus of written and performed material. To me, these plays reflect an underlying anxiety in an educational system that failed to meet its promises.

For this project, I use the term “drama” to describe both classroom exercise and the public theater. When I use the term “theater” I am referring specifically to the public theater. For this project, I think about “performance” in two distinct yet overlapping ways. First, I use the term in the generic sense of “the accomplishment or carrying out of something” and the “action of performing a play, piece of music, ceremony” (OED “Performance” n, 1a, 4a). I additionally use the term as a way of looking at gender and as such I borrow from Judith Butler’s definition of gender as a performance. In making this statement I am following the critically established claim that performance is a necessary part of gender identity. By doing so, I am relying on Judith Butler’s often quoted claim that “‘persons’ only become intelligible through becoming gendered

¹² Jean E. Howard, in *The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England*, looks at the theater as a site of contestation in the periods larger network of class and gender struggles.

¹³ Greenblatt, in *Shakespearean Negotiations*, claims that Shakespeare “conceived of the playwright as a princely creator of anxiety” (142). Greenblatt uses *The Tempest* as a case study for salutary anxiety suggesting that Prospero cultivates, as part of the ethical instruction of his deposed, salutary anxiety in them.

in conformity with recognizable standards of gender intelligibility.” More important to my argument is Butler’s claim that we should “consider gender... as *a corporeal style*, an ‘act,’ as it were, which is both intentional and performative, where ‘*performative*’ suggests a dramatic and contingent construction of meaning” (*Gender Trouble* 22, 190). Moreover, I am following Butler’s statement that “gender ought not to be construed as a stable identity” and instead, “gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a stylized repetition of acts” (191). It is my argument in each of these chapters that the performance of educational practices complicates an understanding of gender and/or race in the period.

Both chapter two and chapter three think about, in different ways, the relationship between gender and education. In chapter four, I suggest that the educational methods themselves complicate England’s understanding of its own racial history. Each of these chapters is interested in thinking about education and the theater. Each of them grapples with a different dimension of humanist education as it is reflected or refracted by the stage. As such, each chapter has been informed by different schools of critical thought. My approach to this project has been intentionally eclectic. To grapple with various cultural phenomenon, different chapters lean differently on some combination of historicist, feminist, and critical race theory approaches. In making this decision I agree with Sujata Iyengar, who claims that “a racially informed Renaissance criticism should ... simultaneously be a *feminist* criticism, a *materialist* criticism, a *queer* criticism, a *new historicist* criticism, a *formal* criticism, and an *interventionist* one” (15).¹⁴

In chapters two and three I draw attention to the humanist education system’s hostility to women by pointing to the imbrication of these intersecting oppressions in drama and

¹⁴ See Iyengar’s *Shades of Difference: Mythologies of Skin Color in Early Modern England*.

performance more broadly. The early modern humanist educational system was largely hostile to women. In short, the educational system taught young boys to separate themselves from women and act like men. In chapter two, “The Performance of Pedagogy in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*,” I use classroom performance exercises to question the validity of performance in education. I also use the play to question the idea that a so-called masculine identity is connected to education and the educational methods of performance. Similarly, chapter three, “Dangerous Rhetoric” looks at the connection between gender and education. By looking at eloquence through the mastery of rhetoric as a performance I examine how eloquent women disrupt the expectations of education to create masculine subjects. I suggest in each of these chapters that the educational system was heavily invested in performance to distinguish men from women.

In chapter two, I look at the early modern classroom as a performative space where students and schoolmasters were both expected to perform. By examining the scholars and Holofernes, the schoolmaster in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, I call attention to the artificiality of performance in the classroom, but I also use the play to think about the performance of gender. Classroom performance was thought to reform self-indulgent, childish behavior and teach young boys how to become successful orators and men. Education was, in its simplest terms, preparation for public performance. Moreover, education was one of the many social rituals that functioned as an indicator of the equally performative emergence of the young boy’s masculine identity. It is my argument that the play highlights absurdity of performance, both pedagogical performance and the performance of gender, and complicates the correlation between education and the concept of a male identity.

Eloquence is linked to a masculine identity and tethered to the all-male institutions of education and public service. This link between education, rhetorical performance, and

masculinity created an environment where eloquent women were seen as a threat. As such, chapter three looks at the accused witches in *The Witch of Edmonton* and *The Witches of Lancashire*. My chapter's argument proposes that witchcraft is a crime of eloquence, one criminalized and theorized along specifically gendered lines. This chapter looks at witchcraft as an extreme example of controlling women's speech and their access to education. I suggest that witchcraft and the eloquence associated with rhetoric are twinned in their origin as modes of activating speech to coerce action. While male writers attempted to regulate female speech in general, witchcraft provides a useful window into the way female speech was mediated, policed, and silenced, sometimes permanently, by a male culture deeply invested in claiming and maintaining eloquence as a uniquely masculine trait. It is my argument that these witchcraft plays are micro-arenas where the larger project of establishing and maintaining a masculine identity in England is played out. I suggest that the regulation of female speech indicates that the idea of a stable, masculine identity that is connected to eloquence and education is tenuous at best.

In chapter four, I examine how education and theater reflect and create raced practices. I use *Titus Andronicus* as a case study for thinking about how the public theater uses classroom practices to speak to a wider-spread anxiety about the viability of education. Chapter four, "'Brutish Utterance': Barbarism and Imitation in *Titus Andronicus*" looks at specifically the practice of imitation and composition and the role both practices play in the early modern definition of barbarism. England relied on the civilizing effect of education to remediate its "barbarous" past, yet the construction of barbarousness versus civilization makes humanist education complicit in the creation of "whiteness" and supremacy in the moment. I claim that "Barbarism" in a humanistic educational context, helps in understanding the formation and

concretion of modern racial supremacies. However, it is my argument that *Titus* complicates the barbarous/civilized binary through the character of Aaron. Through Aaron, the play calls the racial supremacy of whiteness into question and reveals the instability of European “whiteness.” Aaron can be seen as a sort of lynchpin connecting England’s barbarous past with Rome and, through Aaron, the humanist educational fiction of a dyadic opposition of barbarousness and civilization is revealed to be a convenient but specious proposition.

Why the Theater

During the sixteenth century, England’s system of education transformed. After England’s split from the Catholic Church, the scholastic cathedral schools were replaced with local grammar schools modeled after European humanist models.¹⁵ Henry VIII seemed to recognize the need for educated laypersons as government activity became increasingly more complex.¹⁶ Between 1537 and 1547, at least eighteen schools which were founded or re-established that name Henry as their benefactor. The period marks what David Cressy calls an explosion of education. There were so many grammar schools in England that by 1587, William Harrison, in his *An Historical description of the Iland of Britaine*, claimed “there are not many corporate towns now under the Queen’s dominion that have not one grammar school at the least” (83). While the humanist educational system was not – during the period – formally organized as a national program, Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine suggests that the curriculum was largely uniform.

¹⁵ See David Cressy’s *Education in Tudor and Stuart England*. See Helen M. Jewell’s *Education in Early Modern England*.

¹⁶ See David Cressy, *Education in Tudor and Stuart England*; Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine. *From Humanism to the Humanities: Education and the Liberal Arts in Fifteenth- and Sixteenth-Century Europe*; Helen M. Jewell *Education in Early Modern England*; Nicholas Orme. *Education and Society in Medieval and Renaissance England*.

Drama emerged rather naturally from the educational activities which took place in the classroom, particularly because of Latin learning. The interest in ancient rhetorical theory turned the early modern classroom into what Lynn Enterline calls a “daily theater for Latin learning” (*Shakespeare's Schoolroom* 44). Delivery, also called *pronuntiatio*, was the final part of rhetoric, and it was inherently performative. Quintilian divides *pronuntiatio* into two parts; the first part focused on speech or pronunciation, and the second part, *actio*, dealt with gesture.¹⁷

Pronunciation was so important to the educational system that Elyot, in his *Boke*, says that the women responsible for small children should “speak none English but that which is clean, polite, perfectly and articulately pronounced” (18). Leicestershire schoolmaster John Brinsley took a similar stance and claimed that children are to be “trained up to pronounce right from the first entrance” into school (212). The reason that pronunciation was so vital to the early modern educational system is because language was conceived in oral terms and Latin was taught in those terms. Students learned to pronounce the words before they learned to write down the letters that signified those sounds.¹⁸ In an illustration of this, Erasmus’ *De Recta Pronuntiatione* (1528) is devoted to pronunciation. Erasmus stages the work as a dialogue between two characters, Lion and Bear (Erasmus), and the two discuss education.¹⁹ In Erasmus’s work, Bear turns to Quintilian to claim that language is mastered, not only through rules but also by “the

¹⁷ According to Quintilian: “Delivery, or *pronuntiatio*, is often styled *action*. But the first name is derived from the voice, the second from the gesture. For Cicero in one passage speaks of *action* as being a *form of speech* [*quasi sermonem*], and in another as being a *kind of physical eloquence*. Nonetheless, he divides action into two elements, which are the same as the elements of delivery, namely, voice and movement” (*Institutio oratoria* 2.3.1).

¹⁸ Robert Robinson’s *Art of Pronunciation* was the first book devoted to English pronunciation and was published in 1617.

¹⁹ Erasmus’ tongue-in-cheek type of writing is apparent in this dialogue. When Bear complains about the decline of education, Lion makes Bear the dictator of the Republic of Letters.

usage of actual daily speech” (370). Language learning, then, for Erasmus, is tied to performance. The end of eloquence was action.

Delivery skills played an integral role in rhetorical training. The Tudor classroom, as Ursula Potter points out, was a “performative space” where both the schoolmaster and the scholar were asked to perform (147).²⁰ Early modern humanist textbooks used Roman comedy to teach Latin as speech, so the knowledge of grammar was connected to conversation. Ben Jonson points to this trend when he defines grammar as “the art of true, and well speaking a Language” (*English Grammar* 3).²¹ Speech was so important to Eton Headmaster Nicholas Udall that his *Floures for Latine Spekyng* (1533) were “selected and gathered out of Terence” (“Title”).²² The work is comprised of conversational phrases in both Latin and English that Udall extracted from the *Andria* and other plays.

Oral performance was also built into the educational system in the form of dialogues.²³ Kempe’s second through fifth forms rely on a dialogue as a way of teaching.²⁴ Edmund Coote in

²⁰ Potter examines classroom training in memorization, pronunciation, role-playing, and *actio* in order to argue that Tudor grammar schools were “fertile breeding grounds for the explosion of dramatic activity” in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. (“Performing Arts in the Tudor Classroom,” 147).

²¹ Ben Jonson also says that language “most shows a man: speak, that I may see thee. It springs out of the most retired and inmost parts of us, and is the image of the parent of it, the mind” in his commonplace book, *Timber, or Discoveries*.

²² Greg Walker notes that “as humanist teaching methods found their way into the curricula of the English universities and schools, the plays of Plautus, Seneca, and particularly Terence began to find favour as set texts. Terence was taught at Cambridge from 1502, and at Oxford from some point after 1505. As early as 1483 Magdalen School, Oxford, had appointed a grammar master, John Anwykyll, who published a textbook which drew heavily upon Terence’s comedies for its material for translation. By 1531 Winchester College was apparently teaching the comedies to its fourth formers six days a week. Richard Pynson attempted to take early advantage of this new development, and in the late 1490s printed Latin editions of six of the comedies for the academic market” (*Politics of Performance* 10-11).

²³ Another exercise that relied on oral performance was disputations, academic exercises where students debated topics in front of their peers and teachers.

²⁴ In the second form Kempe recommends to “the Dialogs of *Corderius* and *Castalion*.” In the third, fourth and fifth forms, he recommends “harder” Dialogs (F5, G1).

the *English School-Maister* (1596), advises schoolmasters to “let one [student] read the questions, and another the answer.” Coote goes on to advise a sort of classroom competition when he suggests that “when your Scholers oppose one the other, let the answerer answer without booke” (E4v). Brinsley, in *Ludus Literarius* also suggests that students should rely in “disputations of grammar” as a way to learn (Dd1v).²⁵ These dialogues, according to Brinsley, involved a roleplaying, or acting aspect. Brinsley encourages students to “utter every dialogue lively” as if the student “were the persons which did speake in that dialogue” (212). Dialogues required an exchange that required performance by both the student and the schoolmaster. Leonard Barkan observes that the question-and-answer method of teaching at school made Latin something of a “performed as a dramatic conversation” (35). In early modern textbooks, dialogues were typically placed at the end suggesting that oral performance was the culmination of the students’ efforts.²⁶ More, though, than simply acting to teach language, drama was considered a useful educational tool because it also taught verbal and gestural refinement, as well as behavior.²⁷ Charles Hoole sees acting “a comedy, or a colloquy sometimes” as a way to prepare students to “pronounce Orations with a Grace” but oratory – particularly delivery – possessed performative elements (142). At The King’s School, in Canterbury, the headmaster and his assistant were to “endeavour to teach their pupils to speak openly, finely and distinctly,

²⁵ Brinsley’s and his *Children’s Dialogues* (1617) is another example. Similarly, Elyot also advocates “quicke and mery diologes elect out of Luciane” as a method of teaching (31r).

²⁶ See Joyce Boro’s “Multilingualism, Romance, and Language Pedagogy; or, Why Were So Many Sentimental Romances Printed as Polyglot Texts?” in *Tudor Translations*.

²⁷ Halpern suggests that “mimetic assimilation” was “fundamental to all humanist pedagogy” (34). See Halpern’s *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation*. See also, Greenblatt’s *Renaissance Self Fashioning* where he suggests a link between rhetorical manuals and conduct manuals: “The manuals of court behavior which became popular in the sixteenth century are essentially handbooks for actor, practical guides for a society whose members were nearly always on stage. These books are closely related to the rhetorical handbooks that were also in vogue – both essentially compilations of verbal strategies and both based upon the principle of imitation” (162).

keeping due decorum both with their body and their mouth” (467).²⁸ Similarly, Mulcaster taught voice projection at Merchant Taylors’ school.²⁹ Mulcaster encouraged “lowd speaking,” calling the exercise “necessarie” for a scholar (65).

Drama’s usefulness extended beyond verbal performance into action. In Francis Bacon’s essay “On Boldness,” he recalls the “trivial grammar-school text” where Demosthenes says the chief part of an orator is action. While Bacon calls action “superficial” and the “virtue of a player,” his recollections suggest that drama was an important part of the English classroom. Bacon is, of course, not the only early modern writer to connect action with eloquence and oration. Action, for Wright, is “a certain visible eloquence, or an eloquence of the body, or a comely grace in delivering conceits” (212).³⁰ Jonson takes the idea further in his definition of grammar by suggesting that “expression constitutes the persuasive power of rhetoric.” For Jonson, then, “writing is but an Accident” (*English Grammar* 3). William Malim, Headmaster of Eton, disparages acting as “trifling” but claims that “when it comes to the teaching the action of oratory and the gestures and movements of the body, nothing else accomplishes these aims so high.”³¹ Eloquence is more than speaking; it is acting the part of an orator, and these are skills that were privileged in the early modern classroom through drama.

If students were taught to act like orators, then part of the process involved role playing. These role-playing exercises, which include a type of classroom drama, were thought to

²⁸ John Lyly and Christopher Marlowe both attended The King’s School, in Canterbury. See Arthur F. Leach, *Educational Charters and Documents 598 to 1909*.

²⁹ Edmund Spenser entered as a “poor boy” at Merchant Taylors. Thomas Kyd and Thomas Lodge both also studied under Mulcaster.

³⁰ Wright goes on to say that this bodily eloquence is an “external image of an internal mind, or a shadow of affections, or three springs which flow from one fountain, called *vox, vultus, vita*, ‘voice, countenance, life’” (212-3)

³¹ Quoted in T. H. Vail Motter’s *The School Drama in England* Motter, page 51.

influence behavior by teaching young boys how to behave. Erasmus defends the liberal arts when he claims that “though they are not virtues in themselves, they prepare the mind for virtue by making it gentle and pliable instead of savage and cruel” (60).³² Drama, then, served as a “form of courtesy literature in providing social education,” according to Darryll Grantley (59).³³ For Hoole, oration exercises teach students to be “embolded” and master the “artifice of gallant expression” (266). It would be difficult to suggest that a room full of young boys are capable of “gallant expression,” but the exercises provided students with an avenue, as Hoole suggests to “expel that subrustic bashfulness and unresistible timorousness which some children are naturally possessed withal” (316). Thomas Heywood, writing about his time at Cambridge in *An Apology for Actors* (1612), echoes Hoole’s expectations. Heywood claims that academic learning is connected to public performance when he speaks of “shewes” that he has seen acted at the university. For Heywood drama was responsible for “emboldening of their junior schollers to arme them with audacity, against they come to bee employed in any publicke exercise” (28). While Heywood is a professional dramatist and as such is pleading on behalf of the public theater, he also is pointing to the idea that drama provides a training for life in public service. Because drama was seen as a necessary tool in training the orator, it was a staple in the early modern classroom. Drama aided in developing the speech skills and expression and reinforced the idea that the end of eloquence was action.

³² From a letter to John and Stanislaus Boner (1532), quoted in *English Humanism: Wyatt to Cowley*.

³³ Classroom drama, as Enterline notes, turned schoolboys into “self-monitoring, rhetorically facile subjects who modulated their performances of acceptable speech, bodily deportment, facial movement, vocal modulation, and affective expression” (44).

The connection between the classroom and drama was often a controversial one, especially when it came to the relationship of both to early modern theater.³⁴ While schoolboys were learning oration skills through drama, educational institutes, for the most part, sought to distance themselves from public, commercial theater.³⁵ Playwrights, however, themselves products of the educational system, directly engage with academic drama and educational practices. Their engagement with classroom specific exercises, students and schoolmasters suggests that early modern English playwrights were grappling with the overall effectiveness of their educations and they found the experience lacking. On the other hand, rhetoricians acknowledged the performative aspect of rhetoric but attempted to distance classroom drama from the commercial theater. For example, Fraunce, in *The Arcadian Rhetorike*, claims that the orator should use action “or gesture of the whole bodie” less “parasitically” than the professional actor (120).³⁶ Fraunce’s indictment of the professional actor was fairly common in the period.

Antitheatrical treatises such as John Northbrooke’s *A treatise wherein dicing, dauncing, vaine playes or enterluds with other idle pastimes commonly used on the Sabboth day, are reproved* ... (1577) and William Prynne’s *Histrion-Mastix* (1633) are examples of attacks on the public theater.³⁷ However, even attacks such as Northbrooke’s express an ambivalence where he makes some allowance for the inclusion of drama. Ironically, Northbrooke stages his treatise as a dialogue and according to one of his characters, the aged man, drama is permissible when the use

³⁴ For more on the early Modern theater as a commercial enterprise, see Roslyn Lander Knutson’s *Playing Companies and Commerce in Shakespeare’s Time*.

³⁵ While Ascham expresses reservations about the moral efforts of drama, he does recognize the value of drama in the training for rhetorical skills. Ascham advocates the comedies of Terence and Plautus for the classroom.

³⁶ Fraunce uses “parasiticallie” to refer to the Greek *parasitos* or professional buffoon.

³⁷ Sarah Knight observes that reformers debated whether drama’s “ability to build rhetorical confidence and impart to students a deeper knowledge of biblical and classical narratives counterbalanced its potentially pernicious teaching of dissimulation and falsehood” (242).

of drama is confined to very conservative pedagogical practices: “I thinke it is lawfull for a Scholemaster to practice his schollers to play Comedies, observing these and the like cautions” (76). Northbrooke’s concession, though, did not make school masters and student performances less susceptible to ridicule on stage. Play’s such as Shakespeare’s *The Merry Wives of Windsor* and John Marston’s *What You Will* provide examples of students who fail to understand the lessons.³⁸ Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew* mocks education and schoolmasters in particular.³⁹

More than simply mocking schoolmasters, stage plays such as Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* and Jonson’s *The Staple of News* link drama with teaching. Neither Shakespeare nor Jonson position the schoolmaster as a hero. In *The Tempest*, Prospero refers to himself as a “schoolmaster” and claims responsibly for Miranda’s exceptional education, an education he claims has provided her with “more profit / Than other princesses” (1.2.172-3).⁴⁰ Yet this schoolmaster forgets that Caliban is planning to have him killed, because Prospero is distracted by the play he puts on for Miranda and Ferdinand.⁴¹ It would also be hard to call Prospero’s story a tale of the successful schoolmaster, especially considering that he gives up his books and

³⁸ See readings of *The Merry Wives of Windsor* scene in Patricia Parker, *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender and Property*. In John Marston, in *What You Will*, the youngest scholar, Holofernes Pippo, fails to recite correctly from his Latin Primer. Young Holofernes Pippo’s failure is rewarded with the threat of physical violence. Edel Lamb argues that the “theatrical depictions of schoolboy lessons are a means of producing boyhood” (1). For readings on corporal punishment in the early modern classroom, see Rebecca Bushnell’s *A Culture of Teaching: Early Modern Humanism in Theory and Practice* and Lynn Enterline’s *Shakespeare’s Schoolroom: Rhetoric, Discipline, Emotion*.

³⁹ Dennis S. Brooks reads *Taming of the Shrew* in pedagogical terms in “‘To Show Scorn Her Own Image’: The Varieties of Education in *The Taming of the Shrew*.” For Brooks, the play depicts two dominant pedagogies: rote learning and private tutors. According to Brooks, both were popular with English intellectuals who were disenchanted with the grammar schools in England.

⁴⁰ Hiewon Shin claims that “Prospero’s instruction of Miranda point to a departure from the humanist notion of a proper education for a female child” (385).

⁴¹ In “‘Which first was mine own king’: Caliban and the Politics of Service and Education in *The Tempest*,” Tom Lindsay claims that “Caliban speaks and acts like someone who absorbed such training in Prospero’s ‘cell’ and who subsequently became disillusioned by it” (397).

retires to Milan.⁴² Perhaps, though, it is Jonson who presents the more vehement critique of schoolmasters and drama. Jonson's character Censure calls schoolmasters "cunning" and compares a teacher to a "conjurer or a poet" before complaining about the amount of drama in the early modern classroom. Censure claims schoolmasters "make all their scholars play-boys" and wonders, "do we pay our money for this? We send them to learn their grammar, and their Terence, and they learn their play-books" (3.third intermean. 44-49).

Despite their less than flattering depictions of schoolmaster on the stage, playwrights often position their craft as pedagogical when they are forced to defend themselves against antitheatrical literature. Heywood's *Apology for Actors* and John Webster's *An Excellent Actor* (1615) are two such examples. Both Webster and Heywood suggest that the theater and professional actor play a role in influencing morality. For Webster the actions of the actor fortify "morall precepts with example" (4:42). Webster suggests a connection between education and theater but claims that the public theater improves upon the skills taught in the classroom. According to Webster, "whatsoever is commendable in the grave orator" is "most exquisitly perfect" in the actor (4:42). Heywood also claims that the theater contains a pedagogical component, arguing that: "Playes are writ in this ayme, and carryed with this methode, to teach the subjects obedience to their King, to shew the people the untimely ends of such as have moved tumults, commotions, and insurrections, to present them with the flourishing estate of such as live in obedience, exhorting them to allegiance, dehorting them from all trayterous and felonious strategems" (F3).⁴³ Heywood illustrates this power the theater holds against

⁴² Goran Stanivukovic, in "*The Tempest* and the Discontents of Humanism" argues that Shakespeare "showed humanism's negative effects" and calls *The Tempest* a "self-reflective critique of humanism's dark side" (91).

⁴³ J.G. in *A Refutation of the Apology for Actors* disagrees with Heywood, claiming that plays are "wholly composed of Fables and Vanities," "lyes and decepts" and the theater itself is "Venus Pallace and Sathans Synagogue." (F, H2). According to J.G., plays are full of "profane gallants, city dames, country clowns, whores,

“fellonious strategems” by including two anecdotes in which women, who were interestingly enough, excluded from formal education, spontaneously confess to crime at the theater.⁴⁴

Whether playwrights are mocking schoolmasters on stage or positioning themselves as teachers in pamphlets, one thing is clear: Education and drama are interconnected, however uneasy their reciprocity.

The Next Act

Writers of rhetoric manuals share a goal with humanist educators: both felt that eloquence would profit the country. Peachman, when he explains that his writing manual was been designed “to profyte this my country,” makes a bold claim. For Peachman, an education in rhetoric “can hurte none” (Aiiiv). This project suggests that the education, far from “hurt[ing] none,” was instrumental in creating discourses of gender and race that we still grapple with some 500 years later. This project proposes an examination of the consequences the newly formed educational system had in the formation of a British national identity. To assume that education is innocent in the creation of bias is to say that the way we are taught does not influence the way we think. My goal here has been to look at the ways early modern education shaped early modern thought in terms of gender and race. There is much to do. Drama offers insight into the way educational practices were understood and re-represented—something appreciated in the early modern period as much as it is now.

cutpurses, pickpockets, knaves, and youths, while never laying eyes on ancient citizens, chaste matrons, modest maids, grave Senators, wise magistrates, just judges, or godly preachers” (Iv).

⁴⁴ According to Heywood, At *Lin in Norfolke*, the Earle of *Sussex* players performed acting the *History of Fryer Francis*, and when the ghost of a murdered husband arrived on stage, a female audience member “skritchd and cryd out Oh my husband, my husband! I see the ghost of my husband fiercely threatning and menacing me” (G2). The woman subsequently confessed to poisoning her husband. In another play, Heywood notes, the actors driving a nail into the temple of another actor on stage, prompted a “sodaine understand an out-cry, and loud shriek in a remote gallery” and a woman “with a distracted & troubled braine oft sighed out these words: Oh my husband, my husband!” The woman was sent home, but authorities soon learned that she had murdered her husband by driving a nail through his skull. The woman was subsequently convicted and executed.

Robert Greene's two-part romance, *Greene's Never Too Late* (1590) and *Farewell to Folly* (1591), chronicles the adventures of Francesco. He has a rocky start that includes being kept away from the woman he loves, eloping, and imprisonment for the alleged kidnapping of his wife. Francesco finally settles in as a schoolmaster where he makes a modest living and has a son. The young scholar is lured away by a prostitute aptly named Infida. He then has a three-year affair with Infida. After three years, Francesco runs out of money and unsurprisingly, Infida tells him to leave. However, while under Infida's influence, his downward spiral includes the low point of accepting a job as a playwright. In this story – Greene's well-documented distaste for Shakespeare notwithstanding – there is an element of tension between knowledge (obtained or given) in the classroom and knowledge (obtained or given) on the London stage. The tension is learned in the classroom and reproduced on stage. Ben Jonson – somewhat ironically – writes in his commonplace book, *Discoveries*, "our whole life is like a play: wherein every man, forgetful of himself, is in travail with expression of another. Nay, we so insist in imitating others, as we cannot, when it is necessary, return to ourselves" (551). Given the connection between the stage and the classroom, this critique could be applied to either one. And, I think, that is what Jonson is saying. My argument is that this tension between the classroom and the stage is a springboard for further inquiry.

The twin emerging institutions of the humanist educational system and the commercial theater co-existed in a tension but this tension nonetheless shaped perceptions of gender and race in the period. There is no shortage of scholarship on drama and education, or on drama and race, and drama and gender. Critics have suggested, separately, that both the theater and the education system were instrumental in the formation of gender and racial identities. Those works lay the foundation for new inquiries that combine gender and race studies with studies on the theater.

Raymond Williams notes that “it was above all in drama that the otherwise general processes of change in conceptions of the self and society are articulated” (*Culture* 146-7). As we continue to think about issues of race and gender, I advocate looking further at the theater. Plays such as Christopher Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus* and Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* both deal with education and gender in explicit ways. Looking solely at the theater’s influence in forming gender and racial identities reveals only a partial picture. Likewise, only interrogating the educational system’s role in the formation of a male, white, national identity would be incomplete. Therefore, I advocate an approach that moves beyond drama to various works that grapple with the educational system in early modern England. Richard Halpern points out that it seems as though the educational system was adopted just to train successful poets, playwrights, and pamphleteers.⁴⁵ The early modern period has left behind an extensive corpus of literature that grapples with educational techniques. This project is only the beginning.

⁴⁵ See Halpern’s *The Poetics of Primitive Accumulation*

Chapter 2. The Performance of Pedagogy in *Love's Labour's Lost*

Introduction

In early modern English grammar schools, there was an emphasis on memorization and imitation. Students were then expected to prove that they had learned the material by performing it from memory with the appropriate gestures, pronunciation, and expressions. In other words, the early modern classroom was a performative space where students and schoolmasters were both expected to perform.¹ For the student, these performances often relied on reciting parts from classic plays and poetry and were thought to increase oration skills and influence behavior.² For example, Charles Hoole sees performance as a way to increase oration skills through the cultivation of pronunciation and delivery techniques. According to Hoole, acting “a comedy, or a colloquy sometimes” is a way to prepare students to “pronounce Orations with a Grace” (142). Similarly, Thomas Wilson, in *The Art of Rhetoric* (1553), suggests that classroom drama was a way to hone delivery skills.³ For John Brinsley, drama in the classroom would teach student all the skills required for public speaking and oration. Brinsley, in *Ludus Literarius, or The Grammar Schoole* (1612), suggests an emphasis “on that which is pronounced” and expects schoolmaster to “examining each fault.” For Brinsley this performance “will be great furtherance

¹ The Tudor classroom, as Ursula Potter points out, was a “performative space” where both the schoolmaster and the scholar were asked to perform (147). Potter examines classroom training in memorization, pronunciation, role-playing, and *actio* in order to argue that Tudor grammar schools were “fertile breeding grounds for the explosion of dramatic activity” in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (“Performing Arts in the Tudor Classroom,” 147).

² The OED’s definition of “performance” includes both meanings. Performance, according to the OED is both “the accomplishment or carrying out of something” and the “action of performing a play, piece of music, ceremony” (OED “Performance” n, 1a, 4a).

³ According to Wilson: “Demosthenes, therefore, that famous orator, being asked what was the chiefest point in al oratory, gave the chief and only praise to pronunciation, being demanded what was the second and the third, he still made answer, ‘Pronunciation,’ and would make none other answer till they left asking” (241).

to audacitie, memory, gesture, pronuntiation” (177-8). While school performances evaluated based on performance, drama was also thought to influence behavior.

Erasmus has this potential in mind when he defends the liberal arts. For Erasmus, drama is not particularly virtuous, but it “prepare[s] the mind for virtue by making it gentle and pliable instead of savage and cruel” (60).⁴ Performance, then becomes a multifaceted exercise where students prove their knowledge of a topic by imitating classical literature and the schoolmaster. Because of this emphasis on drama, merit and classroom status was largely based on the student’s ability to perform.⁵ In other words, a successful education in early modern England can be defined as a successful reenactment; students provided proof of their own knowledge through the appropriate delivery of another’s knowledge. Early modern humanist textbooks used Roman comedy to teach Latin as speech, so the knowledge of grammar was connected to conversation. The interest in ancient rhetorical theory turned the early modern classroom into what Lynn Enterline calls a “daily theater for Latin learning” (*Shakespeare’s Schoolroom* 44). Classroom performance was thought to reform self-indulgent, childish behavior and teach young boys how to become successful orators and men. Education was, in its simplest terms, preparation for public performance.

⁴ From a letter to John and Stanislaus Boner (1532), quoted in *English Humanism: Wyatt to Cowley*.

⁵ Merchant Taylors and Westminster both held several performances each day. These activities include prayers and oral grammar lessons. Students were also expected to recite classical orations, poetry, speeches from Latin plays, and sermons from memory. Declarations were performed one to six times a week. Often students from other schools would attend the declarations and judge the performance. For example, Foster Watson, in *The English Grammar Schools to 1660: their Curriculum and Practice*, notes that students at Charterhouse “go on election days to Westminster or Merchant Taylors’ School to hear exercises” (94). See Fredrick William Marsden Draper’s *Four Centuries of Merchant Taylors’ School, 1561–1961* and Arthur F. Leach’s *Educational Charters and Documents, 598 to 1909* for more information.

Moreover, education was one of the many social rituals that functioned as an indicator of the equally performative emergence of the young boy's masculine identity.⁶ During the period between birth and three or four years old, known as infancy, the young boy was surrounded by mostly women in the domestic space of his home.⁷ At the end of the infancy period, the young boy would undergo the breeching ritual (where he was dressed in breeches for the first time and thus distinguishable from female children). The period also corresponded with the age where the boy would start grammar school. Although various educational theorists suggest different ages, children were normally admitted to grammar school around age seven.⁸ Once the student was admitted to grammar school, he was encouraged distance himself from the domestic space.

Thomas Elyot, in his *The Book Named the Governor* (1531), was adamant about limiting the influence and even the presence of women during the childhood period. Once a child reaches seven years old, Elyot "hold[s] it expedient" that the child must "be taken from the company of women." Elyot does allow the for the child, for "one year, or two at the most," to be attending by one "ancient and sad matron" but insists that this woman "shall not have any young woman in her company" (19). As the Elyot quote indicates, the early modern educational system was hostile to women. The curriculum in the early modern classroom focused on language

⁶ In making this statement I am following the critically established claim that performance is a necessary part of gender identity. By doing so, I am relying on Judith Butler's often quoted claim that "persons' only become intelligible through becoming gendered in conformity with recognizable standards of gender intelligibility." More important, though, to my claim is Butler's assertion that we should "consider gender... as a corporeal style, an "act," as it were, which is both intentional and performative, where "performative" suggests a dramatic and contingent construction of meaning (*Gender Trouble* 22, 190). For more information on the early modern viewpoint of masculinity and childhood, see Janet Adelman's *Suffocating Mothers: Fantasies of Maternal Origin in Shakespeare's Plays*; Edel Lamb's *Performing Childhood in the Early Modern Theatre: The Children's Playing Companies (1599-1613)*; and Stephen Orgel's *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Shakespeare's England*.

⁷ According to Henry Cuffe, in his *The Differences of the Ages of Man's Life* (1607), "children ... have no actual evident use of their reason" (127).

⁸ Brinsley, in *Ludus Literarius* says "in our countrey schooles," admission "is commonly about seven or eight yeeres old" (9). Mulcaster, in *Positions*, considered seven or eight years old soon enough to start school.

acquisition and was designed to prepare the student for public service.⁹ Neither language acquisition nor public service were skills thought to be necessary for women to possess. In short, the educational system taught young boys to separate themselves from women and act like men insofar as “acting like men” means “not acting like women.” Like the breeching ritual, education was part of the process by which young females and young males became distinguishable from each other.

Although William Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labour’s Lost* draws attention to education through the introduction of both scholars and a schoolmaster, the play also highlights absurdity of performance, both pedagogical performance and the performance of gender, and complicates the correlation between education and the concept of a male identity.¹⁰ The play, for all its interest in education, disrupts the expectations. The play’s scholars isolate themselves from public service by vowing to remain in the court for three years. Additionally, the scholars adopt a regime of self-deprecation thought to be antithetical to education.¹¹ But, more importantly, the scholars at the King’s academy fail to meet their own minimum objectives. Rather than achieving a “still and contemplative” life, the group loses the fight “against [their] own affections” and are seemingly conquered by a “huge army of the world’s desires” (1.1.14, 1.1.9-

⁹ See Walter Ong’s “Latin Language Study as a Renaissance Puberty Rite” for more information on how language acquisition and particularly learning Latin was seen as part of the process by which a masculine identity was established.

¹⁰ The play begins with a pedagogical proclamation. The king of Navarre claims “our court shall be a little academe” (1.1.13). Holofernes is introduced as a schoolmaster who “teaches boys the hornbook” (5.1.44). Neil Rhodes points out the group of scholars at the King’s academy are the only character in Shakespearean drama to be specifically called students. See Neil Rhodes’ *Shakespeare and the Origins of English*, page 75.

¹¹ The scholars’ vow to “one day in a week to touch no food / And but one meal on every day beside,” and “to sleep but three hours in the night, / And not be seen to wink of all the day,” contradicts Vives’ instructions for a school (1.1.39-40, 42-3). Vives insists “that plenty of nourishment (and all that is helpful) is at hand, so that fruitful minds may not be compelled through slender equipment to give up letters” (Vives *On Education* 54). Nourishment and health, for Vives, are necessary so students will continue to learn. Without food, Vives thinks students may “give up” on their educations.

10).¹² The group begins with objectives that are consistent with the policies of pedagogical practices. Their goal to fight against “against [their] own affections” was a goal that was both sanctioned and encouraged by humanist theorists. In fact, the educational system in early modern England emphasized restraint as an important part of public service. For example, Juan Luis Vives is explicit in this point, noting that “learned men should show themselves gentle, affable, self-controlled, unvanquished by depraved desires” (*On Education* 287). Likewise, Thomas Wright, in his *Passions of the Minde in Generall* (1624), links public service with moderation. Wright notes that no one can afford to ignore the passions but “ciuill” gentlemen and “prudent Politician[s]” should be especially aware of their passions. For Wright, these “ciuill” gentlemen and “prudent Politician[s]” should work on “restraining [the passions] inordinate motions” so they can “winneth a gracious cariage of himselfe, and rendreth his conuersation most gratefull to men” (6).¹³ By surrendering to unrestrained passions, these scholars fail to act like orators preparing for public service. They are ruled by passions when they should lead through restraint. Additionally, the young scholars fail to act like men. As the Wright quote makes clear, these scholars, by giving into their passions, are not suitable for the company of men.

The young men leave the all-male academy and rather than separating themselves from women, the young men reenter the domestic space and seek their education from “women’s

¹² All quotes are from the Arden Shakespeare Complete Works Revised Edition, edited by Richard Proudfoot, Ann Thompson and David Scott Kastan, consultant editor Harold Jenkins. Louis Adrian Montrose says, in “Folly, in wisdom hatch’d”: The Exemplary Comedy of *Love’s Labour’s Lost* that contemplative and active lives lead toward antithetical ends. Moreover, Montrose claims that “Living art” and “living in philosophy” roughly translate the *ars vitae* or *ars vivendi* of classical Stoicism, familiar to the Renaissance through the writings of Seneca and Cicero. *Ars vivendi*, however, meant moral philosophy and was associated with the active, not the contemplative life; Navarre has garbled his Humanist education” (148-9).

