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Masked Criticism: the Whore and the Breeches Role as Articulators of Sexual Economic Theory in the Intrigue Plays of Aphra Behn.

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MASKED CRITICISM: 
THE WHORE AND THE BREECHES ROLE 
AS ARTICULATORS OF SEXUAL ECONOMIC THEORY 
IN THE INTRIGUE PLAYS OF APHRA BEHN

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 Theatre

by

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PREFACE

As I look back on it, this project has been with me since childhood. Most disagreements between my parents ended in "who's wearing the pants around here?" The question had nothing to do with pants or skirts, but had everything to do with control. To a small girl in the south, in the 50's and in that family, pants equalled the power to control others and unfortunately, skirts equalled no power at all. Obviously having power was "good", not having power was "bad" and trying to control things when you had no power (as in a female wearing the pants) was very, very bad. It seemed unfair that all I (or any girl I knew) could expect out of life was wearing skirts and having no power at all. Gender, an accident of conception, defined personal power. Women had no power at all, also, no rights to trousers. Somehow this equation left out the concept of sexuality which is central to the plays of Aphra Behn. Behn's whores have sexual power over men, but they also have financial power. Aphra Behn learned these things 300 years before I did.

The 50's were followed by the 60's and the women's rights movement at least liberated women from clothing constraints. Women could wear pants without fear of disapproval, but still had little or no power. Sex and power were not discussed although gender and power were.

When I grew into adulthood and faced the gender imbalance in the real world, the women's rights adage, "the personal is political," seemed very natural, very logical, very right. It was already a lived experience, not just an adage. These days I share with Gloria Steinem
a reversal of this adage "the political is personal" (Steinem 17).

Whether the personal fuels political action or the political reality affects the individual and personal actions and reactions, it seems that Aphra Behn lived in the same sort of reality. And this reasoning seems to fuel this dissertation as well. Aphra Behn lived with the cultural reality of international travel and trade, traveling with her family to Surinam and spying for Charles II and briefly as the wife of a Dutch merchant. As a widow she was forced to make her own financial way at a time when English women did not do these things, did not see these realities. I don’t know if Behn would have acknowledged that her plays were political, for she somehow found a difference between the cultural/patriarchal world view which kept women in their place and the politics of Charles II. Her use of women on stage in breeches and as whores along with her insistence on using dramatic language and situations to point up the power imbalance between the genders is both personal and political. It took the analysis of several plays for me to feel more confident of my understanding of the arc of Behn’s thoughts on women, power and valuation. All of the definitions of power, authority, value, exchange, gender relations changed within plays and across plays. It felt like I was walking across quicksand. Trying to find Behn’s "truth" was like trying to catch quicksilver. It was not until reading one romantic argument in The Second Part of the Rover that I realized that Behn too was trying to sort out the "truth" and it was not until this point that she could differentiate between men’s and women's ideas of power and authority.
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ABSTRACT

Aphra Behn was an important playwright in the Restoration, second only to John Dryden in the number of plays produced during the period. In some of her early plays based on Spanish intrigue comedies, she uses the roles of whores and cross dressed women to articulate her criticism of the sexual economy within patriarchy. Masks and disguises create confusion in all the plays. Her characters, plots, structure, humor and economic concerns change with each successive play. The first play in the series, The Dutch Lover (1673) is a tale of romance where women are exchanged between men for the benefit of the men. In the central utopian portion of the play, women make their own choices about mates and benefit from those choices. Behn's most popular play, The Rover (1677), is a play set firmly within capitalism and critiques that system's use of women. All the characters rail against the selling of female flesh, whether in marriage or in prostitution. This play reinforces themes of the fool who cannot tell the difference between whores and ladies. The third play The Feign'd Curtizans (1679) was clearly written at the same time as The Rover, with similar romances and similar criticisms of the system. The humorous subplot of two fools tricked by a clown (all three played by the best comedians of the period) threatens to overwhelm the romance. The last play of the series, The Second Part of The Rover (1681) is a continuation of the characters and adventures of The Rover. It reprises many of the themes, but the play is much darker and the women have very few choices. The men are no longer looking for
sexual playmates, but marriageable women with large fortunes to secure their own futures.

The breeches role and the role of the whore perform the same function. They embody the idea of women for sale, women on display. The whore does that within the text. The breeches role displayed the legs of the actress in a provocative way that was as much advertisement for the actress's sexual availability as the vizard masks which real prostitutes wore in the streets. The vizard becomes an emblem of Behn's dramatic technique. As the vizard both marks and masks the identity of the wearer, the spectacle of woman for sale (as both whore and breeches role) both articulates and masks Behn's criticism of a sexual economy where women are sold and men are not.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This project will investigate and interrogate Aphra Behn’s use of cross dressed women and prostitutes in her intrigue comedies. These women who challenge the system are always linked to tropes of exchange and economic valuation which foreground the nature of women as commodities in the patriarchal market place. Yet Behn’s message is even more direct. She suggests that women are just as "good" as men, just as valuable and as powerful. These tropes and roles create a utopian world in the midst of this omnipresent patriarchy. Nearly everyone in these plays talks about economics and the value of things. Every flirtation seems to contain words taken from the world of trading and money management. Yet the strongest statements are always those of these oppositional women. Invariably heroines disguise themselves as boys to learn more about the men they desire. And the whores operate on a financial level uncontrolled by the patriarchy. With their words and actions these women change the power distribution within the play. But in the end, men and women are not completely equal and exchangeable and power remains in the hands of the men. Cross dressed women lose duels, beautiful whores lose the men they want, rich women do not have the freedom that rich men have. But it is this failure of the system, this disappointment in "the way things are," as well as the way Behn hopes they could be, that is an integral part of these plays. As readers/spectators, we read and view these plays with great hope, but come to the last moments confused and saddened. I think that was Behn’s view of her world.
Aphra Behn was England's first professional female playwright. This is different from being the first woman to write for the stage or the first woman novelist because it means that she wrote to please an audience and that she was part of the business of drama and the business of publishing books. She wrote prolifically: poems, political writings, novels and plays. Her list of produced plays is second only to John Dryden's output. And this in an age which did not see women as equals. Behn lived an unconventional life. She lived not as a possession of rich and talented men, but as an equal to them. And her work, as did that of her male counterparts, reflects the openly sexual nature of the time.

She worked exclusively with the Duke's Company and took advantage of the excellent actors there. With the stability of a dramatic "home," she created plays in which women characters take center stage. Her first plays, The Forced Marriage and The Amorous Prince were moderately successful. By 1677 she had written her first big hit The Rover and had learned to manipulate the theatrical conventions for dependable success. Actresses were a new convention, having finally been allowed on the British stage soon after the Restoration of Charles II and the restoration of the British theatrical production in 1664. All the playwrights took advantage of this exciting novelty of women on the stage. But Behn's women, especially her whores and cross dressed woman, are mouthpieces for Behn in exposing the inequalities of the sexual economic system and exploring utopian possibilities of gender equality. They articulate Behn's criticism of the system and they use their wit and beauty in sexual negotiations to obtain the best deal.
These female characters are not only equal to the men; they are better than them and that is the only way they can create their own power base.

Behn continued to write for twenty years for the stage. She generally wrote comedies involving intrigue, romantic confusions and women scheming to marry the men they love. Her characters constantly disguise to move the narrative along. The early comedies feature a "gay couple", popularized by Nell Gwynn and Charles Hart. She also wrote a tragedy, Abdelazer (1676) and a political play, The Roundheads (1681), but after the Exclusion Crisis in 1678, her plays display a darker less playful comic quality. This change is also reflected in many playwrights of the period.

Behn criticizes the sexual economic system of her time and creates a more equal world for her women in her intrigue comedies in several ways. First the words and actions of these two oppositional female types, the whore and the cross dresser, critique the system; second the bargaining of the romantic couples for a "good match:" third the casting of specific actors and actresses brought specific meaning to the plays; fourth the structures of the plays themselves and lastly the broad humor used throughout these plays.

Behn was able to write and create these strong female role because her world and the world around her was changing drastically. There was so much upheaval that a woman could have her say. And her personal situation fueled her political ideology. She changed from being an educated young girl amidst upper-middle-class family to being a young woman with no visible means of support, in a culture where
there was money to be made by anyone able to manipulate the system. England at the same time was emerging from isolation to become a leader in the world economy.

Growth of that world economy was fueled by the discovery of the New World and renewed trading with the Orient. Europe became rich with the resources of those new found lands including gold, silver, exotic animals, and new kinds of food and drink. The surplus of wealth and the availability of goods created a commodity culture and the beginnings of capitalism. This project is especially interested in the capitalism of goods and services, mercantile capitalism. And women were part of that commodity culture, both as commodities and as consumers. Laura Brown in her study of the eighteenth century Ends of Empire finds an association of the figure of woman and commodification and consumption in the process of women's labor. The figure of woman

takes a central position in the representation of . . . character, identity, and value. The female figure is associated with the mystifying process of fetishization, and with related problems of identity and knowledge, artifice and reality. . . In this role the woman typically acts as a proxy for male acquisitions. . . (18-19)

Though Behn's plays were written and produced centuries after the initial shock of the influx of wealth to Europe, and just before the eighteenth century, the commodification of women is at the core of her plays. Behn's women either have an income from whoring or have a family fortune. And they are seen as a source of money for the men in their lives. It is always the men -- Willmore in both parts of The Rover, Blunt and Fetherfool in The Second Part of The Rover, Alonzo in The Dutch Lover, Gayman in The Lucky Chance, to name a few, who

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have no ready money to call on. Another function Brown finds for the figure of woman is "represented in terms of the female body and of sexuality" (19). This is associated with gender difference and as a figure of difference: "woman" is "connected with the potentially threatening . . . other" (19).