¹³ Gail Kern Paster notes that Wright uses “passion” and “affection” interchangeably. According to Paster, “*Passion* (derived from the deponent verb *patior*) suggested inactivity and suffering; *affection* (from Latin *affectus*) suggested yearning or desire; and *perturbation* (from *perturbare*, to disturb) suggested disturbance” (*Humouring the Body* 10).

eyes” (4.3.325). Katherine Larson points out that “the women’s refusal to accept Navarre’s belated hospitality shifts the play’s center of authority from the court to the ladies’ tent” (175). This relocation of authority places the women in a position of power and as such these women act as schoolmasters.¹⁴ While the Princess claims that “To teach a teacher ill beseemeth [her],” her final evaluations are expressed in academic terms (2.1.108).¹⁵ By abandoning their formal education and returning to a space occupied solely by women, these scholars are suspended between adulthood and childhood.¹⁶ They have removed themselves from the supposedly masculine space of the academy. They are ruled by passions and evaluated by women. In this liminal state between childhood and adulthood, these scholars must rely on performance rather than experience to achieve their goals. Since, in the end, “Jack hath not Jill,” it is fair to say that their performances fall short of the expectation. Since education was centered around performance, *Love’s Labour’s Lost’s* unsuccessful performances suggest a gap between the ideal theories that informed a humanist education and practical, lived results. More specifically, though, this is a play that exposes the absurdity of performance in the early modern classroom.¹⁷

¹⁴ When Berowne vows to study “women’s eyes” because women’s eyes “sparkle still the right Promethean fire,” the allusion offers a way to think about the women in the play as schoolmasters (4.3.325). The mythological figure Prometheus is tied to Mount Caucasus and tortured daily. A bird eats his intestines every day and he is healed each night. Prometheus’ crime is teaching humans how to use fire, astronomy, medicine, navigation, architecture, smithing, and writing.

¹⁵ The Princess and the other women say that they have “rated” or evaluated the lords’ letters and favors as “bombast and as lining to the time” (5.2.775, 777). William C. Carroll calls the women in *Love’s Labour’s Lost* “the perfect emblem of ... reforming force” and “completely fluent masters of rhetoric and decorum, superior to the noblemen at their own tricks, fit educators for the academics” (198).

¹⁶ Edel Lamb points out that the scholars in the king’s academy “display behaviour that is in many ways “boyish.” Berowne’s reference to youthful games in his cry of “All hid, all hid, an old infant play” (4.3.75) and his description of the “scene of foolery” in which he sees the king transformed to a gnat, Hercules whipping a gig, Nestor playing at “push-pin with the boys” and Timon laughing at idle toys (4.3.160-167), depicts the games of courtship as inherently childish” (“Learning” 8).

¹⁷ Louis Adrian Montrose says of *Love’s Labour’s Lost* that Shakespeare “turns to his advantage the morally ambivalent uses of Renaissance playworlds—their power to shape the wisdom of analysis or the folly of escape—by creating a playworld in which to explore that very ambivalence” (“Folly” 147).

A typical schoolmaster in the early modern classroom spent a great deal of time performing.¹⁸ Literacy skills and Latin acquisition depended upon hearing and imitating the schoolmaster. Moreover, schoolmasters were required to act in such a way that their characters were worthy of emulation. The schoolmaster was tasked with both teaching language skills and was also expected to provide young boys with a model of behavior that would prepare them for their future roles as orators in service of the commonwealth. Because of the multifaceted responsibilities of the schoolmaster, educational theorists and practitioners developed an idealized view of how a schoolmaster should act and what qualifications those schoolmasters should have. These practitioners and theorist do agree, for various reasons, that there is a disconnect between the ideal schoolmaster and the reality of a classroom.¹⁹ While the early modern stage seems to delight in representing the failures of schoolmasters, when the pedant of *Love's Labour's Lost* is measured against the qualifications of a schoolmaster, he found to exemplify the ideal rather than the failure.²⁰ Holofernes may be mocked within the play but he, for better or worse, performs the role of an ideal pedagogue. By looking at his interactions with Dull and Moth and his evaluation of Berowne, it becomes clear that Holofernes' behavior, reactions, and actions in the play mirror the curriculum designed for early modern classrooms.

¹⁸ Performance itself is so vital to educators that John Brinsley presents his educational manual, *Ludus Literarius*, as a dialogue between two schoolmasters: Spoudeus and Philoponus. The two former university roommates discuss their function as schoolmasters in poor country schools and talk about the best ways to teach. Philoponus has happened upon the perfect way of teaching and Spoudeus has come to him for advice.

¹⁹ For example, Mulcaster seems to be realistic about the qualifications for a grammar schoolmaster. He concedes that, even though, "These qualities deserue much" they "be not generally found" in schools (236). Mulcaster says of elementary schools that "good scholers will not abase themselves to it, it is left to the meanest, and therefore the worst" (233). Henry Peacham, in *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622), succinctly notes that "for one discreete and able Teacher, you shall finde twenty ignorant and carelesse, who (among so many fertile and delicate wits as England affoordeth) whereas they make one Scholler, they marre Ten" (22).

²⁰ For example, Peacham claims, that schoolmasters are "ridiculous and contemptible both in the school and abroad." This particular ridiculousness is possibly why Peacham observes that "the schoolmaster almost in every comedy being brought upon the stage, to parallel the zany, or pantaloone" (28).

Holofernes' dual position as both a comical character and an ideal pedagogue invites a reading where the performative role of the schoolmaster is interrogated; this examination reveals the absurdity of classroom performances.

Likewise, students in the early modern classroom were required to perform.²¹ These performances began as soon as they entered the classroom.²² As students continued through grammar school, the reliance on performance became more important. It was through performance that students learned delivery and pronunciation skills.²³ More, though, than simply acting to teach language, drama was considered a useful educational tool because it also taught the verbal and gestural skills necessary for an orator. Moreover, drama was thought to teach students what was considered acceptable behavior. Drama, then, served as a "form of courtesy

²¹ Oral performance was also built into the educational system in the form of dialogues and disputations. For example, Kempe's second through fifth forms rely on a dialogue as a way of teaching. In the second form Kemp recommends to "the Dialogs of *Corderius* and *Castalion*." In the third, fourth and fifth forms, he recommends "harder Dialogs" (F5, G1). Edmund Coote, in the *English School-Maister* (1596) that illustrates the performative nature of the exercise. According to Coote, once a student learned a chapter, he should pair with another student and practice. One student should "read the questions, and another the answer" and "the answerer" should "answer without booke" (E4v). Elyot also advocates "quicke and mery diologes elect out of Luciane" as a method of teaching (31r). Additionally, Brinsley suggests that students should rely in "disputations of grammar" as a way to learn (Dd1v). His *Children's Dialogues* (1617) is an example.

²² For example, the hornbook exercise was performative and required a dialogue between the student and the schoolmaster. The hornbook, as Helen Jewell recounts, was "the first basic equipment of elementary teaching." The hornbook, as Jewell continues, was "a tablet of wood with the alphabet incised on it or written on parchment or paper fastened to it, with a thin horn covering for protection. Commonly it had the Lord's Prayer set out on it, the Creed, and sometimes the Ten Commandments" (98). Kempe explains the practice as interactive and assigns each participant in the performance a role. According to Kempe "the maister nameth the letters" while the "scholler giueth their signification" (F2). The practice, as Kempe notes, was thought to be "the readiest way to induce the true meaning of the letters and syllables, and consequently the pronouncing of euery word into the phantasie of the childe" (F3). Other educational theorists emphasize the importance of the hornbook. According to Hoole, the hornbook is the first step in teaching a young student to learn their letters and was thus a vital part of the early modern classroom.

²³ Delivery and pronunciation were intertwined. Quintilian divides *pronuntiatio* into two parts; the first part focused on speech or pronunciation and the second part, *actio*, dealt with gesture. According to Quintilian: "Delivery, or *pronuntiatio*, is often styled *action*. But the first name is derived from the voice, the second from the gesture. For Cicero in one passage speaks of *action* as being a *form of speech* [*quasi sermonem*], and in another as being a *kind of physical eloquence*. Nonetheless, he divides action into two elements, which are the same as the elements of delivery, namely, voice and movement" (*Institutio oratoria* 2.3.1) The reason that pronunciation was so vital to the early modern educational system is because Latin was taught in through oral performance. Students learned to pronounce the words before they learned to write down the letters that signified those sounds.

literature in providing social education,” according to Darryll Grantley (59). Since classroom drama was thought to influence behavior, drama, then, as Enterline notes, turned schoolboys into “self-monitoring, rhetorically facile subjects” who were taught to perform in terms of “acceptable speech, bodily deportment, facial movement, vocal modulation, and affective expression” (*Shakespeare’s Schoolroom* 44). The skills taught in the early modern classroom were united by one goal: to produce men capable of ruling the commonwealth.²⁴ In other words, education, though the repetition of performance, taught young boy to act like men. Successful performance of both oration and masculinity was thought to indicate that the student has mastered all the required skills for public service. However, in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*, an educational system that excludes women and coerces a particularly gendered form of masculine performance is proven to be unsuccessful.

The early modern theater was uniquely well-positioned to critique the protocols of early modern education. The stage’s own relationship to performing a fiction make it especially well-suited to dramatizing gaps between dream and reality. By examining the ways that schoolmasters and students were expected to perform in the early modern classroom and comparing those ideals to the play, the disconnect between expectation and reality becomes apparent. When Holofernes’ performance as a schoolmaster is weighed against the practices suggested by educational theorists, he, for all his comical flaws, emerges as the most successful performer in the play. Similarly, the women emerge as ideal pedagogues when their methods of evaluation are considered alongside the standards set by educational theorists and practitioners. Conversely, the scholars in the King’s academy fail to successfully meet any of their objectives. Their performance of wit and their expression of passions are exposed as superficial. *Love’s Labour’s*

²⁴ For more on the creation of a masculine identity see Edel Lamb’s. “Learning to be Boys: Reading the Lessons of Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labour’s Lost* and Marston’s *What You Will*.”

Lost is ultimately a story of two academies: one walled in the King's court and the other outside the King's academy.²⁵ One fails where the other succeeds. That Holofernes succeeds where the scholars fail should invite us to think about the absurdity of performance in the early modern classroom. That the women expose the dimness of the men's judgement and expose the King's academy as a self-indulgent activity, complicates an understanding of masculine identity that is tied to performance and education.

Act like a Schoolmaster

Much of a young schoolboy's time in the classroom was dedicated to listening to and imitating the schoolmaster. As such, the schoolmaster's role was performative. Richard Mulcaster, headmaster at Merchant Taylor's, encouraged schoolmasters to see themselves as public performers. For example, Mulcaster privileges the performative nature of pedagogy when he claims to prefer public schools over private tutors. For Mulcaster, "public" education was "simply the better" since public education is "as being more upon the stage" (*Positions* 192). While Mulcaster seems to relish being on the stage in the classroom, Vives sees the performative nature of the classroom as a potential detriment to the educational process. Vives cautions against academies where two schoolmasters teach the same subject at the same hour. According to Vives, two schoolmasters at the same time could result in a popularity contest where "there is a pandering to the audience" and the "best actor" will be rewarded for their performance (*On Education* 61).²⁶ Whether educational theorists approve of the performative nature of the

²⁵ I borrow the idea of duality in the play from Kristian Smidt, who claims Shakespeare has "two minds" in the play (219). Smidt reasons *Love's Labour's Lost* represents Shakespeare's ambiguity associated with a romantic comedy he was neither committed to nor could completely abandon. See "Shakespeare in Two Minds: Unconformities in *Love's Labour's Lost*."

²⁶ The idea of "pandering" to the rabble is something that educational theorists and playwrights both grapple with. For example, Thomas Heywood, in the epilogue to *The Brazen Age* (1613) claims that "the learned can onely censure right" an evaluation of the play. Furthermore, he claims to "seeke to please" the "unlettered" through

schoolmaster or not, both Vives and Mulcaster acknowledge that the schoolmaster is required to perform. Vives and Mulcaster are not alone in this acknowledgement. Ascham and Hoole both acknowledge the schoolmaster's performance as a necessary part of the imitation skills needed in the early modern classroom for language acquisition and composition. Delivery and pronunciation skills were necessary for successful oration and both of these skills were integral parts of an early modern education.

Nearly everything in the early modern classroom was based on imitation and the need to learn imitation skills was apparent from the first day of grammar school when students were introduced to the sound of the schoolmaster's voice. Since the first thing a new student was exposed to would be the schoolmaster's voice, educational theorists and practitioners had very specific advice for the schoolmaster. Ascham focuses on specific learning materials and suggests that "the master read unto [the student] the Epistles of Cicero, gathered together and chosen out by Sturmius, for the capacity of children" (*Schoolmaster* 12). As the student's education progressed, imitating the schoolmaster remained an important part of the classroom experience. Imitating the schoolmaster was vital as the student learned to spell and honed his oration skills. Imitation and performance were linked in the early modern classroom and the relationship between imitation and performance was one of reciprocity. Students listened to the schoolmaster's voice and were then called to replicate the schoolmaster's performance. Classroom performances were, by design, an interactive exchange between the student and the schoolmaster.

The collaborative nature of classroom performance prompted theorists such as Kempe, Hoole, and Ascham to provide detailed descriptions of classroom activities that emphasized the

the visual aspects of the play. Ben Jonson makes a similar distinction in the prologue to *The Staple of News* when he refers to the "vulgar sort / Of Nut-crackers" who only come for the sights in the play.

schoolmaster's role as both a performer and an evaluator. Both Kempe and Ascham claim, in varying ways, that successful pedagogy requires an exchange. Kempe's method for teaching students to spell in English required a performance, in the form of a dialogue, from both the student and the schoolmaster.²⁷ Similarly, Ascham suggests that his double translation method is most successful when the lesson is interactive.²⁸ Like Kempe, Ascham's plan for teaching Latin through double translation is presented as a dialogue between the student and the schoolmaster. For Ascham, this exchange between the student and the schoolmaster provides the most "lively and perfect way of teaching" grammar rules (*Schoolmaster* 14).²⁹ As the student progressed from the basic literacy skills of spelling and translation to oration, the schoolmaster's responsibility as a performer continued to be important.

Pronunciation, which was a vital part of oration, was another skill that was connected to imitation. Hoole acknowledges that imitation and performance are linked when he emphasizes the importance of the schoolmaster's role in pronunciation. Hoole advises that schoolmasters "must be careful to give every letter its distinct and clear sound" (32). This aspect of the schoolmaster's responsibility was particularly important to Hoole, who claimed,

²⁷ Kempe's advice for the hornbook lesson included: "Now followeth the like practise in making words, first by imitation: as the scholler hauing learned that *band* is spelled with *b-a-n-d*, so he shall imitate to spell *bond* with *b-o-n-d*: as *bold* with *b-o-l-d*, so *told* with *t-o-l-d*: as *seem* with *s-e-e-m*, so *seen* with *s-e-e-n*. Lastly without imitation: as if ye aske him how he will spell this word or that word" (F3).

²⁸ Ascham writes of double translation: "I am moved to thinke, this waie of double translating, either onelie or chieflie, to be the fittest, for the spedy and perfit atteyning of any tong." Ascham explains that double translation should be done with three exercise books: one for translations from Latin into English, another book for translations of the English back into Latin, and a third book for notes for examples the students can use in their own composition.

²⁹ Ascham's exercise begins with a Latin text where the schoolmaster explains and parses the text, and the student imitates the schoolmaster until "it may appear that the child doubteth in nothing that his master taught him before." Then master and scholar separate: "the child must take a paper book and, sitting in some place where no man shall prompt him, by himself, let him translate into English his former lesson. Then, showing it to his master, let the master take from him his Latin book, and, pausing an hour at the least, then let the child translate his own English into Latin again in another paper book" (*Schoolmaster* 14-15). When the student makes errors translating their own English back into Latin, the schoolmaster corrects the copy in order to obtain an exact copy of the original Latin.

“Pronunciation is that that sets out a man, and is sufficient of itself to make one an Oratour” (32).³⁰ Hoole, rightly, suggests that the schoolmaster’s pronunciation would influence the way students performed orations. For example, the lord mayor Sir William Harper and bishop of London, Edmund Grindal visited Mulcaster’s Merchant Taylor school to assess student performance.³¹ Their evaluation that the students “did not pronounce so well as those that be brought up in the scholes of the south partes of the realme” reads more like an indictment of Mulcaster (13).³² The students in London were from the southern part of the country. Mulcaster was not; he was born in Carlisle. The students learned to mimic Mulcaster.³³

More though, than simply providing a model for imitation, schoolmasters were required to act in such a way that their characters were worthy of emulation. The character of a schoolmaster was so important to Vives that he mentions it several times. Vives emphasizes the importance of emulation when notes that the schoolmaster should “neither say nor do anything which may leave an evil example for the hearer, not anything which is not safe to imitate” (*On Education* 55-6). Moreover, Vives suggests that schoolmasters should be evaluated “not only by

³⁰ Charles Hoole dedicates his educational manual, *A New Discovery*, in part to his former schoolmaster Robert Doughty, headmaster at Wakefield, and schoolmasters in general saying, “there is no calling more serviceable to Church and Common-wealth then this of a Schoole-Master” (13).

³¹ Mulcaster claimed he was sick and opted to stay in bed during the visit. Edmund Spenser was a student at Merchant Taylors’ during the visit. Grindal, as John Wesley notes, makes an appearance in Spenser’s *The Sheperdes Calendar* as Algrind.

³² Quoted in Fredrick William Marsden Draper’s *Four Centuries of Merchant Taylors’ School, 1561 –1961*. The examiners’ apprehension about language and locale could have potentially been informed by, as John Wesley notes, “contemporary geohumoral theory, which held that qualities of incivility, stupidity, and muscular rigidity increased as one inhabited regions closer to the arctic pole” (1270).

³³ Cicero cautions teachers “to avoid anything in style of action or speaking which can be made absurd by imitation” (*Brutus* 62.225). It would, though, be difficult to fault Mulcaster; he was influential in both early modern education and literature. Edmund Spenser entered as a “poor boy” at Merchant Taylors. Thomas Kyd and Thomas Lodge both also studied under Mulcaster.

their learning, but also by their characters” (*On Education* 59).³⁴ These expectations are often motivated by a desire that the schoolmaster should model and exemplify a standard of morals and behavior. Vives expects the schoolmaster to “be good” (56). “Good,” for Vives, involves a moral element. The schoolmaster should “neither say nor do anything which may leave an evil example for the hearer” (55). Should these schoolmasters have any “faults,” they should “strive to put them away and eradicate them entirely, or what is next best, let them carefully and strenuously keep their faults away from the notice of the scholar” (56). A schoolmaster, according to Vives, is expected to be both educated and moral.³⁵ Vives, however, does not end his qualifications with education and morality. Vives offers more recommendations for finding the ideal schoolmaster: “As a grammarian, let him not be rabid. As a physician, let him not be of the obstinate sort who will not give way before one who offers better advice than himself. As a moral philosopher, let him not be arrogant and a mere discoverer of the faults of others” (Vives *On Education* 56). A schoolmaster, for Vives, should encompass several professions at once and should be both moral and equipped to serve in several professional roles simultaneously.

Teaching by Imitation and the Latin Lesson

Holofernes is often mocked by critics. Charles Martindale questions Holofernes’ intellectual prowess by noting that Holofernes “misquotes the opening lines of Mantuan’s first Eclogue, that staple of the early years of Latin reading” (14). Similarly, Tom Flanigan questions Holofernes’ intelligence and his ability to teach. According to Flanigan, Holofernes is

³⁴ Later Vives echoes this same idea when he says, “Let them make those men professors or masters who by their learning, their judgment and their character are able both to teach others and to gain the approbation of the public” (*On Education* 60).

³⁵ Vives is not the only education theorist who emphasizes intellectual and moral requirements for a schoolmaster. Thomas Elyot, in *The Boke Named the Governour*, offers advice in the selection of a master for in-home training. For Elyot, a tutor should be educated and should be “exellently lemed both in greke and latine” but the tutor should also possess certain moral characteristics. Elyot believed a tutor should be “of sobre and vertuous disposition,” be “chast of livyng,” and also have “moche affabilite and patience” (50).

“intellectually incapable of assimilating and/or synthesizing the enormous system of codified rhetoric that he aspires to practice and teach” (Flanigan 20). Robert Miola suggests that both Nathaniel and Holofernes “display enough arrogance and ignorance to give ... ample reason for caution” (164).³⁶ Critics such as Potter use the name “Holofernes” and its connection to the biblical story as a way to criticize the schoolmaster.³⁷ Potter connects Holofernes with the tyranny, lust, drunkenness, and poor judgement in women of his biblical namesake.³⁸ The biblical Holofernes may well have been a tyrant depending upon the reader’s religious orientation and, as Potter notes, “connections between schoolmasters and a biblical tyrant can be traced to a social context in Elizabethan England where schoolmasters were traditionally depicted as tyrants” (“The Naming” 12).³⁹ Although the biblical association is certainly alive in the text, by evaluating his methods and the way he occupies the role of schoolmaster, another reading emerges, in which Holofernes’ name is not determinative of the character or dispositive of his educational skill. Holofernes might have resonances of the tyrannical, but he is also an

³⁶ William C. Carroll suggests a type of comic revenge when he notes that “by allowing Holofernes to ridicule Berowne, Shakespeare gains a measure of ironic revenge against the pedants who had attacked him” (125).

³⁷ Briefly, in the *Book of Judith*, Holofernes is a tyrant and Assyrian general who leads an army against the Jews. As Holofernes takes over cities, he burns field, destroys livestock, and kills the young men. Holofernes destroys Jewish religious shrines and instructs the people to worship only Nebuchadnezzar as god. He besieges Bethulia by blocking access to the water supply. A Jewish widow, Judith, goes to Holofernes’ camp. Holofernes desires to have sex with Judith and he drinks too much wine. Judith beheads him in his sleep and uses his head to intimidate the Assyrians, who were threatening the Jews.

³⁸ Rebecca W. Bushnell, in *A Culture of Teaching: Early Modern Humanism in Theory and Practice* writes about tyranny in the classroom noting that depictions of the early modern classroom often show “a slender stick or a bundle of birch switches.” Bushnell suggest that these instruments of corporeal punishment represent “the master’s authority” (23). Similarly, Alan Stewart, in *Close Readers: Humanism and Sodomy in Early Modern England*, suggests that educational theorist, “with startling consistency” write about “the beating of boys” (84). On the other hand, Ascham takes a stand against corporeal punishment in education and recounts a story where he finds Lady Jane Grey reading and she credits her love of learning to both “sharp and severe parents and so gentle a schoolmaster” (*Schoolmaster* 40).

³⁹ It is possible Shakespeare used the name of a well-known tyrant as a joke to juxtapose with the king’s academy since, as Potter claims, “the terms “tyrant” and “tyranny” are used as synonyms for a schoolmaster and his authority in various sixteenth- century pedagogical, ecclesiastical and dramatic works” (“The Naming”12).

embodiment of humanist pedagogical theory. Holofernes, despite his faults, embodies most of the character traits that humanist theorists recommend and performs his role as a schoolmaster nearly flawlessly. Holofernes' performances as a successful schoolmaster are seen in his interactions with both Dull and Moth. He conducts a Latin lesson with Dull and utilizes methods associated with the hornbook when he engages with Moth. Latin lessons and the hornbook exercise are both interactive performances between the schoolmaster and the student. Holofernes also engages in the equally performative task of student evaluations and follows the guidelines set by educational theorists for evaluating students and student's work when he assesses Dull and Moth's performance of the Latin lesson and hornbook exercise.

Holofernes is first introduced after witnessing the princess kill a deer. During the exchange, Holofernes' ability to perform a classroom exercise is showcased. Holofernes' response to the hunt acts to display his copia:

The deer was, as you know, sanguis, in
blood; ripe as the pomewater, who now hangeth
like a jewel in the ear of caelo, the sky, the welkin,
the heaven; and anon falleth like a crab on the
face of terra, the soil, the land, the earth" (4.2.3-7).

These lines of seemingly unnecessary repetition of the "sky" and the "earth" as "caelo, the sky, the welkin" and the "face of terra, the soil, the land, the earth" is an illustration of synonymy.

While Flanigan uses these lines to illustrate that Holofernes "is the most conspicuous and colorful abuser of synonymy," the use of synonymy was praised by educational theorists and rhetoricians in the period (26). For example, synonymy is a figure of speech that George Puttenham, in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) calls the "figure of quick conceite" (196). For Puttenham, the use of synonymy indicates a "good, quick, and pregnant capacitie" so using synonymy "is not for an ordinarie or dull wit" (196). Rather than presenting this devise as

excessive, Puttenham presents synonymy as a useful device that “doeth much beautifie and inlarge the matter” (196).

Holofernes’ exhaustive use of the figure is perhaps what causes critics such as Carroll to posit that “Holofernes represents the dead end of one of the greatest humanist ideals” (40).

Carroll is not alone in connecting the overuse of synonymy with schoolmasters. Shakespeare’s contemporary, John Hoskins, makes a similar observation. Hoskins, in *Directions for Speech and Style* (1599), offers an indictment of those who heap up “many terms” and are always “like a schoolmaster foaming out synonymies” (24). While Holofernes’ use, and even overuse, of the figure is undeniable, the idea that Holofernes represents the “dead end” of humanist educational ideals deserves some consideration. As a schoolmaster, Holofernes is responsible for teaching young scholars the tools necessary to become persuasive orators. For educational theorist, Erasmus, the use of *copia* was key to successful oration.⁴⁰ *Copia*, for Erasmus, is a two-fold process. The first part consists of “*Synonymia*, in *Heterosis* or *Enallage* of words, in metaphor, in change of word form, in *Isodynamia* and the remaining ways of this sort for gaining variety.” The other part depended “upon the piling up, expanding and amplifying of arguments, *exempla*, *collationes*, similes, *dissimilia*, *contraria*, and other methods of this sort” (*Copia* 15-16). Based on Erasmus’ definition, excessive use is valued. Erasmus suggests that this already excessive display should be amplified further when it was used as a classroom exercise. Erasmus claims that “for training ... all things ought to be exaggerated” (*Copia* 14).⁴¹ Holofernes is following

⁴⁰ Flannigan claims that synonymy’s connection with Erasmus’s principle of copiousness likely led to the practice being satirized on stage. See Flannigan’s “On Fashionable Education and the Art of Rhetoric: Reflections of a Not-Indifferent Student in *Love’s Labour’s Lost*,” 25.

⁴¹ Erasmus claims to employ this method of exaggeration in his own teaching: “Then I am instructing youth, in whom extravagance of speech does not seem wrong to Quintilian, because with judgement superfluities are easily restrained, certain of them even, age itself, wears away, while on the other hand, you cannot by any method cure meagerness and poverty” (*Copia* 14).

Erasmus' claim that "artifice of style is useful" and he is exaggerating a classroom exercise that taught young students to be persuasive orators (*Copia* 74). Holofernes' habit of using a linguistic exercise more suitable for the classroom only shows that he is dedicated to performing his role as a schoolmaster. If Holofernes' use, or overuse, of synonymy seems absurd, then the absurdity originates from the classroom practice rather than Holofernes. Holofernes is simply acting like a schoolmaster should.

Holofernes continues to accurately and faithfully perform his role as a schoolmaster as his interaction with Dull continues. When Holofernes mentions the deer that the princess killed, he refers to the animal with the generic term "deer." When Nathaniel attempts to correct Holofernes' identification of the animal, saying the animal was a buck, Holofernes answers in Latin: "haud credo" (I do not believe) (4.2.11). Dull seems to misunderstand the Latin for an English statement "old grey doe" and Dull attempts to correct Holofernes. This misunderstanding, according to Carroll reflects Dull's "dogged literal-mindedness," however, the response also leads to a lesson that reflects Holofernes' dedication to performing his duties and role as a schoolmaster (30). Holofernes' initial reaction to Dull's mistake and his subsequent reassessment can be traced back to educational methods. When Dull announces, "'Twas not a haud credo; 'twas a pricket," Holofernes' response, "most barbarous intimation," seems, without educational context, cruel and unmerited (4.2.11-2). However, if the accusation is seen as part of the educational process, then Holofernes' apparent cruelty stems from his dedication to classroom practices. As Lynn Enterline points out, "'Barbarism' was a school commonplace for translating your Latin badly" (*Shakespeare's Schoolroom* 24-5). Dull has violated a classroom rule, and Holofernes reacts in a way suited to the classroom.

In claiming that Dull is barbarous in his Latin translation, Holofernes is simply performing his role as a schoolmaster. Holofernes' reaction can be traced back to the guidelines in Lily's *Grammar*. Lily claims that "all barbary, all corruption, all Latin adulteration which ignorant, blind fools brought into the world ... will not be allowed entrance to the school." In performing his role as the schoolmaster, Holofernes is also positioning Dull as a student and his evaluations of Dull are based on the expectation that a student should also perform during a Latin lesson. For the student, the performance emphasized both pronunciation and delivery skills. Latin lessons in the early modern classroom were both interactive and performative. Students performed their Latin lessons in the early modern classroom with and in front of the schoolmaster. The schoolmaster would evaluate the student's performance based on his delivery of the material and his pronunciation.⁴² By calling Dull's comment a "barbarous imitation," Holofernes is suggesting that Dull's performance is lacking. On the other hand, Holofernes' own performance is again flawless, although unsuccessful.

Once Holofernes realizes that Dull does not know Latin, Holofernes continues to perform the role of schoolmaster and his behavior can once again be traced by to methods described by educational theorist and rhetoricians. Holofernes continues the lesson in English and looks for ways to increase Dull's knowledge of English by using the same performative techniques that theorists recommend for Latin learning. Schoolboys learned Latin by imitation; Holofernes simply extends this principle to English. Holofernes, again, employs the figure of synonymy. Even as Holofernes claims Dull's mistake is a result of "his inclination, after his undressed, unpolished, uneducated, unpruned, untrained, or rather, unlettered, or ratherest, unconfirmed

⁴² Recall Brinsley's recommendations for the schoolmaster to ask each student to "pronounce his Theam without book; you in the meane looking on that which is pronounced, & examining each fault" that I mentioned earlier in this chapter (177).

fashion,” Within this overabundance of insults, Holofernes is providing another example of synonymy for Dull to imitate (4.2.16-19). Flanigan says of this exchange that Holofernes, despite his flaws, “seems prone to look for—and discover—good intentions (and even sound reasons) in his students’ mistakes” (21). While Flanagan is correct in his assessment that Holofernes looks for good intentions in Dull’s mistake and is right to see Dull as a student here, Holofernes is also providing Dull with a foundation of education.

By returning to synonymy, Holofernes supplies Dull with tropes and figures to imitate. The knowledge of tropes and figures was particularly important because it was thought to expand the student’s understanding of ancient texts, increase their analytical skills, and provide students with a vast depository of words that they could use in their own compositions.⁴³ Holofernes is following in the footsteps of Richard Sherry when attempts to provide Dull with knowledge of rhetoric figures. Sherry, writing in English, questions why “common scholemasters” simply ask their students to identify figures in Latin without explaining them further (A6v). For Sherry, understanding these figures was key for an “eloquente wrtyer” and a successful rhetorician (A6v). Sherry’s work offers the English reader a fast track to rhetoric without the necessity of a grammar school education. Holofernes is doing the same. In opting to continue his lesson in English, Holofernes also gains insight and inspiration from educational theorists. Both Ascham and Brinsley make allowances for the use of English in the early modern classroom. Brinsley suggests that performing well in English can prepare the student for Latin oratory. As such Brinsley instructs schoolmasters to have students speak “naturally and lively in English” if the student cannot speak Latin (*Ludus Literarius* 212). While Ascham’s focus is on imitation, but he does seem to be advocating for a way to improve English. According to Ascham, “all languages,

⁴³ As Peter Mack points out, “knowing the tropes and figures helped pupils to understand their authors’ use of the expressive resources of Latin and enabled them to analyze and imitate their reading” (46).

both learned and mother tongues, be gotten, and gotten only, by imitation. For as ye use to hear, so ye learn to speak” (Schoolmaster 133).⁴⁴ A lack of Latin abilities does not mean that Dull is excluded from learning. As such, Holofernes’ performance as a schoolmaster changes, but his performance does not end.

Holofernes stops correcting Dull and concedes to “humor the ignorant” by calling the animal the Princess shot a “pricket” as Dull claimed (4.2.52). In humoring Dull, Holofernes also decides to compose an epitaph for the dead deer.⁴⁵ In this activity Holofernes is also performing the role of a schoolmaster. He explains what technique he is about to use and offers a reason why he chooses it: “I will something affect the letter, for it argues facility” (4.2.56).⁴⁶ Flanigan says of the epitaph, “the pedant’s tendency, here and elsewhere, is to fixate on a single rhetorical principle and simply *beat it to death*—as in this specific case of appallingly strained alliteration” (20). Holofernes does “fixate on a single rhetorical principle,” but perhaps the indictment that he “*beat[s] it to death*” is misplaced. Holofernes’ alliteratively rich example is in keeping with the educational practices of the early modern classroom.

By explaining how to “affect the letter” Holofernes provides Dull with an example to imitate, and he demonstrates skills that Dull would need to perform his role as a student. According to Kempe, younger students were required to understand “by hart the parts of speach with their properties . . . whereof [they] shall rehearse afterwards some part ordinarily every day,

⁴⁴ Elsewhere Ascham reiterates his point about imitation by saying “this he alterth and changeth either in propertie of wordes, in forme of sentence, in substance of the matter, or in one, or other convenient circumstance of the authors present purpose. In thies fewe rude English wordes, are wrapt up all the necessarie tooles and instrustrmentes, wherewith trewe *Imitation* is rightlie wrought withall in any tonge” (*Schoolmaster* 47-48).

⁴⁵ In what Carroll considers a negative reading of Holofernes, he articulates my point. Carroll says that “far from arguing facility, the epitaph is a purely mechanical exercise” (43).

⁴⁶ The phrase “Affect the letter” is also presented as “hunt the letter.” For example, see E.K.’s letter in Spenser *Shepheardes Calendar* (1579): “I sorne and spue out the rakehellye route of our ragged rymers (for so themselues vse to hunt the letter)” (Aii).

illustrating the same with examples of divers Nounes and Verbes” (F4). Similarly, Erasmus recommends that students make “as many variations of them as possible” and posits that developing different ways to say the same thing should be a competition between students (*Copia* 17).⁴⁷ During Holofernes’ interactions with Dull, the performative role of the schoolmaster is illustrated through Holofernes’ reliance on imitation and his desire to teach tropes and figures. His reactions to Dull are sanctioned by humanist education as the most effective way to teach. Holofernes’ reassessment of Dull’s abilities and his somewhat patient approach to teaching also recall the instructions outlined by educational theorists such as Hoole. Hoole claims that “great care” should be taken when the schoolmaster encounters a “slow-witted” student like Dull. Hoole insists that these “slow-witted” students should not be in “any way discouraged” because “they cannot make so good performance of their task as the rest of their fellowes” (66-7). While Hoole is directing his work to schoolmasters, this advice suggests that students were also expected to perform. The performance of the student, though, is based on a successful performance by the schoolmaster. Holofernes has performed his role.

The schoolmaster was responsible for evaluating student progress and part of the evaluation process requires performance. The schoolmaster was asked to strategically deploy either praise or shame as ways to evaluate student performance. Some theorists seem to give shame and praise equal footing in the classroom. For example, Erasmus says that “there are two sharp spurs that will rouse a child’s natural talents, shame and praise” (*De Pueris* II.507E-508D). Similarly, Elyot echoes the idea saying, “the most necessary thinges to be observed by a maister in his disciples or scholars . . . is shamefastnes and praise.” (41). For other theorists, though,

⁴⁷ This type of training is so important to Erasmus that he claims all learning is useless without a knowledge of copia. In fact, without copia, Erasmus says students “shall often find [themselves] either confused, crude, or even silent” (*Copia* 17).

praise was thought to be a more valuable classroom asset. Ascham, for example, suggests that praise is the better classroom practice. Praise, for Ascham acts as a “whetstone to sharpen a good wit” and praise will motivate a student to learn (*Schoolmaster* 13). Later Ascham dismisses shame as an effective pedagogical tool and claims that chiding a student will “both dull his wit and discourage his diligence” (*Schoolmaster* 19). Whether the schoolmaster deployed shame or praise, both required a performance from the schoolmaster.

Shame, as Stanley Cavell describes it (referring to *King Lear*) is, “the specific discomfort produced by the sense of being looked at; the avoidance of the sight of others is the reflex it produces” (49). The use of shame relies on the connection between two parties: one of those parties must feel shame based on the behavior or perceived behavior of the other party. Similarly, the early modern theorists define praise as something that is expressed through body language and is expressed through the performance of the schoolmaster. For example, Ascham calls for the schoolmaster to neither “frown or chide” when the student makes a mistake during a lesson (*Schoolmaster* 13). Hoole, similarly emphasizes the importance of the schoolmaster’s body language and the way he presents himself in the classroom. For Hoole, the schoolmaster should “shew himselfe at all times pleasing and chearful towards” the student and should be “unwilling to punish them for every error” (253). Students are required to perform certain tasks in the classroom and the schoolmaster is required to evaluate the student. In these evaluations, the schoolmaster is asked to act and react in a certain way. These directions for the schoolmaster suggest that the early modern classroom was modeled around the reciprocity of performance.

Performance Review: Wit

Wit, in early modern England, was a multifaceted concept meaning different things to different people in different contexts.⁴⁸ It is unsurprising, then, that educational theorists had conflicting views on wit. For some, wit was the determining factor for access to education. Vives, for example, bases his decision to send students to an academy on their “alertness of wit and goodness” along with being “quick at their studies” (*On Education* 72).⁴⁹ Similarly, when Mulcaster offers advice on when children should start school, he suggests that the decision should be based on “the strength of their bodies, and the quicknes of their wittes joyntly” (*Positions* 14).⁵⁰ Despite all the praise for wit, there seems to be a drawback for quick-witted students. Ascham highlights several of the downfalls of wit. Ascham points out that “men, very quick of wit, be also very light of conditions” (*Schoolmaster* 21). Ascham explains that quick-witted students are often fickle claiming that “quick wits commonly be apt to take, unapt to

⁴⁸ The OED defines “wit” as “good or great mental capacity, intellectual ability; genius, talent, cleverness; mental quickness or sharpness, acumen” as well as a “quickness of intellect or liveliness of fancy, with capacity of apt expression; talent for saying brilliant or sparkling things, esp. in an amusing way” (“wit” n, II.5.a, II.7). According to the OED, examples of this meaning can be found elsewhere in Shakespeare. In *Much Ado About Nothing*, Leonato speaks of a “merry war” between Beatrice and Benedick where “they never meet but there’s a skirmish of wit between them” (1.1.59-61). The word could also mean “Practical talent or cleverness; constructive or mechanical ability; ingenuity, skill” (“wit” n, II.5.b). The OED provides Spenser’s description of The House of Pryde in *The Faerie Queene* as an example: “workmans witte” (1.4.5.2). It is, perhaps, this definition of architectural ingenuity that could be applied to the “wit” of sonneteers, who construct highly formulaic sonnet sequences that supposedly articulate a deep emotional state of desire. Many of these sonneteers call on their own wit or borrowed wit for help constructing the work. For example, Sir Philip Sidney refers, in the third sonnet in *Astrophel and Stella*, to “dainty wits” who call on the Muses for help while claiming he does not need inspiration from the Muses because he can simply copy Stella into his poem (3.1). This “wit” of the sonneteers differs from unrestrained passion; it is as if the form itself contains the emotion.

⁴⁹ Charles Hoole, in *Orbis Sensualium Pictus* claims that his goal for the translation is “To entice witty children.” Hoole falls back on his experience as a schoolmaster and claims that the particular book is “most agreeable to the best witted Children” (A4r).

⁵⁰ When determining the two factors (body and wit), Mulcaster divides the labor. The “sharpenesse of witte, the maister will sound by memorie, and number: the strength of the bodie, the mother will marke, by complaint, and cause” (*Positions* 20). Additionally, Mulcaster values wit more than money noting “that the value in wittes must be heelde of most worth.” Mulcaster also recognizes that wit (allegorized as female) needs a place “where to harbour her selfe, in maintenaunce to studie, either by priuate helpe, if the parents be wealthy, or by publike ayde, if pouertie praie for it. (*Positions* 147).

keep” and are “soon hot and desirous of this and that” and “cold and soon weary of the same again” (*Schoolmaster* 21). Ascham suggests that these quick-witted students are also unpredictable and lack the discipline to commit to a long-term goal. He points out that they are “quick to enter speedily than able to pierce far” and compares them to “over sharp tools, whose edges be very soon turned” (*Schoolmaster* 21). Additionally, Ascham describes quick witted students as ones who “delight themselves in easy and pleasant studies, and never pass far forward in high and hard sciences” and explains these people are “not deep of judgment, either for good counsel or wise” (*Schoolmaster* 21). Ascham goes so far as calling quick witted students as “quick, hasty, rash, heady, and brainsick” who “be ready scoffers, privy mockers, and ever over light and merry” (*Schoolmaster* 22).

Wit was among the “three naturall powers in children” Mulcaster observes. For Mulcaster, children are equipped with “Witte to conceive by, Memorie to retaine by, discretion to discern by” (25). Because wit was such an important part of childhood and was valued and evaluated in the early modern classroom, analyzing the reception and display of wit in *Love’s Labour’s Lost* might be helpful in thinking about failed performances in the play. That wit is evaluated and ultimately dismissed suggests that the play is asking us to consider the value of performance. Wit, while it is seemingly valued by educational theorist, is valueless within the play. Armado calls Moth a “true wit,” but Moth’s display of wit is dismissed by Holofernes as childish (5.1.56). Similarly, the women reject the scholars’ displays of wit as superficial.

Love’s Labour’s Lost is a play that certainly relishes in the display of wit. For example, Moth calls on his “father’s wit” and his “mother’s tongue” to guide him (1.2.91). The women praise the men’s wits before they meet the scholars. Berowne accuses Rosaline of having “too hot” of a wit, and he cautions her that her wit “speeds too fast, ‘twill tire” (2.1.119). The princess

discourages fighting among the women by suggesting “this civil war of wits were much better used / On Navarre and his bookmen, for here ’tis abused” (2.1.225-6). Dull challenges Holofernes’ and Sir Nathaniel’s to answer a question by their wit since they are “book-men” (4.2.35). Holofernes promises to prove Berowne’s poem is “neither savouring of / poetry, wit, nor invention” over dinner with Sir Nathaniel (4.2.158-9). Sir Nathaniel refers to Holofernes as being “witty without affection” (5.1.4).

Moth presents as the exemplar witty student and his performance of wit earns him the respect of Armado. Moth also presents as an educated youth who is well versed in the early modern curriculum. Indeed, critics such as Carroll and M. Tyler Sasser point to Moth’s familiarity with the education system. Noting that Moth is introduced when Armado asks, “Boy, what sign is it when a man of great spirit grows melancholy?,” Carroll explains, “the answer to Armado’s question, known to most schoolboys, is ‘this man is in love’— from Ovid’s *Ars Amatoria*” (1.2.1-2, 74). Sasser points to a mutual familiarity with the material in question when he suggests that “Armado probably already knows the answer to his own question and simply wants the boy to confirm it” (164). Rather than confirm the answer Armado expects, though, Moth turns the commonplace saying upside down. It is in this act that Sasser suggests Moth is displaying his wit.⁵¹ If we look at Moth as the quintessential schoolboy, as Sasser suggests, then his interactions with Holofernes, the established schoolmaster, need to be examined through the principles and practices of the early modern classroom.⁵² Moth’s performance of wit, though praised by Armado and admired by critics, is rejected by the schoolmaster. While Sasser posits

⁵¹ Sasser notes that Moth’s answer “exposes how empty rhetoric creates hollow men and that it is in language’s queer flexibility—not its monolithic reduction to formula—that true wit resides” (154). Sasser’s project is to show how Moth is “queers the schoolboy category and undermines the desirability of the ideal version of that life stage” (153).

⁵² See Sasser’s “Moth and the Pedagogical Ideal in *Love’s Labor’s Lost*.”

that “Holofernes’s interactions with Moth reveal an ironic distance between the ideal of pedantry and its practice,” this interaction says more about the absurdity of performance than it questions pedagogical practices (160). Both Holofernes and Moth accurately perform the roles of schoolmaster and scholar, respectively.

Moth, as a student, would be asked to perform from the beginning of his education. As a schoolmaster, Holofernes would have been responsible for evaluating student performances. In this episode, though, the pair switch roles: it is Moth who plays the role of the schoolmaster, and Holofernes becomes the student. That these roles are so easily reversible points to the artificiality of classroom performance. The assigned roles become somewhat arbitrary; either player can fill the role without detracting from the lesson. When Moth and Holofernes meet, the pair reenact the early classroom exercise of the hornbook. The hornbook exercise is a dialogue between the schoolmaster and the student where the schoolmaster clearly pronounces the sounds of letters and the scholar faithfully repeats those sounds. Moth uses the pedagogical method of “of rote memorization and recall,” as Sasser observes, “to deploy a string of insults that humiliate his schoolmaster (162). Moth reverses the roles, and instead asks Holofernes to answer, “What is *a, b*, spell’d backward, with the horn on his head?” (5.1.47-8). Holofernes answers “Ba, *pueritia* [childish], with a horn added,” and once Holofernes answers “ba,” Moth takes advantage of the animal connection and calls Holofernes a sheep (5.1.49).

Not content, though, with his clever manipulation, Moth continues to exploit the hornbook practice by asking Holofernes to recall the vowels. When Holofernes begins, “a-e-i,” he is interrupted by Moth who adds, “The sheep: the other two concludes it—*o, u*” (5.1.59).

Sasser offers a good reading of the exchange:

The boy uses this run-of-the-mill task to insult the schoolmaster, as he also does when he finishes Holofernes’s sentence “a, e, I” by adding “The sheep,” ultimately causing

Holofernes to call himself, “I, the sheep” ... Moth capitalizes on another opportunity for insult, since the final vowels “o” and “u” should be read as the boy calling Holofernes a female sheep: “Oh, you,” or “Oh, ewe.” (163)

This entire exchange, although mildly clever, nonetheless follows Holofernes’ initial assessment/prediction: it’s childish.

Childish as it is, the exchange prompts Armado to praise Moth’s “quick venue of wit” (5.1.60). This evaluation comes from the character who claims to be such good friends with the King of Navarre that the king “dall[ies] with [his] excrement,” so his assessment invites the reader to question his definition of “wit” (5.1.104). Moreover, Armado’s assessment is based on the performance of a classroom exercise. Moth uses the exchange to exhibit his own wit, and Armado’s praise suggests that the performance of wit is subjective at best, and arbitrary and superficial at worst. Moth responds to Armado’s praise of his wit by claiming it is “Offer’d by a child to an old man: which is wit-old” (5.1.61).⁵³ By doing so, Moth is continuing to exhibit his wit. In that way, Moth has never fully relinquished his role as a student. The early modern classroom relied on oral performances and as Grantley points out, these performances stressed wit and eloquence and allowed students to practice with several styles of rhetoric.⁵⁴ Similarly, Holofernes never fully relinquishes his role as a schoolmaster. Holofernes, as a schoolmaster, is tasked with the responsibility of evaluating Moth’s wit, and his evaluation is linked to Moth’s performance. Holofernes’ review is less than stellar; Holofernes reacts by telling Moth, “Thou

⁵³ Sasser points out that Moth replies “by punning Holofernes’s “wit-old,” or “old wit,” with “wit- tol,” or a contented or complacent cuckold. When Holofernes twice asks, “What is the figure?” he is inquiring about what figure of speech the boy uses, and Moth’s reply, “Horns,” brings the dialogue full-circle, since “horns” not only alludes to the “U” or ewe and the physical representation of a cuckolded man, but it also puns on the hornbook, which served as the origin of this lesson” (Sasser 163). M. M. Mahood claims that the average number of puns in a Shakespeare play is seventy-eight. Mahood says *Love’s Labour’s Lost* has over two hundred puns. The *Henry IV* plays have about 150 puns each. *Much Ado About Nothing* and *All’s Well that Ends Well* have more than 100 puns each. See *Shakespeare’s Wordplay*, 164.

⁵⁴ See *Wit’s Pilgrimage*, 6.

disputes like an infant; go whip thy gig” (5.1.68). Holofernes’ reaction seems to suggest that he has seen the exchange as a role-playing exercise and he had found Moth’s performance to be lacking. Additionally, Holofernes’ assessment that Moth “disputes like an infant” recalls another classroom exercise that is particularly performative in nature.

In the early modern classroom, students were asked to perform disputations and dialogues to both increase their oratory skills and to learn how to inhabit the role of adult.⁵⁵ These dialogues required a performance by both the student and the schoolmaster; each had a role to play within the highly scripted exercise. During these performances, educational theorists privileged authenticity. The student playing the role should perform the role, according to Brinsley, in *Ludus Literarius* (1612), as if the student “were the persons which did speake in that dialogue” (212). During the exchange between Moth and Holofernes, Moth has performed the schoolmaster’s role and by adopting that role his performance should have reflected the performance of the ideal schoolmaster. Holofernes’ assessment seems to suggest that Moth has failed to perform his role as a student and as a schoolmaster. After all, Moth has only used the exercise to insult Holofernes. Moth’s performance of adulthood has been found lacking; he disputes like an infant. In the role of schoolmaster, Moth failed to deploy the strategies of praise and shame as classroom principles. By focusing solely on the performance as a way increase his own status in the classroom at the expense of another, he has become the caricature of a tyrant that Holofernes’ name might indicate.

Moreover, Moth has failed to successfully display his own wit, and he fails to demonstrate that he can perform the role of a student. Several dialogues performed in the classroom allowed students to make excuses for bad behavior or lateness by displaying their wit.

⁵⁵ John Brinsley’s *Children’s Dialogues* is one such example.

A successful performance would ensure that the student could avoid punishment. While outwitting the schoolmaster could be seen as a disruption of the classroom hierarchies, Edel Lamb points out that these exercises were contained within the classroom and a successful performance would be regarded as the “adept deployment of lessons learned” (5).⁵⁶ Moth fails to outwit the schoolmaster and his supposed lackluster performance signals to Holofernes that Moth has not successfully completed his education. In early modern textbooks, as Joyce Boro notes, dialogues were typically placed at the end suggesting that oral performance was the “culmination of the students’ efforts” (21).⁵⁷ Successful performance of these dialogues was thought to indicate that the student has mastered all the required skills for public performance. Jeff Dolven points out that the results of classroom disputations influenced the student’s standing within the classroom.⁵⁸ By saying that Moth “disputes like an infant,” Holofernes is suggesting that Moth is at the beginning of his education and as such has not mastered the skills necessary to act as an orator or as a man (5.1.68).

The scholars from the King’s academy are similarly evaluated based on their performance of wit, and like Moth, these scholars are also found in need of reform. When the women are first introduced, they praise the scholars’ wit.⁵⁹ Maria says of Longaville that he is “a man of sovereign parts” with a “sharp wit ... whose edge hath power to cut” (2.1.44, 49-50).

⁵⁶ Joyce Boro observes, “students learned the arts of analysis, epitome, and disputation so that they could break down texts into their component parts, extract the moral lesson, and replicate the argument’s construction” (26).

⁵⁷ See Joyce Boro’s “Multilingualism, Romance, and Language Pedagogy; or, Why Were So Many Sentimental Romances Printed as Polyglot Texts?” in *Tudor Translations*.

⁵⁸ See Dolven’s *Scenes of Instruction in Renaissance Romance*, 49.

⁵⁹ Cynthia Lewis points out that “this scene, in which Rosaline, Katherine, and Maria all speak so admiringly of Berowne, Dumaine, and Longaville, contains the seeds of a recurring tendency: the inclination of verbally adept people to talk themselves into a position they fancy” (249).

Similarly, Katherine says of Dumaine that “he hath wit to make an ill shape good, / And shape to win grace, though he had no wit” (2.1.59-60). Rosaline has similar things to say about Berowne. She says his “eye begets occasion for his wit” and “his fair tongue, conceit’s expositor, / Delivers in such apt and gracious words” (2.1.69, 72-3). Carroll wryly notes that “with so much wit in the air, everyone catches the disease,” and he suggests that Armado’s exclamation, “sweet smoke of rhetoric,” can be seen as “a kind of Dickensian fog which on the one hand disorients and chokes everyone with its thickness” (3.1.62, Carroll 27).⁶⁰

Perhaps Carroll’s suggestion that wit “disorients” and “chokes” is best illustrated by Maria who later points out the failure of wit. For Maria, men whose “wit doth dote,” on itself “to prove, by wit” finds its “worth in simplicity” (5.2.76-8). The wit that Maria previously describes as “sharp” with an “edge” that “hath power to cut” is dulled but perhaps more importantly, the scholars’ wit has imploded (2.1.44, 49-50). In Maria’s assessment, their wits have proved simple because they tried to use their wit to prove their wit. In other words, their wit was a superficial performance. It seems like these scholars have indeed “choked” on their own wit. While wit appears to be privileged as a valuable commodity in the play, wit, as it manifests through language and poetry becomes worthless.⁶¹ Lewis notes that “the men’s protestations fail to convince because their affection for the women is repeatedly shown to be based on superficialities, especially looks and particularly “women’s eyes.” She suggests that “the men’s judgment proves dim, based as it is on outward signs, like the brooch and the glove that confuse

⁶⁰ Carroll also describes the “Dickensian fog” as “sweet” and desirable” (27).

⁶¹ Mahood writes of the play in *Shakespeare’s Wordplay* saying “words, for all their witty sparkle, are without weight or substance ... There is no substance in speech” (175-76). Longaville expresses the worthlessness of language when he writes that “vows are but breath, and breath a vapor is” (4.3.67).

them when the ladies switch their love tokens” (Lewis 254). The scholars’ performance of wit is superficial and as such their interpretations of the results are equally superficial.

Wit, for the scholars in the King’s academy manifests as poetry. Ascham links wit and poetry by suggesting that “the quickest wits” can become the “best poets” but they are not necessarily “the wisest orators” (*Schoolmaster* 21). Ascham uses a popular agricultural metaphor to illustrate his point. For Ascham these quick wits are like “trees that show forth fair blossoms and broad leaves in spring time,” but at harvest time they “bring out small and not long lasting fruit ...and that only such as fall and rot before they be ripe.” Ascham’s assessment of these quick-witted people is that they “never, or seldom, come to any good at all” (*Schoolmaster* 22). Similarly, Vives links poetry and agricultural by claiming that ancient poets “sowed the seeds of all kinds of knowledge which were scattered about in their works,” and elsewhere he links education with harvesting when he says that students will “receive many seeds of the material of knowledge remaining to us” by studying the works of ancient poets (*On Education* 129, 94).

The imagery of planting and harvesting is prominent throughout the work of humanist educators and theorists.⁶² Early modern educationalists viewed the schoolmaster as the gardener in these agricultural metaphors. For example, Hoole refers to the schoolmaster as a “Gardiner” charged “in furthering the growth of his young plant” (82). Elyot takes the metaphor further. For Elyot the teacher is “a wyse and counnyng gardener” who “will first serche throughout his gardeyne, where he can find the most melowe and fertile erth; and therein wil he put the sede of the herbe to growe, and be norrished: and in most diligent wise attende that no [w]eede be

⁶² Bushnell, in *A Culture of Teaching*, devotes several chapters to planting and harvesting metaphors in the early modern English educational system. Similarly, Mary Thomas Crane, in *Framing Authority*, looks at gardening metaphors. This project will return to gardening metaphors in chapter four as I consider the idea of land expansion and race in early modern England.

suffred to growe or aproche nyghe unto it” (28). The student may be a plant, but the teacher, the “wyse and counnyng gardener,” is responsible for sowing seeds and nourishing the student.

It is not simply the idea that students are plants in a garden that is important to the theorist. It is the way the plants are handled and cared for that matters in education. The schoolmaster is expected to plant knowledge and nurture the student. According to Kempe, the schoolmaster should “prescribe good order both for manners and learning,” and for Kempe this is achieved in a gardening metaphor. The teacher should act by “sowing in their tender mindes the seedes of Christian holinesse” (*Education of Children* H1). The comparison between soil quality and educational methods is also seen in Erasmus. Erasmus notes that “as much as the nature of the soil is better, by so much the more is it corrupted, and seized by useless herbs and fruits, unless the farmer is vigilant. Similarly, the *ingenium* of man, by as much as it is more blessed, more generous, and more upright, by so much it is overspread by many foul vices, unless it is carefully cultivated with helpful precepts” (*Institutio*, col. 564). Elyot sees the teacher as a gardener but the gardener, within this metaphor, has the responsibility of adapting to each student. Elyot says the schoolmaster should “serche throughout his gardeyne where he can finde the most melowe and fertile ert: and therein wil he put the sede of the herbe to growe and be norisshe” (28). The teacher needs to find a place where the student will thrive.

Rosaline specifically utilizes the planting and harvesting metaphors to evaluate Berowne’s performance. By relying on these pedagogical metaphors, she is also performing the role of schoolmaster. For Rosaline, Berowne’s wit needs weeding. Her attempts to “weed this wormwood from [his] fruitful brain” follow Elyot’s suggestion that teachers “put the sede of the herbe to growe, and be norrished: and in most diligent wise attende that no [w]eede be suffred to growe or aproche nyghe unto it” (28). Rosaline tells Berowne to “Visit the speechless sick and

still converse / With groaning wretches” and gives him the task to use the “fierce endeavour of [his] wit / To enforce the pained impotent to smile” (5.2.842-5). Vives says an educated person “must therefore be somewhat cautious in action, slow in judgment, and particularly circumspect in his speech,” and Rosaline seems to be offering Berowne the chance to learn this skill (*On Education* 286). She claims that his wit will benefit from weeding and suggests that her plan is “the way to choke a gibing spirit” (5.2.849). If Berowne succeeds in enforcing “the pained impotent to smile” then she will “have [him] and that fault withal” but if he fails (and I think it is fair to say that he will) then she expects him to “throw away that spirit” (5.2.845, 857-8). The teacher needs to find a place where the student will thrive and in Berowne’s case be contained.

Mulcaster leaves it to the “maister to whose judgement I commend the choice” to “dispose of wittes, and to sorte mens children, as he liketh best” and these women-turned-schoolmasters certainly “dispose of” these “wittes” in the most literal sense (*Positions* 155). The Princess sends King Ferdinand on “some forlorn and naked hermitage, / Remote from all the pleasures of the world” for a year (5.2.791-2). Katherine and Maria dismiss Dumaine and Longaville in a similar fashion. Each of the women tells their would-be-woosers to come back in “A twelvemonth and a day” (5.2.818). Carroll says that “in that year, the men must learn certain artistic and moral responsibilities” (155). In asking King Ferdinand, Dumaine, and Longaville to wait “A twelvemonth and a day,” the women are giving the men a chance to learn (5.2.818). The women do not dismiss the scholars outright, but they do seem to understand that the men could benefit from further education. By asking the men to continue to learn, the women are suggesting that the scholars are not yet the successful men and orators that an education promises but they still have the potential to grow. Hoole says students “in their tender age are generally like leaking vessels, and no sooner do they receive any instructions of Grammar, but they forget them as

quickly,” and he recommends “frequent repetitions and examinations” until the practice is “brought to an habit.” While Hoole suggests “two or three yeares time,” the women are generous with their one-year wait (159). The women send the men out of the domestic space in hopes they will learn to perform authenticity and masculinity. That these men still need education suggests that their performances have failed.

Act like a man: Performing Passions or Separating the Men from the Boys

Since women were largely excluded from public education and public service, the control of passions as pertains to public endeavor can be seen as a masculine quality. Wright makes the distinction between masculinity and passions explicit. Wright connects the mastery of passions with “ciuill Gentleman” and the “prudent Politician” (5–6). For Wright, the mastery of the passions makes men more appealing to other men. Recall Wright’s claim that a mastery of the passions allows a man to “rendreth his conuersation most gratefull to men” (6). Moreover, Wright suggests that especially passionate people should be isolated from masculine spaces. For Wright, the company of those who are “so appassionate in affections” is “to most men intolerable” (6). Similarly, Vives makes the connection between masculine restraint and masculine education clear when he points out that “learned men should show themselves gentle, affable, self-controlled, unvanquished by depraved desires” (*On Education* 287). Passions, for Vives, were a way to separate the men from the boys. According to Vives, “foolish boys” allow “bad passions” to arise because they think “there is no harm in them,” but once these passions have “put forth roots” they are harder to control and “frequently sprout forth anew” (*On Education* 84). This return to the agricultural metaphor suggests that passions, like wit, require cultivation. Rebecca Bushnell points out that gardening metaphors refer to many different things “ranging from violent mastery to tender regard” (75). However, unlike education, which Elyot

claims needs nourishment and care, passions seem to require violent mastery.⁶³ While students within the gardening metaphor are carefully attended, uncontrolled passions seem to hinder the education process and like, weeds (and the scholars' wit), choke the plant. Education is not a matter of transformation, but of self-regulation and self-control. By adopting the role of "affection's men-at-arms," these scholars prove that they are incapable of being the men and the orators that the early modern educational system hoped to produce (4.3.286). It would be impossible to think that four men running around the woods writing sonnets have mastered their passions.

The education system relied on the performance of passions as a key aspect in oration but these performances privileged self-control and restraint. As such, educational theorists and practitioners had various reasons for employing the performance of passions. For some, the performance of passions was linked to persuasion. For example, Quintilian advises that the best way to "influence everybody" with emotions, as is first to be "moved by them oneself" (*Institutio Oratoria* 6.2.26). Thomas Wright, in *The Passions of the Minde in Generall* (1604), likewise claims that passions and persuasion are connected. For Wright, there is a reciprocal relationship between experiencing passions and being influenced by passions. He suggests that "we move because by the passion thus we are moved" and since "it hath wrought in us, so it ought to work in you" (214). Hoole, likewise, suggests that performing "an Act or Scene that is full of affection and action" can "prepare [students] to pronounce Orations with a Grace" (180).

⁶³ The garden scene in *Richard II* connects passions with violent cultivation. The Queen has entered the garden to "drive away" her grief when the gardener enters (3.4.2). The gardener instructs his assistant to "go, bind thou up yon dangling apricocks" which he describes as "like unruly children" (3.4.29-30). However, the gardener speaks in violent terms calling on his assistant to act "like an executioner" and "cut off the heads" of the offending trees (3.4.33-4). This violent pruning, according to the gardener, is connected to the wellbeing of the commonwealth. He wants to prune the trees that "look too lofty" since "all must be even in our government" (3.4.35-6).

Moreover, the controlled use of passions was thought to influence the student's behavior and give students the confidence. Hoole claims that the "Act or Scene that is full of affection and action" can "especiall remedy to expell that subrustick bashfulnesse, and unresistable timorousnesse, which some children are naturally possessed withal" (180). Similarly, Thomas Heywood, in his *Apology for Actors* (1612), claims that drama in general was responsible for "emboldening of their junior schollers to arme them with audacity" (28). Whether the desired outcome was persuasion or behavior modification, each of these theorists provide specific guidelines for using passions in oration. These guidelines and intended outcomes suggest that theorists viewed passions as useful tool in highly scripted performances.

A successful performance of the passions is contingent on several elements. In thinking specifically about *Love's Labour's Lost*, it is important to consider how early modern rhetoricians and educational theorists link poetry, passions, and performance. Poetry, in the early modern classroom, turned on the idea of imitation. Poetry is among "the arts connected with doing, or making things," which Vives suggests are "best acquired from observing the actions and work of those who have been best instructed in them by nature, study, and habit" (*On Education* 88). Kempe has lofty expectations for imitation when he claims that "all knowledge is taught generally both by precepts of arte, and also by practise of the same precepts" (F2). Imitation, for Kempe, though, is only part of the path toward "all knowledge." He instructs students to first imitate "examples ... in other mens works," but then asks students to move beyond narrow, exact imitation in their own compositions (223).⁶⁴ Likewise, Puttenham emphasizes the importance of imitation in poetry claiming that a poet is "a follower or imitator,

⁶⁴ Quintilian teaches that students should advance beyond "mere passive reproduction." Student compositions, for Quintilian, should "rival and vie with the original in expressing the same thoughts" (*Institutio* 10.5.5). Quintilian claims "it is a disgrace too to be content merely to attain the effect you are imitating. Once again, what would have happened if no one had achieved more than the man he was following?" (*Institutio* 10.2.7).

because he can expresse the true and lively of every thing is set before him” (3). Because, according to Puttenham, the poet is asked to “expresse,” poetic imitation involves not only composition but also extends to performance.⁶⁵

When the poetry written by the scholars of the King’s academy is evaluated using these criteria, their performance is found lacking. Holofernes is critical of Berowne’s poem and points out that the poem fails to move beyond imitation. In this criticism, Holofernes relies on the early modern grammar school curriculum and brings up Ovid.⁶⁶ Moreover, Holofernes criticizes Berowne’s imitation of Ovid saying the “*Imitari* is nothing” (4.2.127). For Holofernes, the poem is likened to the hound following his master; the ape following his keeper; and the rider seated upon the tired horse (4.2.127-29).⁶⁷ There is nothing original in Berowne’s poem.⁶⁸ While Holofernes concedes that the “numbers are ratified,” he claims that the “elegancy, facility and golden cadence of poesy” are missing from Berowne’s poem (4.2.124). Holofernes additionally

⁶⁵ William Webbe suggests that poetry that is performed is superior to written poetry. For Webbe, poetry on stage has “speciall respect to the motions of the minde” (300). Wright also connects passions to the theater when he advises his reader to look “upon other men appassionato” and focus on how “demeane themselves” and observe “what and how they speake” (179). For Wright, the best performers are the best imitators. According to Wright the “perfection of their exercise consisteth in imitation of others, so they that imitate best, act best” (179).

⁶⁶ Carroll points out that Ovid was one of “the chief authorities for the study of figures, the *flores rhetorici* or, in Holofernes’ rendering, the ‘odoriferous flowers of fancy’” (125).

⁶⁷ It is likely worth pointing out that Robert Greene’s attack on Shakespeare uses these images of the ape and the horse. Greene, in *Groatworth of Wit* (1592), calls Shakespeare an “upstart Crow, beautified with our feathers,” and encourages his fellow scholars to let their “rare wits to be employed in more profitable courses; & let those Apes imitate your past excellence, and never more acquaint them with your admired inventions ... For it is pittie men of such rare wits, should be subject to the pleasures of such rude groomes” (19).

⁶⁸ Neal L. Goldstein, in “*Love’s Labour’s Lost* and the Renaissance Vison of Love,” suggests that the sonnets within the play are a “mockery of Renaissance love theory” (346). However, as Carroll points out, “three of the four sonnets were later collected in *The Passionate Pilgrim* (1599) and Dumain’s was also included in the nostalgic pastoral collection, *England’s Helicon* (1600), an indication that the audience would not have considered them in any way avant-garde” (103).

suggests that Berowne's work is missing "the apostrophus" (4.2.121).⁶⁹ As Peter Mack notes, apostrophe was among "the most commonly used figures of rhetoric" during the early modern period (300).⁷⁰ The apostrophe was among the devices students were taught to, as Mack observes, "deliberately elevate the level of their prose" (154). Students were instructed to use "additional ornaments or tropes" in their compositions and as Mack points out, "writers could expect their readers to notice and evaluate their use of such techniques" (154). Based on Holofernes' evaluations, the poem fails to meet the minimum requirements set out in the early modern classroom; Berowne's imitation skills are lacking, and his prose falls short of the requirements for successful student compositions. As a student of poetry, Berowne's performance is considered a failure.

Holofernes also criticizes the poem's ability to perform passions in a persuasive way. This critique is evident in Holofernes' observation that the poem is missing the "accent" (4.2.122). The OED offers a literary definition of accent as a "significant tone or sound" ("Accent" n. 4b). Accent, as a verb, requires a "distinctive force, sharpness, prominence, or intensity to; to make conspicuous; to emphasize, stress" (Accent v. 2). In other words, missing the "accent" indicates that Berowne's poem fails to convey his passions. It is this failed performance of passions that the women address in their criticisms of the scholars' poetry. Rosaline, like Holofernes, claims that Berowne's poem lacks emotional depth. Rosaline says the poem is "Much in the letters, nothing in the praise. (5.2.40). The Princess and Katherine assess

⁶⁹ An apostrophe is defined as "a direct and explicit address either to an absent person or to an abstract or nonhuman entity. Often the effect is of high formality, or else of a sudden emotional impetus (Abrams, M. H. and Geoffrey Galt Harpham, *A Glossary of Literary Terms Tenth Edition*. Wadsworth Cengage Learning 2012, p. 345).

⁷⁰ The full list of figures Mack provides are: "alliteration, anaphora, parison, isocolon, colon, comparison, metaphor, simile, vivid description, antithesis, sententia, apostrophe and rhetorical question." He points out that "the first five of these figures are connected with repetition and patterned language; the next five with descriptions, comparisons and copia; and the last three with placing the material in a particular relation to the audience" (300).

the poems as “beauteous as ink” and “Fair as a text B in a copy-book” (5.2.41- 42). Copybooks, as Flanigan points out “were elegant penmanship manuals” and “what the women mean is that there is little more to Berowne’s words than the ink on the page” (19). In other words, “the emotional content cannot be trusted” and “the performance, though seemingly polished, compares to a child’s mindless, slavish copying of letters from a set (and perhaps second rate—a B-text) model” (Flanigan 19). Berowne’s poem is “dismissed as a passionless, mechanical imitation of the hackneyed Petrarchan type (Flanigan 19). Poetry was thought to influence the hearers’ emotional states and the delivery of these passions was thought to be contagious.⁷¹ Poets, according to Philip Sidney in his *A Defence of Poesie* (1595) “move” their readers toward virtue by delighting them (27). Elsewhere, Sidney describes poetry as “heart-ravishing knowledge” (21). While poetry was thought to move the hearer, Berowne’s poem falls flat.

Katherine’s evaluation of Dumaine’s poem as “A huge translation of hypocrisy, / Vilely compiled, profound simplicity” suggests that the poem fails to express passions because the poem itself lacks sincerity (5.2.51-2). Educational theorists and practitioners value sincerity or at least the appearance of sincerity to persuade and move the audience. For Wright, the transference of emotions is contingent upon the speakers own emotional state. Wright claims that passions must be “stamped in our hearts” if “we intend to imprint a passion in another” (212). Erasmus offers a similar sentiment when he suggests that “a speech comes alive only if it rises from the heart” (*The Ciceronian* 402). When the women evaluate the scholars’ poetry, they expose this lack of sincerity. The successful performance of poetry relies on the externalization of interior thought. This idea is made clear by John Bulwer, in *Chirologia, or The Natural Language of the*

⁷¹ The contagious nature of passions is often shown on the early modern stage. For example, In *The Spanish Tragedy*, Hieronimo recognizes his own grief when he is confronted by Don Bazulto’s grief. Both characters are linked by their mutual loss of sons. Bazulto’s grief seems to increase Hieronimo’s sadness.

Hand. Bulwer claims that “the gestures of the Hand must be prepar’d in the Mind, together with the inward speech, that precedes the outward expression” (142).⁷² Rather than bridging the gap between internalized emotions and outward expression, these scholars use poetry to display their own wit.

Final Act

The final act of the play stages a drama designed, in theory, for the amusement of the court. In particular, the king wants “some delightful ostentation or show or pageant or antic or firework” (5.1.103-4). This request, delivered by Armado, sheds some light on how the scholars view performance. For them, there is no distinction between performances: a firework show carries the same pedagogical value as a pageant. Since these scholars do not see the pedagogical value of performance, their approach to pedagogical performance is as superficial as their own performances. While the court is not particularly concerned about what type of performance is offered, Holofernes, on the other hand, immediately determines that the performance should be educational: He will present the Nine Worthies. That Holofernes presents a play that is largely educational also highlights the scholars’ level of immaturity and their status as boys rather than men. As a schoolmaster, Holofernes decides that the scholars should be instructed through performance and once again these scholars fail to learn the lesson. Throughout this performance, the women emerge as a civilizing force while the men reveal themselves to “be ready scoffers, privy mockers, and ever over light and merry” (*Schoolmaster* 22). It is, though, Holofernes who emerges as a model worthy of emulation.

As a schoolmaster whose job largely relies on performance, Holofernes is all too happy to present an entertainment of the Nine Worthies for the king and court. He even volunteers to

⁷² Quoted from John Wesley’s “Rhetorical Delivery for Renaissance English: Voice, Gesture, Emotion, and the Sixteenth- Century Vernacular Turn.”

play three worthies himself. By choosing to play three of the worthies, Holofernes is perhaps, hoping to provide the scholars with a figure, or three, to emulate. By doing so Holofernes is performing his duties as a schoolmaster. Elyot claims that a teacher should be “such a one as the child by imitation following may grow excellent” (*Boke* 19). Classroom performances were also thought to provide the students with a moral lesson. Vives suggests as much when he claims that “Subject-matter is to be presented” in a way that the student’s “may elevate itself by movement and action” (*On Education* 81). However, when Holofernes presents his entertainment, he is met with ridicule and heckling from the audience. Even while he is being abused by those who should be virtuous, Holofernes remains calm and he reminds his audience, “This is not generous, not gentle, not humble” (5.2.630). While the King and his fellow scholars are not generous and gentle and not humble, Holofernes is all these things. Holofernes represents the values he performs.

Similarly, the women seem to exemplify the type of behavior an education was thought to provide. Kempe explains that the goal of education is to “set the common wealth in good order” and these women do more to set the commonwealth in order than their male counterparts (*Education of Children* D). The women are largely silent during the performance, but the Princess interjects several times to encourage or show kindness towards the performers.⁷³ But, that it is the women who provide this model further suggests that the scholars have failed to perform their roles as students. The beginning of grammar school should have marked their journey away from a space where education was provided by woman and toward the all-male school where their journey toward masculinity began. Hoole is adamant that the teachers of the

⁷³ During this performance, the Princess speaks four times: “The conqueror is dismayed. Proceed, good Alexander. (5.2.563); “Stand aside, good Pompey” (5.2.582); “Alas, poor Maccabaeus, how hath he been baited!” (5.2.626); and “Speak, brave Hector; we are much delighted” (5.2.664).

“Petty- schoole” where “the first Principles of all Religion and learning ought to be taught” should not be left as work for women” (48). It is probably fair that Berowne will no longer “trust to speeches penned / Nor to the motion of a schoolboy’s tongue” since he fails to perform his role as a student (5.2.402-3). The scholars from the king’s academy hardly set the commonwealth in good order. They can’t even have a successful play. Their play doesn’t end like the others: “Jack hath not Jill.”

After the scholars are confronted with their own failure, they fail to reform their behavior and instead shift their focuses outward and superimpose their own short comings on surrogates. Their abuse of the players may well serve as a salve to treat their wounded prides, but the abuse also points to their feelings on the benefits of performance for pedagogical means. They refuse to reform their behavior and fail as audience members in much the same way that they fail as performers. While the king seems to recognize their failure when he objects to the performance and suggests that the presentation of the worthies will “shame” them, Berowne assures him that they are “shame-proof” (5.2.509-10). Their own inflated sense of self-worth seems to hinder their ability for retrospection and self-evaluation. If classroom drama, as Enterline has claimed, turned schoolboys into “self-monitoring, rhetorically facile subjects,” these scholars have failed to learn that lesson (*Shakespeare’s Schoolroom* 44). Rather than look for morality or behavior worthy of emulation in the play, the lords mock the performers. Drama was thought to influence behavior and it is obvious from the scholars’ behavior that they have failed to learn that lesson.

This chapter has argued that the only characters Shakespeare refers to as students have failed to meet the goals set forth by the humanist educational system. It would, however, be difficult to claim that the scholars have failed to impress centuries of scholars. For example, Montrose calls the play “a comedy of self-exploration and self-celebration” (“Folly” 160).

Similarly, John Kerrigan says of Moth that he is “in full command of the literary underpinnings of his education” (94). On the other hand, successful pedagogical performances such as Holofernes are alienating enough that centuries of reception of the play have seen him as a failure. For example, Gerlier claims that the “language of the teacher is an arsenal of tautological vocabulary and endless qualification: nothing is affirmed, nothing denied” (599).⁷⁴ This chapter does not advocate a complete dismissal of earlier criticism. In fact, this chapter embraces that criticism. Such a critical success within a pedagogical failure does not suggest that centuries of criticism are wrong, but instead points to the failure of an educational system designed to produce masculine subjects through a narrow and specific performance. Education has failed the scholars. Their performances of wit and passion, both important aspects of a masculinity identity have been found lacking by both the schoolmaster and the women from whom men were required to separate from to learn. In other words, the play suggests that the educational system is designed to produce performances that are destined to fail. The inability of the students to achieve the aspirations of humanist education is located within the educational system itself rather than the scholars.

⁷⁴ Gerlier also says of Holofernes, his “fondness for inkhorn terms and negative adjectives, linked with his general taste for synonymy ... does not add anything to his meaning nor indeed communicates anything” (599).

Chapter 3. Dangerous Rhetoric

Introduction

Eloquence, as humanist theorist Juan Luis Vives suggests, is defined by “beautiful and splendid kinds of speech” (*On Education* 181). In order to achieve such speech, early modern English students were taught rhetoric. An education in rhetoric, as Quintilian notes, “will increase their powers of speech and nourish their eloquence” (Bk 1 PR 21-2). English rhetoric manual writer Henry Peacham also praises rhetoric’s connection to eloquence. In the *Garden of Eloquence* (1593), Peacham claims an education in rhetoric combined with natural wisdom creates a group that “hath bene judged able, and esteemed fit to rule the world with counsell, provinces with lawes, cities with pollicy, and multitudes with persuasion” (A3r). Rhetoric is so important that Thomas Wilson, in his epistle letter to John Dudley in the *Arte of Rhetorique* (1560), describes it as “so necessarye: that no man oughte to be withoute it, whiche either shall beare rule over manye, or must have to doe wyth matters of a Realme” (Aij). An education in rhetoric, for these writers, is preparation for a life of public speaking and performance as an orator. Rhetoric, according to its advocates, is a necessary skill that opens employment opportunities and provides a way to be a productive member of the Realm. Leonard Cox, in *The Arte or Crafte of Rhethoryke* (1530), claims that rhetoric, or what he calls a “crafte” is “very necessary to all” professions. For Cox, rhetoric is key for those who will “be advocates and proctoures in the lawe.” In addition, Cox claims rhetoric will prepare people for diplomatic service in case they are “sente in theyr prynces Ambassades.” Cox continues to praise the benefits of training in rhetoric saying it also necessary for those who want “to be techars of goddes worde” since rhetorical skills will make their sermons “moste sensible and accepte to their audience” (41-42). In other words, according to William Kempe, an education in rhetoric

produces eloquent people who will “set the common wealth in good order” through various avenues of public service (*On Education D*). In short, rhetoric offers a persuasive power to those with the skill. The persuasive power is supposedly necessary to safeguard the realm.