Behn and the actresses of the Restoration stage were likely to be commodities more often than consumers, such was the hard-scrabble life of these young women forced to make a living. The early English actresses differed from the well-trained, acclaimed and often respectable French actresses. They were pretty girls with sharp minds, but they were also poor and some dabbled in prostitution before they reached the stage. The prettiest and most popular actresses often became mistresses of wealthy and powerful men, as did Elizabeth Barry with the Earl of Rochester and Nell Gwyn with Charles II. Elizabeth Howe in her ground breaking work *The First English Actresses*, considers these early actresses and their reputations as "loose women". She begins her examination of the actress as prostitute with the claim that

"no 'respectable' woman became an actress. Society assumed that a woman who displayed herself on the public stages was probably a whore." (32)

But it was not simply the actress' respectability, it was the Restoration world's lurid interest in the actress' sexuality, that created interest in the playhouse. Howe writes

Whether or not she exploited it off stage, the actress's sexuality -- her potential availability to men -- became the central feature of her professional identity as a player. It has been observed that contemporary critics and satirists discuss the actress's private life and lovers as an extension of her histionic function. (Howe 34)
Katherine Maus examined the reasons why these early actresses were so readily accepted by the London theatre world and concluded that the sexual ideology of the actresses was reason enough for acceptance. The stage became the focus for the display of women's bodies, and male audience members scrambled to display their own power in the possession of the prettiest, sauciest and most passionate actresses. Instead of measuring wealth and power in terms of land, gold or the visible consumption of luxurious goods. Restoration society also judged men in terms of the women they kept. The theatre became a tantalizing showcase for commodities on sale, so expensive or unattainable as to be available only to the most powerful. I suspect, though, that Restoration actresses were metaphorically "possessed" by most of the men in these audiences. Thus actresses on the Restoration stage, represented both the promise and reality -- the promise of sexual possession and the metaphoric or imaginary possession of the women themselves.

Many of Behn's favorite actresses in real life were mistresses to wealthy men; some were common whores. Even the most chaste of the actresses (Mary Betterton, married to the famous actor/playwright/manager Thomas Betterton) risked the accusation of "public woman" (equivalent to "whore"), simply because she stood on a stage, framed by a proscenium arch and allowed men to look at her. The more titillating the play, the more scandalous the women seemed. All actresses were guilty by association: the culture assumed they all were whores because many were. The cross dressed actresses were even more scandalous because their legs (otherwise so carefully hidden by
voluminous skirts) were so visible. The whore roles were also scandal-%
ous because of their provocative costumes and their provocative
attitudes. Secrets, lust, licentiousness, outrageous sexual practicies
and perhaps just a bit of freedom were all embodied in the "whore" on
the Restoration stage. The characters and the actresses mirrored each
other, registering scandal from every angle. Both whore characters
and the actresses who show their legs and offer that view for sale
become literal and figurative symbols for the woman as commodity, the
woman for sale. And because Aphra Behn uses one character, Hip-
polyta in *The Dutch Lover* to play both roles, she makes it clear that
the whore and the cross dressed woman are two sides of the same
coin: woman. In all other cases, the whores and the cross dressed
women are in competition for the leading man, he must choose between
the woman who impersonates men and the woman who represents female
excess. Behn's women certainly fall into Laura Brown's definition of
the figure of woman.

Behn is aligned with all these whores/women/commodities because
her own words are sold, necessarily to make a living unsupported by
men. Behn's choice to write in order to support herself was both a
personal and political act. Critics have seen Behn herself as a prosti-
tute (Gallagher 65) and also as a transvestite, playing the part of a
man (Kavenik 177).

Behn's critique of the sexual economy stems from the position of
woman as commodity and consumer in that economy. She uses specific
actresses based on their reputations within the real sexual economy of
Restoration England. Casting then becomes an important part of her method of critique.

In materialist-feminist terms, prostitution is the prototypical sexual economy -- an economy in which women's bodies become a commodity, something that can be bought, traded and displayed, something that has value in market of male desire. This sexual economy can be seen as an exploitative continuum with prostitution, kept women, mistresses and even lucrative marriages as points along the entire range of possibilities. Behn's use of women in the position of commodities in the sexual economy predates the theorists that inform this materialist-feminist criticism of western social and economic relations. Claude Levi-Strauss presents the best definition of the western sexual economic concept:

The total relationship of exchange which constitutes marriage is not established between a man and a woman, where each owes and receives something, but between two groups of men, and the woman figures only as one of the objects in the exchange, not as one of the partners between whom the exchange takes place. (115)

In The Dutch Lover, there is an strict adherence to these societal norms. The culture and the economy seem almost primitive in construction, although the characters in the play certainly are not primitive. Alonzo even explains to Lovis that he is marrying a woman, not because he is in love with her, but simply to make an alliance with her family because he has none of his own.

Luce Irigaray, in two complementary essays. "Women on the Market" and "Commodities among Themselves" completes a critical discourse with Levi-Strauss, dissecting this economic relationship in
terms of the theories of Freud and Marx. She looks at the objects, the women who are left out of the equation. For her

all the social regimes of "History" are based upon the exploitation of one "class" of producers, namely, women. Whose reproductive use value (reproductive of children and of the labor force) and whose constitution as exchange value underwrite the symbolic order as such, without any compensation in kind going to them for that "work." For such compensation would imply a double system of exchange, that is a shattering of the monopolization of the proper name (and of what it signifies as appropriative power) by father-men. (Women 173)

In a way, she explains the value of women as commodities on the Restoration stage as well as within a romantic relationship.

The use made of women is thus of less value than their appropriation one by one. And their "usefulness" is not what counts the most. Woman's price is not determined by the "properties" of her body -- although her body constitutes the material support of that price. But when women are exchanged, woman's must be treated as an abstraction... woman has value on the market by virtue of one single quality: that of being a product of man's "Labor". (Women 175)

Irigaray suggests that

Commodities among themselves are thus not equal, nor alike, nor different. They only become so when they are compared by and for man." (Women 177)

Irigaray ends her essay "Women on the Market" wondering how women as subjects could take part in these exchanges. Her answer to her own question is another question "what if these 'commodities' refused to go to 'market'? What if they maintained "another" kind of commerce, among themselves?" (Commodities 196). For Laura Brown and Aphra Behn the question becomes "What if the women went shopping?" And the answer is "Use and exchange would be indistinguishable" (Commodities 197).
And in that "other" kind of commerce. Behn creates a utopian world where women go to market, but become consumers as well as commodities. Her female characters are both commodities and consumers, as Laura Brown theorized. As Behn moves through her career, her women are less and less involved in a family, less and less involved in society ("outsiders"). and her plays end in a much more open ended manner. The female characters vary widely in their position as commodity (object of desire) and consumer (subject of their own narrative.

Much has been written about the cross dressed role in modern and in Elizabethan and Restoration performance. Much less has been written about the whore in performance.

Annette Kuhn offers as good a definition as any of cross dressing.

On a cultural level, crossdressing may be understood as a mode of performance in which - through play on a disjunction between clothes and body - the socially constructed nature of sexual difference is foregrounded and even subjected to comment: what appears natural, then, reveals itself as artifice. (49)

Marjorie Garber writes:

one of the most important aspects of cross-dressing is the way in which it offers a challenge to easy notions of binarity, putting into question the categories of "female" and "male," whether they are considered essential or constructed, biological or cultural. (10)

For Annette Kuhn the pleasure of watching cross dressed figures is the enjoyment of

a vision of fluidity of gender options: to provide a glimpse of 'a world outside the order normally seen or thought about' - a utopian prospect of release from the ties of sexual difference that bind us into meaning, discourse, culture. (50)
This vision of fluidity is essential to identity and links to cross dressing and narrative. Kuhn writes about cross dressing and narrative in film, but her ideas transfer easily to stage performance, there is simply less manipulation of the image on the stage. She cites Roland Barthes's distinction between the pleasure to be obtained from the closure or resolution of the classic narrative and the 'bliss' (jouissance) of the text which defies such closure.

(56)

There is the pleasure of closure of finally knowing the truth (especially with a mystery), of finishing a task. It is the comfort of the familiar.

It is also the closure of the classic Greek New Comedy through Terence and Plautus and even into Shakespeare as described by Northrup Frye (237). Usually the family forces a girl into an unwanted marriage, usually to an older man and always for money. In Frye's formulation of a "comic Oedipus situation"

the main theme is the successful effort of a young man to outwit an opponent and possess the girl of his choice. The opponent is usually the father (senex). . . The girl is usually a slave or courtesan and the plot turns on a cognito or discovery of birth which makes her marriage-able. (237)

Annette Kuhn has her own definition of the classic narrative which is equivalent to the comedic plot:

in the classic narrative the resolution of a story typically involves some restoration of the equilibrium to the world of the fiction, a world disrupted by whatever event or situation sets the story in motion in the first place (60).

The pleasure of a ending without closure is the freedom to look at things differently, it is a squeal of confusion and delight. But Kuhn notes that Barthes always reminds his readers that "closure is a mark
of culturally dominant narrative forms, forms whose trajectory is always toward resolution" (56). Kuhn continues that because cross-dressing "threatens to disrupt an apparently natural order," stories involving crossdressed figures "in offering the promise of a visionary multiplicity of gender relations open up a space for jouissance" (56).

In Behn’s formulation of the comic plot, the woman (who may or may not be young) is prevented from finding happiness with "her" man by much more complex issues such as rape, previous marriage, loss of income and unconventional life style. Often it is the young man who must discover his true parentage in order to become marriageable. Behn’s narratives seem to end as do the Roman comedies with all the couples marrying and all invited to a feast.

But Behn’s endings become and more open across her career. The Dutch Lover features a final scene where women are handed over to men for weddings and weddings and a banquet. It is a traditional comedy ending, yet it illustrates both Levi-Strauss and Frve theories. Much less traditionally, The Luckey Chance ends as a husband gives up his wife to her lover (but does not dissolve the marriage) and another couple marry. In The Second Part of the Rover, neither couple marries on the spot, one decides to try a serious courtship, the other decides to make the commitment but without the formality of marriage. The patriarchy (cultural dominance) controlled the beginning of Behn’s career, but not the end.

Central to this argument is the breeches role which has had a long history on the stage has in England. Beginning with Elizabeth I and the English sumptuary laws, Marjorie Garber sketches in the rise
of the "boy actresses" on the Elizabethan stage. These sumptuary laws regulated distinctions in clothing according to class and gender. The ultimate authority for gendered clothing laws was the Bible -- "The woman shall not wear that which pertaineth unto a man, neither shall a man put on a woman's garment: for all that do are an abomination unto the Lord thy God" (Deut. 22:5). Sumptuary laws restricted women from dressing as they wished, and other legislation banned them from female roles on the Elizabethan stage. On the street, women were legislated to look like women, but on the stage only "boy actresses" could represent the female. Stephen Greenblatt and Stephen Orgel have written about this confusion of gender and sexuality in the use of boy actors/actresses in Shakespeare's plays. According to these scholars, Renaissance men believed that women could evoke real passion in men and thus render them "out of control," a problematic state for this category conscious society. Thus the appearance of homosexuality on stage (actor courting boy actress) was less problematic to the Elizabethan theatre going public than the "uncontrollable" passions of real men and women. On stage, cross dressing challenged the system much less than it did in every day life. Rather, cross dressing on the stage worked to confirm the ability of people to be rational, controlled and passionless; just as the legislation against cross dressing on the streets confirmed the visible categories of class and gender.