The mastery of rhetoric was thought to mark the end of education and the beginning of public service. Because of this expectation, educational theorists’ goals for education are strikingly similar to the promises made by rhetoricians. Education, for Merchant Taylors’ schoolmaster Richard Mulcaster, equips students to “execute those doings in life, which the state of his calling shall employ him vnto, whether publike abroad, or priuate at home, according vnto the direction of his countrie, where unto he is borne, and oweth his whole seruice” (*Position* 185). As Mulcaster’s pronoun rich proclamation suggests, education was reserved for young boys who would eventually gain the rhetorical skills needed for public service. Eloquence is linked to a masculine identity and tethered to the all-male institutions of education and public service. This link between education, rhetorical performance, and masculinity created an environment where eloquent women were seen as a threat. Patricia Parker suggests that “the sense that rhetoric was outside the sphere or proper place of women” is linked to “the nature of rhetoric as specifically public speaking” (104). As Parker notes, “it was the public nature of rhetoric – taking women outside their proper place – which disqualified them” (104).¹ Since women were prohibited (Elizabeth and Mary Tudor excluded) to “beare rule over manye, or must have to doe wyth matters of a Realme,” an education in rhetoric would be superfluous at best and disruptive to a “common wealth [set] in good order” at worst (Wilson Aij, Kempe D).²

¹ Parker goes on to note that the “humanist training of young men to argue persuasively in public, including in the courts” created a “link of rhetoric with judicial cases” (104).

² For more on witches who attempt to interfere “wyth matters of a Realme” by attempting to murder Queen Elizabeth I using wax magic see, Frances E. Dolan’s *Dangerous Familiars: Representations of Domestic Crime in England, 1550–1700* and Louis Montrose’s *The Subject of Elizabeth: Authority, Gender, and Representation*. For more information on wax magic in general see Lynn Maxwell’s “Wax Magic and *The Duchess of Malfi*.”

Karen Newman notes that female speech, in general, was “perceived as a usurpation of authority” and viewed as both “a threat to order and male sovereignty.” Speech, for Newman, was a “commodity exchange” that was designed for and policed by men (*Fashioning* 134).

It is evident that educational theorists are invested in controlling female speech when their comments on eloquent women are examined. For example, when it comes to eloquence in women, Vives, once tutor to Mary Tudor, was “not at all concerned” since, according to him, “a woman has no need of that” (*Christian Woman* 71). While Vives praises eloquence in men, saying “all eloquence stand[s] in full battle array for goodness and piety, against crime and wickedness,” it is apparent that “all,” for Vives, is gender specific (*On Education* 185). His view on eloquence shifts when he thinks about eloquent women. According to Vives, when young women are eloquent, or what he calls “garrulous,” it serves as “proof of levity and perverse character” (*Christian Woman* 169). Vives continues his indictment of female speech by suggesting “that the man who intends to marry” this eloquent woman he “will think he is marrying a viper, not a woman” (*Christian Woman* 169). Vives’ use of animal imagery here illuminates his view on eloquent women and the destructive power female speech could have. There is, in this imagery, an allusion to the Christian belief that the man, Adam, was tempted to sin by the woman, Eve, who was in turn, tempted by Satan, who was disguised as a snake. While the allusion seems to conflate the woman and the snake and thus conflate the woman with the devil, what is particularly interesting here is her speech is what makes the woman beastly. Elsewhere, Vives claims that Latin training would turn a beast into a man.³ The skills that Vives suggests will have a civilizing/humanizing effect on men, seemingly have the opposite effect on women.

³ See *Linguae latinae exercitatio* A6r.

Since eloquence is a contemptable trait in women, it stands to reason that women would have no need for an education in rhetoric.⁴ As such rhetoricians and conduct manual writers both object to providing women with an education in rhetoric. For some, such as George Puttenham, that objection is rooted in domestic relationships within the home. Puttenham, in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1598), groups women and women poets under the heading of “vices and deformities in speach and writing.” Puttenham claims that rhetoric lies outside the purview of the “devises of Ladies, and Gentlewomen” because access to rhetoric and rhetorical devices might cause them to become “too phantasticall wives” (256). Others such as Leonardo Bruni recognize that rhetoric is linked to the public service and public speaking. Bruni, writing to Lady Baptista di Montefeltro (younger daughter of Antonio, Count of Urbino) claims, “with much more hesitation” that “rhetoric in all its forms – public discussion, forensic argument, logical fence, and the like – lies absolutely outside the province of woman” (*De Studiis et Litteris*, 126). In both cases, the writers agree that rhetoric is associated with specific effectual powers, either over the home or over the commonwealth, and women should be denied access to that power. Eloquence is a power that is reserved for men and that power is retained by policing female speech and regulating women’s access to education.⁵ I am not claiming that education is solely to blame for the way women were mistreated in early modern England. Women were excluded from public service for various reasons. Their exclusion was partly informed by humoral

⁴ Interestingly enough, Aristotle did not exclude women from the use of rhetoric. Instead, Aristotle groups Sappho and other women from classical writings among his examples of skilled rhetoricians. See, Aristotle’s *On Rhetoric*, trans. George Kennedy.

⁵ Sara Mendelson and Patricia Crawford report that accounts of female speech reveal “more about male anxieties in an atmosphere of misogyny and phallogentric sexuality than they do about female speech” (214).

medicine that considered women, as Gail Kern Paster notes, particularly leaky.⁶ Their views were partially influenced by Aristotle's view that women were disabled men.⁷

The early modern period had no shortage of women who were accused of deploying language in dangerous ways.⁸ While male writers attempted to regulate female speech in general, witchcraft, in particular, provides a useful window into the way female speech was mediated, policed, and silenced, sometimes permanently, by a male culture deeply invested in claiming and maintaining eloquence as a uniquely masculine trait. If, as Jane Kamensky notes, witchcraft is a crime of "female speech," witchcraft might be situated within the humanist preoccupation with regulating access to eloquence (288).⁹ The connections between witchcraft and rhetoric extend beyond eloquence. The rhetorician was revered for his ability to sway and persuade others through language. Similarly, witches were thought to possess power over the entire community.¹⁰

⁶ According to Gail Kern Paster both men and women, "experienced such basic social interpellations as their engenderment in humoral terms, since ... humoral theory was instrumental in the production and maintenance of gender and class difference" (*The Body Embarrassed* 7). According to Paster the people in the early modern period "increasingly sought to regulate and regularize a subject's experience of his/her own body and relations with the bodies of others" (*The Body Embarrassed* 164).

⁷ Rosemarie Garland-Thomson points out that "Aristotle affirms this connection of disabled and female bodies by stating that 'the female is as it were deformed male' or – as it appears in other translations – 'a mutilated male'" (*Extraordinary Bodies* 20). Garland-Thomson theorizes that feminism and disability "challenge existing social relations; both resist interpretations of certain bodily configurations and functioning as deviant; both question the ways that differences are invested with meaning; both examine the enforcement of universalizing norms; both interrogate the politics of appearance; both explore the politics of naming; both forge positive identities" (*Extraordinary Bodies* 22). See also Thomas Laqueur's *Making Sex* where he claims the early modern person believed that there was only one body—a male one—and that in the female, the same reproductive organs existed, but turned inside rather than outside. In this model, females are "lesser" than males, but not profoundly different from them. (8).

⁸ So called scolds, shrews, viragos and witches all fall within the category of women's dangerous speech. For more on scolds and controlling language see Linda E. Boose's "Scolding Brides and Bridling Scolds: Taming the Woman's Unruly Member."

⁹ But, of course, witchcraft is not only a crime of female speech. To say so would be to ignore deeply held religious beliefs. Michelle Brock in both "Experiencing Satan in Early Modern Scotland" and "Internalizing the Demonic: Satan and the Self in Early Modern Scottish Piety" looks at the ways both men and women experienced and understood Satan in early modern Scotland and how their beliefs shaped and sharpened inner piety.

¹⁰ Clive Holmes points out the social relationship witches had with their communities in "Women: Witnesses and Witches." According to Holmes, "the inhabitants of Knaresborough Forest coexisted with the witch-

In other words, the rhetorical qualities of both witches and of the rhetorician are twinned in their origin as modes of activating speech to coerce action. Moreover, contemporary documents of witchcraft and rhetoric share a pedagogical structure, visible in the way they parse speech acts. Both witchcraft and rhetoric self-consciously thematize and interrogate the protocols of discursivity and in various ways suggest that the power of language is subject to artifice.

This chapter looks at Thomas Dekker, William Rowley, and John Ford's *The Witch of Edmonton* and Thomas Heywood and Richard Brome's *The Witches of Lancashire* as case studies for the way witchcraft, education, and eloquence overlap. These particular plays are valuable because they reveal both how women use and deploy language in ways that reflect a knowledge of humanistic educational practices and how they are ultimately silenced. In *The Witch of Edmonton*, Mother Sawyer is taught how to be a witch and the process is strikingly similar to methods taught in the early modern classroom. In *The Witches of Lancashire*, Mrs. Generous uses speech that highlights her knowledge of rhetoric and the legal system. However, in both plays, the witches are silenced through instruments of the educational system. Tom, the devil dog acts as Mother Sawyer's schoolmaster and he abandons her. In *The Witches of Lancashire*, a young schoolboy is responsible for bringing order to the community and silencing the witches. In thinking about witchcraft in pedagogical terms, the policing and silencing of witches and their language can be seen as part of the larger project of defining early modern gender through education. These witchcraft plays are micro-arenas where the larger project of establishing and maintaining a masculine identity in England is played out. That female speech is so highly regulated suggests that the idea of a stable masculine identity that is connected to

clans in their midst" and a "similarly dense and long-standing network of social relations is apparent in Pendle Forest between the rival witch- families, headed by their respective matriarchs, Old Chattox and Old Demdyke, and the village" (52)

eloquence and education is tenuous at best. This chapter looks at how eloquent or educated women disrupt the expectations of an education system designed to create masculine subjects.¹¹ Additionally, this chapter examines the ways that men identify, re-present and silence female speech while privileging their own accounts.

This particular study focuses on women accused of witchcraft in early modern England.¹² In looking specifically at women, I am not saying that men were not accused of witchcraft.¹³ However, as Alan Macfarlane observes, over 90 percent of accused witches were women. He further points out that men who were formally accused of witchcraft were tied in some way to women either by marriage or socially.¹⁴ Because women were disproportionately accused of

¹¹ Karen Newman points out that women who were accused of witchcraft were “often disorderly or unruly women who transgressed cultural codes of femininity” (*Fashioning* 56).

¹² During the 2019 Season, the Arkansas Shakespeare Theater performed *Macbeth*. At the beginning of the play was a dumb show where the Weird sisters are in a domestic setting with their husbands and children. The women are tending gardens and raising their children when (possibly) Macbeth’s soldiers arrive and slaughter their husbands. Once the men are killed, the women’s affect changes; they transform into the witches Macbeth encounters. Director Rebekah Scallet said of the dumb show: “We’ve added a prologue at the beginning of the play, so we’ve moved away from thinking of them as witches and more as women.”

¹³ Paul Kocher points out that the term “witch” could “include anyone who performs supernatural acts by demonic agency” such as a “conjurer, black magician or enchanter” (10). Ronald Sawyer suggests that “the typical correlation between women and witches ... is not a universal phenomenon. Anthropological evidence proves witches could be either men or women.” According to Sawyer, the English focus on “women witches is a result of complex economic and social forces as well as of traditional folk and Christian beliefs that emphasized the threatening power of women” (465). See “‘Strangely Handled in All Her Lymes’: Witchcraft and Healing in Jacobean England.”

¹⁴ See Alan Macfarlane’s *Witchcraft in Tudor and Stuart England*, 160. Similarly, Karen Newman points out that “statistically in England witches were overwhelmingly women – over 90 percent” and “the few men tried for witchcraft in England were almost always related to known witches or rounded up in some of the larger multiple hunts that encompassed not only the accused but the accused’s family” (55). Clive Holmes suggests that the “mysterious powers that constituted witchcraft would normally be possessed by women” (51). Holmes also suggests that witchcraft appears “to inhere in matrilineal lineage: ‘by descent . . . from the grandmother to the mother, and from the mother to the children’” (51). Karen Jones and Michael Zell point out that “it is common knowledge that the majority of accused ‘witches’ during the ‘witch-craze’ of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were female” and they suggest that “while in the later Middle Ages witchcraft employed for beneficent purposes might be attributed to men or women, ‘black’ magic was already considered a largely female preserve, well before the early modern ‘witch-craze’” (45). Alan Anderson and Raymond Gordon point out that “from the start of the middle ages there was, then, a marked tendency to link the social inferiority of women with a spiritual inferiority which rendered them especially susceptible to the allures of malevolent forces” (173). Gordon and Anderson (among many others) also note that, “because of their nature women were felt to be more corruptible than men” (174).

witchcraft, feminist historians Christina Lerner and Marianne Hester both contend in various ways that witch hunts were women hunts.¹⁵ Lerner claims that “witches are women; all women are potential witches” (92). Both Lerner and Hester suggest that witches have in some way violated the expectations society held for women. According to Lerner, witch-hunting can be seen as “the hunting of women who do not fulfil the male view of how women ought to conduct themselves” (100).¹⁶ Similarly, Hester suggests that witch hunts rely on the “constructs of masculinity and especially femininity” and reflect “an important part of the dynamics of male domination in sixteenth and seventeenth-century England” (4).¹⁷ James R. Keller acknowledges witchcraft as a binary issue that pits perceived masculine authority against feminine behavior when he suggests that witchcraft is both “the empowering of the traditionally helpless female” and “a threat to patriarchal authority” (38). Keller highlights witchcraft as a desire for power, and Diane Purkiss summarizes this desire when she acknowledges that “the witch was a woman’s fantasy and not simply nightmare” (1).¹⁸ The witches’ fantasy that Purkiss points to is connected

¹⁵ Anne Barstow makes similar claims in *Witchcraze: A New History of the European Witch Hunts*.

¹⁶ See Christina Lerner’s *Witchcraft and Religion: The Politics of Popular Belief*. James A. Sharpe includes witchcraft as a serious felony that was usually tried at the assizes. Other crimes Sharpe mentions are “homicide, grand larceny, burglary, arson, and rape. See James A. Sharpe’s *Crime in Early Modern England 1550-1750*. Culpeper and Semino claim that ecclesiastical courts were seen as too lenient (98). Malcolm Gaskill points out that, by 1560, there were two stages involved in the prosecution of witches. First there was an initial examination by a Justice of the Peace which was followed by arraignment and a trial. See “Witchcraft and Evidence in Early Modern England.” In short, prosecution generally relied on private individuals to both bring forth accusation and pursue the legal matter in court.

¹⁷ In *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama*, Karen Newman analyzes “how the category ‘femininity’ is produced and deployed in early modern England” (xix). In doing so, Newman examines “the relationship of gender to power and the state” and the ways “gender is used, or alternatively, effaced, in the service of so-called larger political interests” (xvii).

¹⁸ Viviana Comensoli notes that, “those perceived as most likely to become witches, therefore, are those who are powerless” or otherwise “unassimilable” into the community (112).

to a desire for power and for witches, similar to rhetoricians, that power comes from speech, is tied to eloquence, and originates in education.

Witchcraft and rhetoric are twinned forms of eloquence with much the same expectations; in both witchcraft and rhetoric, language was thought to possess effectual powers.¹⁹ Wilson makes this claim explicit in his belief that rhetoric has the power “to wynne folke at their will” (“Preface”). As Mary Thomas Crane points out, rhetoric is “designed to exceed the limits of common speech and to manipulate the emotions of the common people” and because of this, rhetoric “posed a threat both to the grounding of discourse in significant matter and to its framing in accordance with the hierarchical social code” (Crane 40). Or, as Crane puts it more bluntly, rhetoric “promised to teach a way to control others without necessarily being able to control itself” (Crane 40). The same, of course, can be said of witchcraft. Brenda Danet and Bryna Bogoch call curses “a form of ‘word magic’” and point out that “curses are genre of verbal control” (133-4).²⁰ If rhetoric promises an effectual power so, then, does witchcraft. The

¹⁹ Legally witchcraft was defined as *maleficium*, willfully inflicted harm. Witches in England, as Jonathan Culpeper and Elena Semino note, were initially charged with *maleficium* “rather than the practice of witchcraft itself” (98). As Karen Newman astutely observes, *maleficium*’s root is *facio*, “to make, to fashion, to build” (*maleficium*, then can be loosely translated as “to build something bad”). To build anything (good or bad) requires a foundation, and in the case of witchcraft, Bernard and Perkins seem to suggest that the foundation is language-based. Rhetoric, undeniably language-based, is also something that is built. Wilson calls rhetoric God’s “owne workmanshippe” and speaks of rhetoric as a way to “*frame* them by reason to all good order” (emphasis mine). The OED defines “frame” as “to give structure to, shape, or construct. (“frame” v. II) The term is architectural in the sense that it is used to describe construction “by fitting and uniting the parts of the skeleton of (a wooden structure)” and “to join together the frame of (a house, a ship, etc.)” or “to cut or prepare (timber) for use in building (“frame” v II 4a). The humanist education system that claims skill in rhetoric produces eloquent people is also presented in terms of constructing and framing. Kempe, speaking of education broadly, uses similarly architectural imagery, saying, “we will *frame* our discipline to a meane nature, and distinguish it according to the increase of yeares in a meane Scholler.” Richard Rainold, speaking specifically of a fable, says “some godlie precepte, or admonition to vertue is given, to *frame* and instructour maners” (2v). Kempe’s idea of education as something that “can teach [the student] all things” relies on “*framing* [the student] to eloquence in talke, and vertue in deedes” (*Education of Children* E6).

²⁰ This chapter is informed by speech act theory and considers both curses and various elements associated with classical rhetoric as “performative” utterances. For J. L. Austin, a performative speech act does “not ‘describe’ or ‘report’ or constate? anything at all, are not ‘true or false’” (5). John R. Searle expands Austin’s categorization to include “cases where one brings a state of affairs into existence by declaring it to exist, cases where, so to speak, ‘saying makes it so’” (16). Similarly, Derrida identifies a performative utterance as something “outside of itself or,

effectual power of witch's language is reported by early modern English writer, Robert Burton, in his *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1652), in a circular argument. Burton suggests that the power of witches relies on the power of language while he simultaneously attempts to demystify the witch's "magical" speech acts. Burton claims that "charms" are "the means by which [witches] work" but then quickly claims that there is "not that there is any power at all in those spells, charms, characters, and barbarous words; but that the devil doth use such means to delude them" (Partition 1, 205). In both the case of the rhetorician and the witch, language was thought to possess effectual powers. That the rhetorician is trained, and the witch is silenced and discounted suggests a correlation between the two that deserves attention.

Silent Women and Educated Wombs

In early modern England, the culture was heavily invested in policing female speech and creating a monopoly on language, rhetoric, and education for men. While young boys were trained in rhetoric and taught to use language in the service of the commonwealth, women were largely denied formal education and encouraged to remain silent. When women did speak, their speech was often criminalized and pathologized.²¹ Criminalizing female speech points to both to

in any event, before and in front of itself." Derrida further claims that a performative utterance "does not describe something that exists outside of language and prior to it" Instead, "it produces or transforms a situation, it effects" (13). A performative utterance, according to J. Hillis Miller, is "a speech act in which the saying or writing of the words in some way or other does what the words say" (2). Austin specifically mentions *to curse* and *to wish* as examples of behabitives, which he defines as the "reaction to other people's behavior and fortunes and of attitudes and expressions of attitudes to someone else's past conduct or imminent conduct" (159). However, using speech act theory to specifically categorize a witch's curse is complicated. Austin's category of exercitives ("a decision that something is to be so, as distinct from a judgement that it is so: it is advocacy that it should be so") might prove useful. While Searle's definition of "declarative" is also useful, perhaps Kent Bach and Robert M. Harnish's "conventional" illocutionary acts is most illuminating. Bach and Harnish, who say the category corresponds with Searle's declarations, define conventional illocutionary acts as "actions which *if* done in certain situations, count as something else. In other words, a convention is a mutually recognized means for doing something, counting as such only because mutually recognized, perhaps by being agreed upon" (109).

²¹ The male culture policed female speech by suggesting that the primary method to identify a witch was based on verbal expression. Clergyman Richard Bernard, for example, suggests that identifying a witch is something that is exclusively linked to language. For Bernard, "cursing and banning, and bitter imprecations," "threatnings with curses," "Charmes and Spels, the words thereof being repeated," "certaine formes of words like prayer, using the name of God, and the Lord Jesu, or the Virgin Mary," and "praising and . . . words of commendations" are the

the power language was thought to have and to the tenuous hold men had on the power that language afforded them. Kenneth Charlton addresses this specific anxiety when he notes that men who “came to portray women as scold, shrew, virago and witch” were “coming close to expressing, if not overtly acknowledging, their basic apprehension of the powers of women” (15). The apprehension of women and female speech is tied to the belief that language, education and rhetoric afford and grant access to power. Moreover, that apprehension likely springs from the knowledge that retaining that power as a masculine trait required policing women’s speech.

Early modern conduct manuals writers as well as educational theorists could all agree that women should be silent. Vives points out that “it is not shameful for a woman to be Silent” (*Christian Woman* 71). Vives says that he does “not wish that a young woman be talkative” and he does not limit his opposition to garrulousness to public speaking. Vives stipulates that a woman should not be talkative “even among her girl companions.” Vives even suggested that the “custom to give praise to a woman for her ability to converse wittily and eloquently with men for hours on end” is linked to the devil. He claims that praising woman for eloquence is “welcomed and prescribed by ordinances of hell” (*Christian Woman* 130). Vives is, of course, not the only early modern writer to insist on silence in women. William Gouge advised women “to keepe in their tongues with bit and bridle” in his 1622 conduct manual, *Of Domesticall Duties* (285).

verbal arsenal of a witch (I-12). Similarly, William Perkins claims that finding witches was linked to language. Of the seven “presumptions” Perkins claims will “probably, and conjecturally note one to be a Witch,” five of these, as Kamensky notes, are “centered on the spoken word” (45, 293). For Perkins, identifying a witch may be identified “if a fellow-witch or Magician give testimonie of any person to be a Witch” (45). Since Perkins claims that “Witches are wont to practise their mischievous facts by cursing and banning,” a witch can also be identified “if after cursing, there followeth death, or at least some mischeiefe” (45). Perkins’ fourth way to identify a witch is linked, again, to language and cursing. According to Perkins, “if after enmitie, quarrelling, or threatning, a preset mischiefe doth follow” this would serve to identify the speaker as a witch” (45). While this particular marker suggests that there is a tie between language and action, Perkins’ final marker for identifying a witch relies on verbal responses. For Perkins, “if the party examined be unconstant, or contrary to himselfe in his deliberate answers, it argueth a guilty minde and conscience” (45-6). The witches’ power lies in their language, and, by contrast, the witch hunters’ power comes from their ability to identify a witch through their language.

Similarly, conduct manual writers John Dod and Robert Cleaver insist, in *A Godlie Forme of Household Government* (1621), that “the dutie of the man is, to be skilfull in talke: and of wife, to boast of silence” (L7). According to these male writers, female speech and witchcraft are linked through the act of simply speaking; a woman who speaks is linked with the devil. Women who were not silent, were either witches or were likely to be approached by the devil. By using the threat of a witchcraft accusation, these male writers attempt to completely silence female speech and preserve eloquence as a masculine quality. Moreover, witchcraft was seen as pedagogical in nature and women were more likely to teach others what they knew about witchcraft. Alexander Roberts, in his 1616 treatise on witchcraft, claims that because women are “of a slippery tongue and full of words,” they are more likely to share their knowledge of witchcraft with their family members and community (G2). Witchcraft accusations also served to maintain education as a uniquely masculine trait.

Silent women, naturally, did not need a formal education that emphasized eloquence and was thought to provide the skills needed for public service. As such major pedagogical thinkers sought to exclude women from formal educational institutions.²² Both Mulcaster and Vives express, in excluding women and young girls from education, that the classroom and the skills taught there are reserved for men and young boys. Mulcaster’s reasons for “set[ting] not yong maidens to publicke grammer scholes” or universities is based on his interpretation of Plato (*Positions* 167).²³ For Mulcaster women and men are both capable of learning but the “vertues”

²² Education in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries involved formal schooling in the forms of grammar schools, tutors and universities but learning was expected to begin at home, usually under the mother’s care. Early modern education, as Dowd notes “was thus an extended process of socialization that would encourage sons and daughters to grow up to be morally upstanding, spiritually devout, and culturally informed men and women” (Dowd 134-5). That is to say, humanistic education was, as Lynn Enterline notes, designed to “intervene in social reproduction, to sort out which differences between bodies (male and female) and groups (aristocrats, the middling sort, and those below) were necessary to defining and producing proper English ‘gentlemen’” (1).

²³ Mulcaster devotes Chapter 38 in his *Positions* to the education of “young maidens.”

that inform the capacity to learn are “more strong and more durable in men, weaker and more variable in wymen” (*Positions* 170). Unlike Mulcaster, Vives makes no distinction between the intellectual capacity between male and female students but Vives similarly suggests that young girls should be denied access to a formal, liberal arts education. Vives is explicit in claiming that women are to “be denied access to those liberal arts” such as “dialectic, history, mathematics, and politics” since these topics “deal more with the man’s world” (*Christian Woman* 15-16).²⁴ The “man’s world” Vives refers to are “professional skills” for the “administration of the republic or justice” and weirdly, “generosity” (*Christian Woman* 85).²⁵ Public service is part of the “man’s world” so Vives claims that women do not require “talent or wisdom” for public occupations (*Christian Woman* 85). Whether or not women and men were seen as intellectually equal (Vives agrees and Mulcaster disagrees) both agree that women should be denied a formal education, and both claim the formal classroom as a masculine space.

While, for the most part, women did not receive a formal education, it would be irresponsible to suggest all women were excluded from the influence of the educational system. Edmund Coote addressed *The English Schoole-Master* to “such men and women of trade, as taylors, Weavers, Shop keepers, Seamsters, and such other as have undertaken the charge of teaching others” (A3). Susan Dwyer Amussen says that both children and servants were given a moral and practical education. She cites pamphleteer Dorothy Leigh’s insistence that her sons

²⁴ Vives recommends, for women, reading “books that will improve her morals and give her serenity of spirit” (*Christian Woman* 16).

²⁵ I have already mentioned that Leonardo Bruni claims that “rhetoric in all its forms – public discussion, forensic argument, logical fence, and the like – lies absolutely outside the province of woman.” Also, for Bruni “there are certain subjects in which, whilst a modest proficiency is on all accounts to be desired, a minute knowledge and excessive devotion seem to be a vain display. For instance, subtleties of Arithmetic and Geometry are not worthy to absorb a cultivated mind, and the same must be said of Astrology” (*De Studiis et Litteris*, 126).

teach all their servants how to read as an example.²⁶ Wendy Wall notes that “writing masters, merchants, and household mistresses ...informally taught maids and apprentices to wield a pen; and household guides instructed mothers to teach literacy skills as part of religious education” (118). Education, as Michelle Dowd notes, was “a more expansive category” that included a number of practices that are no longer considered as pedagogical (134). Such activities include marriage instructions, guideline for prayers, or, as Dowd notes, “more general advice on how to live a good life” (134).²⁷ As Dowd points out, this type of instruction is evident in Ben Jonson’s “To Penshurst” (1616). Jonson compliments Robert Sidney’s wife, Barbara Gamage on her “high huswifery” and while he says her children have been “taught religion,” Gamage’s role in the educational process is unclear (85, 92). Dowd points out that “Barbara Gamage’s particular role in educating her children is rhetorically erased, or rather rhetorically subsumed under the umbrella of parental pedagogy” (134). Even as women were expected to participate in the education of their children, they were also, as Jonson’s work suggests, erased from the process.

There is a paradox in claiming that women are responsible for education at home while also denying women a formal education. Mulcaster offers illuminating insight into this paradox when he explains his “four speciall reasons” why young women should be educated, ironically in the same chapter he prohibits women from formal education in universities and grammar schools (*Positions* 167). Mulcaster begins by arguing in the negative; he claims that women should be taught because women are *not* prohibited to learn according to the “maner and

²⁶ See Amussen *Ordered Society*, 40-1. Leigh, Dorothy. *The mothers blessing. Or The godly counsaile of a gentle-woman not long since deceased, left behind her for her children containing many good exhortations, and godly admonitions, profitable for all parents to leaue as a legacy to their children, but especially for those, who by reason of their young yeeres stand most in need of instruction. By Mrs. Dorothy Leigh.* Printed at London: For Iohn Budge and are to be sold at the great South-dore of Paules, and at Brittaines Burse. 1616.

²⁷ The vast corpus of conduct literature in the period speaks to the emphasis on this type of pedagogical work.

custome” of the country (*Positions* 167). Mulcaster cites “duetie” as his second reason why women should be taught (*Positions* 167).²⁸ When Mulcaster begins to elaborate on the “duetie ... to see [young women] well brought up,” his definition of duty is less about women and more about women’s relationship to men and their positions within the household as wives and mothers (*Positions* 168). Women are, according to Mulcaster, “the seminary” of men’s “succession” and were made for men’s comfort (*Positions* 168). Mulcaster’s use of the word “seminary” here is particularly useful in understanding how Mulcaster views the woman’s place within the household and the educational system. As seminaries of men’s “succession,” Mulcaster positions women as both passive participants in the creation of heirs and active educators responsible for training children.²⁹ While Mulcaster is concerned about the effect mothers will have on their children, he extends his concerns to men. Again, though, Mulcaster’s reason are centered around the man’s comfort. For Mulcaster, women are “the onely good to garnish [to men’s] alonenesse” and educating women strengthens the household (*Positions* 168). Strengthening the household, however, for Mulcaster, means establishing the man as primary authority. Mulcaster offers a cautionary scenario: if men should neglect the education of young women, then women may “by our default ... winne the vpper roome and make vs stand bare head or be bolder with us to” (*Positions* 169). Educating women, for Mulcaster, seems to simply

²⁸ This particular proof is motivated by a duty that is “charged in conscience” which prompts Mulcaster to claim that a lack of education will “leave [young women] lame” (*Positions* 167).

²⁹ According to the OED, “seminary” can mean “a piece of ground in which plants are sown ... to be afterwards transplanted,” “a place ... in which some particular class of persons are produced or trained,” or “a place of education, a school, college, university” (OED “seminary” n. 1a, 3b, 4). As “seminaries, then, women become both the fertile ground for sowing a seed and an institute of learning. The connection to men’s children is important; Mulcaster asks “Is it either nothing, or but some small thing, to have our childrens mothers well furnished in minde, well strengthened in bodie? Which desire by them to maintaine our succession?” (*Positions* 168).

be another way to control women.³⁰ Even granting women access to a limited education becomes another way men can police and control women. By offering women access, however limited, to the male-centered institution, men act as gatekeepers who can deny or grant access based on their own specific, selfish needs.

An extreme example of controlling female speech and limiting a woman's access to education can be identified in witchcraft. The successful practice of witchcraft is contingent upon two factors: knowledge and speech.³¹ Both knowledge, in the form of formal education, and speech, through rhetorical training, were seen as the property of men and these skills were emphasized in the exclusively male institutions of public service and education. When these larger cultural issues are reduced to a specific study of witchcraft, the same elements emerge. Male knowledge is privileged while female knowledge is policed and controlled. The male version of the "magical practitioner," as Stephanie Irene Spoto points out, was "often more tolerated" than their female counterparts. Spoto isolates this toleration to the institutions through which the knowledge was transmitted. According to Spoto, male sorcery was "practiced either in the university or the government" and "the sorcerer's or magician's knowledge was passed through an acceptably and more easily controllable form of textual transmission" (60). Witchcraft, as a pedagogical experience, is more diffuse and thus hard to track and control. As

³⁰ The idea that education can be seen as a way to control women is apparent in Mulcaster's third reason where he claims educating women is for their "owne *towardnesse*," since "God by nature would never have given them to remaine idle" (*Positions* 167). The final proof Mulcaster provides is "the excellent *effects* in that sex" education could provide (*Positions* 167). However, based on his lengthy discussion of women in relation to men and children, these "excellent effects" seem to be less about women and more about the effects women will have on their children and the ability to entertain their husbands.

³¹ Andrew Cambers points out the connection between witchcraft and knowledge when he suggests that "making a pact with the devil was a fundamentally learned experience, closely associated with the technology of writing" (21). Frances Dolan links speech with witchcraft by acknowledging that "speech was the primary means of expressing that anger, of provoking the devil, and of enacting ill will" (198).

Spoto notes, “the witch’s knowledge was communicated orally, in a non-literate form, making it less tangible and perhaps more threatening” (60).³² Moreover, witchcraft depended upon another skill thought to be available exclusively to men in the period: public speaking and rhetoric.

Witchery, as Eleanor Rycroft suggests, “bestows on women an oral liberty to voice their desires.” This “oral liberty” is more dangerous than rhetoric (and eloquent women were seen as, if not dangerous, then garrulous) because witchcraft is connected to the “ability to talk to devils” (175).³³ Witchcraft, in other words, extends beyond traditional rhetorical skills afforded to and policed by male institutions. Witchcraft connects the power of speech to the supernatural.

However, the way male writers respond to and attempt to re-represent witchcraft suggest that their fears are more grounded in maintaining control of education and public speaking than they were in divine retribution.

Learning to Spell

When two separate accounts of accused witch Mother Sawyer are examined together, it becomes apparent that access to education and public speaking and rhetoric are components of witchcraft that male writers attempt to reclaim as masculine qualities. In *The Witch of Edmonton*, the process of witch-making/ becoming a witch is presented as a process that is fundamentally pedagogical: there is a student and a schoolmaster. As Meg F. Pearson points out, “the process of becoming a witch is not typically staged,” but in *The Witch of Edmonton*, Mother Sawyer becomes a witch on stage by (partially) following the course of study laid out for a grammar school education. As a woman, Sawyer should have been denied access to a formal education,

³² Diane Purkiss identifies witchcraft as an “inversion of the gender hierarchy” that sparked “fear of chaos in the political order” (*Witch in History* 93).

³³ For example, in James I’s *Daemonologie*, Philomathes expresses concern about women who “converse naturally” with Incubi and Succubae (Kv).

but she easily understands and masters the methods of a humanist classroom. Sawyer's mastery of humanist techniques calls into question both the viability of the educational system and the effectiveness of maintaining the classroom as an exclusively male space. Furthermore, in both *The Witch of Edmonton* and Henry Goodcole's pamphlet, Sawyer's speech, and her ability to affect change through language is both acknowledged and re-presented. In *The Witch of Edmonton*, Sawyer is presented as silent once her alleged power has been contained by male authorities. In Goodcole's pamphlet, he presents Sawyer's language as simultaneously powerful and impotent. Mother Elizabeth Sawyer's case, in both *The Witch of Edmonton* and as it was presented by Goodcole, undergoes a significant amount of revision as it is relayed and re-represented by men. Each of these sources work in various ways to reestablish the supposed male-controlled areas of language and knowledge by stripping Sawyer of any power her education and speech may have afforded her.

Elizabeth Sawyer was convicted for witchery and condemned to die in connection with her neighbor Agnes Ratcliffe's death; Goodcole, ordinary at Newgate prison, took Sawyer's confession days before she was executed.³⁴ Goodcole claims that he documented Sawyer's confession in "The wonderfull discoverie of Elizabeth Sawyer" as a way to refute the "base and false Ballets" sung around Sawyer's execution (A4).³⁵ Beyond these relatively well accepted and

³⁴ Goodcole's pamphlet identifies the "victim" of the bewitching as Agnes Ratcliffe. However, in *The Witch of Edmonton*, the same "victim" is identified as Anne Ratcliffe. For the sake of clarity, throughout this chapter I will use Goodcole's spelling and identification: Agnes Ratcliffe.

³⁵ Kenneth Charlton thinks about broadside ballads as part of the educational system in "'False Fonde Bookes, Ballades and Rimes': An Aspect of Informal Education in Early Modern England." For more on witches in broadside ballads see Sarah F. Williams' *Damnable Practices: Witches, Dangerous Women, and Music in Seventeenth Century English Broadside Ballads*. For more information on broadside ballads in general see, Patricia Fumerton's *Ballads and Broadsides in Britain, 1500-1800* and "Not Home: Alehouses, Ballads, and the Vagrant Husband in Early Modern England," Tessa Watt's. *Cheap Print and Popular Piety, 1550-1640*, Leslie C. Dunn and Katherine R. Larson's *Gender and Song in Early Modern England*, and Paula McDowell's "The Manufacture and Lingua-fracture of Ballad Making: Broadside Ballads in Long Eighteenth Century Ballad Discourse."

documented statements, Sawyer's historical truth has been re-represented and supplanted by Goodcole's account and the (now lost) ballads his pamphlet addressed.³⁶ In opting to write his pamphlet Goodcole seems invested in becoming the dominant authority and in order to do so, he is faced with discounting and re-representing both Sawyer and the ballad writers. In both cases, Goodcole attempts to silence what he considers dangerous speech by displacing the language of others and repositioning his own language as, not only the supreme authority, but the only authority. Goodcole addresses the unknown ballad writers as those who "wound" the truth with "ridiculous fictions." Goodcole muses how it is possible for these "lewde Balletmongers" to reach such a standing that they are allowed to "creepe into the Printers presses and peoples eares" (A4). "Creepe" can be a verb with an unpleasant connotation.³⁷ Goodcole seems to be saying there is something both animated and potentially dangerous in the ballads. Furthermore, "creepe" indicates a lessening of agency on the part of those who hear these ballads; they did not consent to listening. Goodcole reestablishes himself as the authority by protecting society from lies that "creepe" into people's "eares" and by silencing and re-presenting the dangerous speech of convicted witch Mother Sawyer (A4).³⁸

³⁶ Ballads were not designed to last. Hyder Rollins speaks of the "enormous number" of broadside ballads printed (258). The comparably few remaining ballads that survive were collected as novelty items during the period. In his ballad collection, Samuel Pepys writes out a quote from John Selden, who Pepys acquired his own collection from, that illustrates the ephemeral nature of broadside ballads: "Though some make slight of libels, yet you may see by them how the wind sits. As take a straw, and throw it up in the air; you shall see by that which way the wind is, which you shall not do by casting up a stone. More solid things do not show the complexion of the times so well as ballads and libels." Quoted from *Ballads and Broad-sides in Britain 1500-1800* p. 1.

³⁷ The OED defines "creep" as "to advance or come on slowly, stealthily, or by imperceptible degrees; to insinuate oneself *into*; to come *in* or *up* unobserved; to steal insensibly *upon* or *over*." ("creep" v. 3a). Even in a more positive definition creep still means "to move timidly or diffidently; to proceed humbly, abjectly, or servilely, to cringe; to move on a low level, without soaring or aspiring" ("creep" v. 3b). It might also be worth mentioning that "creeping to the cross" was used in the Roman Service for Good Friday.

³⁸ Frances E. Dolan points out that "the plays that grant witches the most power also confine them to the subplot and/or eliminate them from the play's conclusion and reordered community by executing them or, more generally and less realistically, by allowing them to vanish" (211).

As Goodcole begins to discredit Sawyer, he first reduces her to what Julia M. Garrett calls a “blazon” of Sawyer’s “stigmatizing physical features” (329).³⁹ In his blazon, Goodcole describes Elizabeth Sawyer’s physical state as “most pale & ghoast-like” and “crooked and deformed” but he pays particular attention to another (partially physical attribute): her tongue (A6). While Goodcole categorizes her tongue among the “publike and private markes on her body,” what he seems to be describing through her tongue is language (A6).⁴⁰ Her tongue, according to Goodcole, “was the occasioning cause, of the Divels accesse unto her” but the existence of the organ is not the reason Sawyer becomes a witch; it is the “cursing, swearing, blaspheming, and imprecating” Sawyer does that brings the devil (B). Her language allows the devil to approach her, and it will be her language that ultimately convicts her of witchcraft. As Sarah Johnson points out, the “Sawyer’s transgressing tongue opens the way for bodily transgression in the form of physical intimacy with the devil, who in turn visits physical harm on others. In short, Elizabeth Sawyer’s unruly speech has very tangible consequences” (70). Goodcole described Sawyer’s tongue as an “it” as if the tongue acted and compelled itself to speak without Sawyer’s intervention. While there were contemporary physicians who claimed that the tongue was a fundamentally duplicitous member, in this context, it is important to note that Sawyer spoke.⁴¹ Blaming her weirdly independent tongue for that speech suggests that

³⁹ See “Dramatizing Deviance: Sociological Theory and *The Witch of Edmonton*,”

⁴⁰ Sheilagh Ilona O’Brien points out that “English witchcraft laws did not permit torture in witchcraft cases (unlike in neighboring Scotland and parts of continental Europe), certain physical measures were sometimes part of the pretrial process or of the trials themselves. These included searching for and testing the witches’ “mark” and, later, tossing suspects into water to see if they floated—the “swimming test” (32)

⁴¹ Physician Nicholas Culpeper lumps the tongue together with asthma, madness, and vertigo as diseases of the brain. These diseases, for Culpeper, hurt the “intellectuall faculty” and interfere with the rational, “motionall part of man” (89, 99). See *Semeiotica Uranica or an Astrological Judgement of Diseases*. William Drage, speaking specifically about diseases associated with witchcraft, isolates the tongue as both a way to identify witches and a means to try to silence them. For Drage, signs of possession include the tongue “speaking Blasphemy, Raving, and Lying, and telling things done far off at the moment” (11). As Drage recounts the story of Mary Hall’s possession he points out that attempts to silence Hall involved grabbing and holding her tongue: “Sometimes when the Spirits

Goodcole recognizes the potential power Sawyer's words might have and that power prompts him to reduce her speech to an anatomical organ. Jonathan Culpeper and Elana Semino point out that the witchcraft "phenomenon was based on the belief that the words of certain people in certain circumstances had the power to harm others" (100). By attempting to shift blame from Sawyer's speech to her tongue, Goodcole acknowledges his belief that Sawyer's words had the ability to hurt people while simultaneously limiting her agency.

Sawyer's tongue is severed from the feminine body in a kind of fantasy of isolating and containing feminine agency. However, the need to contain feminine agency suggests that there is agency available. Goodcole reports that "God did wonderfully overtake her in her owne wickednesse, to make her tongue to be the meanes of her owne destruction, which had destroyed many before" (B). In this statement, he acknowledges the power of Sawyer's speech to both harm others and, ultimately, to be the "meanes of her owne destruction" (B). Even in attempting to control Sawyer's speech, Goodcole, perhaps inadvertently, assigns Sawyer linguistic agency; he seems to believe that Sawyer's words influenced others. It is a circular argument to suggest that witches have the power to kill with their language and yet their language is powerless. Yet, Goodcole attempts to re-represent the language associated with witchcraft's power by superimposing his own narrative that will convince others that witches are linguistically impotent (or at least are subject to divine intervention). While divine justice may eventually arrive, in the interim, Goodcole is able to control public opinion by erasing Sawyer's agency and asserting himself as an authority sanctioned by the divine to intervene.

moved her Tongue, some of the House would catch hold of it, to stay it, and it was pulled from them" (37). At least in Hall's case silencing a woman by isolating her tongue was unsuccessful; she pulled it away from the person holding it. See *Daimonomageia a small treatise of sicknesses and diseases from witchcraft, and supernatural causes*.

Despite his best efforts to isolate Sawyer's speech from any notion of agency, Goodcole is forced to rely on Sawyer's language to justify his need to silence her. Goodcole's uses Sawyer's speech to justify her conviction and execution. Goodcole records that "by her swearing and cursing blended, it thus farre made against her, that both Judge and Jurie, all of them grew more and more suspicious of her" (B). The proof for Goodcole, is that Sawyer continues to swear: "she was not able to speake a sensible or ready word for her defense" and instead of providing for her own defense, she "but sends out in the hearing of the Judge, Jury, and all good people that stood by many most fearefull imprecations for destruction against her selfe" (B). Sawyer's language is language that, according to Goodcole, "none that had the feare of God, or any the least motion of Gods grace left in them" would use (B). Sawyer spoke and just as Vives predicted, her speech is "welcomed and prescribed by ordinances of hell" (*Christian Woman* 130). This type of speech is presented as anti-eloquence, but the speech nonetheless *does* something, evincing the power ascribed to successful rhetoric. Even in attempting to erase Sawyer from her own narrative, Goodcole cannot completely strip her of power and assert himself as the gatekeeper of rhetoric and its specific effectual powers. Witchcraft is equally tied to its own belief in the effectual powers of language. Sawyer's speech persuades the magistrates that Sawyer is a witch, but the language does something. Even as eloquence is linked to a masculine identity and tethered to the all-male institutions of education and public service, the grasp on this power is so loosely held that a "crooked and deformed" woman can wrest it away with her self-propelled tongue (A6).

Eloquence is a power that is reserved for men and that power is retained by regulating women's access to education. However, in *The Witch of Edmonton*, Mother Sawyer undertakes a Latin lesson that mirrors the lessons young boys endured in the early modern classroom. The

beginning of Mother Sawyer's education from Tom, the familiar, mirrors one of a typical grammar school education.⁴² As Mary Thomas Crane notes, children "came to grammar school knowing how to read and write in English. The first three forms were devoted to teaching them the basics of Latin grammar" (80). Leonardo Bruni, in *De Studiis et Litteris*, emphasizes the importance of Latin training when he notes "that the foundations of all true learning must be laid in the sound and thorough knowledge of Latin: which implies study marked by a broad spirit, accurate scholarship, and careful attention to details" (124). Learning Latin, then, is an important part of the early modern English educational system.

The Witch of Edmonton stages a Latin lesson that is linked with witchcraft and thus suggests that witchcraft is a pedagogical experience. By using the educational practices associated with male authority and education, the play suggests that educated women pose a threat to society. In the play, Mother Sawyer learns a Latin phrase, "Sanctibecetur nomen tuum," that she should use when she wants to curse someone (2.1.176). This Latin lesson mirrors ones associated with the early modern classroom in that the lesson is conducted exclusively through oral performance. The Dog, acting as a schoolmaster, pronounces the phrase and Sawyer, acting as the student faithfully repeats the phrase. However, Mother Sawyer might be seen as an especially apt student since she immediately moves beyond simple rote memorization and performance to the classroom methods of imitation and composition. Student compositions, for Quintilian, should "rival and vie with the original in expressing the same thoughts" and Mother Sawyer's next act as a student does just that (*Institutio* 10.5.5). Mother Sawyer alters the Latin phrase she just learned to "Contaminetur nomen tuum" (2.1.181). Sawyer is seemingly satisfied

⁴² It could be a subtle dig at schoolmasters that the teacher who appears is a dog. Dogs, according to Meg F. Pearson, were "the companions of clowns and minstrels whose tricks lured in crowds and charmed coins from spectators" (92).

with her academic performance because she then refers to herself as “an expert scholar” (2.1.181). It may seem strange that Sawyer calls herself an “expert scholar” only moments after she misquotes the Latin she just learned. However, what initially seems like a bad linguist move can be read as the product of the period’s pedagogical practices and a step toward eloquence.⁴³

Sawyer’s eloquence seems to have concerned both Goodcole and the authors of *The Witch of Edmonton*. In the end, both representations of Elizabeth Sawyer deny her words any power. In both versions of the story, Elizabeth denies killing Ratcliffe. In *The Witch of Edmonton*, which I will return to later, Mother Sawyer denies killing Ratcliffe, but when she is questioned about Frank Thorney, she asks them to let “a poor old woman...die without vexation” (5.3.24-5). Similarly, Sawyer is found guilty of the death of Agnes Ratcliffe in Goodcole’s account, but she is acquitted of the charge of witching to death two children. However, when she was questioned by Goodcole, she denied responsibility for Ratcliffe’s death but accepts responsibility for the death of the children. She is ultimately executed for a crime she claims not to have committed and exonerated of the crime she claims to be responsible for. The authors give credence to the power of her words while also denying her words to have any effect on the outcome. It is as if they are saying Sawyer’s words have the power to take a life, but her words are also meaningless. In fact, to further diminish the credit that is given to Sawyer’s language, the testimony of Ratcliffe’s speech on her deathbed is permitted in court. Even though Ratcliffe is clearly sick – Goodcole reports that Ratcliffe “lay foaming at the mouth and was extraordinarily distempered” before she died – her accusation is not discounted (B2). Ratcliffe’s words carry more weight than Sawyer’s language. Generally speaking, giving credit to the

⁴³ In chapter 4, I discuss imitation and composition at length. In short, though, imitation involves “bettering” the original text.

reliability of somebody who is “foaming at the mouth” does not signal sound judgement.⁴⁴ Yet, the judge, the jury, and Goodcole used this opportunity to discredit (and convict) Elizabeth Sawyer. It is possible that Ratcliffe’s speech is credited while Sawyer’s speech is ignored, because Ratcliffe is dead, and her speech can no longer influence or affect society. It is as if Goodcole is claiming that the only acceptable version of female speech is the reported and mediated speech of a dead woman.

(II) Legally Eloquent

While the judge and jury convicted and executed Mother Sawyer, Mrs. Generous, in *The Witches of Lancashire*, has a different result when she encounters elements of the legal system.⁴⁵ Mrs. Generous neither swears, curses, nor blasphemes; instead, she speaks with a persuasive eloquence that illustrates her skills in rhetoric and she is able to use those skills to navigate a witchcraft accusation and secure a (temporary) pardon. Rhetoric was thought to be a useful skill in public service and in particular the law. Witchcraft and rhetoric are linked in their ability to persuade and this is particularly evident with Mrs. Generous. Kirilka Stavreva suggests that witches were identified through language she describes as an “endlessly variable disturbances of signification, equivocations, moans, giggles, and incantations of intangible form but unmistakably material impact” (72). Eloquence, on the other hand, is what, according to William Kempe, prepares the student-become-adult to “set the common wealth in good order” (D). By speaking both publicly and eloquently, Mrs. Generous complicates the clear-cut linguistic lines

⁴⁴ John Langbein points out that “for certain crimes, especially heresy and witchcraft, there was seldom any objective evidence that might be used to verify the confession, and condemnation was allowed on the basis of an unverified confession. In many jurisdictions the requirement of verification was not enforced or was indifferently enforced.” (294-296).

⁴⁵ For a detailed account of the early modern judicial system see John Bellamy’s *Criminal Law and Society in Late Medieval and Tudor England*, John H. Langbein’s *Prosecuting Crime in The Renaissance: England, Germany, France and Torture and the Law of Proof: Europe and England in the Ancien Régime*.

between the witch and the rhetorician. Additionally, after she admits to being a witch, she is able to persuade her husband that she has repented. Mrs. Generous is able to use the system against itself and in doing so, she brings to light the problems within a legal system that relies on the performative power of words to obtain justice. Her confession and subsequent disingenuous oath reveal the early modern anxiety about equivocation and oath taking. More than though, Mrs. Generous' successful navigation of the legal system suggests that both women and rhetoric are inherently dangerous and controlling women's access to rhetoric will ensure that men retain power.

The male figures in Lancashire are explicit in their desire to control women and female speech. There are attempts to control Mrs. Generous throughout the play. First, Generous attempts to limit Mrs. Generous' access to travel. Generous learns that his wife, Mrs. Generous is riding his horse in the middle of the night and he orders his servant, Robert, to deny Mrs. Generous access to the horse. As such, Mrs. Generous is first introduced as being absent; she leaves the domestic space of the home but perhaps more importantly she leaves without male supervision. Generous does not seem concerned that his wife has taken his horse, but he is concerned that she has left alone, without one of the "fellows" on his staff (2.2.84). While he claims that he trusts her reputation and is not bothered by her leaving, he still tells Robert to forbid Mrs. Generous from leaving. Rather than remaining at home, Mrs. Generous uses an enchanted bridle to ride Robert to a witches' meeting. However, when Mrs. Generous attempts to bridle Robert and ride him home like a horse, Robert snatches the bridle and uses it on Mrs. Generous instead.⁴⁶ By bridling Mrs. Generous, Robert is emulating the punishment for scolds

⁴⁶ This type of bridling women is not uncommon in the early modern period. It is the type of punishment used for scolding women. According to Geoffrey "Bud" Abbott, former Yeoman Warder at the Tower of London, the scold's bridle had several different designs but "basically it consisted of an iron framework in the form of a

during the early modern period, but he is also literalizing a metaphor used by educational theorists during the period. Erasmus, in particular, relies on a bridling metaphor as a gentler approach to discipline. Erasmus, in *Education of Children* compares a school child to a horse in need of training. The horse is “better tamed with puping of the mouth or soft handyling then wyth whyp or spurres” (17).⁴⁷ Mrs. Generous’ speech is controlled when she is bridled, and she is no longer a threat. In fact, she is transformed into a beast; she is a horse. Moreover, she is Generous’ property. Robert assures Generous that the horse in his stable “‘tis your own beast” (4.2.67). By bridling Mrs. Generous, male order is restored; she is no longer a threat, and she is reduced to property.

The key to transforming Mrs. Generous from her beast form is an inversion of Erasmus’ instructions on gently training a horse. Rather than the “puping” of the mouth, the bridle is removed. Once the bridle is removed, she is no longer a horse, but her witchcraft is discovered. When Robert suggests Mrs. Generous’ bridle should be removed, she once again becomes a danger to male authority because is once again able to speak. She is particularly dangerous here because she uses the skills of persuasion associated with rhetoric to her advantage. Mrs. Generous is able to circumvent the legal system simply by using the same principles that were expected to frame a student “to eloquence in talke, and vertue in deedes” (*Education of Children*

cage” (48). The device was fitted over the offending woman’s head. Abbott notes that “some models were quite painless to wear” while “others had large tongue plates studded with sharp pins or a rowel” (49).

⁴⁷ Phillipe Aries posits that corporal punishment after the fifteenth century was part of a “humiliating disciplinary system” in the classroom (261). According to Aries “in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries corporal punishment became widespread at the same time as an authoritarian, hierarchical – in a word, absolutist – concept of society” (261). For Mulcaster, the rod, an instrument he defines as “correction, and awe,” is “some meane which in a multitude may worke obedience” (273-274). According to Mulcaster, this obedience in the classroom would extend into adult life and make the student a better subject to the monarch. Mulcaster’s student who is the recipient of corporal punishment “is like to prove in further years, the fittest subject for learning in a monarcie” but this pliability is contingent upon the student’s ability in his “tender age” to show “himself obedient to scholeorders, and either will not lightly offend or if he do, will take his punishment gently: without either much repining, or great stomaking” (*Positions* 150).

E6). Mrs. Generous reaps the benefits writers of rhetoric manuals promise. She is able “to wynne folke at their will” (Wilson “Preface”). Even though Bruni claims rhetoric is “of the least practical use” to women, Mrs. Generous found a use and exhibited skill. Robert’s accusation and Generous’ subsequent questioning of Mrs. Generous bear a striking resemblance to the court documents detailing witchcraft accusations and specifically to Goodcole’s questioning of Mother Sawyer. Both interrogations begin with some variation of the question Generous asks his wife: “Art thou a witch?” (4.2.144). Both Mother Sawyer and Mrs. Generous confess to the accusation but unlike Mother Sawyer who “was not able to speake a sensible or ready word for her defense,” Mrs. Generous displays a mastery of language and eloquence. She exhibits the type of persuasive eloquence those schooled in rhetoric were promised and acting as her own attorney, she successfully secures a (temporary) pardon for her crime.

Mrs. Generous’ confession is relatively straightforward during the beginning of the exchange. When Generous asks her if she is a witch, her response is simple: “I am” (4.2.161). Her next answer is equally simple and straightforward. When Generous ask her if she has “made any contract with that fiend,” her reply is short: “Oh, I have” (4.2.162,164). Mrs. Generous then continues by simply detailing the terms of the contract: “I have promis’d him my soul” (4.2.165). This confession is important from a legal perspective since the act of confession, as Todd Butler notes, “simultaneously reiterates the justice of the legal process and secures a final transformation of self from abject criminal to recipient of divine grace” (129). Mrs. Generous, however, moves beyond simple manipulation of words and perhaps exposes the early modern anxiety about equivocation. The anxiety of equivocation is palpable in Shakespeare’s *Macbeth*, where the Porter says, “Faith, here’s an equivocator, that could swear in both the scales against either side; who committed treason enough for God’s sake, yet could not equivocate to heaven”

but it is also present in Mrs. Generous' initial confession (2.3.8-10).⁴⁸ In her confession, Mrs. Generous suggests that she is skilled in equivocation.⁴⁹ She admits to making a contract with the devil for her soul, but she mentally reserves a part of the proposition. She claims to have only given the devil "what interest in this soul [she] could claim" while reserving a part for the Christian God who "made it" and thus was "not [hers] to give" (4.2.174-6).⁵⁰ A careful listener might, at least in theory, be skeptical of any subsequent claims or promises Mrs. Generous makes. Mrs. Generous, as the audience will soon learn, obfuscates the truth. It would be hard to

⁴⁸ Later in the play, Macbeth repeats the witches' prophecy and admits that he starts to "doubt the equivocation of the fiend / That lies like truth" (5.5.41-42). For more *Macbeth* and equivocation see Peter C. Herman's "'A deed without a name': *Macbeth*, the Gunpowder Plot, and Terrorism."

⁴⁹ Richard Huloet, in his 1572 dictionary explains that equivocation can be defined as making "divers significations to one worde" (Qv). Equivocation, though, as Butler notes, "laid out a scheme whereby, in separating one's speech from one's interior thoughts ... an individual might safely respond to questions of faith while endangering neither soul nor body" ("Equivocation" 133). While equivocation is discussed in linguistic psychology, it is hardly the product of a postmodern world. Stefania Tutino argues that "first Catholic theologians who engaged systematically with these doctrines, Domingo de Soto and Martin de Azpilcueta (Navarrus), used them as tools to investigate the potentialities and limitations of human language as a means to communicate meaning between a speaker and a listener." The theory was expanded by theologians "between the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century, when they slowly modified the debate on equivocation and mental reservation from a debate over the nature of language to a debate over the moral value of human intentions" (Tutino 115, 117). Perez Zagorin and Stefania Tutino have both pointed out that the source of what they call "offensive" dissimulation is Machiavelli. Machiavelli, as Tutino notes, advised the Prince "to imitate the cunning of a fox" and advocated "lying and deceiving his subjects and allies for his own interest" ("Between" 534). "Defensive" dissimulation, on the other hand is "defined as necessary falsehood in the face of repressive Church or state persecution" (Tutino "Between" 535). "Equivocation and mental reservation," as Tutino notes, "became the objects of an intense public propaganda" and were linked to Jesuit missionaries' "devious and politically seditious" approach to language (138). Tutino provides, as an example, the Jesuit, Robert Southwell who advocated for equivocation. Elizabethan Attorney General Edward Coke's interrogation of Southwell and reports of the conversation suggests that he feels like equivocation has the potential to disrupt the entire legal system. For Coke, if equivocation were to be accepted as a common practice, it "would supplant all Justice" since the courts relied on judgement based on "outward actions and speeches, and not accordinge to their secrette and inward intentions." Quoted in Peter Zagorin's *Ways of Lying*, 191. Early modern English protestants, like Coke, spoke out against equivocation as a uniquely Catholic offense that threatened the security of the realm. For example, Thomas Morton, in *A full satisfaction concerning a double Romish iniquitie* (1606), says of equivocation that it is a "new-bred Hydra, and uglye Monster" and that equivocation and sedition were linked (47). Morton and the English Jesuit Robert Persons, who was living in exile, were involved in a pamphlet war of sorts that lasted over five years and together the two are responsible for more than one thousand pages on the subject. For example, see, Persons' *A Treatise Tending to Mitigation toward Catholike-Subiectes in England*. For more on Morton and Persons' exchanges see Micheal L. Carrafiello's "St. Paul and the Polemicists."

⁵⁰ The devil in *The Witch of Edmonton* seems to be smarter than the devil Mrs. Generous encounters. When Mother Sawyer attempts the same type of equivocation, the dog questions her intent and threatens her: "Equivocations? / Art mine or no? speak, or I'll tear" (2.1.144-6).

guess whether Mrs. Generous relies on the same principles of equivocation she uses during her contract with the devil when she swears an oath to her contrition. However, equivocation and oath taking were certainly linked for theater goers in early modern England.⁵¹

It would be difficult to fault Generous for being persuaded by his wife. Generous considers his wife to be an extension of himself. When he is listing all the ways that he will extend his hospitality to his guests, he includes his wife as one who is of the same “custom” (1.1.190). Since he claims he “ever studied plainness and truth” he is fair to assume that he also believes his wife shares those traits” (1.1.197-8). Additionally, he was, after all, simply following the conventions available to him. In “A Christian Exhortation unto Customable Swearers,” Miles Coverdale claims that oaths are “a sure ancker whereunto Judges may lawfully

⁵¹ After the Gunpowder Plot and subsequent Oath of Allegiance, the idea of equivocation, as Butler notes, “had once again been radically intensified and transformed into matters of the utmost importance to the commonwealth” (“Equivocation” 132). Briefly, the Gunpowder Plot involved blowing up the parliament house with gunpowder to kill King James I and eliminate his heirs. The conspiracy was devised by a group of men who were convinced that James I would drive all Catholics out of England. The plan was ultimately foiled when an anonymous letter was delivered to the earls of Salisbury, Suffolk, Northampton and Worcester at Whitehall warning them of the conspiracy. Guy Fawkes was discovered with 36 barrels of gunpowder in a chamber in Westminster. He was subsequently arrested and tortured, and he provided six statements on the conspiracy. See Don Hollway’s “The Gunpowder Plot” and Pauline Croft’s article, “The Gunpowder Plot” for more information on the Gunpowder Plot. The Gunpowder Plot is also linked with equivocation. One of the accused conspirators, Thomas Tresham, was in possession of Henry Garnet’s *Treatise of Equivocation*. Since one of the alleged conspirators had Garnet’s defense of equivocation, Garnet was also arrested. Coke’s interrogation of Garnet reads more like an indictment of equivocation than of Garnet himself. Coke claimed the conspirators used “perfidious and perjurious Equivocating” to “conceale or denie an open trueth” and to “protest upon salvation, to swear that which themselves know to be most false, and all this by reserving a secret and private sense inwardly to themselves, whereby they are by their Ghostly fathers perswaded, that they may safely and lawfully delude any question whatsoever” (*A True and Perfect Relation* I). Coke also displayed Garnet’s treatise in court and called it a “very labyrinth to lead men into error and falsehood” (II). Garnet was condemned and eventually executed in 1606 but perhaps Garnet’s association with the Gunpowder Plot inspired an equivocation clause in James I’s Oath of Allegiance. The Oath of Allegiance required the swearer to acknowledge that James I was the “lawful and rightful” king. The swearer vows, “I do from my heart abhor, detest and abjure as impious and heretical this damnable doctrine and position that princes which be excommunicated and deprived by the Pope may be deposed or murdered by their subjects or any other whatsoever” (*Stuart Constitution* 458-9). The Oath of Allegiance required swearing “without any equivocation or mental evasion or secret reservation whatsoever” (459). However, Morton points out the inherent problem with the clause when he asks, “How shall his Majesty be persuaded that these words, *without all aequivocation*, are not spoken in some doubtfull sense and aequivocation” (3.99). Peter Zagorin notes that the oath of allegiance “precipitated an international controversy while fomenting new dissensions among English Catholics and adding fresh fuel to the disputes between them and the English government” (205-6).

stick, when their wyts can go no further.”⁵² Believing an oath is a foundation of the legal system. Oaths, as Butler notes, “had long been seen as a divinely instituted mechanism for mediating social conflict” (133). The Elizabethan homily, “Against Swearyng and Perjury,” suggests that oaths can establish “common tranquillitie and peace” (130). The homily continues to explain that oaths create “amitie, and good ordre is kept continually in all commonalties, as boroughs, citees, tounes and villages” (130). Oaths, then, as Butler explains, work in a “dual fashion” that deploys the power of God as the ultimate guarantor of one’s promises,” while “simultaneously enabling members of the community to see the interior thoughts of an individual in a more tangible form” (“Swearing” 133). By adding an oath to her confession, Mrs. Generous exploits the “dual fashion” of oaths but given her previous deployment of equivocation, it would be impossible to suggest she reveals her interior thoughts. In fact, it would be much easier to suggest that she hides her inner thoughts and only uses an oath as a superficial speech act. She presents her oath as an internal manifestation of repentance, but this oath should also be seen as a rhetorical performance designed exclusively to “to perswade with reason all men to societie” into pardoning her for witchcraft (Wilson “Preface”). While swearing oaths were typical occurrences in early modern England, it is worth noting that an oath does not necessary guarantee truth.⁵³ Barbara Shapiro points out that the introduction of perjury legislation “marks a point at which it was realized that the prospect of divine punishment was no longer sufficiently powerful to ensure

⁵² Quoted from Todd Butler’s “Swearing Justice in Henry Goodcole and *The Witch of Edmonton*” 155.

⁵³ John Kerrigan devotes his *Shakespeare’s Binding Language* to “the whole array of utterances and act by which the people in early modern England committed themselves to the truth” (ix). Included in his study is oath taking and he makes this observation: “The readiest way to adapt an oath or vow was—improperly” (3). Compare Mrs. Generous’ disingenuous oath to Shakespeare’s *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, where Proteus observes that “Unheedful vows may heedfully be broken” (2.6.11).

truthful sworn testimony” (“Part One” 154).⁵⁴ In order, then, to secure truthful testimony, a set of rational criteria designed to grapple with issues of fact and to evaluate credibility had to be established.⁵⁵

It is probably not surprising that early modern English writers turned to classical rhetorical tradition to establish credibility. Moreover, as Shapiro observes, the “criteria for crediting and discrediting testimony in a legal setting were ... firmly enshrined in the educational system” (“Part Two” 27). Both Cicero and Quintilian establish a corpus of arguments for establishing credibility. An individual’s educational status, wealth, and reputation has a bearing on credibility for Cicero. Similarly, Quintilian’s *Institutes of the Orator* emphasizes how an individual’s circumstances and outward signs were important in establishing credibility. While, as Shapiro notes, these classical rhetoricians’ methods for establishing credibility were adopted in common, civil and canon law traditions, these guidelines are not isolated to the early modern legal system. Much of the same material is also rehearsed in educational and rhetorical literature. For example, in Erasmus’s textbook *De Copia*, his eighth method “is taken from circumstances” For Erasmus, these circumstances involve “cause, place, occasion, instrument, time” and also include “race, country, sex, age, education, culture, physical appearance, fortune, position, quality of mind, desire, experiences, temperament, understanding and name” (57).

Circumstances can be used, according to Erasmus, for not only classroom composition but also

⁵⁴ Shapiro reports that “The first perjury statute became law in 1563, though the crime itself was not new and earlier had been handled in the ecclesiastical courts, chancery and Star chamber. Perjury prosecutions continued to require the testimony of two witnesses, typically in Star chamber. Judges in all courts and justices of the peace in quarter sessions were to have full authority to inquire into the offence of perjury, and judges were to publicize the perjury legislation and its penalties...The two-witness rule for perjury may be explained either as continuing the practice of the ecclesiastical courts or as a means of preventing accusers and accused testifying against one another. When the common law courts took over perjury prosecutions after the demise of Star chamber the two-witness rule was retained. Ecclesiastical courts continue to have jurisdiction over perjuries committed in their courts” (“Part One”153).

⁵⁵ For an extensive look at the law of evidence see Simon Greenleaf’s *A Treatise on the Law of Evidence*.

as a way to establish “confirmation and credibility” (57). Similarly, Wilson’s popular rhetoric manual suggests that circumstances such as family, gender, education, and nature were related to where, when and how the deed in question had been done and navigating all of these factors was part of the rhetorician’s task. Rhetoric and law are intertwined. Perhaps this is what prompted Cox to claim that those skilled in rhetoric can “be advocates and proctoures in the lawe.” Circumstances should be considered by both the legal advocate and the rhetorician.

Mrs. Generous is seemingly aware of classical rhetoric’s connection both the early modern educational and legal systems and relies on her past reputation as a way to influence the reception of her confession and oath of repentance. While Mrs. Generous admits that she is guilty, the standards used in determining guilt and innocence can also be useful in understanding why Generous is quick to accept her repentance and subsequent oath. The burden of “impeaching credibility,” as Shapiro notes, “lay with the objectors” rather than the witnesses (“Part Two” 24). It would, then, be up to Robert or Generous, to prove Mrs. Generous’ disingenuousness. Cicero’s *De inventione* insists that a successful legal defense should draw attention to the defendant’s upright character. Similarly, the medieval text, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, which Wilson’s manual borrows from heavily, insists that an accused person’s “Manner of Life” should be examined in the light of [their] previous conduct” (2.2.5). As her name might suggest, Mrs. Generous has a reputation for generosity. When Robert tells Generous that Mrs. Generous has taken his horse, Generous rehearses Mrs. Generous’ reputation as “a good woman and well bred / Of an unquestion’d carriage” and claims she is “well reputed / Amongst her neighbours” (2.2.102-4). Her reputation gives her oath credibility. Additionally, her visible signs of repentance, or at least the language she uses to describe her repentance, are anchored in the circumstances that can be use in “confirmation and credibility” (*Copia* 57). As

Shapiro notes, “visible signs such as pallor or blood” were used to “support accusation or defense” (“Part Two” 26). While the presence of blood on someone accused of murder could be a sign of guilt, Mrs. Generous uses blood metonymically as a linguistic display of her internal condition. This metonymic display should reinforce the truth of her oath.⁵⁶ When Mrs. Generous claims her oath and her repentance is “tinctur’d in blood, blood issuing from the heart,” she should be reporting a real, genuine state of repentance (4.2.185). She is assumed to be speaking from the heart largely because she is relying on the established legal guidelines for establishing credibility and is able to eloquently articulate her repentance.

Mrs. Generous can turn the legal system to her advantage through her use of a disingenuous oath. Mrs. Generous is able to circumvent the legal system simply by using the same principles that were expected to frame a student “to eloquence in talke, and vertue in deedes” (*Education of Children* E6). Swearing an oath that can maintain the “common tranquillitie and peace” within a community echoes, also, the goal of eloquence to “*frame* them by reason to all good order” or set the common wealth in good order” (“Against Swearyng and Perjury” 130, *Education of Children* D). Generous (and likely the audience) are persuaded by her speech of contrition. By using rhetoric (part of the last forms of grammar school), Mrs. Generous is able to persuade her husband of her repentance. Mrs. Generous reaps the benefits writers of rhetoric manuals promise. She is able “to wynne folke at their will” (Wilson “Preface”). Mrs. Generous, then, might serve as an example of why women were excluded from rhetorical training and formal education.

⁵⁶ Edmund Leach suggest that “metonymy implies contiguity” and Harry Berger Jr. reports that metonymic “contiguity is a ‘real’ connection (felt to be real)” (14, 16).

The Witches of Lancashire are for the most part harmless. For example, the witches stage a play for Whetstone, Arthur, Bantam, and Shakestone where spirits reveal that each of the audience members is a bastard.⁵⁷ The entire play is staged in defense of Mrs. Generous' nephew, Whetstone, after Bantam calls Whetstone a bastard. The dumb show itself is harmless and serves less as an act of witchcraft and more of an insult toward those who insulted Whetstone.

Additionally, Robert, who was sent by Generous to Lancashire to fetch wine, makes a stop at his girlfriend, one of the accused witches in the play, Moll's home. Here her antics seem relatively Roomba-like and harmless. She makes the broom sweep the floor by itself and draws the milk pail to her rather than going to get it. Before Robert and Moll leave, Moll replaces Robert's horse with a different horse and sends her well-train milk pail out the door in a speech act and an amazing stage direction: "She puts down the pail and it goes out the door." As playful as these episodes may seem, these women have overstepped their bounds and disrupted the hierarchy of a male dominated institution and therefore they must be silenced. By using language to effect change and coerce action these women have entered a male dominated arena and they will ultimately be stopped by an extension of the educational system in the form of a schoolboy.

Conclusion: "Men-witches," Silenced Women, and Education to the Rescue

The crimes the witches in both *The Witch of Edmonton* and the *The Witches of Lancashire* are accused of committing are hardly sinister. Some of Mother Sawyer's alleged crimes are more harmful than those accused of witchcraft in *The Witches of Lancashire*. For example, Mother Sawyer is accused of bewitching Ratcliffe until she goes mad and "beat[s] out

⁵⁷ When Bantam says he would like to see his father, a spirit that looks like the pedant in his father's house appears. The story Whetstone tells Bantam is that his teacher is actually his father; his mother had an affair. Shakestone's father is revealed to be the tailor. Arthur claims the act is "plain witchcraft" and then his father is revealed to be Robert, Generous' groom, who had served Arthur's father in his youth (4.4.63). Whetstone, on the hand, has his father revealed as a gallant.

her own brains” and dies (4.1.210). However, most of the crimes Sawyer is accused of are humorous. She is accused of causing the First Countryman’s wife to sleep with his servant and is held responsible for a number of sexual encounters that cause the townspeople’s wives, daughters, and servants to “fall” (4.1.12).⁵⁸ Most of the crimes she is accused of have to do with livestock. She is accused of causing Old Bank’s horse to have a runny nose, causing cattle to fall ill, and of causing a sow to miscarry her piglets the day before they were going to be sold.⁵⁹ Additionally, Mother Sawyer is credited with Old Bank’s bizarre habit of kissing his “cow[‘s] behind” (4.1.57). The witches in *The Witches of Lancashire* are accused of similarly humorous crimes. It is alleged that they moved the miller, “stark naked, atop [his] mill” on a “bitter cold night” (5.1.29-30). Additionally, they are blamed for the miller’s wife’s butter not churning. The butter turned to “waterish gear” that only one pig would drink (5.1.41). The pig – for its troubles – “ran out of his wits” until his head was covered, and he was coaxed into sleeping. According to the Miller, the pig “has had a wry mouth ever since” (5.1.45). Doughty – as the self-appointed witch hunter – claims to have “heard of a hundred such / mischievous tricks” during his two-day tenure as a witch hunter (5.1.48-49). In both plays, the charges seem to be outlandish. Yet in both cases these witches are silenced and eliminated through male figures and in both cases, these male figures are associated in some way with the educational system.

The witches in *The Witches of Lancashire* are silenced through the intervention of a school-aged boy. When we are introduced to the schoolboy, we notice that he is not exactly the model scholar. He has apparently abandoned the classroom in favor of picking and eating wild

⁵⁸The account of the man who caught his wife thrashing with a servant can be found in 4.1.5-9. The townspeople’s solution at this point is to steal straw from Mother Sawyer’s house and set it on fire.

⁵⁹ The account of Old Bank’s poor horse with its runny nose can be found in 4.1.1-2. The account of the sow can be found at 5.3.35-40.

plums and then he heads off to watch a hunt. How the schoolboy initially ends up in the company of witches can easily be seen as the result of a series of bad decisions on his part. After he skips school to eat bullace and decides to watch the hunt, his next action is motivated by greed. He finds two dogs that he believes will net a reward when they are returned to their owner. He only becomes aware of the witches through an act of violence on his own part; when the dogs do not chase a rabbit, he ties them up and begins to beat them. When the dogs transform into Gillian, the witch, and a small demon child, the witch, Gillian, is hardly sinister. She tells him that she does not plan to hurt him. She even offers him money for his silence. It is not until he tries to run that she seizes him. Again, though, she does not appear to have ill intent. She claims she will take him to a “brave feast” where she will “hug [him] stroke [him], and embrace” him in order to “teach [him] twenty thousand pretty things” so he will “tell no tales” (2.5.41,38-9). As she tries to secure his silence, Gillian seems to be aware that his words will carry more weight and be more well received than her speech. As a male member of the educated community, he can undo the witches spell with his own rhetoric.

In his efforts to alert the authorities, the boy, however, does not provide a fact-based narrative but rather relies on a rhetorical performance. He relies on the principles associated with rhetoric to, as Wilson notes, “to perswade with reason all men to societie” and “wynne folke at their will” (“Preface”). The schoolboy uses a series of embellishments that serve to position him as the hero of his own narrative. In doing so, the schoolboy is both silencing the witches and establishing himself as a civilized product of the all-male educational system. Wilson grants rhetoric a religiously redemptive role that would, that would, obviously, be absent in witchcraft. Wilson does not specifically mention witchcraft, but he does claim that the ability to persuade others is a product of God’s “owne workmanshippe” and is a gift given to the world when “man

was thus past all hope of amendement” (“Preface”).⁶⁰ While it would be difficult to assume that the young man was “past of hope of amendement” the texts does reveal that the schoolboy was extremely ill after his encounter with the witches. The boy, at first refused to reveal what had happened to him and according to the Miller, his father, he was “at death’s door before he would reveal anything” but once he spoke about the witches “he mended” (5.1.20-2).⁶¹

In *The Witches of Lancashire*, the witches are playful for the most part. They disrupt a hunt, harass the miller, help Robert buy wine, and perform a dumb show to avenge Whetstone’s honor. Their elaborate scheme to disrupt the hunt involves Meg disguising herself as a hare and Gillian – with the aid of her Puckling – disguising herself as a greyhound to lead the pack of hunters’ dogs. Mawd will observe from the steeple top. It is hardly a sinister game. The boy does seem to provide a fairly accurate description of the witches and the animal shifting their feast, but he embellishes his story.⁶² The boy’s tale is even more outlandish than any of the charges leveled against the witches. The boy recalls a tale of his own hand-to-hand combat with the devil. According to the boy, the devil appeared to him as a youth about his size and age. The devil demanded to know where the Boy lived and his name. The boy, taking offense to the

⁶⁰ After the fall, according to Wilson, God uses his words to stir “up his faithfull and elect” in order “to perswade with reason all men to societie” (“Preface”). These “appointed Ministers” were given the “knowledge both to see the natures of men, and also graunted them the gift of utteraunce, that they might with ease win folke at their will, and frame them by reason to all good order” (“Preface”). The power of speech is given for the purpose of restoring or creating order in this formation. Wilson continues by claiming that “lived brutishly in open feeldes, hauing neither house to shroude them in, nor attire to clothe their backs” until God gave his faithful the power to persuade through speech.