Between great Elizabethan theatre of Shakespeare with its boy actresses and the Restoration theatre of Aphra Behn with women playing boys in breeches roles, England suffered through a Civil War, which ultimately replaced the monarchy with a commonwealth and all
but destroyed the class system. Charles I was beheaded in 1648 and many courtiers fled to Europe, especially to France. British society was virtually destroyed. The ties that bound the British class system prior to the Civil War were based first on the monarchy and only secondarily on economics. Once the king was beheaded and the heir and other supporters banished, monarchy and attendant class system was destroyed. Familiar patterns and dependable government services came to a halt. Chaos reigned.

Charles II and his banished cavaliers settled in France in the court of Louis XIV. There they discovered a monarch and a class system which reveled in the display of grandeur and extravagance even more than the British aristocracy in Elizabeth's time. The Sun King and his courtiers privileged theatre and performance as a natural outgrowth of this inclination of grand display. Not only did the French theatre feature upper class male actors and beautiful and skilled professional actresses, but the genius of writers like Racine, Corneille and Moliere.

When Charles II was restored to the English throne in 1660, his first task was to recreate a monarchy which his country could support. He created the illusion of a strong monarchy with the display of his own power in monuments, royal processions and entrances, royal costume and regalia and in his own visible consumption of goods and services. Included in this public display was the restoration of the theatre in London. Even before he returned to England, Charles II commissioned William Davenant and Thomas Killigrew to reactivate two theatre companies, and within a year of his arrival, he had legislated
the British actress into existence and on to the stage. There is so much of the cavalier spirit in The Rover that this play must always be associated with Charles II, the interregnum and the restoration of the theaters in London.

Breeches roles of the Restoration became popular almost immediately when the theatrical companies began using women on the stage in Shakespeare's plays. Shakespeare's technique of using boy actors to play women who dress as boys turned the tables on the theatre-going public. Suddenly women were showing their legs, simply because Elizabethan dramatic texts demanded it. Breeches roles in early Restoration required little more than charm and prettiness: the story is simply one of "boy meets girl," etc. Nell Gwynn was noted for her breeches roles in the plays of Dryden. But other actresses also became famous for their breeches roles, notably Elizabeth Boutell, Anne Bracegirdle and Susannah Mountfort Verbruggen. As Elizabeth Howe explains in The First English Actresses, Verbruggen was much more a comic character actress in her "breeches roles" than temptress. Dryden and other playwrights used these actresses and their sexual signification to foster a tradition which deployed the "breeches role" as a titillating spectacle.

In studying the dramatic devices Aphra Behn used to highlight the critical aspect of the whore and breeches roles, I remembered the age old insight of detectives in mystery novels. There are two kinds of crimes -- those of passion and those involving money. Thus the detective must "cherchez la femme" or discover "cui bono?". When I discovered the link between the breeches role and the role of the
whore, I began to investigate the role of the whore and the sexual/gender economics (including talk of money and valuation) in Behn's plays. I found clues to Behn's sophisticated dramatic technique. That sophisticated technique which hid her criticism of the sexual economy in plain sight within the "spectacle of woman," that is the whores and the breeches roles.

I had originally planned this project to include visual images of actresses in breeches roles on the British stage, but all the searching of the Victoria and Albert print library and the Theatre Library produced not one image of a breeches role from the period. Thus the project changed to a close performance reading of Behn's early plays to determine how she created these characters and images which expose and critique the sexual economy. These readings were helped immeasurably by using the materialist feminist theories of Claude Levi-Strauss, Luce Irigaray, the feminist cultural theories of Marjorie Garber, the feminist film theories of Laura Mulvey and Annette Kuhn.

This opening chapter has investigated theories of the sexual economy, theories of cross dressing, some ideas about prostitution and a description of the cultural and theatrical world of the time, including the commodification of women and their position as consumers in the growing mercantile economy. The following chapters will analyze some of Behn's plays in which cross-dressing figures prominently. In the early plays, The Dutch Lover and The Rover, the cross dressed women do move the plot along and their actions contribute to the successful resolutions of their problems: they marry the men they choose. Hippolyta in The Dutch Lover dons sword and garb like her betrothed
(Alonzo) in order to avenge her own ruination. Hellena in The Rover dons men's clothes in order to flirt with the prostitute Angelica Bianca and to make an argument with Willmore, the Rover, on her own behalf. Ariadne dresses as a man to come between Willmore and LaNuche in The Second Part of the Rover but she does not appreciably increase her chances of "catching" Willmore, although she does make a good match with Beaumond. The most outspoken whores are Angellica Bianca and LaNuche in The Rover and The Second Part of the Rover. Willmore in both plays often plays the part of the whore and rails against the economic system which helps him to stay poor; yet he accepts money from women for sexual favors. Willmore chooses the "good girl" in The Rover and the whore in The Second Part of the Rover. I will also analyze other whore figures as well. The structures of these plays, including closure, also require some analysis. Behn moves from a very familiar closed ending for The Dutch Lover to a very equivocal, open ending for The Second Part of the Rover.

There is very little research available about breeches roles in the Restoration and even less on the figure of the whore in drama. Virtually nothing has been done to analyze the stage costumes or audience reaction to the costumes. Lily Campbell's "A History of Costuming on the English Stage Between 1660 and 1823" is a very thorough search through the literature of the period. She lists the traditional costume for tragedy for men and women. She also tells anecdotes about the women who wore the costumes. But she says nothing about the costumes of breeches roles. James Laver's Costume in the Theatre, Diana DeMarley's Costume on the Stage 1600-1940 and
Theodore Komisarjevsky's *The Costume of the Theatre* were also disappointing. Though well researched, they lack details. If five important costume writers do not discuss this important costume issue of the Restoration stage, extant materials likely do not exist. Laver worked with costumes at the Victoria and Albert Museum and Diana DeMarley worked with the Costume Institute in London. I suspect if these two don't discuss breeches roles, there is nothing on the topic. Other costume books, such as and Laver's do not touch on stage costume, but discuss fashionable clothing of the period.

Allison Lurie's *The Language of Clothes* is the most recent study of the function of clothing in the creation of sexual difference, though it has no information on historical costume. Anne Hollander's recent *Sex and Suits* begins the theorize the relationships between clothing, gender and power, but she discusses mainstream fashion of the period, not stage costume or renegade transvestites.

Somewhere between the costumes and the history of transvestism are a few studies which look directly at the "breeches roles." Pat Rogers' "The Breeches Part" investigates the careers of Peg Woffington and Charlotte Chark, eighteenth-century actresses for whom "breeches roles" were important both on and off the stage. Woffington's roles were like those found in most Restoration comedies: flirtatious and unambiguous. Charke's use of the convention was more disruptive. Jacqueline Pearson includes several sections in *The Prostituted Muse* which explore the popularity of the "breeches roles" and the phenomenon of the female transvestite in the plays of this period. Lesley Ferris addresses the Restoration and eighteenth century convention in
convention in the chapter "Women Acting Men" in Acting Women and in her introduction to her collection Crossing the Stage.

Stephen Orgel's "Nobody's Perfect", Stephen Greenblatt's "Fiction and Friction," Jean E. Howard's "Cross-dressing, the Theatre and Gender Struggle in Early Modern England," and Marjorie Garber's monumental Vested Interests explore the phenomenon of boy actresses on the Elizabethan stage and relate this practice to Elizabethan culture. All four suggest a crisis of categories. But these studies describe Renaissance England, not the England after the Restoration. They do point out, however, some of the variables that might be transformed by these political disruptions and might form the framework for Behn's plays.

Studies of Restoration drama have not explored cultural criticism until only recently. There are non-theatrical studies of performance practice as well as those which integrate performance practice and theory. Paula R. Backscheider's Spectacular Politics is the best cultural overview of the Restoration in terms of Charles II's consolidation of political power by visible spectacle, including theatre. Antonia Fraser's The Weaker Vessel is a good introduction to the changing role of women during the time, including actresses. Susan Staves' Player's Scepters explores ideas about authority in the Restoration.

Elizabeth Howe's The First English Actresses: Women and Drama 1660-1700 traces the changes and trends in Restoration drama through the personalities and talents of the leading actresses of the day. Most of her comments about "breeches roles" focus on Susannah Montfort, who most often played these roles in the early Restoration. Howe
includes an invaluable list of the roles of the leading actresses, indicating the "breeches roles." John Harold Wilson's All the King's Ladies: Actresses of the Restoration is an early and pioneering work about these early actresses which includes a chapter entitled "In Petticoats and Breeches." He also includes thorough biographies of individual actresses. Thomas King offers a fresh new look at Nell Gwynn from a modern critical perspective. Katherine Mans discusses the sexual ideology of these early actresses.

Several fairly recent studies include Aphra Behn among the classic writers of the Restoration, a position she was denied her in earlier overviews of the dramatic literature. Edward Burns' Restoration Comedy: Crises of Desire and Identity looks over all the comedy of the period with chapters on each of the important writers, including Behn. Susan Carlson's Women and Comedy positions Aphra Behn's The Lucky Chance as a turning point in the way comedy was written about woman. Interpreting Ladies by Pat Gill is an overview of the image of women on the Restoration stage and situates Behn among Etherege, Wycherly and Congreve as primary authors of this image.