⁶¹ The boy tells his mother about it instead of his father. The account of this can be found in 5.1.98.

⁶² By embellishing his tale, the schoolboy relies on skills taught in the early modern classroom. Students of rhetoric, according to Kempe, take a text and “translat[e] . . . the same speach into another like sentence, but altered with many varieties at once, and chiefly with the last varietie of the words” as a composition exercise (G). This type of repetition is identified by Puttenham as synonymy and is described as “the Figure of store.”⁶² Rather than presenting this devise as excessive Puttenham presents synonymy as a useful device that “doeth much beautifie and inlarge the matter.” The boy’s speech should also be considered from the standpoint of rhetoric and the power rhetoric was thought to have.

devil's demeanor refuses to give out any information and the two fight. According to the boy, they "fought a quarter of an hour" until the devil's "sharp nails" made the boy's ears bleed (5.1.79-80). However, in the play, he did not fight the devil; he sat down at a feast with the witches and criticized their cooking. It is, of course, always possible that the fantasy-based narrative of witchcraft is metatheatrical.⁶³ But, it is equally possible that the schoolboy casts his own spell, so to speak, in an effort to coerce action and by doing so he simultaneously silences female speech and reestablishes masculine eloquence as the primary authority.

Like Sawyer's, his words do something: they secure him a comfortable inheritance or at the very least an adoptive father in Doughty. The schoolboy's success, however, does little to separate witchcraft from education and rhetoric. There is definitely some witchcraft or at least manipulation happening when a group of men are convinced by a child's fantastical relation of his remarkably stoic refusal to answer the devil's questions and his subsequent fist fight with Satan. Moreover, the boy's use of rhetoric as a way to gain a reward is connected to witchcraft. Just, as witchcraft, as Purkiss notes, offered a way for women to "gain power and respect in their community," the boy gains respect through his language (*Witch in History* 93). He is acknowledged as a "made man" and adopted as a Doughty's son (5.1.103). Doughty even suggests that the schoolboy is the "honour of [his] country" and promises that his "statue shall be set up in brass upon the market / cross in Lancaster" (5.1.1-3). The schoolboy's speech relies on the power of rhetoric and he uses rhetoric to erase the power of witches' language in much the

⁶³ As Rhodes notes, "by 1580 ... the expanding London book trade and the newly opened professional theatre offered interesting opportunities for some of those eloquent schoolboys, or graduates, who had no chance of finding a job in the Elizabethan civil service" (46). Like the playwrights, the boy is creating a story. For more on the metatheatricity of witches. See Stephen Greenblatt's "Shakespeare Bewitched" in *New Historical Literary Study: Essays on Reproducing Texts, Representing History*, Diane Purkiss. *The Witch in History: Early Modern and Twentieth- Century Representations*. David Stymeist suggests that in *The Witch of Edmonton* "the playwrights effectively appropriate the witch's marginality in order to address and explore their own marginality through surrogate figures" (44).

same way as Goodcole. He attempts to superimpose a new narrative that relies on the effective power of rhetoric. His story of fighting the devil is apparently delightful to the ear but his story is also a fabrication that is likely constructed to make himself look like a hero rather than a truant and a food critic.

The reestablishment of male authority and the privileging of male speech is also evident in *The Witch of Edmonton*. Tom, the devil dog, acts as Mother Sawyer's schoolmaster as she learns witchcraft and, in the end, he abandons her. For Sawyer, becoming a witch is a pedagogical experience. She wonders "where and by what art learned" she can become a witch (2.1.34). She expects "the thing called Familiar" can "be purchased" to teach her "spells ... charms" and "invocations" (2.1.26, 35). It is at this point that Tom arrives to act as the schoolmaster who "instruct [her] which way [she] might be revenged" against Old Banks (2.1.108). Sawyer even lays out the plan for study. She suggests that she will "study curses, imprecations, / Blasphemous speeches, oaths, detested oaths, / Or anything that's ill: (2.1.113-5). It is Tom who teaches her the language skills she will need to become a witch. It is also Tom who abandons her in her time of need. After Mother Sawyer is arrested, Tom does not come to her for three days. She is abandoned by her teacher and friend. When she "fall[s] to [her] old prayer" Tom appears to her as a white dog rather than a black dog, taunts her about her impending death, and refuses to help her (5.1.24). The education Sawyer received fails her. But more than that, as a woman, Mother Sawyer is abandoned by the education she received perhaps because, as a woman, she should have been denied access to education. Sawyer overstepped her boundaries by obtaining an education and the educational system corrected itself by abandoning Sawyer.

Sawyer is not alone in feeling abandoned by the educational system. Education was thought to “set the common wealth in good order” and offer employment opportunities for educated young men. Despite the promises the educational system offered, there is a marked lack of consensus about the success or failure of the early modern humanist educational system.⁶⁴ Jeff Dolven notes that:

As early as the 1560s, the great success of humanism as a reform movement is accompanied by a gradually rising tide of dissatisfaction with its methods, dissatisfaction particularly with the ways its students were trained to read. Such restlessness stems at least partly from testing its program in an ever-wider field, and giving its students time to age into disillusionment. The consequence is a loss of faith in the forms of understanding that had been cultivated day to day in institutions where an increasing proportion of privileged Englishmen spent their formative years, and where they learned not only to read but (to the extent that these can be separated) also to write, and to think” (8).⁶⁵

Perhaps this overall uneasiness is partially responsible for the way men policed women’s speech and denied women access to education.

In *The Witch of Edmonton*, similar to Goodcole’s pamphlet, Mother Sawyer denies witching Ratcliffe to death and, unique to the play, she denies bewitching Frank Thorney. She asserts her denial by asking the valid question “is every devil mine?” (5.3.28). She additionally makes a valuable statement that links rhetoric’s ability to persuade with witchcraft. Mother Sawyer scoffs at the accusation that she is a witch and offers instead a rhetorical question: “who is not?” (4.1.103). Mother Sawyer begins to list others that she believes are also guilty of

⁶⁴ As I mentioned in the introduction, Rebecca Bushnell suggests looking at the educational system with an “ambivalence” that “was a symptom of a world of uncertain hierarchies, shifting relations, conflicting authorities, and contradictory values” (19-20). Neil Rhodes points out that “late sixteenth-century England was kick-started by an education system that was producing increasing numbers of the unemployably eloquent” (46). Dolven points out that those educated under the humanist system felt like “that they had been betrayed by that training and the promises it had made them” (3).

⁶⁵ For more on the disillusionment of education and the overproduction of educated men in early modern England see Darryll Grantley’s *Wit’s Pilgrimage: Drama and the Social Impact of Education in Early Modern England*.

witchcraft. Among those she includes other women such as the “painted things in princes’ courts” who “burn men’s souls in sensual hot desires” (4.1.105, 107). Mother Sawyer also suggests that “city-witches” who sell “their husband’s wares” in shops across the country and “scolds” should be counted among the witches (4.1.115-6, 130). Her accusations of witchcraft extends beyond women and she includes men who tempt “maiden[s] / With golden hooks” to abandon their “chastity” and have sex (4.1.140-1). Among what Sawyer calls “Men-witches” is also included the lawyer “Whose honeyed hopes the credulous client draw” (4.1.130-1). As Sawyer notes, courtesans, shop keepers, scolds, courtiers, and lawyers, like accused witches, all deploy language in a way that will coerce action. Sawyer makes the connection between witchcraft and rhetoric clear in her observations and while the modern reader might argue, withing in the play, Sawyer’s astute observations are discounted.

While Mother Sawyer’s use of rhetoric, on the surface seems innocuous, Sir Arthur’s reply to Sawyer’s claim that “men-witches” can act “without the fangs of law” suggests there is something particularly gendered about the access to rhetoric (4.1.144). According to Sir Arthur, these men, despite their flaws that exceed Sawyer’s faults, “are not in trading with hell’s merchandise (4.1.135). “The practice of witchcraft,” Newman notes, “is semiotic activity that depends on acts of reading, systems of difference. A charm, an incantation, or a blemish has no inherent meaning but comes to mean only in relation to a given speaker and a specific set of circumstances” (*Fashioning* 66). Sir Arthur is acknowledging that when the specific speaker is male, the same or worse speech act is not classified as witchcraft. When you compare Sawyer’s curses with what she accuses men witches of doing, her “crimes” are harmless.

Mother Sawyer’s intentions and her use of language begins from a position of reflexive self-defense. Her curses reflect the last far-flung attempt at justice from a minoritized character

who has been ill-served by traditional means of securing equitable resolutions. She curses Old Banks, but her curses work more toward turning physical violence and bodily vulnerability into weaponized language – making words do the work of violence – than they suggest malign intent. In other words, Mother Sawyer is attempting to use rhetoric in the way Wilson and others suggest.⁶⁶ Mother Sawyer curses Old Banks in two parts. The first part of her curse comes after Old Banks calls her a witch and stops her from gathering sticks on his property. Here she hopes the sticks harm him: “Would they stuck ‘cross thy / throat, thy bowels, thy maw, thy midriff” (2.1.24-5). Her curses escalate as Old Bank’s violence against her escalates. The stage direction indicates that Old Banks beats Mother Sawyer and once he begins to beat her, her curses are designed to cause the same pain Old Banks inflicts on her. She tells him, “Now thy / bones ache, thy joints cramp, and convulsions stretch and / crack thy sinews” (2.1. 27-9). These are the same injuries and pains it would be easy to imagine are associated with being beaten. She simply wishes he felt what she felt. These curses act a type of forced or compulsory empathy for Sawyer. While Mother Sawyer continues to curse after Old Banks leaves, what she seems to be asking for is a type of justice or retribution. She wishes that the hand that beat her enough to cause her disability, would wither and “drop from the rotten trunk” (2.1.32). Mother Sawyer is not the aggressor, and her words attempt only to solicit compassion (or at least the ending of violence) from Old Banks. According to Vives “the end of Rhetoric” is “to teach, to convince, to rouse,” and this is exactly what Sawyer is attempting to do with her curses (*On Education* 181).

⁶⁶ Sarah Johnson points out that “Sawyer’s opening soliloquy reflecting on how she is called a ‘witch’ merely because she is ‘poor, deformed and ignorant’ immediately suggests her perceptiveness and eloquence (2.1.1-13). When Old Banks interrupts to chase Sawyer from his land, she turns this eloquence to expressive cursing, venting her anger toward him for refusing the charity of ‘a few rotten sticks to warm me’, and her curses are met with savage beating. Given contemporary fears that a justified curse might be divinely or demonically endorsed, cursing could provide an effective means of retaliation for a victim of injustice who had no recourse to financial or physical means of revenge” (72).

A witch is not the identity that Sawyer claims for her own, but it is a label that is given to her. “Some call me witch” Sawyer explains earlier, “and, being ignorant of that myself, they go / About to teach me how to be one” (2.1.8-10). Her accusers give her specific directions on how to bewitch their cattle, their corn, “themselves, their servants and their babies at nurse” (2.1.12-3). In *The Witch of Edmonton*, Mother Sawyer adopts the identity she has been given and is allowed – by their accusations and instructions – access to power that society forbids a poor, disabled woman. Later that power is forcibly removed and as the playwrights orchestrate Sawyer’s final moments, they silence her. Sawyer asks her accusers to let “a poor old woman...die without vexation” (5.2.39-40). Sawyer’s silence is important here. Catherine Belsey suggests that “the supreme opportunity [for women] to speak was the moment of execution” (190-1).⁶⁷ As Dolan observes, “by the late seventeenth century, a voluble and assured performance by the condemned had become so standard, so expected by those who were present and those who read about the execution afterward” (“Gentlemen” 169). The writers of the play have silenced Sawyer again.

⁶⁷ For more on speeches during execution see J. A. Sharpe’s “Last Dying Speeches”: Religion, Ideology and Public Execution in Seventeenth-Century England.”

Chapter 4. “Brutish Utterance”: Barbarism and Imitation in *Titus Andronicus*

Introduction

There is no doubt that *Titus Andronicus* draws heavily on allusions from Ovid’s *Metamorphosis* (among other works). There is also little doubt that Shakespeare uses language associated with the early modern classroom. Jonathan Bate notes that the “language of the schoolroom” is repeated throughout the play. Bate points out “remarks like ‘Handle not the theme,’ ‘Til teach thee,’ ‘I was their tutor to instruct them’ and ‘well has thou lessoned us’” as examples that speak to his point (3.2.29, 4.1.119, 5.1.98, 5.2.110). More than simply echoing language used in the classroom, though, *Titus* can provide us with insight into how educational practices and theory ended up being repurposed and recycled in other contexts, including drama. In other words, it is not simply important that the language used in classrooms is present in *Titus*; it is important how those practices are re-represented not as useful exercises but as a rebuttal of the practices. The early modern humanist education system, of which Shakespeare was a part, operated under the grandiose delusion that education was the path to, as William Kempe, schoolmaster at Plymouth, claims, “eloquence in talke, and vertue in deedes” (*Education of Children* E6). However, in *Titus*, virtue is conspicuously sparse. Instead, the use of humanist, educational practices repeatedly result in violence. Shakespeare uses what Vernon Guy Dickson calls “excessive repetition of emulative strategies” taught in the early modern classroom as a “rebuttal of straight- forward humanist models of character, judgment, self, and decorum” (380). While Dickson sees a vengeful Shakespeare, who uses *Titus* as “a kind of schoolboy’s revenge on his own education,” I see a play that exposes the limitations of a humanist education (380). More than simply pointing out the deficiencies of a humanist education though the play exposes the inherent “barbarism” in the early modern humanist curriculum.

Titus accomplishes this feat by superimposing the classroom practice of imitation on characters in the play. In other words, this is a play that sees characters as texts that can be rewritten and revised by borrowing material from various classical works and restructuring those parts as a composition. This type of composition was a staple in the early modern classroom, and I will discuss the practice with more detail later. This chapter looks at specifically the practice of imitation and composition and the role both of these practices play in the early modern definition of barbarism. *Titus* shows that the educational system not only failed to create eloquent and virtuous students but the practices, when pushed to the extreme, result in the same barbarism the system was designed to combat. In the coming pages, I will examine the classroom practice of imitation and composition and suggest the exercise results in an overwhelming level of intertextuality that defies any generative meaning making. *Titus* uses these classroom practices to speak to a wider-spread anxiety about the viability of education. England relied on the civilizing effect of education to remediate its “barbarous” past, yet the construction of barbarousness versus civilization makes humanist education complicit in the creation of “whiteness” and supremacy in the moment. “Barbarism” in a humanistic educational context, helps in understanding the formation and concretion of modern racial supremacies. However, *Titus* complicates the barbarous/civilized binary through the character of Aaron. Through Aaron, the play calls the racial supremacy of whiteness into question and reveals the instability of European “whiteness.” Aaron can be seen as a sort of lynchpin connecting England’s barbarous past with Rome and, through Aaron, the humanist educational fiction of a dyadic opposition of barbarousness and civilization is revealed to be a convenient but specious proposition.

Education was believed to be an antidote to barbarism and the early modern humanist education system was heavily invested in positioning education as the path to redeeming

England's barbarous past. George Puttenham, in *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589), describes "barbarism" as a "brutish utteraunce" that is confusing and "indistinct" (73). While Puttenham deploys his indictment against "brutish utteraunce[s]" for nationalistic purposes, the idea of a "brutish utteraunce" is tied to Britain's own "barbarous" past. I will return to Britain's complicated past with its past "barbarous" label, the racial overtones of barbarism, and the English colonial effort later in this chapter. For now, it will suffice to note that educators and rhetoricians insist that "brutish utterance[s]" are the linguistic markers that separate the "barbarous" from the educated. Kempe, quoting or at least pretending to quote King Alfred encourages his readers to "looke upon the barbarous nations, which are without [education]: compare their estate with ours, and thou shalt see what it is to be learned, and what to be unlearned." For Kempe, these "barbarous nations" have "no lawes, no civill pollicie, no honest meanes to live by, no knowledge of Gods mercie and favour, and consequently no salvation nor hope of comfort" because they lack education (D6). To be barbarous, according to Kempe, is to be without education and without eloquence.

Titus is a play heavily invested in the language and practices of the classroom. It would be difficult to blame a lack of education for the lack of "Gods mercie and favour" or a lack of "lawes" and "civill pollicie" in *Titus*' Rome: Demetrius and Chiron remember a verse from Horace from grammar school; Lavinia tutors Young Lucius; a copy of Ovid's *Metamorphosis* is brought on stage (*Education of Children* D6).¹ In theory, a group as educated as those in *Titus* should exemplify the "eloquence in talke, and vertue in deedes" that Kempe claims an early modern, humanist education would guarantee (*Education of Children* E6). It would, however, be

¹ Dickson notes that "Titus features at least three different textbooks in the play itself, Cicero's *Orator*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and, most likely, Lily's grammar, the *Brevissima Institutio* (1548), not to mention foregrounding several references within the text that apparently derive from schoolbooks familiar to the audience, such as *Cooper's Thesaurus*" (388-89).

difficult to claim that a play in which the most memorable moments include rape and multiple dismemberments should be held as an example for success in either eloquence or virtue.² Instead, in *Titus*, Rome might well be one of the “barbarous nations.” I suggest that the apparent lack of “lawes” or “civill pollicie” in *Titus* invites a reading that conflates and confuses the connection between education and barbarism (*Education of Children* D6). In other words, this is a play in which “brutish utterance[s]” become a matter of unstable intertextuality and eloquence is pointedly separated from virtue (*Arte of English Poesie* 73). *Titus*’ deployment of educational practices produces the type of “brutish utterance[s]” associated with barbarism (*Arte of English Poesie* 73). Rather than acting as the promised redemptive force, education ultimately creates the very barbarism it was supposed to extinguish.

Shakespeare exposes the inherent “barbarism” in the early modern humanist curriculum by literalizing academic exercises on the bodies of the characters in the play. I do realize that school exercises are not meant to be literalized even if they are meant to be taken literally. You do not have to physically put a cat on a roof or under a bus to understand prepositions. By claiming that *Titus* literalizes educational practices, I am suggesting that we read the characters in the play as texts to be written and read. I am not the first to look at the characters of the play as texts. Heather James (speaking specifically of Tamara and Lavinia) observes, “Shakespeare causes their bodies to oscillate between the natural and politically iconographic, suggesting a hybrid of character and emblem” (48). Mary Laughlin Fawcett notes that “words are embodied and disembodied throughout this work. One person becomes the text for another’s explication, a

² It might be worth noting that violence also intersects with spectacular linguistic ability in *The Spanish Tragedy*. While the humanist educational system wanted people to put these on opposing sides, violence and eloquence are actually frequently co-creative. Similarly, silence often coincides with the end of violence. In *The Spanish Tragedy*, Hieronimo bites out his tongue so he cannot be compelled to speak further on the violent events in the play. In *Othello*, Iago instigates violence through language and then refuses to speak at the end of the play.

challenge for interpretation” (263). Fawcett also observes that the Andronici “make the body bear the weight of each syllable and sentence; they write themselves out of the body ... they become words,” while Lavinia “is the text for their and our interpretation, a ‘map of woe’ whom, like a map, we must learn to read” (272, 265). While Fawcett leans toward a psychoanalytic reading, I believe she is correct when she suggests *Titus* “ought to be used, more often than it is, as a primary text to evolve a theoretical account of the relationship between the body, signs, speech, and writing” (262). Albert H. Tricomi, writing about metaphor, notes that literalization “deliberately exposes the euphemisms of metaphor by measuring their falseness against the irrefutable realities of dramatized events” (19). To return to my example, I’m iffy about putting a cat under a bus; my concern about sacrificing a cat for educational purposes points to the dangers of literalizing a lesson on prepositions. In *Titus*, literalizing the tale of Philomel results in Lavinia’s rape and dismemberment.

I also take my cues from Renaissance educational theorists and Shakespeare’s contemporaries when I choose to read the characters as a text. Literalizing lessons, or at least equating language and the body, was a part of the rhetoric surrounding humanist education and practices in the early modern period. The educational theorists of the early modern period tended to present their methods (and the results) through several prominent tropes. Gardening metaphors (which I will discuss further in this chapter) is one such trope. Theorists also expressed writing through the metaphor of the body. Since I am suggesting a reading that sees bodies on stage as texts, it is important to note the connection between language and body early modern metaphor. As Neil Rhodes points out, “the representation of literary discourse as an articulate structure, a body constructed of joints and members, is ... absolutely pervasive in discussions of composition among Shakespeare’s contemporaries” (75). Roger Ascham, once tutor to Elizabeth Tudor,

speaks of “well joyned sentences” and later speaks of writers who “medle onelie with some one peece and member of eloquence” and others who “perfitelie make up the whole bodie” (*English Works* 283). Richard Rainolde writes in *The Foundation of Rhetorike* (1563) that “Rhetorike is like to the hand set at large, wherein every part and joint is manifeste” (Rainolde, *Foundation*, A1v). Edmund Spenser, in a letter to Gabriel Harvey writes of “the knitting of sentences, whych they call the joynts and members therof” (28). Referring specifically to translation, Richard Stanyhurst notes that without the Latin conjunctions “many good verses would bee ravelde and dismembred that now cary a good grace among theym, having theyre joynctes knit with theese copulative sinnewes” (143). It should, of course, go without saying that metaphor is not reality yet in *Titus*, as Kendall Gillian Murray observes, language in the play “has an uncanny and disturbing life of its own” (300). These tropes, in *Titus*, do become reality. Sentences are not, or they should not be, joints and sinews ripped and severed. The visceral connection between rhetoric and the body is uncomfortable. If *Titus* makes us uncomfortable, it is worth noting that the uncomfortableness starts with the uneasy metaphor linking words with the body. That same uncomfortableness gives room to read the characters as texts.

Imitation: (Mis)Use Your Allusion

For the early modern, imitation is closely tied, both in and out of the classroom, to composition. The poet, for Puttenham, is “a follower or imitator, because he can expresse the true and lively of every thing is set before him” (3). Thomas Wilson, in *The Arte of Rhetorique* (1553), relies on imitation as a way to enhance the skills of the rhetorician. Wilson suggests that eloquence is achieved by finding examples from “the moste wise and learned menne” and imitating their “fashion, as well their speeche and gesturing, as their wit or endityng” so that one may “appere somewhat like the[m]” (A3). Kempe connects imitation with education by claiming

“all knowledge is taught generally both by precepts of arte, and also by practise of the same precepts” (F2). Imitation, for Kempe, though, is only part of the path toward “all knowledge.” He instructs students to first imitate “examples ... in other mens works,” but then asks students to move beyond narrow, exact imitation in their own compositions (F2). Quintilian also teaches that students should advance beyond “mere passive reproduction.” Student compositions, for Quintilian, should “rival and vie with the original in expressing the same thoughts” (*Institutio* 10.5.5). Quintilian claims “it is a disgrace too to be content merely to attain the effect you are imitating. Once again, what would have happened if no one had achieved more than the man he was following?” (*Institutio* 10.2.7). In other words, as Dickson observes, “imitation is not merely the labor of copying or even modifying a text but is an actual bettering of the original” (384). Students were expected to, according to Kempe, focus on “the artificiall expounding of other mens works” and the “exercise will make him an expert in the forming Nounes and Verbes” (F5, G). Composition is based on imitation, and it is this imitation that should lead to knowledge.

However, imitation, as presented by early modern and classical pedagogues, is a messy process of dismembering and reanimating texts. Quintilian claims that imitation is a multifaceted project that relies on several factors including analyzing the text, paraphrasing the text, and performance of the text. All of these factors, for Quintilian, will allow the schoolmaster to “test his pupils’ judgment” (*Institutio* 1:307, 2.5.13). Building on Quintilian’s instruction Kempe gives specific instructions for imitation and composition and advises students to observe these four steps:

First, that if the author whom he imitateth, have generall sentences, he may reteyne the very same ... Secondly, that he may leave out the imitation of some sentences or arguments. As Tullie setteth forth the similitude by the authoritee of African, and the relation of Panetius: whereas only the protasis of the first part of our similitude is attributed but to Cato, for want of a like similitude garnished with like authority. Thirdly, he may adde more than his author hath: as here the example of Cleope is added to

recompence that which wanteth in the similitude. Fourthly, he may in some part alter the method, forme of syllogismes, axiomes, arguments, figures, tropes, phrases and words. (G6).

While Kempe's first two steps allow the student to copy verbatim or leave material out, it is important to note that Kempe's third and fourth steps give the students liberty to "adde more than his author hath" and "alter the method, forme of syllogismes, axiomes, arguments, figures, tropes, phrases and words" (G6). Kempe is suggesting a method of composition that relies on imitation, omission, addition, and alteration. For Kempe, what is added, omitted, altered, or copied appears to be left to the student's discretion.

Titus is hardly innocent of what Dickson calls an "excessive repetition of emulative strategies." Imitation, in *Titus*, seems to manifest itself through allusions to classic poetry, and the characters in *Titus* recycle these allusions using the classroom methods of imitation.³ However, attempting to read these additions and allusions across texts becomes overwhelming. Coherence is sacrificed to a cacophony of voices. Robert S. Miola observes that, "Elizabethan readers generally valued ... multiplicity over coherence," and *Titus*' use of allusions certainly illustrates this practice in action (4). There are so many references and allusions derived from classic texts that these allusions undercut their ostensible surface uses. Far from producing the "well joyned sentences" or "some one peece and member of eloquence" that Ascham points to, these allusions in the text, result in "brutish utteraunce[s]" (*English Works* 283, *Arte of English Poesie* 73).

³ According to Grace Starry West, there are fifty-three allusions in the play. West suggest that the "juxtaposition of delicately allusive speech and villainous action in a play about Rome at the twilight of its greatness suggests that Shakespeare is exploring the relationship between Roman education – the source of all the bookish allusions – and the disintegration of the magnificent city which produced that education" (65).

A close examination of some of the classical allusions in *Titus* exposes a cacophonous multiplicity that can be considered antithetical to eloquence. In other words, the play's overwhelming use of allusions highlights the deficiencies of imitation practices. Instead, the allusions destabilize legibility and complicate the lines between educational practices and barbarism. The citizens of Rome elected Titus as the head of Rome at the beginning of the play. When Titus declines the offer to "put a head on headless Rome" by becoming emperor he seemingly supports Saturninus' claim to rule (1.1.186).⁴ However, Titus's use of mythological allusion reveals a potentially different interpretation. His wish that Saturninus' virtues will "reflect on Rome as Titan's rays on Earth" seems to suggest that Saturninus is virtuous and Rome will prosper (1.1.230). However, a closer review of the allusion reveals an outcome that sits in direct opposition with prosperity. The most obvious connection to mythological allusion can be found in Saturninus' name. To the Romans, Saturn was originally a god of agriculture and Saturn represented a time before people needed to farm in order to survive. However, the Roman Saturn eventually merged with the titan, Cronus.⁵ When "Titan's rays on Earth" is interpreted through the Cronus allusion, Rome becomes a place of "no lawes, no civill pollicie" (*Education of Children* D6). There was a brief moment when Titan's rays reflected on Earth, but that time was both relatively short and destined to fail. The reference to Titan's rays unleashes images of the underworld and effectively serves to bring hell to Rome. Rays from the underworld are not

⁴ Marjorie Garber notes, "this apparently conventional metaphor will take off, will virtually explode into a nightmare of literalization" (82).

⁵ Cronus, according to mythology was confined *under* Earth by his jealous father, Uranus until his mother, Gaia gave him a sickle that he used to castrate his own father. Uranus leaves his kingdom to Cronus after the mutilation but warns Cronus that one of his own sons will overthrow him. Cronus marries his sister, Rhea, and swallows their children to avoid being overthrown by his offspring. Rhea tricks Cronus into swallowing a stone instead of their son Zeus. Rhea hides Zeus away and Zeus grows up, either he or his mom (depending on the myth) trick his father into regurgitating his siblings and the stone. Together with his siblings, Zeus fights and defeats his father Cronus. Once Zeus defeats Cronus, the Titans are imprisoned beneath the Earth once again. This time the Titans are imprisoned in Tartarus, a place as far from Earth as Earth is from heaven.

reassuring, stable, or generative. By invoking the allusion to “Titan’s rays” the play positions Rome as one of the “barbarous nations.” Since education was thought to eliminate barbarism, this allusion makes the leader of Rome complacent if not active in an effort to conflate barbarism and civility.

Saturninus as a character-as-text, is not alone in being subjected to rewriting and revising by borrowing material from various classical works and restructuring those parts as a composition. After Alarbus is sacrificed, Demetrius encourages his mother, Tamora, to wait until the gods of revenge will favor “Tamora, the queen of Goths / (When Goths were Goths and Tamora was queen)” (1.1.142-3).⁶ This acknowledgement of Tamora’s name and her past displaces her identity and allows space for a series of conflicting allusions to take her place. She is, as Kempe encourages, “alter[ed]” in the “forme of ... figures, tropes, phrases and words” (*Education of Children* G6). In his marriage proposal, Saturninus encourages Tamora to consider herself “like the stately Phoebe ‘mongst her nymphs” in comparison to the women in Rome (1.1.321).⁷ Again, like Titus’ “Titan’s rays” allusion, the allusion and intertextuality crumbles under scrutiny. Phoebe does not have nymphs. Phoebe, the Titan, might well be more desirable than her nymph siblings conceived through violence and blood, but it is hardly a compliment. Saturninus seems to be conflating Phoebe with Diana but even the allusion to Diana is

⁶ Sale points out that “Shakespeare’s Queen of the Goths almost certainly gets her name” from a Scythian queen “Tamyris or Thomyris, the Queen of the Queen of the Massagetes, whose soldiers kill Cyrus in revenge for his killing of her son. Tamyris has Cyrus decapitated and she then plunges his head into a vat of blood from which she commands it to drink” Sales (41-42).

⁷ Saturninus seems to have Diana in mind. Phoebe, whose name means “bright,” is, however, associated with Diana, Artemis, and the moon. But one has to switch authors from Hesiod to Euripides to make a connection to Artemis. Additionally, a connection to Artemis would not be considered especially flattering. Artemis was a goddess of sudden death who causes disease in animals and wields potentially dangerous arrows. Phoebe, on the other hand is connected to Titus’ comment about “Titan’s rays on Earth.” According to the ancient Greek poet, Hesiod, Phoebe is Cronus’ sister (subsequently not the one he marries in the myth; there he marries Rhea). Nymphs associated specifically with this myth, on the hand, are the product of a copulation interrupted. As Uranus, Cronus’ father prepares to have intercourse with Gaia, Cronus severs Uranus’ penis. The blood that flowed from the wound impregnates Gaia and she conceives both tree nymphs and Erinyes (armored giants).

problematic. In any case, Tamora was raised in Saturninus' mind once she accepted his marriage invitation. She went from fairer than tree nymphs to "Pantheon," all of the gods embodied in one (1.1.338).

Tamora, as a text, continues to be elaborated by allusions. Aaron, in his monologue about Tamora, calls her "Semiramis" as well as a goddess, siren, and a nymph (2.1.22).⁸ When the pair are alone in woods, Aaron calls her Venus. Bassianus adds to the collection of allusions when he and Lavinia find Aaron and Tamora in the woods. Bassianus accuses Tamora of sleeping with Aaron by employing another multiple layered allusion: Dian. While Diana protected wild animals and was worshiped in the woods, Bassianus flips the symbol insinuating that Tamora is doing a different kind of hunting in the woods. The term functions to highlight how Tamora's behavior places "horns" on Saturninus. The conflicting allusions and competing interpretations make Tamora's textual legibility unstable. These classical allusions do not hold steady as we attempt to interpret their significance in *Titus*. Tamora is connected to many texts and given the period's educational practices, it might be said that Tamora is a commonplace book on legs. What is particularly disconcerting about this textual incoherence is that it is produced by adhering to the methods associated with imitation and composition. A successful composition, according to Kempe relies on elaboration; the student is required move beyond the original and adorn the text with a multitude of rhetorical figures. The result is, in Tamora's case, is an overwhelming level of intertextuality that defies any generative meaning making; it is a "brutish

⁸ Carolyn Sale notes that "When Lucius calls for Tamora, more than once associated with Semiramis, to be chucked outside the city walls and left as food for birds, he inverts another myth, for when Semiramis found herself in 'a desert place, ... full of rockes,' she managed to survive on 'a great store of birds,' rather than, as Lucius hopes of Tamora, being eaten by them" (42).

utteraunce.” The result of an “indistinct” and “brutish utteraunce” is also simply a by-product of imitation and composition taught in the early modern classroom (*Arte of English Poesie* 73).

It is not surprising to see that the allusions and intertextuality are counterproductive when seen within the structure of the grammar school. As Mary Thomas Crane notes, “the title page to John Palsgrave’s *Acolastus* (1540) provides a useful clue to what English schoolmasters actually *did* to the texts on their list” (87). As Crane explains, “the title page ... provides a useful clue to what English schoolmasters actually *did* to the texts on their list” (87):

first worde for worde, as the latyne lyeth, and afterwarde accordynge to the sence and meanyng of the latin sentences: by shewing what they do value and counteruayle in our tongue, with admonitions set forth in the margyn, so often as any suche phrase, that is to say, kynd of spekyng used of the latyns, whiche we use not in our tonge, but by other wordes, expresse the sayde latyn maners of speakeinge, and also Adages, metaphores, sentences, or other fygures poetically or rhetorical do require, for the more perfyte instructyng of the lerners (1).

Given that text, is, as Crane notes, Palsgrave’s “translation, and commentary” on a play by Fullonius was designed “to be used as a school text in the Lily/ St. Paul curriculum” and was intended to “provide a single model for reading just as Lily’s Grammar was designed to provide a single text for teaching grammar,” it is hardly encouraging that Palsgrave’s method makes the text, as Crane observes, virtually unreadable (87). As I have noted with Tamora, these allusions and “other fygures poetically or rhetorical,” are not intertextual meaning makers but are instead distracting and serve more as a way to decompose meaning than as parts for composition. When the pieces used for composition are suspect and do not contribute to any meaning making, then composition is problematic. In fact, any practice in meaning making that results in, to return to Puttenham a “brutish utteraunce” that is confusing and “indistinct,” would be best described as barbarism (*Arte of English Poesie* 73).

Students in the early modern classroom, however, were not given unmediated access to classical texts. Schoolmasters were responsible for providing the material for students to imitate.⁹ In *Titus*, Aaron fills the role of schoolmaster and as such, he offers as offers Demetrius and Chiron a myth story to use as a foundation for villainy.¹⁰ Demetrius and Chiron want to fight to win Lavinia's love, but Aaron promises to teach the pair a "speedier course" before providing the pair with a schoolroom staple, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, to imitate in their own composition of Lavinia as a character-as-text (2.1.111). Aaron also explains the plan to Tamora using allusions to the plot of Ovid's tale; it will be a bad day for Bassianus because "His Philomel must lose her tongue today" (2.3.43).¹¹ Aaron's claim that Demetrius and Chiron will "make pillage of [Lavinia's] chastity" falls neatly into the plot of *Metamorphoses* (2.3.44). When Aaron introduces the plan, he also introduces two outside sources: He claims that Lavinia and Lucrece share the same level of chasteness and Aaron also introduces another text, *The House of Fame*

⁹ Anthony Grafton and Lisa Jardine have proposed that efforts of the humanist theorist to make the curriculum uniform across England were successful. Neil Rhodes outlines the curriculum as Canterbury where Christopher Marlowe attended grammar school. During the first three forms, Rhodes notes that students used "*Cato*, a collection of moralizing verse couplets, edited by Erasmus and sometimes printed in bilingual form— Aesop's *Fables*, and Erasmus' dialogues, the *Familiar Colloquies*." In the third form students used "Terence's comedies and the *Eclogues* of the Italian Renaissance poet Mantuan ... The master took over from his assistant at fourth-form level, where they concentrated on the literary classics ... while creative writing appeared in the fifth form: 'they shall commit to memory the Figures of Latin oratory and the rules for making verses.' In the sixth form students studied "Erasmus' *De Copia* ('On the copiousness of words and things') for rhetorical amplification, they read Horace for poetry and Cicero for oratory." (51-52). Crane comments that "in the fourth through sixth forms, the canon expanded to include works that are central to a modern program of classical education: Virgil's *Eclogues*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Cicero's letters, selections from Sallust and Caesar, as well as Erasmus's *Colloquies* and *Parabola* (87).

¹⁰ Aaron establishes himself as a teacher when he describes his connection to Tamora. Aaron says his charm has held Tamora prison "fatser bound / Than is Prometheus tied to Caucasus" (2.1.15-16). The mythological figure Prometheus is tied to Mount Caucasus and tortured daily – a bird eats his intestines every day and he is healed each night. Prometheus' crime is teaching – more specifically teaching humans how to use fire, astronomy, medicine, navigation, architecture, smithing, and writing. In contrast to Prometheus, Aaron teaches the unruly scholars Demetris and Chiron a lesson is one of "rape and villainy" (2.1.117).

¹¹ Briefly, Philomel was raped by her brother-in-law Tereus. When Tereus pushed Philomel to hide his crime, she refuses to keep quiet about the rape. Tereus cuts out her tongue so she could not speak. However, Philomel uses her hands to weave a tapestry detailing the crime and brought the tapestry to her sister, Procne. When Procne realizes what happened, she kills her son, Itys, cooks him, and feeds him to his father, Tereus.

(Chaucer and Ovid both have poems on The House of Fame). The allusion to Philomel is one that a playgoing audience would understand. However, the rape of Lavinia does not simply mirror Philomel's story. Demetrius and Chiron, as early modern students, expand upon the Philomel myth and also cut off Lavinia's hands. By removing Lavinia's tongue, the pair are following Kempe's instructions to "reteyne the very same" from the target text. Cutting off Lavinia's hands, as gruesome as it is, is simply another step in the imitation process Kempe provides – an imitation process that invites elaboration, including in this horrific form.

Demetrius and Chiron also "adde more than his author hath" with horrifying results (*Education of Children* G6).

The chaos of allusions makes (a person/text's) legibility unstable, and an overwhelming level of intertextuality produces, unsurprisingly, the potential for "bad readings." Lavinia, as a character-as-text, provides a good example of how superficial knowledge, reading without understanding, reproduces the cycle of textual illegibility. Upon finding Lavinia, Marcus reads the allusions correctly at first but then abandons his first (correct) interpretation of Lavinia, as a character-as-text, for a metaphoric one. Marcus' first observation that "some Tereus hath deflowered" Lavinia and "lest [she] shouldst detect him, cut [her] tongue" out is a relatively accurate summary of events (2.4.26-7).¹² However, Marcus is not content with that reading and is compelled to embellish the text he sees with metaphor. In doing so, Marcus is provided with a text (Lavinia), and he tries to create his own composition using the text provided as a guide. Marcus employs Kempe's instructions to "alter the method, forme of syllogismes, axiomes, arguments, figures, tropes, phrases and words" as he buries Lavinia in similes in much the same

¹² In Gail Kern Paster's reading, Lavinia's bleeding mouth represents a vaginal wound and indicates that women do not have complete control of their own bodies: "In a chain of dramatic metonymies, Lavinia's inability to prevent her rape is equivalent to her own inability to stop bleeding, is equivalent to her inability to speak her own bodily condition" (98-9)

way Tamora is hidden behind allusions (*Education of Children* G6). Lavinia's blood flows "like a bubbling fountain stirred with wind...coming and going with [her] honey breath"; she is "as a conduit"; her cheeks are as "red as Titan's face"; her inability to communicate is "like an oven stopped" (2.4.23, 25, 30, 31, 36). By including these embellishments Marcus reduces Lavinia's mutilation to a composition that is nearly unreadable.¹³ As Coppelia Kahn notes, "Lavinia renders even commonplace metaphors dysfunctional" (61). Marcus reduces Lavinia to an object, a text – that must be read and then used to create his own composition. While Marcus' response is an instance of a perverse blazon, and the comparisons are meant to evoke that exhausted poetic form, it also speaks to the instability of a text when the creator relies too heavily on imitation.¹⁴

What may be more troubling than the incoherence of the imitation driving compositions in *Titus* are the gruesomely embodied dismemberments that arise from the practice of imitation and composition. Imitation was one of the practices that was believed to have an effect on virtue. Successful deployments of imitation should create "vertue in deedes": Quintilian claims the orator should be "perfect in morals" (*Education of Children* E6, *Institutio*, prooemium. 18). Emulation, as Dickson notes, "was intended to teach judgment and analysis" and should result in

¹³ J.K. Barret, in "Chained Allusions, Patterned Futures, and the Dangers of Interpretation in *Titus Andronicus*," notes that "Marcus' speech exposes the uselessness of such defensive groundwork by staging a confrontation between rhetorical excess and physical suffering" (461). Kendall Gillian Murray suggests that "Lavinia, as speechless emblem, becomes a work of art (made by Shakespeare) designed to show the limits of art and artful language" and further claims that "Lavinia is a reality that language distorts and refracts, and in turn shows how language itself is fragmented" (Murray 306, 309).

¹⁴ Barret also notes that "Lynn Enterline demonstrates the extent to which the scene shows Lavinia subjected to a male reading practice commonly found in the "dismembering rhetorical" of Petrarchan poetics. Jonathan Bate posits the speech as a critique of humanism, exposing the extent to which 'having all the rhetorical tropes at your fingertips doesn't actually help you to *do* anything. Heather James argues that Shakespeare here 'analyzes poetic devices which distort and fragment the female body and may lead teleologically to rape' but points out that the scene operates via striking reversal" because the Petrarchan language appears after Lavinia's rape" (461-462). Barret notes of *Titus*, "The play's repeated signals toward a future foreclosed by textual models, and its emphasis on the problematic interpretation of source texts suggest the dangers of a present moment that rests too heavily on models from the past" (485).

“excellence of character as well as speech” (386). Juan Luis Vives, tutor to Mary Tudor, believed that imitation required the “need of a quick and keen judgment, as well as a certain natural and hidden dexterity” so “a true imitation of what is admirable is a proof of the goodness of the natural disposition” (*On Education* 194). Ascham takes the link between eloquence and morality a step further. Ascham encourages his readers to:

“mark all ages, look upon the whole course of both the Greek and Latin tongue, and ye shall surely find that when apt and good words began to be neglected and properties of those two tongues to be confounded, then also began ill deeds to spring, strange manners to oppress good orders, new and fond opinions to strive with old and true doctrine, first in philosophy and after in religion, right judgment of all things to be perverted, and so virtue with learning contemned and study left off. Of ill thoughts cometh perverse judgment; of ill deeds springeth lewd talk” (*Schoolmaster* 115).

It would seem that Ascham is positing that misused language leads to perverse thoughts and ill deeds and ill deeds and perverse thoughts lead to lewd language. Speaking poorly means doing evil; doing evil means speaking poorly. It is this type of thinking that Dickson calls the “circularity of cause and effect and linking of judgment in language and action” (386). In *Titus*, the characters successfully follow the practice of imitation; they borrow material to “reteyne the very same” from target texts and they “adde more than his author hath” (*Education of Children* G6). Instead of an exhibition of “vertue in deedes,” the stage is littered with dismembered and transformed body parts (*Education of Children* E6). The expected results from imitation and composition are achieved; the overall goal of education for “eloquence in talke, and vertue in deedes” seems lacking (*Education of Children* E6).

English’s Eloquent Barbarisms

In this section, I look at the ways English writers attempted to privilege the English language by navigating and remediating their past associations with barbarism. This negotiation, I suggest, produces the idea of linguistic colonialism which later develops into imperialism. Ian

Smith points out that “barbarism is a technical term taken from classical rhetoric and grammar to denote linguistic vices, errors in language that were specifically associated with foreigners or cultural outsiders” (1). Although the idea of barbarism, according to Smith, “eventually sharpen into racial awareness,” the term was “used quite liberally as a slur across European cultures where language performance conferred status and provided access to social mobility” (2). Barbarism, then, “demarcated a cultural division of insiders and outsiders” and one that pertained to language rather than behavior or cultural customs (Smith 2). I will return to racial awareness later in the chapter and look at how barbarism shaped England’s nationalism and concomitant white-supremacist structures. For now, though, it is important to note that demarcating a “cultural division of insiders and outsiders” relies on conduct and evaluation, and England was in the position of evaluating their language as they attempted to create a national identity.¹⁵ Creating a national identity, however, required a historical hat trick. The English had to justify the use of their language while negotiating their own barbarous past. What emerges in this negotiation is an ambiguity that suggests, as Rhodes notes, “the relationship between civilization and barbarism is unfixed” (119). Vanessa Corredera points out that “delineating and reifying alterity was a fluid process” and, of course, the process of creating a national identity was not altogether benign (30). Smith points out that the “primordial ... characteristic” of barbarism is “failed language” so, as part of establishing a national identity, the English were tasked with proving that their language was capable of success, or eloquence rather than failure and barbarism (8).

In order to become a successful language, though, writers were forced to grapple with the perception that English was a barbarous language. The attempts to justify the use of the English

¹⁵ Patricia Akhimie points out that conduct “is a key idiom for negotiating social difference in early modern English culture” and she suggests that conduct is a way of “evaluating the way other people do things” (1).

language produces some comically ambivalent results. For example, Ascham apologizes for writing his “Toxophilus” in English even as he attempts to justify using English. For Ascham, “every thinge” in English is “so meanly, bothe for the matter and handelynge, that no man can do worse” (57). In fact, Ascham claims that writing in English threatens to destroy his reputation. For him “to have written it in an other tonge,” he claims would have “bene bothe more profitable for my study, and also more honest for my name” (56-57). While Ascham seems to be concerned about his reputation and the state of the language, he still points to Aristotle’s advice that writers should “speake as the common people do” and indicates that writing in English is appropriate (apparently at risk of his honest name) despite its limitations (57). As Ascham defends his choice to write in English, he also addresses an imagined critic who scorns Ascham for writing in English. Ascham defends himself from these critics in his mind by asserting that if the “best of the realme thincke” English is “honest for them to use” then he “ought not to suppose it vile” (57). For Ascham, English is both vile and worthy to write in; writing in English is the worst thing to do and yet Ascham writes in English. Ascham’s linguistic cognitive dissonance may seem counterproductive, but his view of English as an inferior language is part of the larger literary view of the language.

In order to create a literary community, writers first had to create respect for the English language. Instead of declaring a place for English in literature, pamphleteers and rhetoric manual writers create an embellished history for the language in order to justify its use. Jenny C. Mann notes “English writers began to use the tools of their humanist education to nurture native pride, drawing on classical tradition as the inspiration for a vernacular culture that would displace England’s barbarous past” (12). For some of these writers, creating a national literary community involved displacing the accusations of barbarism to other, often Continental, sources. These

writers claim that Italian poetry is more closely connected to barbarism than English. For example, William Webbe claims that “brutish Poetrie” was “at last conveyed into *England*” as a result of poetry that “first began to be followed and maintained among the *Hunnes* and *Gothians*,” and it was the Huns and Goths who “brought it into *Italy*” (*Elizabethan Critical Essays* V.1. 240). Other writers admitted English was, historically, a barbarous language while simultaneously suggesting English has risen above its “savage” (as Puttenham puts it) roots. For these writers, English existed before barbarism corrupted the language. Puttenham makes this claim explicit in his chapter, “How the wilde and savage people used a naturall Poesie in versicle and rime as our vulgar is,” where he claims that “our maner of vulgar Poesie” is older than classical verse. Puttenham then blames “the barbarous conquerors” and the “innumerable swarmes of strange nations” who invaded the Roman Empire for establishing “the ryming Poesie of the Barbarians” in Europe and specifically in Italy (10-12). In so doing, Puttenham is cleverly, though tacitly, capitalizing on anti-Catholic sentiment that is very much part of England’s nation building strategy, but he is also attempting to create respect for the English language. The OED defines “savage” as “as primitive and uncivilized” as well as “uncontrolled” and “destructive” (“savage” adj. A13a, 6a). To call someone or something “savage,” of course, cannot be considered a compliment. In fact, the word comes to represent a racial supremacy and the so-called savageness of others develops into a justification for English colonization. It’s a historical hat trick and an argument Andrew Hadfield recognizes as circular.¹⁶ As circular and embellished as Puttenham’s claim may be, establishing English as the pre-barbaric language allows him to justify its use.

¹⁶ See *Literature, Politics and National Identity: Reformation to Renaissance*.

Justifying the use of the language was not the only goal and expectation these critics seem to have for English. Richard Mulcaster, who proclaims, “I honor the Latin, but I worship the *English*,” envisions a sort of linguistic colonialism (*Positions* 269). Even as Mulcaster claims “our state is no *Empire* to hope to enlarge [the language] by commanding over countries,” he is also excited by the idea of spreading the use of English (*Positions* 271). Mulcaster returns to the goal of the early modern educational system and links linguistic eloquence to land expansion. For Mulcaster, “eloquence it self is neither limited to language, nor restrained to soil, whose measur the hole world is” (*Positions* 272). In what can also be seen as another circular argument, Mulcaster claims that it is English speakers who have misused the language and the fault does not lie in the language itself. Since, as Mulcaster claims, “it is our accident which restrains our tung, & not the tung it self,” then English “will strain with the strongest, and stretch to the furthest, for either government if we were conquerers, or for cunning, if we were treasurers” (*Positions* 275).

Obviously, colonialism, linguistic or otherwise, does result in an increased number of English speakers, but simply because English is a useable language does not mean that it should be violently imposed on the world. There is violence in language expansion. Stephen Greenblatt observes that “the principal means chosen by the Europeans to establish linguistic contact was kidnapping” (106).¹⁷ Elsewhere, Greenblatt is explicit in stating, “the primal crime” in British colonies was “committed in the interest of language” (17).¹⁸ Before this type of violent colonial effort becomes a reality, the prospect of linguistic colonialism was imagined by educational theorist. For example, Mulcaster imagines eloquent English speakers as linguistic conquerors

¹⁷ See Stephen Greenblatt’s *Marvelous Possessions: The Wonder of the New World*.

¹⁸ Greenblatt’s *Learning to Curse: Essays in Early Modern Culture*.

and he suggests that English has reached the point of perfection. Just as Demosthenes's was the age for Greek and Cicero's was the age for Latin, Mulcaster claims, "such a period in the English tung I take this to be in our daies, for both the pen and the speche" (*Positions* 83). Mulcaster's observation seems to stem from the educational system. For him, he was living in "the perfitest period in our English tung" because "our custom hath alredie beaten out his own rules redie for the method, and frame of Art" (*Positions* 85). It is hard to say that Mulcaster is envisioning the English colonial empire with his musing on the capabilities of and the potential for English, but he is saying that English as a language is capable of acting as a lingua franca.¹⁹ There is, of course, an obvious ambiguity present when the same author says "our state is no *Empire* to hope to enlarge [the language] by commanding over countries," and "eloquence it self is neither limited to language, nor restrained to soil, whose measur the hole world is" in the same work (*Positions* 271-2). But, as Ania Loomba and Jonathan Burton point out, a "mutability of identity is not always a benign idea" and this ambiguity is "underlined by the discourse of degeneracy, which was an essential component of later racial thought" (24). Barbarism and race, then are tied together as facets of the discourse of difference. For the early modern, barbarism is both a linguistic category and a proxy for racial categorization.

As a linguistic category, though, *Titus* points to the same type of ambiguity found in Mulcaster. Romans and Goths in Shakespeare's *Rome* both use the term liberally to describe themselves and the "other" (Goth and Roman). As Smith notes, "the schematic barbarian binary is ... qualified in Shakespeare's presentation of a hybrid, mixed Rome, equally guilty of the

¹⁹ Richard Helgerson observes that "the English came to think of themselves and their language both as having been colonized and as potentially colonizing others" (289). Helgerson notes that "sovereignty, including linguistic sovereignty, can hardly be conceived without a sense of both liberation from former subjection and a plan to subject others in turn. To achieve full national selfhood, the colonized must become a colonizer, a colonizer of himself as well as of others. That is what imitating the Romans meant" (293).

charges of wanton brutality and inhumane savagery uniquely accredited to the Goths” (126). Marcus claims that Titus is returning “from weary wars against the barbarous Goths” and yet it is Chiron, the Goth, who asks if Scythia was “half so barbarous” as Rome (1.1.28, 131). Marcus cautions Titus against barbarism when he begs Titus to allow Mutius to be buried: “Thou art a Roman; be not barbarous” (1.1.379). It is the Roman Bassianus who refers to Aaron as a “barbarous Moor” when he spots Tamora in the woods (2.3.78). The Roman Lavinia calls Tamora “barbarous” when she astutely notes that “no name fits thy nature but thy own” (2.2.118-9). Lucius, Titus’ son, exclaims “O barbarous, beastly villains, like thyself!” when Aaron tells him that Chiron and Demetrius raped Lavinia (5.1.93). Lucius repeats the charge that Aaron is a “barbarous Moor” when he says Aaron should be imprisoned (5.3.4). The problem, of course, with simply viewing barbarism as “failed language” that it would be difficult to suggest that the Roman, Titus is particularly eloquent. Titus’ eloquence is reduced to a bodily excretion when he claims, “my tears are now prevailing orators” (3.1.26). It would be equally difficult to claim that Tamora and Aaron can be identified solely by their failed language. Rhodes comments that “If mastery of eloquence is a badge of civilization, then Tamora is part of the club” (137). Likewise, Smith notes that Aaron’s “intellectual pedigree matches any of the Andronici” (130). Eloquence and “failed language” do not sufficiently serve to distinguish the Romans from the Goths within the play.

Failed language, however, should have served to distinguish the barbaric from the eloquent and the Romans from the Goths. Thomas Elyot, in the *Dictionary of Sir Thomas Elyot* (1538), defines “*Barbaria*” as, “the country where dwelleth people rude or beastly.” Elyot says of *Barbari*, that there were “in the old time ... people, except Greeks ... which do speak grossly, without observing of congruity, or pronounce not perfectly, specially Greek or Latin.” Elyot

further notes that they “abhor all elegancy” and they “be without letters, fierce or cruel, of manners or countenance.” Since “failed language” is an inadequate marker, it may be useful to return to Smith’s observation that, while barbarism “denote[s] linguistic vices” and “errors in language,” these linguistic errors “were specifically associated with foreigners or cultural outsiders” (1). In other words, “barbarism” is an ethnic term, marking the Goths who invade Rome, and while “barbarism” might be expanded to encompass other kinds of linguistic otherness such as “failed language,” it is important to note that *Titus*, at the core, is a play about Goths running amok in Rome. Barbarism, as Smith notes “demarcated a cultural division of insiders and outsiders” (Smith 2). However, in *Titus*, this “cultural division” separating the “insiders” (Romans) and the “outsiders” (Goths) cannot be confined to “linguistic vices” (Smith 1).

In Elizabethan England, the “cultural division” separating the “insiders” and the “outsiders” is somewhat complicated. Loomba points out that “the Goths were viewed as brutish and lawless, but also as ancestors of the English” and “the Romans were both conquerors of England and imperialists worthy of English emulation” (Loomba 83). Emulation is a bedrock in the early modern educational system. Recall Kempe’s claim that “all knowledge” knowledge is found by “observing examples of them in other mens workes, and partly by making somewhat of our owne; and that first by imitation, and at length without imitation” (*Education of Children* F2). England relied on the civilizing effect of education to remediate its “barbarous” past and their educational system relied heavily on imitating the Romans. But, as Miriam Jacobson points out, “the experience of reading about one’s own ancient ancestors as the very barbarians that Roman writers denigrate must have further complicated the early modern view of Britain’s inherited and imposed Roman literary legacy” (10). England’s complicated racial history as

ancestors of the “brutish and lawless” subjects of the Roman empire point to the same type of ambiguity present in Mulcaster’s linguistic cognitive dissonance. However, as Loomba points out, “the idea of national formation as an anxious, unstable, and always unfinished process should not lead us to underestimate the aggressive connections between imperial ambition and nation formation” (Loomba 16). In negotiating their own barbarous past and the colonial overtones of discourse around barbarism, the English relied on imitating the Romans as they composed their own present and future.

It is important to remember that before the English ever considered the potential of their colonial reach, they were colonized by the Romans and, as Ascham claims, the “*Hunnes* and *Gothians*, and other barbarous” people defeated the Romans. The Huns and Goths, or what Ascham calls “the influx of barbarians” are responsible, according to Ascham, for “ignorance and rude singularity” in English poetry (*Schoolmaster* 291). Smith observes that “Ascham’s desire to brand the barbarians as ignorant and lacking in judgment comes from his need to find a myth that any reasonable person can assent to: the Goths and Huns are ... the destroyers of a great empire.” Smith points out that seeing the Goths and Huns as destroyers of Rome is an “incontestable history that any civilized Englishman would embrace” (107). Ascham expresses what Smith calls an “anxiety” when he faults Cicero “because once it pleased him, though somewhat merelie, yet oueruncurtelie, to rayle vpon poore England, obiection both, extreme beggerie, and mere barbariousnes vnto it, writyng thus vnto his frend *Atticus*: There is not one scruple of silver in that whole Isle, or any one that knoweth either learnyng or letter” (*Schoolmaster* 292–93). At the same time, Ascham’s works remediate Cireco’s charge that the ancient Briton “knoweth” nothing or has “learnyng or letter” by advocating an educational system that reduces the “barbarous ... unto civility” and guides students “into more humanity.”

(*Kempe's Ovid* 4). The idea that England's barbarous past can be rehabilitated by imitating the ancient Romans prompts Ascham to make the claim that "that sixteen hundred yeare after" Cicero's death "it may trewly be sayd, that for siluer, there is more cumlie plate, in one Citie of England, than is in foure of the proudest Cities in all *Italie*, and take *Rome* for one of them" (*Schoolmaster* 293). In other words, Ascham seems to suggest that by emulating Rome, England has surpassed Rome.

In emulating and surpassing Rome, though, there is what Helgerson calls "double face of the early modern reformation of English." Loomba suggests that "it is useful to think about the 'early modern' as the 'early colonial' because colonization and imperial ambitions were the midwives that assisted in the development of the European nations" (16). According to Helgerson, "sovereignty, including linguistic sovereignty, can hardly be conceived without a sense of both liberation from former subjection and a plan to subject others in turn. To achieve full national selfhood, the colonized must become a colonizer, a colonizer of himself as well as of others." England's colonizing effort or its potential to colonize is, according to Helgerson, what "imitating the Romans meant" (293). The English used the same educational claim that "all knowledge" is found by "observing examples of them in other mens workes, and partly by making somewhat of our owne; and that first by imitation, and at length without imitation" to justify colonialism (*Education of Children* F2). Loomba and Burton note that the English "often justified colonialism by invoking their own past colonization by the Romans" (9).

William Camden's *A chorographical description of the most flourishing kingdomes, England, Scotland, and Ireland* (1610) for example, insists on the salutary effects of colonization for the colonized. Camden claims that the "yoke of the Romans... proved and a saving health" to the ancient Britons. Camden further claims that the Roman colonization effort "chased away all

savage barbarism from the Britons' minds" (26). Similarly, William Strachey, in *For the colony in Virginea Britannia* (1612), calls the Roman colonization effort an "injury been offered to us by the Romans" but credits the establishment of colonies in England with "teaching us even to know the powerful discourse of divine reason (which makes us only men, and distinguisheth us from beasts, amongst whom we lived as naked and as beastly as they)" (18). Strachey further claims that, without the Roman colonies, the ancient Britons "might yet have lived overgrown satyrs, rude and untutored, wandering in the woods, dwelling in caves, and hunting for our dinners, as the wild beasts in the forests for their prey, prostituting our daughters to strangers, sacrificing our children to idols, nay, eating our own children" (18). It would seem, at least for Strachey, that the difference between "of divine reason" and eating one's own children is connected to teaching. Camden makes the connection between barbarism and education more explicit. According to Camden, "the natural inhabitants of the island" were brought "unto the society of civil life" through training "in the liberal arts" and by learning "the laws of the Romans" (31). Camden's claim that the Romans "governed [the ancient Britons] with their laws and framed [the ancient Britons] to good manners and behavior" echoes the "eloquence in talke, and vertue in deedes" that Kempe claims an early modern, humanist education would guarantee (*Education of Children* E6). The educational system, at least in theory, reduced the "barbarous ... unto civility" and guided England "into more humanity." (*Kempe's Ovid* 4). The English could claim that their barbarous past had been remediated through education. If, as Smith has claimed, barbarism denotes linguistic errors, it is then difficult to presume that people who considered themselves to be living in "the perfitest period in our English tung" believed that they were guilty of the "linguistic vices" and "errors in language" associated with barbarism (*Positions* 85, Smith 1).

It might then be useful to think about barbarism in *Titus*, to return to Smith, not only as “a slur across European cultures where language performance conferred status and provided access to social mobility” but also as a term that “eventually sharpen into racial awareness” (2). Social mobility and racial awareness both seem to stem from Greenblatt’s idea of self-fashioning. For Greenblatt, “self-fashioning is achieved in relation to something perceived as alien, strange or hostile” and that aristocratic and upper classes in early modern England looked to the “natives” of the English colonies in the Americas as a way to fashion their identities (*Self-Fashioning* 9). Fashioning a national identity, like the linguistic efforts to justify English as a language, involved displacing England’s barbarous past. Smith points out that the English “found a convenient and available people, Africans, onto whom they could export and project the discarded barbarisms of a newly imagined past” (17). *Titus* explicitly connects barbary and racial awareness in the term “barbarous Moor” used to describe Aaron (2.3.78).

Shakespeare’s use of the term “barbarous Moor,” though, might not have immediately signaled racial awareness and certainly was not a completely negative term. Loomba observes that “distinctions between Saracens, Turks, and Moroccans (all of whom could be referred to as ‘Moors’) were often not clear in English writings” (71). Loomba points out that the word “Moor” was first used to describe “those who belonged to ‘Mahomet’s sect’ and ‘the people of mixed Arab and Berber ancestry and Islamic faith who came to Spain in the eighth century were called ‘Moro’ by those whom they conquered, but they were not necessarily dark-skinned” (46). Loomba explains that “Protestant England’s enmity with Catholic Spain complicated its attitude to Moors. Elizabeth I was engaged in an effort to consolidate English trading ties with Morocco, especially in arms. Some critics suggest that for this reason the English could not have held a purely negative view of Moors” (70). Similarly, Dennis Austin Britton observes that “when an

early modern author writes about a Moor ... it is often unclear whether that author is describing a person with a set of ethnic/ cultural/racial characteristics, a person holding a set of religious beliefs, or both” (6).

The term “moor” itself is not explicitly linked to blackness but Andrew Boorde, in *The fyrst boke of the introduction of knowledge* (1555), does link the term to slavery. Boorde notes that “there be white Mores and black Moors, they be infidels and unchristened” and there are “many Moores brought into Christendom ... to be sold, and do all manner of service, but they be set most commonly to vile things, they be called slaves” (I1 –I2). Robin Blackburn points out that the “Renaissance did little to weaken ideas supportive of the legitimacy of slavery” and “the rediscovery of classical authorities did nothing to undermine belief in the lawfulness of slavery.” Instead, according to Blackburn, “by diffusing a greater awareness of the cultural achievement of antiquity ... the Renaissance nourished a sense of cultural superiority that dovetailed with the classical Aristotelian doctrine that barbarians were natural slaves.” As such, as Blackburn notes, “newly conquered peoples of any sort could be seen as requiring the civilizing influence of colonial subjection and, at the limit, enslavement” (87). For example, John Mair, *In Secundum Librum Sententiarum* (1519), says “it is clear that some men are by nature slaves, others by nature free” and he cites Aristotle as a way to justify “the reason why the Greeks should be masters over the barbarians” saying “barbarians and slaves are the same” (38). Eventually, as Loomba notes, “the word ‘Moor’ increasingly became associated with blackness” and for Shakespeare’s audiences, certainly, the “word Moor was an amalgam of both religious and colour difference” (46).

Where the humanist educational system is complicit in a whitewashing England’s barbarous past, *Titus*’ reliance on imitation and intertextually complicates a reading that equates

barbarism with slavery. Here I would like to suggest a reading that positions Aaron as a sort of lynchpin connecting England's barbarous past to "the perfitest period in our English tung" Mulcaster images (*Positions* 85). Aaron is both eloquent and ethnically othered as one of the, to return to Puttenham, "barbarous conquerors" and the "innumerable swarmes of strange nations" (10). Aaron acts a prototypical representation of England's position to eloquence and serves as a reflection of England's own complex racial history.

Aaron's Eloquent Barbarisms

The matter of Aaron's race – his status as a Black man – seems settled by both scholars and the play itself. But if we investigate the terms ascribed to him in relation to England's mythologized past (or history), we will see an unexpected kinship between the two. I am not suggesting that Aaron's position as an African or a Moor who represents ideas of race or racialization in early modern England should be ignored. The text repeatedly draws attention to Aaron's "hue." His likeness as "a coal-black Moor" is equated with the fly Marcus kills (3.2.78). Aaron echoes the exact phrase as he looks at his son and claims that "Coal-black is better than another hue" (4.2.101). I am, however, suggesting a reading that looks at Aaron as a palimpsest who represents a text written and rewritten. It is my argument that the play's abundance of intertextuality associated with Aaron opens the door to a multitude of significations.²⁰ Aaron is described as the "wandering prince" Aeneas, a "coal-black Moor," and a "swart Cimmerian," and it is my argument that these allusions conflate him with Rome, Africa, and, importantly, the ancient Britons (2.2.2, 3.2.78, 2.3.73). This chaos of allusions, again, makes legibility unstable.

Bethany Packard points out the "impossibility of a single narrative" for Shakespeare's Rome. As Packard notes, if Shakespeare's Rome "were a pure descendant of Troy, the choice of

²⁰ This reading draws heavily on Sale's reading of Aaron as a means to "recuperate a certain kind of letter along with the histories suppressed by the Romans" (25).

emperor would never fall to Titus.” In this reading of a Rome where, as Rhodes observes, “the relationship between civilization and barbarism is unfixed,” Packard suggests that “the Goths are thus not an infestation of a previously healthy state but an additional manifestation of its multiplicity” (Rhodes 119, Packard 284). By reading *Titus’* Rome as a site of multiple narratives subject to and sometimes overwhelmed by conflicting allusions and unstable intertextuality, I propose that Aaron can be used as a character-text that summarizes and represents England’s struggle to reconcile its past with its present and its future.²¹ Through Aaron, I will argue, the play calls the racial supremacy of whiteness into question and reveals the instability of European “whiteness.”

The intertextual allusions associated with Aaron blurs the distinction between barbarism and education. The English early modern educational system was designed to create eloquence but the “brutish utteraunce[s]” Puttenham links to barbarism are etymologically linked to Britain (*Arte of English Poesie* 73). According to English chronicle history, Britain was founded by Brutus, who was the grandson of Aeneas. Aeneas founded Rome so England saw itself as a descendant of Rome.²² Richard Grafton claims in his chronicle history of England, the arrival of Brute and his subsequent naming the isle “Briteyne” marks the beginning of the “History of this Realme” (31). Geoffrey of Monmouth similarly records the story of Brutus in *his History of the Kings of Britain* (1136) suggesting that English writers of history privileged their familial relationship with Rome. However, England’s history is more complicated than the direct line to Rome that chroniclers imagine (It would truly be a short history that would not require much

²¹ In making this claim, I am building off Sale’s observation that Aaron is “complexly associated with several peoples subject to Roman imperialism” and he “challenges the charges of ‘barbarousness’ to which the peoples conquered by the Romans were subject” (25).

²² Heather James points out that Andronici accept Rome’s founder Aeneas as part of their own “family history” in *Shakespeare’s Troy: Drama, Politics, and the Translation of Empire*.

remediation if Elizabeth I was Brutus' daughter). Tamora links Aaron to Aeneas when she invites him to play the "wandering prince," Aeneas to her Dido (2.2.2). In connecting Aaron with Aeneas, the English audience is challenged to imagine Aaron as Rome's founder. As the founder of Rome, Aeneas would have been responsible for chasing "away all savage barbarism from the Britons' minds" and bringing civility to the barbarous isle (Camden 26). As Rome's founder, then, it is fitting that Aaron should be eloquent.²³ It is equally fitting that Aaron's eloquence serves to remind the English that their own claim to eloquence is linked to accusations of barbarism (30). While early modern humanist educators and rhetoricians work to remediate and reposition English as a language is capable of acting as a *lingua franca*, the textual allusion to Aeneas reminds audiences that English is still very much connected to its "savage" (as Puttenham puts it) roots. In other words, as Carolyn Sale notes, the allusion is "asking the English to remember their own racial history, in which they were considered "barbarous" by the Romans" (30).

The Romans, as Camden reminded his readers, were responsible for bring, liberal arts training and education to the barbarous inhabitants of the British isle and it is apparent that Aaron is educated. We have already seen how Aaron acts as the schoolmaster for Demetrius and Chiron as he offers them a "speedier course" (2.1.111). Moreover, the play suggests that Aaron's intellectual pedigree surpasses that of Demetrius and Chiron since, as Smith notes, "he not only recognizes the Horatian citation wrapped around a weapon sent by Titus, but unlike Tamora's naive sons, he also deconstructs the code of the gift as a debt that he must pay with his life" (130,

²³ In suggesting that Aaron represents a type of eloquence, I am following in the critical footsteps of Ian Smith, who points out that Aaron is both "the archetypal black villain" and "at the same time, Shakespeare evokes a memorial overlay, drawn from the exodus narrative, of Aaron the eloquent spokesman, the resistor in history's mimetic drama of ethnic and racial oppression" (Smith 129).

4.2.19–32). Similarly, where Marcus fails to decode the chaos of allusions associated with Lavinia, Aaron succeeds. Aaron, as the “wandering prince” Aeneas, is connected to Rome and he is connected to the Roman educational system. In that way, Aaron might be considered a figure worthy of emulation as England attempts to distance themselves from their barbarous past. On the other hand, Aaron is also described as a “coal-black Moor,” and a “swart Cimmerian” (3.2.78, 2.3.73). Sale reads Aaron “for the ways in which he may have represented a Briton for Elizabethan audiences of the 1590s” (26). By doing so, Sale suggests that Tamora is inviting the English audience “to imagine a Moor as the agent for the transmission of ancient Trojan culture to Italy and then to Albion.” For Sale, this imaginative exercise “challenges the history of the cultural migrations across the Western world, especially as that history is concerned with matters of “hue” and race” (Sale 28). Even as the English audience is challenged to imagine Aaron as Rome’s founder, his “hue” offers space for interpretive intervention.

Hue, as Francesca T. Royster points out, is not a word Shakespeare uses often, and its frequency in *Titus* “suggests a real interest in racial issues” (434).²⁴ It is my argument here that even the label “coal black Moor” is fraught with meaning and by examining what Aaron’s “coal-black” hue might have meant to the early modern theater goer, the instability of European “whiteness” is revealed. Loomba and Burton suggest that “the meaning of blackness was subject to debate” in the early modern period (4). Thomas Browne, in *Pseudodoxia epidemica* (1646), explores a number of theories to explain blackness. For Browne, blackness could be explained as the result of cannibalism, or as a genetic disease, attributed to a chemical compound in the blood, or be explained by environmental factors. As Scott Oldenburg points out, the two most popular

²⁴ Royster identifies seven instances of the word “hue” to describe color and suggests that six of the instances reference skin color: “Of these, two refer to Aaron’s black skin color, two to the white skin of Goths, and two to the color of the baby” (434).

theories of blackness “were the Climate theory and the Biblical theory” (46). The climate theory suggests that location and climate produce dark skin. Classical texts Pliny’s *Natural History* and Ptolemy’s *Tetrabiblos* explain that darkness and other physical features are the result of proximity to the sun.²⁵ More than physical characteristics, though, blackness was thought to affect personality. Joannes ab Indagine uses humoral theory to explain hues. In *Briefve introductions* ... (1537), Indagine claims that “colour in a picture doth show temperance colour in a picture doth show temperance” and he suggests that “black choler doth also show the evil affections of the mind, as envy, anger, rancor, machinations and privy hatreds” (11r). Blackness, as Mary Floyd-Wilson observes, was associated with “physical weakness, wisdom, and political subtlety” (185).

George Best called the climate theory into question in *A True Discourse of the late voyages of discoverie, for the finding of a passage to Cathaya by the Northwest* (1584) when he posited that “blacknesse proceedeth of some naturall infection” and is “the curse and infection of bloud, and not the distemperature of the clymate” (30, 32-3). Instead, Best suggests that the cause of blackness “manifestly and plainely appeareth by holy Scripture” and can be traced back to sin (31). Within the biblical theory of blackness, as Best claims, blackness appears in the world as a curse brought about by the “wicked Spirite” who causes one of Noah’s son Cham to three sons “transgresse and disobey his fathers commaundement, that after him all his posteritie should bee accursed” (30-1). As a result of Cham’s sin, according to Best, “God would a sonne shuld be borne,” to Cham “whose name was *Chus*, who not only it selfe, but all his posteritie after him, should be so blacke and lothsome, that it might remaine a spectacle of disobedience to

²⁵ Pliny’s *Natural History*, states “that the Ethiopians are burnt by the heat of the heavenly body near them and are born with a scorched appearance, with curly beard and hair” (2:80). Ptolemy’s *Tetrabiblos*, says “since they have the sun over their heads and are burned by it, have black skins and thick, wooly hair” (123).

all the World” (32). Writing about the Middle Ages, Geraldine Heng suggests that “within Christianity the color black accrued a slate of negative significations that yoked the ‘abstraction of blackness ... to sin, ignorance, shame, error, and the state of unredemption” (186).²⁶

It would be simple to suggest that Aaron’s “hue” identifies him as the stereotypical villain. Aaron, after all, boasts of his own villainy saying, “Aaron will have his soul black like his face.” (3.2.205-6). Jeannette White suggests that, to Elizabethan audiences, “blackness and evil were so synonymous” that “black was always indicative of evil” (336). Aaron could certainly be described as evil; he orchestrates a rape and two gruesome dismemberments. Aaron seems to fit in with Winthrop Jordan’s oft quoted observation that “in England ... the concept of blackness was loaded with intense meaning” and that “Black was ... the handmaid and symbol of baseness and evil, a sign of danger and repulsion” (7). But Aaron juxtaposes his villainy with “fair men” who “call for grace” and “fools” who do good, so it is worth examining “fair” hues as well. While Best claims that blackness represents a “spectacle of disobedience to all the World,” he also makes an inaccurate claim about whiteness (32). When Best relates the biblical story of the flood he says, “there remained no moe men alive but Noah and his three sonnes, Sem, Cham, and Japhet ... who all three being white, and their wives also, by course of nature should have begotten and brought foorth white children” (31). Indagine similarly juxtaposed whiteness and blackness. While he claims that “black choler doth also show the evil affections of the mind, as envy, anger, rancor, machinations and privy hatreds” he also suggests that white is a “feminine colour, soft and cold” and “declareth a cold, soft and tender person” (I1r). Whiteness, for Indagine, is the color “most commendable, for it causeth also a man to be inclined and disposed to all good and honest things, and apt to all things” (I1r). On the other hand, as Floyd-Wilson

²⁶ See also, Benjamin Braude’s “The Sons of Noah and the Construction of Ethnic and Geographical Identities in the Medieval and Early Modern Periods.”

notes, whiteness was also associated with “physical strength, barbarousness, and dull wits” (185). It is worth pointing out that whiteness itself is a fraught label. Classicist James H. Dee suggests that the “Greeks and Romans do not describe themselves” as white or “as anything else because they had no regular word in their vocabulary for themselves.” Dee claims that “the concept of a distinct ‘white race’ was not present in the ancient world” (Dee 163). Aaron may well be the “barbarous, beastly villain” Lucius accuses him of being, but I will argue, he is a British “barbarous, beastly villain” and as a British “barbarous, beastly villain” his “hue” and position as a stereotypical villain deserves some revision (5.1.93).

Aaron is described as a “swart Cimmerian” and I suggest that this label places Aaron among the ancient Britons and as such blurs the distinction between black and white.²⁷ Bassianus cautions Tamora that a sexual encounter with her “swart Cimmerian” will make her “honor of his body’s hue (2.3.73-4). While, on the surface, Bassianus seems to suggest that Aaron’s hue has a contaminating power that will render Tamora’s (supposed) honor a “symbol of baseness and evil,” his use of “swart Cimmerian” situates Aaron as an ancient Briton.²⁸ Sale points out that “‘Cimmerian’ is not simply a synonym for ‘Moor,’ a term generally used for the peoples of the Ottoman Empire or north African.” As Sale notes, “the name Cimmerian came, at least initially, from central Asia. For Homer, the Cimmerians inhabited a land of darkness at the far edge of the world, possibly Britain” (28). William Harrison suggests a link between England

²⁷ In tracing a Spanish connection to Aaron in Titus, Noémie Ndiaye notes that “*cimarrones* were runaway African slaves in the early modern Spanish Americas” (Ndiaye 66). Floyd-Wilson points out Ben Jonson’s use of “swarth” to describe Spain in his *The Masque of Blackness*. She notes that the “construed coloration of the Spanish in this period reveals the instability of European “whiteness.” (FN 13 p. 187).