The classic histories of theatre during this period include Leslie Hotson's The Commonwealth and Restoration Stage Allardyce Nicoll's multivolume A History of English Drama 1660-1900 and the Revel's History of Drama in English. The London Theatre World 1660-1800 contains articles by experts in the field updating research in Restoration theatrical practice such as audience composition and management practices. The London Stage, edited by William Van Lennep, is an invaluable tool for cast lists and primary references.
format and excellent index make it possible to verify details effortlessly and to discover trends in theatrical seasons. *A Biographical Dictionary of Actors, Actresses, Musicians, Dancers and Other Stage Personnel in London, 1660-1800* is another kind of encyclopedia with easy-to-access biographical information about the players. Unfortunately, it lacks the gossipy format in which Wilson's *All The King's Ladies* excels. Wilson is much better at offering ideas about how the ladies were regarded by the play-going public, their reputations on stage and off. The standard *Dictionary of National Biography* was an unexpectedly rich source of this gossipy material.

Modern cross dressing has been a popular topic in the 1990's. Much of this information was gay oriented, male oriented and helped to develop what is now known as "queer theory." Because of the heterosexual underpinnings of my study, these have not been very useful. Anne Kuhn's "Sexual Disguise and the Cinema" is my favorite statement of cross dressing in performance. Corinne Sawyer's "Men in Skirts and Women in Trousers" links comedy with power in cross dressed images and discusses the problem of power imbalance when women dress as men. These theorists and others (Marjorie Garber's *Vested Interests* and Lesley Ferris's collection *Crossing the Stage* rely heavily on that which is visible, that which is seen and contrast it with that which is essential and unseen (a female body covered by male trousers). The Restoration theatre was a world of visual display, with the first attempts at stage lighting, glittering costumes and beautiful men and women. Power was made manifest, if only in visual signs and symbols. Feminist film theory concerning the act of looking
at women's bodies (theorists like Laura Mulvey as well as Kuhn, Garber and Sawyer) has an important place in theorizing the female body in male garments on the Restoration stage. John Berger's Ways of Seeing covers the same territory as Mulvy in theorizing the male gaze, but utilizes Western's civilizations great paintings rather than film.

The works of Luce Irigaray in opposition to the statements of Claude Levi-Strauss form the cornerstone of any discussion of the sexual economics which underly all my ideas about Aphra Behn's feisty heroines on the stage. The female theorists stress the economics of women as objects within the patriarchy and provide models for analysis.

Much has been written about Aphra Behn. Her presence as a writer has become a focal point for women scholars who study this period, but very few of her plays have been studied and analyzed critically. Three important biographies include The Passionate Shepherdess by Maureen Duffy, Reconstructing Aphra: A Social Biography of Aphra Behn by Angeline Goreau. All do a good job of correlating Behn's life to her plays. When I began this project, the only complete collection of Behn's work was that of Montegut Summers which was compiled in 1915. Janet Todd edited a complete new and authoritative edition which began publication in 1992, including some plays which had not been collected before. Of these plays, I have selected The Dutch Lover, The Rover and The Second Part of the Rover for analysis. Were there more time, I would also include The Feign'd Curtizans, The Luckey Chance and The Widow Ranter. The Feign'd Curtizans was produced in between the two Rover plays, but it contains so much
humor in the subplot, it became difficult to uncover the importance of the cross dressing and the sexual economics. The Widow Ranter is outside the classic comedy and the intrigue comedy traditions, with an older heroine and an American setting.

There are many excellent essays on Behn and her plays. Three important collections which include analysis of more obscure plays are *Rereading Aphra Behn* edited by Heidi Hutner, *Curtain Calls: British and American Women and the Theatre, 1660-1820*, and Susan Carlson's *Women and Comedy: Rewriting the British Theatrical Tradition*. Many other essays exist, but none really address the "breeches roles" and their relation to Behn's plays. Janet Todd's excellent edition of Behn's *Works* makes for an easier analysis. Theories of cross-dressing, sexual economics and "the gaze" will help to focus the work.

This study is significant because of the current interest in cultural studies and the relationship of the culture of a moment to the literature of that same time and place. There is very little on the cultural history and implications of money, the history of capitalism during the Restoration. Behn's plays have never really been studied in terms of sexual economics, or in terms of the language of money, except perhaps by Mark Lussier. Lussier studies the language of money within Behn's plays, but completely ignores woman as subject or consumer. He only sees the figure of woman as the object of desire or commodity. If he doesn't recognize woman as consumer, he certainly cannot see the male figure as object of desire. Behn is specific in her use of the cross dressed figure and the whore (both figures outside
the patriarchal economy) to circumvent the patriarchal system. Lussier certainly doesn't see Behn's utopia or the female consumer acting within it. It is important to see how Behn uses the language of money to make clear all the implications of the women as commodities exchanged among men in a male sexual economy. It also is important to see that same language used to make clear the implications of women as consumers in a utopian feminist economy. For the feminist theatre practitioner, Behn's successful methods, using dramatic structure, specific characters, casting and humor are worth studying if only for modern duplication. Aphra Behn used the same characters, language, actors and theories to create several very different comedies, this in itself is important to the world of theatre.
CHAPTER 2

THE DUTCH LOVER

Exchange is both the subject and the structure of this first play of Behn's series of intrigue comedies. Love is merely a human condition which fuels the exchange. In some ways, *The Dutch Lover* demonstrates the theories of Claude Levi-Strauss, who first described the concept of sexual exchange as a relationship between men, with the woman serving simply as the object to be exchanged. And chief among those exchanged objects in *The Dutch Lover* is Hippolyta, who plays both the whore and the cross dressed woman. At the very last moments of the play, the patriarchal figures present the male leads with the women who have become objects of desire. The women are exchanged from one family to another. Behn also dramatizes to other common definitions of "exchange" -- "to give and receive reciprocally" and refers "chiefly of coin: to be received as an equivalent for." (Oxford English Dictionary) *The Dutch Lover* reverberates with all of these meanings, culminating finally with an on-stage masquerade which is a metonymic exchange of woman for man, that is a woman not only impersonates a man, but becomes one, performing the masculine role in defense of female and family honor. In doing so Behn creates new meanings for both gender and self. This play becomes a template to which the other plays can be compared. In it are all themes, characters and tropes that
make Behn's intrigue plays so delightful, yet so critical of the prevailing patriarchy.

The Dutch Lover: A Comedy was produced by the Duke's Company on February 6, 1673 at the new Dorset Garden playhouse. The play was not well received (5: 158) and Behn launched an attack against the audience and the players with "An Epistle to the Reader" which was printed with the script (5: 159). Behn blamed the poor reception on bad acting, ineffective costumes and the prejudice of the fops in the audience against a woman writer. The plot was too complex for the flirtatious, chatty Restoration audience to follow easily. Behn excuses the complex plot in her "Epistle" with: "the Plot being busie (though I think not intricate) and so requiring continual attention" (5: 163). But the audience did not come to the playhouse to devote "continual attention" to the stage and any plot that confuses four couples with dizzying speed is intricate and busy as well as difficult to follow.

In spite of her statements that the play was not faulty, Behn learned from this experience and would eliminate couples from her plots throughout her career. The Rover balances two main couples and a very peripheral third couple. The Second Part of the Rover features only two couples. Part of this complex plotting can be attributed to the source, Don Fenise, which was published as The history of Don Fenise. A New Romance, Written in Spanish
by Francisco De las-Coveras. And now Englished by A Person of Honor in 1651 (5: 158). Las Coveras did not exist, but the work was ascribed to Francisco de Quintana (5: 158). Quintana wrote several collections of stories formed into novels. Behn uses several of the interlinked and embedded short stories which comprise Don Finise (5: 158).

All of the lovers in these plays bargain with each other, almost as a way of flirtation. This bargaining seems colored by gender and sexuality -- women are equated with wealth as well as sexual pleasure and men are equated in the same way. In this play, most of the women do have the fortunes and they also offer beauty and wit. Unlike Levi-Strauss's definition of exchange, where women are only the object of the exchange, Behn offers her audience a utopia where men and women are literally exchanged and thus become subjects rather than objects of exchange. This is especially true of Hippolyta and another strong woman, Euphemia. In this play, women and men are equal, exchangeable and interchangeable.

Behn offers this radical utopia in the midst of the Restoration of the male monarchy by creating in these plays a calculated structure of gender valuation and equation sandwiched between scenes of patriarchal exchange of women as Levi-Strauss defined exchange. The play is like an Oreo cookie with the good stuff in the middle: the center is
marked by equally valuable men and women negotiating their own exchanges.

The play begins with two friends, Alonzo and Lovis, discussing arranged marriages in the language of business. Lovis asks if Alonzo's betrothed "will . . . recompense the Folly [of matrimony]" (5: 165). Alonzo replies that the recompense will not come from the woman, but from her family:

I consider my Advantage in being allied to so considerable a Man as Ambrosio, her father; I being now so unhappy as not to know my Birth or Parents. (5: 165-166).

The play ends in the style of classic comedy with multiple weddings; all the leading characters marry as do the minor characters. Behn returns to the status quo (as must all traditional comedies eventually) and to the Levi-Strauss definition of exchange as kinsmen hand over three brides to their future husbands in literal exchanges between men. The fourth couple marry without family intervention, but once wed, they are welcomed back into the fold. Two women do marry men of their own and not their family's choosing. But as in classical comedy, there are several discoveries of true identities and all the men and women make happy and profitable matches.

Within the central portion of the play, Behn explores meanings of exchange which are not part of Levi-Strauss's sexual economic world, but offer alternatives to Luce Irigaray's all-female universe. Irigaray's essays "Women
on the Market" and "Commodities Among Themselves" condemn the patriarchal institution of women as commodities and ask the question, "what if these 'commodities' refused to go to 'market'?" (Commodities 196), what if women themselves choose a world without men, i.e. a lesbian world? Behn asks the correlative but heterosexual question "What if the commodities went shopping themselves?" Laura Brown's formulation of the figure of woman in a mercantile economy as both commodity and consumer also answers the question as does Marc Shell in his introduction to Money and Language quoting an early modern Jewish saying about the market and commodities: "all wares acquire each other" (2).

Behn also uses the figures of the cross dressed woman and the whore to foreground the concept of woman as a commodity. The exchange of utopia for patriarchy and back again marks a structural transformation in the way this play can be read and is also marked by the transformation of the women. The central utopian portion of the play is marked at the beginning and end by curious back-to-back two-scene confusions of fantastically disguised women, almost as though the presence of women changes everything, even if the women are not "real" and mere fantasies. It is not the presence of a women that Behn is using, but the spectacle of "woman." Behn uses the character of Hippolyta particularly to embody the idea of women for sale and especially women displayed for sale. Not only is Hippolyta
supposedly a whore and constructed as a woman for sale, but she also wears breeches.

Behn also disarms the sting of her societal criticism with humor. Haunce van Ezel is the Dutch lover and he is a fool. But is so sure of himself that he equates himself with his wealth and his ability to wheel and deal in the money markets. The woman his family has arranged for him to marry (Euphemia) runs rings around him and destroys his sense of the certainty of his identity. There is a funny moment when he is not sure who he is. There is also another moment when two other characters stand on stage dressed exactly like him. With Haunce as the center of the identity problem, Behn destabilizes all identities based on social markers. The fact that he is Dutch also makes the humor very political.

It is unfortunate that the cast list for The Dutch Lover was not published with the script and has never been recovered. In her other plays Behn used her casting choices to enhance the dramatic effects of techniques like play structure, humor and her use of the language of trading. In her later plays, Behn was blessed with brilliant interpreters of her characters and it would be interesting to see if the failure of this play was due to the text or the acting or both. For the purpose of this study, it would be important to know if Hippolyta was more like Angellica Bianca (the whore) or Hellenia (the cross dressed girl). It
would also be useful to know which of the male actors playing Marcel, Silvio, Alonzo, and Lovis were precursors of William Smith's wild Willmore or Thomas Betterton's constant and loving Belville. What we do know is that the comic Haunc van Ezel was played by Edward Angel (Behn 5: 535). Behn was very angry with him for his ad-libs:

My Dutch Lover spoke but little of what I intend-ed for him, but supply'd it with a deal of idle stuff, which I was wholly unacquainted with, till I had heard it first from him. (5: 163)

The play is set in Madrid in and around the household of Ambrosio, a nobleman. While it is difficult to retell this "busie" plot, an introduction to the characters and situations is essential. Marcel, Euphemia, Hippolyta and Cleonte are Ambrosio's children and Silvio is his bastard son who is also part of the household. Hippolyta has run away to marry Antonio, but has been ruined by him and set up as a prostitute in a house nearby. Marcel is especially sensitive to the loss of family honor with Hippolyta's situation. But this is hypocritical, since he lusts for his own love Clarinda and would have sex with her and thus ruin her, too. Silvio, the bastard son is in love with his sister Cleonte and this causes no end of unhappiness for both. There is another family, Carlo and his children Lovis and Euphemia. Into this soap opera come the travelers, Alonzo and Haunce. Haunce is betrothed to Euphemia though she abhors the idea of a forced marriage. Alonzo is
betrothed to Hippolyta, which an impossible situation since Hippolyta is in love with Antonio as well as being "damaged goods." Typical of all Behn's plots are confusions and mistaken identities. Even the names conspire to confuse. In the end, Hippolyta and Antonio marry. Euphemia and Alonzo make a match. Silvio is discovered not to be the bastard son and is free to love and marry Cleonte. Marcel and Clarinda can marry also. Even Haunce and his servant Gload are married off to servants of Ambrosio and Carlo.

Early in the play, Euphemia, a headstrong young woman, sees Alonzo in a church and chooses him for a life partner in order to escape an abhorrent arranged marriage. She is the character who "does her own shopping" and acknowledges herself as a commodity. She is also the first disguised and transformed woman. Late in the first act, her maid brings Alonzo to a grove where Euphemia appears to him heavily veiled.

They immediately begin to bargain: he wants to see her face and she refuses. He counters with "let's have fair Play on both sides, I'll hide nothing from you" (5: 173). She questions him, but he sticks to the negotiation of equality:

I can promise nothing till I see my Reward [her face]. I am a base Barterer, here's one for t'other; you saw your Man and lik'd him, and if I like you when I see you -- . (5: 173)

She complains that if he does not like her face "must all my liking be cast away?" (5: 173). They negotiate further
and she intrigues him with her intelligence. She is making the bargain of her lifetime: "if I possess you, it must be forever" (5: 173). He is ready to seal the bargain "Forever let it be then. Come, let's begin on any terms" (5: 173).

These traders in love are negotiating a delicate deal -- all seems to hinge on the physical attractiveness of the traders. Alonzo has been seen and has his worth is completely known. Euphemia will not show her face, will not offer her goods (for to have them seen is to become a "public woman" and that is ruination to a young virgin). A pretty face or the promise of a pretty face in this case is much like virginity -- to have it is important, a bargaining chip; to give it away is ruination and cancels all possibility of future negotiations. Euphemia must offer something else in stead: her family and fortune. "I am the sole Daughter of a rich Parent, young, and as I am told not unhandsom. . ." (5: 173). She explains that she is contracted to a man she does not know, but she "would rather dye than marry him" (5: 173). Alonzo on the other hand is a man "that was perfectly agreeable" to Euphemia (5: 174). Alonzo tells her that he is unworthy of the honor that she offers him, yet he is still wary of commitment: "Will nothing but Matrimony serve your turn, Madam?" (5: 174).

He realizes that no woman has been so open and
straightforward with him, but still fears the commitment. This is a confrontation that appears in all of the intrigue plays. Behn's female characters are forthright in their speech and men are intrigued rather than put off by that. But typical of all Behn's male characters, these young men in this play express this fear of marriage because of the loss of freedom it entails. In the first scene, Lovis and Alonzo speak of matrimony in terms of danger. Marcel, another character, revels in the promise of the capitulation of his love, Clarinda, "without the ceremonious tye of Marriage" (5: 169) while raging against the man who seduced his sister, also without the tie of marriage. Alonzo later fumes that he must give up "delicious whoring, drinking and fighting and be condemn'd to a dull honest Wife" (5: 194). Women rail against matrimony as well. Olinda, Euphemia's maid reiterates Alonzo's distaste for marriage:

This marrying I do not like; 'tis like going on a long Voyage to Sea, where after a while even the Calms are distasteful dangerous; one seldom sees a new Object, 'tis still a deal of Sea, Sea; Husband, Husband, every day -- 'til one's quite cloy'd with it. (5: 209)

Despite any other's distaste for marriage, Euphemia plunges forward. She may not like marriage, but she must protect herself from an inappropriate arranged marriage. She feigns a swoon and lowers her veil; she shows Alonzo her face. He is enraptured and exclaims "it changes the nature in me" (5: 174). He continues: "you have robb'd me of my native Humour" (5: 175). If a woman's virginity is
her ultimate trump card in the physical sense, then showing her face is Euphemia's trump card in these negotiations, but it also leaves her vulnerable. They have both been honest, but they have also reached an impasse and Euphemia offers to meet him later. This encounter sets the tone for much of the negotiations throughout the play. Euphemia must offer both beauty, fortune and family connections while Alonzo offers nothing more than his attractive person and the loss of his freedom. Actually he also offers Euphemia sanctuary from an arranged marriage. Unmentioned in this negotiation is Euphemia's virginity and honor and Alonzo's sexual experience, honor and courage in battle, these are actually givens. To negotiate without these already acknowledged would be impossible. Yet with all these negotiations and the negotiations between the other lovers, love is not really mentioned. Everyone seems to be negotiating a better deal, a less offensive match. Only Silvio and Cleonte seem to be truly in love.

In a second scene of unveiling and discovery in the second act, Euphemia is staying with Hippolyta who has been set up by her lover Antonio to appear as a Venetian courtesan. Euphemia is veiled again in order to meet secretly with Alonzo. Hippolyta's brother Marcel enters and assumes that the veiled woman is his "poor lost Hippolyta" who has been debauched by Antonio. The family honor is at stake and Marcel threatens to kill his sister and Antonio, but
Alonzo enters and challenges Marcel because he thinks that Marcel is threatening "his" Euphemia. Marcel attacks Euphemia and her veil drops yet again. At that moment, Hippolyta enters "drest like a Curtezan" (5: 179). The whole scene stops in what film critics call an extra-diegetic moment, a moment when one narrative breaks and another can be seen through the break. For a moment Behn has shown the audience and the male characters "woman" displayed for sale. Euphemia has dropped her veil and revealed herself and Hippolyta has revealed herself as a whore. In that moment, Hippolyta and Euphemia, formerly mistaken for each other, are both revealed as distinctly different women, yet they are both suddenly displayed and vulnerable. The men respond to the moment in a way that helps the audience understand what Behn is trying to make clear. Lovis says "I know not the meaning of all this" (5: 179) and Marcel admits "I've lost the power of striking where I ought, since my misguided hand so lately err'd" (5: 179). In that moment both women seem at the same time tainted and exonerated.

After this encounter, Behn's use of the exchange of bodies (actually disguise and misunderstanding) moves from flirtatious negotiation and inadvertent confusions of identities among women to planned misrepresentations of both the men and women. Instead of using words to express
exchange, Behn begins to use impersonation in her dramatization of the lives of these lover/negotiators.

Directly after Euphemia drops her veil and Hippolyta appears, Euphemia asks Alonzo to impersonate her betrothed Haunce van Ezel with her father to secure her marriage to him. She gives him letters from her father to Haunce which he is to present to her father to prove that he is the husband destined for Euphemia. As far-fetched as this plan seems, it is a workable one since her father has never seen Haunce. If Euphemia and Alonzo marry before Haunce arrives, she will be spared the distasteful marriage. This patriarch arranges marriages based on fortunes, not on the value of the individuals. And if the value and the looks are somehow not really equal, then the authorities are easily fooled. When men are defined simply by paper (the letters of Haunce to Euphemia's father), the "law of the father," and those can be misrepresented and counterfeited, then identity is jeopardized and the proof of identity is destabilized. When Alonzo hesitates, Euphemia offers "I give a Credit where I give a Heart. Go inquire my Birth and Fortune: as for you, I am content with what I see about you" (5: 180). In her valuation of herself is a definition of self. Again, Behn seems to be saying that women must bring status and fortune to the bargaining table, but men simply bring themselves. Women choose almost whimsically, intuitively. As often as Euphemia
defines herself in terms of her desirability to men (status, wealth and beauty), Alonzo defines himself to another woman as "a wanderer; a poor lost thing, that none will own or pity" (5: 188). Again, Behn's utopia celebrates the feminine "natural" value in exchange, but condemns the culturally manufactured value (a patriarchal construct).