²⁸ Francesca T. Royster uses the lines “Coal-black is better than another hue / In that it scorns to bear another hue” to claim that Aaron “complicates the conventional view of blackness as that which cannot be washed away” (4.2.101-2, 442). In doing so, Royster suggests that Aaron twists the associations between black and white and embraces “blackness as a sign of permanence and constancy.” Blackness, in Royster’s reading, “becomes the natural state” (442-3).

and a “swart Cimmerian” when he claims in his *Description of Britaine* (1587) that “our ancestors haue hitherto were laboured in Cimmerian darknesse” (A6r). England’s existence emerges from this “Cimmerian darknesse,” and the play seems to suggest that Aaron should be counted among England’s ancestors.

This connection between England and “Cimmerian darknesse” is solidified in Thomas North’s translation of Plutarch and Harrison’s chronicle. According to Plutarch, the Cimmerians were eventually forced from the area and they relocated in the northern regions. Plutarch says Cimmerians “were knowen in old time for auncient Greecians” before they moved north to “the furdest partes of the earth” (QQ1r). Plutarch then says the Cimmerians moved to Italy and they were “surnamed Cimbres” (QQ1r). Harrison claims the Cymbres or Cymbri were living in Britain when the Romans invaded. Sale points out that North’s translation of Plutarch and Holinshed’s *Chronicles* “suggest that the Cimmerians and the Cymbri were the same people” (Sale 29). Based on the history of the Cimmerians, Sale advocates a reading of “Cimmerian” that asks the Elizabethan audience to conflate Cimmerian and Briton and “associate Britons with blackness” (29). Since, as Sale notes, “Blackness designates those who are not properly or fully incorporated into language’s civilizing regime,” Aaron’s “hue” and his identification as a “swart Cimmerian” recalls England’s barbarous past (31).

England’s attempt to rationalize and justify the use of English is built around the circular argument that English’s “maner of vulgar Poesie” is preexists Roman colonization while simultaneously blaming “the barbarous conquerors” and the “innumerable swarmes of strange nations” who invaded the Roman Empire for establishing “the ryming Poesie of the Barbarians” in Europe (*Arte of English Poesie* 10-12). This claim speaks to a national concern that does little to conceal its own complex racial history. *Titus Andronicus* draws attention to England’s

complex racial history, through the “swart Cimmerian,” Aaron. Smith points out that “as the English pursued the national benefits of capital investment through trade and linguistic prestige through the acquisition of rhetorical skills, they found a convenient and available people, Africans, onto whom they could export and project the discarded barbarisms of a newly imagined past” (17). Aaron complicates this transference of barbarism from England to elsewhere by defying any to attempt to isolate his racial identity. Aaron is a character- text where race is presented as something unfixed and as, as Kim F. Hall observes, “a social construct that is fundamentally more about power and culture than about biological difference” (6). Aaron as the “coal-black Moor,” and “swart Cimmerian,” recalls Harrison’s claim that Briton’s were once darker in hue since their roots trace to a “race proceeding from Cham,” who, as Sale notes, was “believed to have been turned black for the sin of viewing his father naked or for having sex” on the ark (Harrison B2r, Sale 30-1).²⁹ Race, in *Titus*, seems to function by relying on the same circular argument other modern writers rely on to justify their (impending) colonial efforts to English the world. Aaron’s “hue” might well be expressed as “England’s hue.” English as a language and England as a kingdom are the product of these “the barbarous conquerors” and the “innumerable swarmes of strange nations,” and Aaron, as the eloquent, “swart Cimmerian” is representative of this past (*Arte of English Poesie* 10-12). Given Aaron’s attention to his own blackness, it is safe to say that the play positions whiteness as a myth, and through Aaron, the racial supremacy of whiteness is called into question.

In the Garden of Barbary

As much as Aaron seems to point to England’s “barbarous” past, I also suggest that Aaron points to English’s present and future. Aaron, as both a “barbarous, beastly villain” and an

²⁹ William Camden writes “the Britain’s were indeed, to wit, painted, depainted, died, and coloured” (C1v).

eloquent and obviously educated person, occupies a sort of liminal space between the “savage” and the educated (5.1.93). By existing as both “barbarous” and eloquent, I suggest that Aaron can be used to examine my previous claim that Shakespeare exposes the inherent “barbarism” in the early modern humanist curriculum. In suggesting that Aaron be seen as a prototype of England’s eloquence, I am following Smith’s suggestion that “largely negative readings of Shakespeare’s Aaron might undergo some revision” (129). In suggesting that Aaron is also a “barbarous, beastly villain,” I am suggesting a reevaluation of the humanist curriculum’s success. Rebecca Bushnell suggests looking at the educational system with an “ambivalence” that “was a symptom of a world of uncertain hierarchies, shifting relations, conflicting authorities, and contradictory values” (19-20). I share Bushnell’s ambiguity and posit that Aaron represents a model where “eloquence in talke, and vertue in deedes” are not necessarily compatible outcomes (*Education of Children* E6). Instead, Aaron epitomizes intertextual chaos and exposes the flaws in a system designed to frame the student “to eloquence in talke, and vertue in deedes” (*Education of Children* E6). In this section, I first establish the presumed salutary effects of education and then demonstrate how Aaron refutes that, despite his familiarity with a good humanist education. I will then look at the way Aaron uses imitation and composition to create a text (Lavinia) and suggest that Lavinia’s death (as a text) points to the counterproductivity of education as a remediating force. I will further suggest that Aaron’s representation as the “wandering prince” Aeneas, a “coal-black Moor,” and a “swart Cimmerian,” points to an interpretation that is simultaneously colonial and anti-colonial.

The early modern English educational system operated under the assumption that education was crucial to overcoming their barbarous roots and establishing a language the eloquence of which, as Mulcaster claims, is not nor restrained to soil, whose “measur the hole

world is” (*Positions* 272). Wilson speaks to the redemptive power of education when he claims that people “lived brutishly in open feeldes, hauing neither house to shroude them in, nor attire to clothe their backs” until God gave his faithful the power to persuade through speech (“Preface”). Eloquence, according to the model, should have the power to uproot and relocate the “savage,” roots and displace the “barbarous, beastly villain” through education. Eloquence, according to Wilson originates from God’s eloquence. According to Wilson, God uses his words to stir “up his faithfull and elect” in order “to perswade with reason all men to societie” (“Preface”). These “appointed Ministers” were given the “knowledge both to see the natures of men, and also graunted them the gift of utteraunce, that they might with ease win folke at their will, and frame them by reason to all good order” (“Preface”). Moreover, the humanist educational system placed specific interest in the works of Ovid. John Brinsley, in his 1618 translation of Ovid’s *Metamorphosis*, claims that Ovid can advance eloquence. Brinsley claims that teaching Ovid’s “singular wit and eloquence” will “reduce” the “barbarous ... unto civility” and change “their savage and wilde conditions . . . into more humanity” (3-4). As Lynn Enterline notes, Brinsley “brought a specifically national concern to bear: He hopes that his translation of Ovid, ‘dedicated to the good of the schooles,’ will help in ‘all the ruder places of the land ... chiefly for the poore ignorant countries of Ireland and Wales’” (74-5). Kempe had a similar expectation from Ovid’s poetry. For Kempe, Ovid “like Orpheus musicke ... perswaded euen the Getes, a wilde and barbarous people, to use great humanitie towards him while he liued, and afterwards to burie him with great pompe” (4). Despite these lofty expectations, the use of Ovid in *Titus* does little to “reduce” the “barbarous ... unto civility” or guide students “into more humanity.” *Titus* blurs the distinction between Roman and “barbarous nations.”

Titus seems to speak to a wider spread anxiety about the viability of education as a way to remediate the nation's past label as one of the "barbarous nations." Samuel Daniel seems to express a similar ambiguity when credits the "candle of letters" the Romans brought to the "barbarous" Britons for giving them "some little light" and the same time claims "it be but a touch of arrogant ignorance to hold this or that nation Barbarous, these or those times grosse" (204). Daniel's argument here, like Mulcaster's, is circular. Daniel is suggesting that literacy and education can have a redeeming effect and reverse the label of "barbarous" and at the same time he is claiming that labeling any nation "barbarous" exposes an "arrogant ignorance." Daniel seems to be working toward the goal of embellishing history to further the respectability of English but in doing so, he leaves, as Rhodes observes, the "relationship between civilization and barbarism ... unfixed" (119). Daniel exploits the unfixed boundary between the civilizing effect of the "candle of letters" and the "barbarous" Britons by suggesting "the Goths, Vandals, and Longobards ... overwhelmed ...all the glory of learning in Europe" (204). Suggesting that the "barbarous" Goths, Vandals, and Longobards "left us still their laws and customs as the originals of most of the provincial constitutions of Christendom, which well considered with their other courses of government may serve to clear them from this imputation of ignorance" while crediting Rome for "some little light" to the Cimmerian darkness moves beyond a circular argument into a chaos of allusions (204). In *Titus*, as I have mentioned, Romans and Goths both use the term "barbarous" liberally to describe themselves and the "other" (Goth and Roman) and the "cultural division of insiders and outsiders" Smith points to is disrupted. Within the play Romans and Goths alike become conflated under the label "barbarous."

Aaron, despite his obvious familiarity with the educational system, can rarely be accused of excessive humanity. The play's abundance of intertextuality associated with Aaron, allows a

reading that uses Aaron as a way to judge the viability of the educational system. There is little doubt that Aaron is eloquent, but his eloquence hardly lends itself to “vertue in deedes” (*Education of Children* E6). In his role as an eloquent, “barbarous, beastly villain” Aaron disrupts the expectations of an early modern educational system thought to redeem England from its “barbarous” past. The allusion to Aaron’s biblical namesake should suggest that Aaron’s eloquence is linked God’s “gift of utteraunce” that Wilson identifies as so necessary for eloquence (“Preface”). Smith points out that “The Geneva translation characterizes well Aaron’s role as mouthpiece: “he shall be thy spokesman to the people: he shall be, even he shall be as thy mouth” (Exodus 4:16, 129). In the Christian bible, as Smith notes, “in the Exodus context of enslavement, forced labor, and ethnic subjection, Aaron’s eloquence represents resistance to tyranny, the rejection of persecution, and opposition to racial disenfranchisement of the house of Israel, this “tribe, nation, or people, regarded as of common stock” (129).³⁰ *Titus’* Aaron, on the other hand, may have the “knowledge both to see the natures of men” and the “gift of utteraunce, that they might with ease win folke at their will” but his “vertue in deedes” are conspicuously absent (Wilson “Preface, *Education of Children* E6).

In thinking about Aaron as the prototypical “barbarous” Briton whose education and eloquence fail to produce “vertue in deedes,” it might be helpful to return to the practice of imitation and composition taught in the early modern classroom and examine a text Aaron creates (*Education of Children* E6). While Aaron claims to have “oft digged up dead men from their graves” and carved Roman letters on their bodies, it is *Titus’* Lavinia who emerges as Aaron’s most memorable composition (5.1.135). Like the other character-texts in *Titus*, Aaron’s

³⁰ Sale points out that “the name Titus recalls that of Titus Vespasian, who destroyed Jerusalem in 70 CE, killing over ‘eleuen hundredth thousand’ Jews according to Josephus. The historic Titus’s claim that he considered any day lost in which he did no good is inverted in Aaron’s claim that he curses the day “wherein I did not some notorious ill’ (5.1.127) (Sale 42).

role in composing Lavinia relies on the overuse of allusions. Aaron's instructions to "make pillage of [Lavinia's] chastity" borrows from Lucrece and Philomel (2.3.44). The exact material imitated, however, is not as important as the outcome. Imitation, as Dickson notes was believed to "teach judgment and analysis and was meant to create excellence of character" (386). It would be impossible to look at Lavinia's missing hands and bleeding mouth and claim that the imitation of the Philomel myth is the product of "vertue in deedes" (*Education of Children* E6). Likewise, Aaron's use of Ovid does little to "reduce" the "barbarous ... unto civility" or guide students "into more humanity" (Brinsley 3-4). What the dismembered Lavinia does do, though, is point to the "barbarism" inherent in a system designed to displace "barbarism." Ultimately, as Bate notes "both the practice of humanist imitation and Renaissance hermeneutics more generally draw strength from a belief in the readability of the world: myths, classical texts, nature itself, are book in which moral truth may be read" (11). The dismembered Lavinia does prove to be a text Titus claims he will "wrest an alphabet" from but missing from Lavinia as character-text is any moral truth.

Absent a moral truth, what is left is Lavinia-as-text, and her mutilated body calls into question the viability of education. The Andronici have a hard time reading Lavinia as a text. I would attribute their difficulty to the educational practices that call on readers and students to "alter the method, forme of syllogismes, axiomes, arguments, figures, tropes, phrases and words" (*Education of Children* G6). Marcus reduces Lavinia to an object, a text that must be read but then he fails to read correctly. Sale notes that "the arboreal language used for Lavinia – she has her 'branches,' those hands which would 'tremble, like aspen leaves,' she is 'lopped and hewed' – suggest that she is being figuratively transformed into the raw material from which books are

made” (2.3.18, 45, 17, Sale 44).³¹ Lavinia is literalized as a text and as book-like as Lavinia is, she proves unreadable until she “tosseth” a copy of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* on stage (4.1.41). It is through the book that Lavinia is able to communicate; it could be said that the book serves as her tapestry. It could also be said that Lavinia, without speech, finds eloquence by limiting the possible intertextual interpretations to a single source text: Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. If that is the case then the play seems to suggest that the marker of barbarism might be a superabundance of allusion and eloquence is achieved in simple, single text interpretation. This moment for Barret suggests that “Shakespeare highlights the limits of amplificatio by deferring any kind of active response until an actual copy of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* appears onstage and enables the family to understand the crime” (455). I agree that the play’s use of the literal book highlights the limits of imitation and composition, but I would also suggest that the play seems to say that limiting intertextual options, in this case to Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*, possesses its own peril. Packard points out that “Lavinia uses *The Metamorphoses* to revise other’s interpretations of her wounded body, but her intervention is a gamble that finds fruition in her death” (293). Destroying the text (Lavinia) seems counterintuitive to learning.

The death of Lavinia, though, takes on a more complex meaning if she is read through intertextual allusions. The mythical Lavinia is the mother of Rome and she marries Aeneas.³² Bassianus refers to Lavinia as “Rome’s rich ornament” while Aaron euphemistically calls her rape a “revel in Lavinia’s treasury” (1.1.55, 2.1.132). Lavinia’s death may well mark the death of

³¹ Packard points out that Jeffrey Masten and Wendy Wall suggest that “early modern writers and publishers often gendered texts feminine, for example, figuring books as loose women shamed as they were distributed in print” (282).

³² Sale suggests that “the play seems to rewrite the myth: this Aeneas not only does not marry Lavinia, he mates with Dido to father a child that disrupts histories that will not take account of what Rome figuratively ingested or incorporated, in both the transmission of earlier cultures and letters to Rome and their transmission to Albion” (37).

Rome but the “swart Cimmerian’s” role in her death suggests a connection between Rome and England that can be illuminated by returning to Mulcaster’s colonial musings. Using language such as “rich ornament” and “treasury” to describe Lavinia echoes Mulcaster’s claim that English “will strain with the strongest, & stretch to the furthest, for either government if we were conquerers, or for cunning, if we were treasurers” (275). The cunning English “treasurers” metaphorically enter Rome’s mother and extract their own eloquence. The English mining expedition through “Lavinia’s treasury” speaks to England’s goals to remediate their own past by, as Mann said, creating “a vernacular culture that would displace England’s barbarous past” (12). Aaron suggests as much when he calls Lavinia a “parcel” of their “hopeful booty” (2.2.49). This remediation of England’s past relies on imitation, or, as Kempe says, “observing examples of them in other mens works,” but the composition calls for “making somewhat of our owne” (*Education of Children* F2). England (through Aaron) seems to make Rome (through Lavinia) its own and her “treasury” provides the pieces for this composition. To return to Dickson, “imitation is not merely the labor of copying or even modifying a text but is an actual bettering of the original” and England’s educational system certainly wanted to produce something better than the original (384). The question, then, is whether England’s imitation of Rome produces “something better than the original” (Dickson 384). I would suggest that the answer to that question is somewhat ambiguous.

In order to measure the success of emulating and surpassing Rome linguistically or colonially, it would be helpful to look at Aaron’s outrageously excessive punishment. Educational theorists had expectations that extended beyond framing the student “to eloquence in talke, and vertue in deedes” Kempe, attributing the sentiment to King Alfred again, makes some claims regarding education and morality (*Education of Children* E6). According to Kempe,

“benefite of learning” prevents murder and adultery. He goes on to claim that plentiful harvests, favor and love of God and eternal salvation, and peace and protection from adversaries are all the results of education. Kempe compares a young scholar to a “couragious Colt,” that must “bee broken while he is young,” if he “will be tractable and fit to do good service.” This young scholar, then, must “bee well instructed by discipline” so he “will prove a good man” but if education is denied and “if he bee not instructed in his youth with good precepts” he “will waxe very intollerable” (*Education of Children C*). It is hard to accuse any of the characters in *Titus Andronicus* of doing “good service” and obviously, the education system fails to protect the characters of *Titus Andronicus* from murder, adultery, or adversaries. It would be hard to speculate whether the characters in Shakespeare’s Rome received the “favor and love of God” or “eternal salvation,” but I do want to think about “plentiful harvests” in light of Aaron being buried in the ground.

It does seem fitting to return to the metaphors used by educational theorists use to describe their methods. Language was sometimes described as a body. Another metaphor used extensively by educational theorists is imagery of planting and harvesting. The schoolmaster is expected to plant knowledge and nurture the student. Kempe believes the schoolmaster is responsible for instilling “good order both for manners and learning,” in the student and, for Kempe, this is achieved in a gardening metaphor (*Education of Children H*). The teacher should act by “sowing in their tender mindes the seedes of Christian holinesse.” (*Education of Children H1*). Similarly, Elyot claims the teacher is “a wyse and counnyng gardener,” who “will first serche throughout his gardeyne, where he can find the most melowe and fertile erth; and therin wil he put the sede of the herbe to growe, and be norrishd: and in most diligent wise attende that no [w]eede be suffred to growe or aproche nyghe unto it” (28). Vives also uses gardening metaphors in his work when he suggests that the classical poets “sowed the seeds of all kinds of

knowledge which were scattered about in their works,” and he continues the metaphor into education by claiming that students will “receive many seeds of the material of knowledge remaining to us” by studying these works (*On Education* 129, 94). While educational theorists use gardening metaphors to describe pedagogy in general, the writers of English rhetoric manuals are specifically interested in advancing English as a language and as such their works adapt the metaphor to specifically English gardens. For example, Richard Rainolde claims the “ende and purpose” of his *Foundacion of Rhetorike* is “to plante a worke profitable to all tymes, my countrie and common wealthe” (“Title”). Henry Peacham uses the title “*The Garden of Eloquence*” for his rhetoric manual and he makes it apparent that the book is “Set foorth in Englishe” (“Title”). Considering the gardening metaphor, the literal planting of Aaron takes on new light.

The intertextual allusions associated with Aaron, though, complicate a straightforward reading of Aaron’s punishment. Aaron’s associations as the “wandering prince” Aeneas, a “coal-black Moor,” and a “swart Cimmerian,” provide two conflicting views of colonization or more specifically land expansion. In one way, *Titus* can be read as anticolonial. On the other hand, Shakespeare seems to be saying that English eloquence extends the “measur” of the “hole world.” Colonization, as Loomba points out, “was seen as the cure for various English ills such as growing unemployment, criminality, and hunger, the result, many argued, of a rapidly expanding population on a small island” (13). However, as Daniel Vitkus points out, “before the latter half of the seventeenth century, England’s ‘colonial’ discourse was merely the premature articulation of a third-rank power” (3). While there was, as Vitkus points out, “much rhetorical bluster and much interest in the New World, but there was no way of knowing if, when, or where the English (or British) would build an enduring empire” (3). Vitkus suggests that it is “important

to acknowledge that the ‘idea’ of empire arose in England long before there was a real, material empire on the ground” (6). Moreover, as Vitkus relates, that while “English courtiers and adventurers strove to emulate the imperial accomplishments of the Spanish, Portuguese, and Turks,” the reality was that “the only empire the English had was an impoverished and besieged foothold in Ireland, and even as late as 1630, their ‘empire’ had only been enlarged by a handful of miserable outposts in Virginia and Massachusetts” (9).³³ In other words, colonization was a fantasy in the 1590’s. In light of England’s thus far failed effort at colonization, planting Aaron suggests a type of immobility that would prevent expansion and colonization. Presumably, Aaron, planted outside the city gates of Rome can still speak and he will continue to be eloquent, but his eloquence is stationary.

England’s emergence as a colonial power solidifies its antipathy toward blackness and Aaron’s label as a “coal black-Moor” certainly points to the beginnings of the English colonial effort. Best, as his title suggests, wrote his *Discourse* in order “to prove all partes of the World habitable” or, as Oldenburg glosses, “to encourage further exploration, commerce, and colonization of distant lands” (47).³⁴ When Best promotes the biblical theory of blackness, he conflates blackness and servitude. What the conflation of blackness and servitude does, according to Oldenburg, is “disenfranchise Africans of their right to land. That is, if Cham’s descendants are to be servants, they need masters” (53). Oldenburg observes that Best’s project leads to the “idea that Africans have no right to land suggests that Africa could be colonized and

³³ Vitkus points out that “the Roanoke colony was wiped out by 1591, and the Plymouth Company’s early attempts to found a colony failed in 1606 and again in 1607-08 (9).

³⁴ The full title is *A true discourse of the late voyages of discouerie, for the finding of a passage to Cathaya, by the Northvveast, vnder the conduct of Martin Frobisher Generall deuided into three bookes. In the first wherof is shewed, his first voyage ... Also, there are annexed certayne reasons, to proue all partes of the worlde habitable, with a generall mappe adioyned. In the second, is set out his second voyage ... In the thirde, is declared the strange fortunes which hapned in the third voyage ... With a particular card therevnto adioyned of Meta Incognita*

that no ‘blackamoore’ had a right to stand in England’s way” (53). The rewriting of the Noah story “inspires a negative transference toward black people, a positive sense of national identity for England, and a tacit claim that England has a right to distant lands” (Oldenburg 54). However, those who would engage in what Oldenburg describes as “negative transference” disregard entirely the possible connection between England and “Cimmerian darknesse.” It may well be Roman soil that English educational theorists find to be “the most melowe and fertile erth” but the “swart Cimmerian” of England’s past and he is literally buried. In burying Aaron, Shakespeare seems to be saying that English should be “restrained to soil.” In that way, *Titus Andronicus* can be read as an indictment against land expansion. To be rooted somewhere certainly would make colonization difficult.

On the other hand, the “English Aaron” is planted in Roman soil, and emulating Rome also means emulating the Roman colonial effort. Recalling Strachey’s claim that, without the Roman colonies, the ancient Britons would have eaten their own children, Aaron’s relationship with his own child should be examined. Rhodes points out that “it is left to Aaron, the absurdly monochromatic villain, to bring a note of ordinary humanity into the shambles” (140). As Rhodes observes, Aaron’s “infant child, born from his adulterous union with Tamora, ought to be a monster of miscegenation, and in a play where all life is cheap this life should be less than worthless” yet “Aaron refuses to have the child killed, kills to protect him, and flees the city. (Rhodes 140-1). Sale suggests that “Aaron and Tamora’s baby taken into the Andronici at the play’s end ... sounds a grace note.” Sale points to “the historical Andronici” who take in a “slave captured at the battle of Tarentum in 272 BCE.” This slave, as Sale observes, “used his literacy to translate Greek texts, including the *Odyssey*, into Latin and more importantly is credited with introducing drama into Rome” (Sales 51). It is not too much of a stretch, in reading Lavinia as

the mother of Rome and Aaron as the “wandering prince” Aeneas to identify Lavinia-as-text as a kind of bastardized child that deserves to be protected. To return to Mulcaster’s claim that English as a “language, nor restrained to soil, whose measur the hole world is,” Shakespeare seems to be saying that English eloquence extends the “measur” of the “hole world.” In either case, the educational system’s goal to separate the “barbarous” from the civilized and remediate England’s past seems to only succeed in producing eloquent barbarism planted and grown in English soil.

Conclusion

To Fail or Not to Fail?

If you google “Shakespeare tattoos” – which I, sadly, have – you’ll find hundreds of variations of Polonius’ instruction to Laertes: “above all – to thine own self be true” (1.3.78). While it is likely that the persons whose legs, arms, thighs, shoulders, ankles, wrists, and feet these words are written on find meaning, the problem with this apparently perfectly tattooable snippet of speech is that – in context – the words are utterly stripped of meaning. Or, rather, the words are part of a series of instructions so overpoweringly loaded with symbols that the meaning is lost in parsing the speech. Before issuing his final advice to be true to himself, Polonius – in a series of clichés – jumps from “character” to “thoughts” to speech, to friendship, to vulgarity to “entertainment” to quarrels to clothing to borrowing and lending money before ending with a strange husbandry metaphor (1.3.59-77). Taken as individual pieces of advice, for example, “Be thou familiar but by no means vulgar,” these can have a meaningful effect but, together, as a series of unrelated statements they lose an overall meaning (1.3.61). In other words, to follow all of Polonius’ advice as if it were meant to be taken as a whole, assures there is no way Laertes could be true to himself; he would be overwhelmed by a tome size grocery list of seemingly unrelated and unattainable advice. In this sizeable list of adages, Laertes would not be able to locate any particular mode of behavior or any viable way of living because this advice is just as it seems – a randomly collected series of adages. But Polonius doesn’t intend for these statements to be taken as a whole. He prefaces his random advice column by calling attention to a grammar school practice. He does not want Laertes to use the advice as whole but instead wants his son to commit “these few precepts” to “thy memory” (1.3.58).

In asking Laertes to memorize these random pieces of information, he is providing Laertes with a series of precepts that he assumes Laertes will use in his own composition (of his life).¹ In short, he is providing Laertes with a commonplace book.² What Polonius assumes is that Laertes will store these precepts in his table-book – be that a physical book or a more metaphoric table book of memory. By giving Laertes a commonplace book, Polonius is providing him with a foundation to build his own reputation as a scholar, writer, statesperson in much the same way a contemporary schoolmaster would prepare his scholars for political jobs. More importantly, though, Polonius is giving Laertes insight. “The commonplace book,” as Ann Moss notes, is “a mode of apprehending the world” and a complete commonplace book ensures the owner will be poised for success (123).

Early modern education theorists had different ideas about what should go inside a student’s commonplace book. As Crane succinctly relates, Erasmus “emphasizes primarily such tropes as metaphor, allegory, riddle, allusion, and pun that involve the alteration of meaning” (45). For Erasmus, to continue to follow Crane, “these forms help to authenticate the adage in various ways. Metaphoric references to homely activities call attention to the origins of sayings in the cultural code, while the shifts of meaning involved in riddle or pun stress the ways in which the uncanny resemblances of language can support and comment upon the code” (45). Regardless of the items placed in a student’s commonplace book or the order in which they were placed, commonplace books were supposed to as Moss notes, supply “a rhetoric of argumentation geared to put the case for and against any proposition or course of action, to

¹ Neil Rhodes points out that commonplace books served, as “a mean of linguistic empowerment” and the books were meant to be used for their owner’s own compositions (154).

² In early modern England, the commonplace book existed in two forms. The first form existed as a printed collection – such as Nicholas Udall’s *Floures For Latine Spekyng*; the second form was blank (referred to general and in *Hamlet* as a table-book). In the blank table-book, the owner was expected to record their own observations, quotes, adages, jokes, symbols, metaphors, sayings, and more.

persuade and dissuade, to praise and blame” (123). In other words, once these commonplace books were compiled, there was no theoretical reason why the book’s owner would ever be able to fail.³ They would always have these precepts to fall back on.

To return, then, to *Hamlet*, Polonius’ advice to his son, in the form of a commonplace book, should have protected them both: Polonius as the schoolmaster with the information and Laertes as the dutiful student transcribing this wisdom into his book. But, despite all this commonplace wisdom, both Polonius and Laertes face the same fate: Hamlet (accidentally) kills them both. Polonius is stabbed while hiding behind the curtain in Gertrude’s room and Laertes is poisoned by the same sword he tries to use to kill Hamlet. Hamlet is equally unprotected by his commonplace book although the text indicates Hamlet has a complicated relationship with his table-book. Claudius – accusing Hamlet of grieving too long – addresses Hamlet using terminology related to both education and commonplace wisdom. Hamlet’s “impious stubbornness,” and grief according to Claudius is “An understanding simple and unschooled; / For what we know must be, and is as common / As any the most vulgar thing to sense – (1.2.94, 97–9). Within this formulation, Hamlet’s grief for his dead father is interpreted (by his father’s murderer) as a failure to learn the most basic elements of an education: the commonplace adage against grief that should have alleviated Hamlet’s pain. Obviously, though, words, metaphors, allegories, proverbs, and tropes are no substitute for time or action. The text puts the education system’s practice of collecting tropes in conflict with action and in the process, action is stalled by “words, words, words” (2.2.192).

³ Thomas M. Greene, in *The Light in Troy: Imitation and Discovery in Renaissance Poetry*, claims that after Petrarch died, writers in Italy “failed to produce interesting discussions of imitation” partly because of “the pedagogic method of the commonplace book, which tended to foster syncretic textures of fragmentary allusions or topoi and left little room for extended reflection.” (147).

It would be impossible to prove that Shakespeare kept a commonplace book, however, it is textually evident that Hamlet did. However, Hamlet's commonplace book itself is a contradictory site. Within a single speech, Hamlet both erases and writes in his table-book. The ghost of his father reveals the poisoning plot that led to his death and Hamlet reacts by vowing to "wipe away all trivial fond records / All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past / That youth and observation copied there" and instead promises that his father's ghost's "commandment all alone shall live / Within the book and volume" of his brain (1.5. 99-103). What Hamlet understands from the ghost's call for revenge and 50-line tale and what is summed up in his seemingly newly erased table-book is an adage that Hamlet sets down: "That one may smile, and smile, and be a villain" (1.5.108). Hamlet's entry follows the humanistic formula for collecting tropes but hardly reflects what Hamlet should have gleaned from the "text" of his father's story and the adage certainly does not inspire action. There are two important things to remember about Hamlet: Hamlet is a university student dutifully collecting adages for his commonplace book and Hamlet's commonplace book does not help him. The problem is that Hamlet's inactivity is inconsistent with the promised his education made to him; Hamlet's faithful deployment of educational practices should have guaranteed his success. My question then, moving forward, is how can we dutifully deploy the practices of our educations without slipping into the same type of brooding inaction of Hamlet?

Now is the Winter of our Discontent⁴

History has left us a vast corpus of literature that expresses discontentment with the educational system in one way or another. Thomas Nashe, in a lengthy feud with Gabriel Harvey expresses some dissatisfaction with the educational system. In *The Anatomy of Absurdity*, Nashe

⁴ As it may be obvious, I have borrowed this subheading from Shakespeare's *Richard III*, 1.1.1

rails against “they that are voide of all knowledge” who “endeavour continually to publish their folly” (*Anatomy Ai*). While Nashe’s concerns seem to stem, at least partially, from the type of social mobility where “learning and knowledge ... which maketh the children of the needy poor to become noble peers, and men of obscure parentage to be equal with princes in possessions,” it is difficult to image that Nashe is not railing against the educational system in general (*Anatomy D*).⁵ Elsewhere as his attack on Harvey continues, Nashe criticizes the classroom practice of imitation. It would be difficult to claim that Thomas Nashe had a distaste of all forms of imitation like that taught in the early modern classroom but his attack on Gabriel Harvey suggests a sort of dissatisfaction. Nashe in “Confuted” writes of Harvey that “his invention is over-weapond; he hath some good words, but he cannot writhe them and tosse them to and fro nimble, or so bring them about, that hee maye make one streight thrust at his enemies face” (*Works* i.282). On the other hand, Nashe seems to be proud of his originality and seems to suggest that he does not rely on imitation for his own work. Nashe claims “the vaine which I have (be it a *median* vaine, or a madde man) is of my owne begetting, and cals no man father in England but my selfe” (*Works* i.319). Nashe, for whatever reason uses his education to attack his educational system.

⁵ Nashe seems to take particular offense to Harvey who was the son of a rope maker. It is also worth noting that Shakespeare’s father was a glove maker and Christopher Marlowe’s father was a cobbler. In 1592, Robert Greene makes a similar statement. Greene writes in his *Quip for an Upstart Courtier*, “if the one altered his nature & became either endued with learning or valour he might be a gentleman, or if the other degenerated from his ancient virtues he might be held a peasant” (C1). Greene continues “the worlds are changed, and men are grown to more wit, and their minds to aspire after more honourable thoughts; they were dunces *in diebus illis*; they had not the true use of gentility, and therefore they lived meanly and died obscurely, but now men’s capacities are refined; time hath set a new edge on gentlemen’s humours, and they show them as they should be, not like gluttons as their fathers did, in chins of beef and alms to the poor, but in velvets, satins, cloth of gold, pearl, yea, pearl lace, which scarce Caligula wore on his birthday, and to this honourable humour have I brought these gentlemen since I came from Italy; what is the end of service to a man but to countenance himself and credit his master with brave suits? the scurvy tapsters and ostlers *fex populi* fill pots and rub horse heels to prank themselves with my glory; alas, were it not to wear me, why would so many apply themselves to extraordinary idleness?” (C2).

This dissatisfaction is not isolated to the pamphlet wars of early modern England. The music industry is full of artists and songs that speak disparagingly of the educational system. In 1957 Chuck Berry released a rock anthem that juxtaposes the school day and the freeing feeling of music. The song expresses the anxieties and hardships of school. In 1973 Paul Simon sang a song as an apparent love anthem to his camera and film. The song begins “When I think back on all the crap I learned in high school / It’s a wonder I can think at all.” In 1975 The Kinks released the concept album *Schoolboys in Distress*. The album tells the story of a mischievous schoolboy who gets into serious trouble with/over a girl. He is punished by the schoolmaster and because of this encounter he turns into a bitter character who rails against authority. In 1979 as part of Pink Floyd’s *The Wall*, they released a song called “Another Brick in the Wall” as what appears to protest against schoolmasters and discipline in the school system. The song claims, “We don’t need no education / We don’t need no thought control / No dark sarcasm in the classroom / Teachers leave them kids alone.” The Police, in their 1980 song, “Don’t Stand So Close to Me” write about the inherent potential for sexual abuse and misconduct in the school system. In 2000 Dead Prez in “They’ Schools” draws attention to the Eurocentric curriculum “Tellin’ me white man lies, straight bullshit” and suggests that “All [his] high school teachers can suck [his] dick.” In 2001, System of a Down, in “Shimmy,” calls education the “Indoctrination of a nation.” In 2002 John Mayer expresses discontentment with career counselors in high school who encourage students to pursue “the so-called right track.” In 2007, The Replacements articulated the sentiment in simple terms in their song “Fuck School.” In 2010, The Downtown Fiction refers to school as the place “where dreams go to die” in their song by the same name. In 2013 Tech N9ne reports in “Public School” that “most of my teachers didn’t teach me shit” and offers the sentiment “Fuck English Lit.” In 2015 Boysinaband released a song called “Don’t Stay in

School.” In this song they suggest that the education they were provided was not at all practical. In this song, the speaker claims, “I was not taught the laws for the country I live in / But I know how Henry the VIII killed his women / Divorced, beheaded, died, divorced, beheaded, survived” and sarcastically says “Glad that’s in my head instead of financial advice.” This list is by no means exhaustive.

In a worrying trend, politicians, particularly Republican politicians have begun to address their own discontentment with the educational system through a series of troubling legal proposals. As I sat down to write this, Idaho has just passed legislation that will ban schools from teaching critical race theory. Proponents of Idaho bill, HB 377, claim that students have been indoctrinated and the bill reads, in part, critical race theory can “exacerbate and inflame divisions on the basis of sex, race, ethnicity, religion, color, national origin, or other criteria in ways contrary to the unity of the nation and the well-being of the state of Idaho and its citizens” (Idaho HB 377) Idaho governor Brad Little, however, was only the first Republican governor to sign such legislation. Now nearly a dozen states have followed suit and introduced similar legislation. Rhode Island has proposed to prohibit teaching that either the state itself or the country is “fundamentally racists or sexist” (Rhode Island House Bill 2021- H 6070)⁶ Georgia governor Brian Kemp sent a letter to the Georgia State Board of Education urging the board to ban critical race theory. Kemp, in his letter, called critical race theory a “dangerous ideology” and claimed it was a “divisive and anti-American curriculum.” Instead, Kemp suggested teaching what he calls “our fundamental values” such as “freedom, equality, and the God-given potential of each individual.”⁷ In Oklahoma, Governor Kevin Stitt signed a law prohibiting educators from

⁶ A copy of the proposed bill can be found [here](#).

⁷ Reported by Forbes, Nicholas Reimann. Kemp also tweeted a copy of the letter.

teaching that “an individual, by virtue of his or her race or sex, is inherently racist, sexist or oppressive, whether consciously or unconsciously” (OK H.B. 1775). The Oklahoma law continues by prohibiting teachers from teaching that “an individual, by virtue of his or her race or sex, bears responsibility for actions committed in the past by other members of the same race or sex.” The law further reads that students should not be made to feel “guilt” or “anguish” because of “his or her race or sex.” Similarly, lawmakers in Utah want their department of education to ban what they call “harmful” critical race theory ideas. Their resolution claims “some concepts contained in critical race theory degrade important societal values and, if introduced in the classrooms, would harm students’ learning in the public education system.” Legislators in Tennessee, Texas, Georgia, Arkansas, South Dakota, and Arizona have proposed similar legislation. One could, correctly, argue that this flood of legislation is based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the educational system and the theories that inform study. But, at the same time, this legislation represents dissatisfaction with the system.

I am also not immune to discontentment. I am sure that everybody who has ever been to a school has grappled with discontentment with the institution at some point. Luckily not everybody who has been, however briefly, disillusioned by the system has written a dissertation interrogating their concerns. Even now, staring at the folder that contains the finished product, sans this conclusion, I still grapple with my place within an institution that seems to breed discontentment. At one point during the final revisions of this project I expressed these lingering concerns to my brilliant, kind, and insightful friend Darby. In a text message I vented that I get frustrated by the question, “why is your research important?” To explain my frustration through examples, I continued my text by claiming “Jane Goodall didn’t eliminate animal cruelty; Rosa Parks didn’t eliminate racism; Mother Theresa didn’t eliminate poverty; Lady Mary Wortley

Montagu didn't eliminate disease." At the end of my text, I posed this rhetorical question: "what do they want from me?" Her immediate response was "clearly none of those things" but a few minutes later she added, "the thing they all have in common is causing a shift in perspective, which is about the best you can do." I'm satisfied with this advice and I posit that this present time calls for a shift in perception. It is time to interrogate the disillusionment that the education seems to breed with earnestness. George Pettie, in the preface of his translation of the *Civil Conservation* emphasizes learning and asks a question that may well be more relevant now than it was in 1581: "Why Gentlemen ... in Learning, the best thyng of all others, are you afearde to shewe to be that, which you are?" (2). And so, I end this project with a question rather than an answer: How can we, as a group of scholars and thinkers, grapple with disillusionment in a productive way?

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