This meeting of Alonzo as Haunce (drest ridiculously (5: 191)) and Euphemia's father Carlo is very funny. It is purely Levi-Strauss as Carlo and Alonzo negotiate Euphemia's marriage while she stands by passively. It is of course, ironic, because the passive seeming Euphemia has masterminded the whole plot. But Alonzo plays the fool too well, and Carlo concludes "Why should it be said that I ruin'd a child to satisfie my appetite of riches?" (5 194) and forbids the marriage. This is reminiscent of the best of American situation comedies: Lucy and Ethel planning some impossible scheme which of course, backfires.

The narrative turns serious again in a scene between Hippolyta and her lover Antonio. He has seduced her and ruined her for a regular marriage (she was betrothed to Alonzo) and has not paid her "back one sigh, or smile" (5: 200) for all that she has given. When he mentions that he has set her up as a prostitute, he rudely asks her the price of her love. She answers "Thy life; he that durst say Antonio lives no more should have possesst me gratis" (5: 200). That is her honor is equated with his life and
the only recompense to her shame is his death. Behn's view of the equality of men and women turns biblical with this "eye for an eye" equation. Hippolyta feels like her life is worthless, and the only recompense is to render Antonio's equally so. Not only does she want him dead, but she will reward any man who does the deed with her own life and body. She is willing to pay dearly for the life which has ruined her own. Giving her favors away to Antonio's murderer ups the ante, for in giving herself away, she is giving away something that only Antonio can enjoy or control.

Haunce von Ezel is also part of Hippolyta's story. His entrance follows Alonzo's impersonation and it is difficult to imagine which would be the more obnoxious or difficult to live with: Haunce or Alonzo as Faux Haunce. Yet Haunce happens upon this confrontation between Hippolyta and Antonio and protects Hippolyta from Antonio's rage. When Haunce finally visits Euphemia and her father Carlo, he is welcomed, though the household has met only his mirror image in Alonzo's impersonation. This leads to a confrontation of the confusion of identity:

Haunce: Why, ha ha, who the pox am I?
Servant: You, Sir, why who should you be?
Haunce: Who should I be? Why who should I be? (5: 207)
When confronted with a situation where everyone knows him, yet he knows no one or how they know him, he bluffs as well as a fool can. Imagine Lucy and Ethel trying to talk their way out of a difficult situation which they do not completely understand, but know enough to try to get out as quickly as they can. And when Euphemia asks who he is, he does not answer her directly, but replies "there's not a child thus high in all your Fathers House would have askt me so simple a question" (5: 207). The mind of the audience remembers Alonzo as Faux Haunce playing the fool for Carlo while asking for Euphemia's hand in marriage and superimposes it on the real Haunce who is doubly foolish -- a fool in his own right and being made a fool of by Euphemia and Alonzo. He gathers his wits in this confusing situation and when confronted again, Haunce offers "here are my Bills of Exchange with my own natural name to them, if you can read written hand--" (5: 210), equating his identity with his money. In this one off-hand comment ("if you can read written hand --"), Haunce aligns himself with the men of the family (and societal power) and dismisses Euphemia completely. Women were not generally taught to read or write, so written communication (even Bills of Exchange which amounted to a guarantee of cash and credit) were of interest to men only. He is also stating that Euphemia is (as Levi-Strauss explained) not part of bargaining process. Even if she wishes to be, Haunce will not
allow her to be part of the process. He has changed quickly from uncomfortable to dismissive and demeaning. When Euphemia tells him that "I heard you were the most incorrigible fool, the most intolerable fop" (5: 211), Haunce counters with "I am counted as pretty a Merchant as any walks the change: can write a very plain hand, and cast account as well --" (5: 211). By showing her his papers, by identifying himself with his "plain hand," he is proving his identity and also proving himself as a part of the world of power, the world of men. Earlier both Euphemia and Hippolyta identified themselves with their bodies. Haunce can only be "real" when he has papers to identify himself according to the laws of men. Yet Euphemia has already used these identifying papers for her own good when she gives Haunce's letters to Alonzo to insure a believable impersonation. The distance between a man and is identifying papers is a large and treacherous gap and one that Euphemia and Hippolyta escape by their more essential identity valuations. Their looks are their value.

Behn destabilizes the links among identity, value and valuation. Haunce thinks that his reputation in the marketplace, his ability to write and do math, coupled with his fortune, are enough to offset any personal imperfections. Yet both Euphemia and her father, Carlo, value wit and manners above fortune and class. Finally Haunce
threatens Euphemia with the masculine power of that fortune and hierarchical position: "I shall have you whether you will or no" (5: 211). Though both men and women are identified and commodified in this marketplace, the means of evaluation is quite different. Haunce, when confronted with his powerlessness, is willing to use his brute male strength (or bravado) to get what he wants. He cannot understand that opposition to his desires may be stronger than his own personal power as well as the patriarchal and societal power which underlie his power.

The very next scene is one which begins: "Enter Hippolyta drest like a man" (5: 213). She immediately confirms to the audience "Methinks I am not what I was" (5: 213) which echoes Bottom's transformation in Midsummer Night's Dream. But given the former scene of identity and evaluation and her own decision to ruin Antonio's life, this line heralds a change in attitude and action along with clothing and identity. She tells the audience "my soul too is all man" (5: 213) and she means to be an agent of her own destiny, not a bystander or an object of exchange. She comes to challenge Antonio and she is dressed as Alonzo to whom she was betrothed and the only man who can avenge her seduction and loss of honor. I suspect she dresses as Alonzo as he dressed as Haunce. Haunce is characterized as a boorish ass, but Hippolyta's costume which should have been identical to his, must reflect
Euphemia's anger and intention and yet also be appropriate for him. But it should not make her look like a fool. Just as the scene with Euphemia's unveiling and Hippolyta's appearance stopped the action in the early part of the play, the appearance of Hippolyta dressed as Alonzo dressed as Haunce stops this scene as well. Even though the audience has only the memory of the way Haunce and Alonzo look, the effect is one of a "mise en abym," an infinite mirror reflection or repetition of an image. That is not only does Hippolyta not look like herself, but she looks like Alonzo who looks like Haunce, which is very funny, but also very disconcerting.

All through the play, Behn has repeated the valuation motif. Women value themselves in terms of honor, wit and sensibility and fortune, but they are valued by men for their virginity, family connections and fortunes and most importantly for their beauty. And women are willing to negotiate with all these attributes, offering fortune and wit and when that doesn't work, upping the stakes to include honor, beauty and sexual pleasure as well. Men value themselves in terms of honor, action, wit and fortune, but women value them in terms of looks and wit. Fools and fops need not apply. There is very little a man can do to "up the stakes." With the appearance of Hippolyta dressed as a man, the structure of valuation is completely destabilized. A woman can dress as a man, act as a man. Can she be a
man? With the memory of the three people all dressed ridiculously to impersonate a fool, even this gender destabilization is tenuous. Can Hippolyta revenge her own "ruination"? Is she ridiculous or determined?

Interpretation of this moment is subtle and difficult and depends completely on the interpretation of the director and the actress. More than any other moment in Behn's plays, this illustrates Annette Kuhn's concept of the cross dressed figure in film:

the practice of performance constructs a subject which is both fixed in the distinction between role and self and at the same time, paradoxically, called into question in the very act of performance (52)

Behn does let us know in her "Epistle to the Reader" that the costumes did not serve this moment well:

I intended him a habit much more notably ridiculous, which if it can ever be important was so here, for many of the Scenes in the three last acts depended on mistakes of the Colonel for Haunce, which the ill-favor'd likeness of their Habits is suppose'd to cause. (5: 163)

For all of her creativity and good intentions, this ultimate moment did not go as she had planned. The costumes for Alonzo and Haunce were not ridiculous enough to create the effect of multiple fools.

The scene continues as Hippolyta hides and Haunce and enters followed by Alonzo and Lovis. Haunce has agreed to ask Alonzo if he can marry Euphemia, but when this doesn't work, he accuses Lovis and his family of reneging on the marriage bargain: "your Father is bound by agreement to
mine, to deliver me the wares (that is, his daughter) safe and sound; and I have no more to do, but protest against him in case of non-performance. 'Twill be a dear commodity to me at this rate" (5: 214). This rather silly confrontation masks the laughter and confusion the audience must have felt as the imagined "mise en abym" becomes real, right before their eyes. Careful blocking could have Hippolyta hiding as Haunce and Alonzo are entering simultaneously.

There must have been a huge sense of anticipation as the audience waited for the obligatory narrative conclusion, but first there was some general joking and clowning between Lovis Haunce and Alonzo, perhaps to let the audience calm down. Hippolyta then enters and recognizes Haunce, then asks the stranger Alonzo to find Antonio and challenge him for her. She declares:

So now the Work's half done, that will redeem all the lost Credit of our Family [...] Be strong my Soul, and let no feeble Woman swell about thee. (5: 216)

Approaching the climax, Hippolyta and Alonzo discuss the upcoming challenge. Alonzo offers to help, but Hippolyta will avenge her own dishonor. Alonzo hides. When Antonio arrives he expresses remorse of his treatment of Hippolyta. He doesn't recognize his lover, but threatens to fight her in her impersonation of Alonzo. Hippolyta answers as Alonzo and the hidden Alonzo wonders...
Who the Divel's that young Bully that takes my name and my concerns upon him? [. . .] Or you are both my Rivals -- tell me which. Which of you is it I must kill or both? (5: 220-1)

Hippolyta replies "Let not your friendship, Sir proceed so far, to take my name, to take my quarrel on you" (5: 221). Again, Behn reiterates that this is about metonymic (naming) exchange. Marcel appears and they all fight. Alonzo and Hippolyta dressed alike fight with Antonio and Marcel. Alonzo fights with Antonio in the only confrontation that makes sense by patriarchal rules (remember Hippolyta was betrothed to Alonzo and ruined by Antonio, the only valid avenger is Marcel the brother or Alonzo the betrothed).

Marcel fights with Hippolyta, the sister whose honor he has sworn to avenge. Hippolyta is wounded and Antonio realizes her true identity and is repentant and protective. She has almost avenged her and her family's honor, but has failed at the one thing that all of these men seem to succeed with: fighting.

In the denouement, all the men are found to be the sons of wealthy fathers and all the women are seen to be virtuous. Hippolyta and Antonio have already married and are welcomed. Even Haunce and his servant are matched to servants in Carlo's household. Alonzo and Euphemia and the other couples are all poised to marry, but first they dance. "There is within a young Father ready to joyn your hands: take this opportunity, and make sure of a wife" (5: 237). And finally Alonzo invites all to "a small Banquet.
[... in the next room" (5: 237). All's well that ends well with a dance, marriages and a feast in the tradition of classic comedy. But this is outside the utopian core of the play and even though it is familiar, it robs from the women their own choices and ability to act on their own. Olinda and Dormida are servants who are handed over to Haunce and Gload without any approval on their parts. The women are transformed again into objects instead of subjects. The money and the women belong to the men.

To make the arguments clearer, I have omitted discussion of the other women -- Cleonte and Clarinda and their love interests Silvio and Marcel. In eliminating these characters, I have also eliminated the discussion of the attempted rapes and seemingly incestuous romances that pepper their stories. While the incest is central to Levi-Strauss's concept of families exchanging women to other families and creating taboos against incest in order to keep this structure firmly in place, it seemed peripheral to the valuation motifs and the agency of female choice. Cleonte and Clarinda are unremarkable in the legion of Behn's female characters and they basically make no choice of husbands. They are the chosen of Silvio and Marcel. There will be very few Cleonte's and Clarinda's in the rest of Behn's work.

In spite of its length and complexity and its reputation as a flop, *The Dutch Lover* provides a detailed and
useful template for the economic analysis of gender and value in Behn's later plays that feature cross-dressed women and whores. The Oreo cookie structure of the plays with the female utopia sandwiched between scenes of patriarchal power is a standard structure for all the plays although the structure is never as clear cut as it is in this play. Behn uses the bargaining lovers, constantly evaluating themselves and each other in order to create appropriate matches in all the plays too. And she uses foolish male characters to criticize specific national and political adversaries to the English nation. This is the most primitive of Behn's intrigue comedies, in the structure and her understanding and critique of the sexual economy.

Hippolyta is not one of Behn's characteristic whores because she really isn't a whore. She is set up as one by her lover and she is worried over by her brothers, but she is not sought out as one. Only when she decides to avenge herself, does she plan to trade herself for the murder of her lover Antonio. She is saved from the life of a whore only by her own actions in breeches. Her brothers are totally ineffective in their efforts to find her, finally fighting against her instead of defending her in the climactic sword fight. Behn sets up a binary of women in her intrigue plays, one who is the whore and one who wears breeches. In this play, Euphemia and Hippolyta are both
subjects, not objects. Euphemia is the precursor to Hellen- 
ena in *The Rover* as she schemes to get the man of her 
choice in opposition to her family's plans for her. She is 
one of Laura Brown's women who are both commodities and 
consumers. Hippolyta also occupies a subject position, 
although she is simply a commodity. But her aims are more 
earthy and practical than Euphemia's — to make right the 
wrongs against her and her family. Hippolyta works for her 
honor and the other whores in Behn's later plays work for 
money. In this more primitive society, both women, in 
finding a mate and restoring honor, are welcomed back into 
their families in order to secure their futures.
CHAPTER 3
THE ROVER

If The Dutch Lover is all about exchange (in structure, rhetoric and action), then The Rover is all about "money." Behn continues the rhetoric of exchange in terms of flirtatious bargaining about the worth of men and women, and the strongest statements come from Behn's usual mouthpieces -- the whore character and the transvestite. The strong male character, Willmore, the rover, also speaks out against the patriarchal system which puts so much emphasis on wealth and thus leaves him feeling powerless. He speaks for the poor and disenfranchised including women. When pressed though (as he is with the two women in love with him), he quickly reverts to his own place as male in the patriarchy, a character with power. There is still in this play the bargaining between romantic partners, but the bargaining is angry in its open critique of the patriarchal system of valuating women. There is much discussion of money not just value and valuation and this idea of value and exchange is made real by the presence of money on the stage. Unlike in The Dutch Lover, "worth" is tangible and visible as coins are exchanged, stolen and put aside for safe keeping. The whore role and the breeches role are taken by two different characters not just one character, as Hippolyta in The Dutch Lover. The "Oreo cookie" structure is still in place, but the change from
patriarchal limits to utopian freedom and back to
patriarchal dominance is less clear cut. The control of
the daughters by the family is jeopardized from the opening
scene and the typical ending scene of wedding feast is
missing some important elements. There is much more humor
in this play than in The Dutch Lover but the humor is more
like character defamation and the brunt of these jokes is
Blunt. Because he is a specific English "type," the humor
is directed at the landed gentry unaffected by the
interregnum and the humor is political rather than
personal.

The play is set in Naples during carnival, so disguise
and masquerade are ever present. There are so many hidden
faces and costumes that they become commonplace, not the
strong statements they are in The Dutch Lover. This is a
play of words, though, not one of impersonations or
startling dramatic effects. Misunderstanding is a common
denominator among the characters. But Behn's meaning
(about gender inequality, love, economics) is clearer
because of her improved dramatic technique.

The Rover became Behn's most successful play, the
success perhaps resulting from the play's freedom from the
forced structure which characterized The Dutch Lover. The
lively characters (played by the best actors of the day)
and the simple compact plot also contributed to the play's
success. This popularity was also due to an enormous

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nostalgia for the cavaliers who followed the king in his banishment to France. The overall mood of the play is very joyful and hopeful. The audience and the reader are swept along by the enthusiasm of Florinda and Hellena, as they are swept along by the energetic sword fights and duels which pop up just when interest flags. It is important to note that the two plays which Behn wrote between The Dutch Lover and The Rover were not in her series of intrigue comedies featuring whores and cross dressed women. The play following The Dutch Lover was The Town Fopp, a direct attack against the fops in the audience who denounced the former play. The next play was her only tragedy, Abdelazer, which was an unsuccessful experiment, although it was "reasonably popular" and revived in 1695 to pen the season for the Drury Lane Theater (Behn 5: 241).

The Rover or, The Banish't Cavaliers was acted by the Duke's Company at Dorset Garden with King Charles II in attendance around March 24, 1677 (5: 446). The play was performed at Court in February 1680 and again in October 1685 (5: 446). It was revived on the public stage in March 1685 and January 1687 by the United Company (5: 446). Willmore, the title character, is partially based on Charles II, in that the character is disenfranchised because of the interregnum. The king's support of the play with attendance at the public playhouse and two
performances at court, lent the play a royal endorsement which Behn's other plays never enjoyed.

Behn based her play on Thomas Killigrew's closet drama *Thomaso, or The Wanderer: A Comedy*. Killigrew had helped Behn when she was spying for Charles II in Holland, but her theatrical alliance was with William Davenant's Duke's Company as long as it was in existence. Behn never accounts for her decision to use Killigrew's characters and plot. She went to great lengths to explain herself in the play's printed "Postscript" that the plot and the business were her own but that the reader could compare Killigrew's words and characters and make their own judgement (5: 520). Killigrew's play was a two part play of ten acts and seventy-three scenes (5: 446). It was written during the interregnum and was full of references to these years of cavalier exile (5: 446). There is inconclusive evidence that Killigrew tried to revise the play for the stage.

Anne Marshall Quin learned the role of Angelica Bianca for Killigrew's production of *Thomaso* in fall of 1664, but there is no record of the production (Wilson 168, *The London Stage* I: 84). Quin played the same role in Behn's production. Killigrew set his play in Madrid and begins with news of the arrival of the Paduan courtesan, Angellica Bianca (5: 445). There are other whores, "who frankly discuss the economic problems of their business" (5: 445). *Thomaso* is a philosopher as well as a cavalier (5: 446).
and the character is very much autobiographical. Like Behn's cavalier Willmore, Thomaso is also accompanied by Englishman Ferdinando and an Essex fool, Edwardo (5: 446). Edwardo is tricked by Lucetta, the whore, a brilliant Killigrew episode which is placed directly into The Rover. Thomaso takes money from Angellica Bianca, but is much more interested in the virtuous Serulina (5: 447). The whole threatens to disintegrate into a revenge tragedy with Edwardo extracting revenge by having Lucetta's face cut and the whores seeking to have Thomaso murdered (5: 447). But Thomaso wins the hand of Serulina and the whores repent their way of life and travel to Italy.

Behn shortened and focused the plot and changed many of the names. She added a friend for Willmore and a sister for Hellena to multiply the effect of happy couples at the conclusion. Behn changed Angellica Bianca from a repentant whore to a disappointed and broken-hearted one. Love seems much more dangerous for Behn's women than for Killigrew's. In fact Killigrew tells the tale exclusively from Thomaso's point of view, but Behn's story focuses on the fortunes of the women. She does this in the first scene with its intimate conversation between Hellena and Florinda. She also creates in Angellica Bianca a complete woman with strengths and weaknesses. This is not Thomaso's story of love, it is Hellena's and Angellica's story of rivalry over Willmore. In Behn's female utopia, the male has
become the object of desire, the prize to be won. Montegut Summers has many positive things to say about Behn's transformation of Thomaso:

Correcting, pruning, augmenting, enlivening, rewriting, she may indeed . . . be well said to have clothed dry bones with flesh, and to have given her creation a witty and supple tongue (Summers 5).

Like The Dutch Lover, this play is a confusion of memorable characters in contrived situations. The Rover was blessed by a brilliant cast, some of the most talented performers of the Restoration, all stock members of the Duke's Company. Elizabeth Barry created the role of Hellena, the outspoken "good girl" who wants to be "bad." Hellena wants only to go to carnival to find herself a man and a way out of her family's plans to send her to a convent. Barry herself was not a "good girl," but was "free with herself" (A Biographical Dictionary 1: 316). She had many liaisons during her career and was always accused of being mercenary in these relationships. She was a brilliant actress also known for her ability to dazzle audiences "with a beauty she did not have" (A Biographical Dictionary 1: 325). Though she plays the "good girl," her mercenary reputation enhances Behn's use of the whore in this play. There are more whores on the stage than meet the eye at first, Angellica Bianca, Lucetta, Moretta (formerly a whore) and Elizabeth Barry.

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Hellena's sister, Florinda, played originally by Mary Betterton, has fallen in love with the English Colonel Belvile just before arriving in Naples and hopes to meet him again in the midst of the Carnival confusion. Mary Betterton made a career of playing virtuous heroines, although she was also adept at playing the "lustful villainess" (Howe 104). She was thus able to play Florinda's steadfast love for Belvile while besieged at every turn by rape attempts. The scene of the soothers together beginning of the play is very unusual for the period and represents one of Behn's most masterful changes in the Thomaso format (in order to create a play about women's choices and desires).

Don Pedro is their brother, determined to marry Florinda off to his friend Antonio, against his father's wishes that she marry Don Vincentio, an old man. Into this simple enough scenario come Belvile and his English cohorts Frederick and Blunt. Thomas Betterton, one of the most important Restoration actors and a manager of the Duke's Company, created Belvile. He and Mary Betterton were married and were well known as a faithful and loving couple. It was a foregone conclusion that if Florinda and Belvile were played by the Bettertons, then despite all the trials and tribulations, they would be happily matched at the finale. Blunt is a country gentleman who is the butt of many jokes. He is not a cavalier and has not lost all
in the interregnum; in fact, he boasts of his wealth and his estate back home in Essex. Blunt is the English fool who is tricked by the whore Lucetta, a plot device stolen directly from Killigrew's Thomaso. Blunt was played by Cave Underhill, an important "low" comedian, playing characters who were "the stiff, the heavy and the stupid" (A Biographical Dictionary 15: 84). The title character is Willmore, the sailor who has come ashore to enjoy the carnival and especially to enjoy the women. He meets an old friend in Belvile and travels about with him and the other Englishmen. William Smith originated the part of Willmore, a role based on both Charles II and the Earl of Rochester. He also originated the role in The Second Part of the Rover. Montegut Summers is quotes as stating that Smith was "notably handsome and athletic" (Summers quoted in A Biographical Dictionary 14: 169). Smith performed in several of Behn's plays and was also part of the management of the Duke's Company. ¹

As the men talk on the street, carnival revellers cross the stage, women dressed as "curtizans" and some of the men dressed as cuckolds. The streets of Naples are alive with maskers embodying sexuality, very much like the modern New Orleans carnival. Hellena, Florinda and their

¹ It is interesting to note that Will Montfort also played Willmore, but his rover of 1690 seems a very different character. Summers quotes Dibdin about Montfort that "it was remarked by many, and particularly by Queen Mary, that it was dangerous to see him act, he made vice so alluring." (Dibdin quoted in Summers 1: 5).
cousin Valeria enter at this moment dressed like gypsies. Lucetta the whore and her entourage also enter into the masquerade. the women literally choose their men and in each case it is an appropriate choice, for the woman and the men have no idea why they have been chosen and for what purpose. This encounter initiates most of the plot of the remainder of the play -- the romance between Florinda and Belvile, the romance between Willmore and Hellena and the tricking of Blunt by Lucetta. it also introduces the ideas of both love and sexuality and sets the stage for the entrance of Angellica Bianca. After this encounter with all manner of carnival maskers, these Englishmen are aroused by the sexual possibilities available to them in Naples. This conversation turns to the most beautiful whore in all of Naples, the newly arrived Angellica Bianca. Frederick explains her price "She's expos'd to Sale, and Four days in the Week she's yours -- for so much a Month" (5: 466). But even the sex-starved Willmore is uninterested "The very thought of it quenches all manner of Fire in me" (5: 466).

Anne Marshall Quin played the passionate Angellica Bianca.2 She was one of the four original actresses in

2 The published script lists "Mrs. Gwin" in the role and it is often assumed that Nell Gwyn played the part. But Mrs. Gwyn performed only for the King's Company and left the stage in 1669 after she became the mistress of Charles II (Howe 74). She performed occasionally, "but in 1671, she left the stage for good" (Howe 74).
Killigrew's King's Company, along with her sister Rebecca Marshall (Howe 24). She was talented and attractive and soon became the leading lady of the company. Some historians think that she was the first woman to play a female role on the English stage after the Restoration, playing the role of Desdemona in the King's Company's production of Othello, on December 8, 1660 (Howe 24). Wilson describes her as "a handsome woman with an oval face, dark hair and eyes, and a small mouth" (170). Mrs Quin left the King's Company because of the company's financial troubles and joined the Duke's Company in 1677 (Howe 155). Elizabeth Howe muses "She cannot have been happy there, however, as for some reason she left the stage soon after" (155).

From the moment Angellica Bianca and Willmore meet, the play spirals through duels, chance meetings, sword fights, rapes, mistaken identities and jealousies too difficult to present as a brief plot summary. The conflicts are easier to identify. Willmore is in love with both Angellica Bianca and Hellena. Angellica is being courted by Willmore, Don Pedro and Don Antonio, only Willmore cannot pay her price. Don Pedro opposes his friend Don Antonio because Don Antonio is not only his rival for Angellica but also because Don Antonio dishonors his betrothed Florinda with his dalliance with Angellica. Blunt, enraged by Lucetta's trickery pledges to rape and
injure the next woman he sees, who unfortunately happens to be Florinda. Antonio is injured and Belvile must step in to duel with Don Pedro. Angellica becomes so angry that Willmore has spurned her, she threatens him with a pistol. In the last moments of the play Belvile and Florinda wed, much to Don Pedro's confusion. Valeria and Frederick marry also. Angellica Bianca is scorned by Willmore but followed offstage by Don Antonio. Blunt appears poorer, but wiser about the ways of whores. Finally Hellena and Willmore pledge to marry (and Willmore to command Hellena's large fortune).

In The Rover, the character types of whore and cross dresser are taken by two separate characters, Angellica Bianca and Hellena, not by the single Hippolyta whose story dominates The Dutch Lover. Angellica is truly a whore, unlike Hippolyta. Angellica is not only unrepentant (unlike Killigrew's Serulina), she is mercenary to the end, looking out for her own best interests. She and her baud, Moretta, talk often about the goal of her job -- making money. This is their priority. She exists outside of family and societal systems as defined by Levi-Strauss. There is also the whore Lucetta who is more a "type" than Angellica. Her presence mirrors and illuminates Angellica's position in the play and society. She too operates outside the patriarchal system but within the economy, although she robs and tricks Blunt rather than has
sex with him. Hippolyta, on the other hand has been debauched by her lover and the image of her as a "whore" has been constructed by him and by the male members of her family. She is firmly bound by the family system and is not paid for her "services." Hellena, in The Rover lives within a patriarchal family, which plans to place her in a convent soon. Her sister Florinda is also part of this system and is betrothed to the ancient Don Vincentio.

Hippolyta opposes that system by cross dressing and fighting with her lover to revenge her own ruination. Her efforts in male apparel change the direction of the narrative as well as her own romance and fortunes. Hellena, Florinda and Angellica Bianca oppose the patriarchal system as well in their words against their brothers and lovers. But Hellena does little more than flirt with Willmore and Angellica in her breeches. Cross dressing is merely one of the many disguises Hellena uses to bait, hook and reel in her catch, Willmore, thus defying the system which would have her become a nun. She is dressed as a boy in the final moments of the play and this destabilizes the ending as I will prove shortly.

Instead of the structure of an Oreo cookie which characterized The Dutch Lover, Behn offers an Oreo cookie which has been manipulated by a playful child. The good stuff (a utopia where women are free to act in their own self-interest) is still the most important part. There is
a change from the patriarchal world (the chocolate wafer) to a utopian world, but there is much less of the return to the status quo with a celebration of marriages at the play's end.

The beginning moments of the play define the plot from the sisters' point of view. They are seen talking alone ("commodities among themselves") about men, the societal and family system that limits them and of their determination to rebel against the system -- to be subjects instead of objects of exchange. Don Pedro, their brother enters and reminds them both of the family plans for them. Thus in this scene, Behn presents an idyllic female vision of women alone together plotting their futures and their love lives, interrupted by the patriarchal authority figure which that idyll by definition must oppose. The play does not end with the patriarchal figure delivering a lady to every gentleman, as did The Dutch Lover. Belvile and Florinda have married without a family blessing, although Don Pedro is happy his sister has not married Don Antonio, his rival for Angellica. Blunt does not get his girl (although the girl gets his money). Willmore and Hellena (still dressed as a boy) agree to marry as she breaks down his reserve. Subservient girl is not delivered into the hands of appropriate gentleman, boy tricks man. There is no invitation to a wedding celebration. Maybe the cookie has begun to crumble, but the analogy of a utopian world
sandwiched between major scenes of patriarchal reality no longer holds.

*The Rover* and Aphra Behn were blessed with a brilliant cast of leading men of the company (learned, distinguished, talented and attractive); the leading lady of the company, known for her "good girl" image; a much gossiped about ingenue; a beautiful actress known for the role of the whore and recently defected from the rival company; and a brilliant comedian known for his natural timing and his seeming "slowness". It almost seems that the parts were written for this cast in particular. The images of Elizabeth Barry in her gypsy costume and in her breeches as Hellena and the handsome and athletic William Smith as the charming Willmore as well as Cave Underhill as Blunt influence our ideas about what the play "means" even today.

As in many of Behn's plays, bargaining is a strong element in this play. From the very beginning to the very end, Hellena, Florinda, Angellica and Willmore rail against capitalism, the patriarchal system that forces people to do things for money. There is the simple bargaining that substituted for flirtation in *The Dutch Lover*. But in the midst of the bargaining and often instead of the bargaining, there is opposition to the idea of "payment" for love and sex. It's as though Behn's earlier play was bound by primitive tribal traditions of Levi-Strauss, while this play is bound by Marx's capitalism.
In the very first scene, Florinda is furious with her father for the marriage he has arranged for her with the rich old Don Vincentio --

I shall let him see, I understand better what's due to my Beauty, Birth and Fortune, and more to my Soul, than to obey those unjust Commands. (5: 455)

Hellena approves of this rebellion:

Now hang me, if I don't love thee for that dear disobedience. I love mischief strangely, as most of our Sex do, who are come to Love nothing else. . . (5: 455)

These women are unyielding and potentially disruptive because they are commodities which long to be consumers. Florinda has already done some window shopping having fallen in love with Belvile before the action begins. Hellena is adding up her assets --

have I not a World of Youth? a humour gay? a Beauty passable? a Vigour desirable? Well Shap't: clean limb'd? sweet breath'd? (5: 455)

She has her shopping list as well:

I'm resolv'd to provide my self this Carnival, if there be ere a handsome proper fellow of my humour above ground, tho I ask first. (5: 455)

Their brother, Don Pedro, enters to remind Florinda that their father wants her to marry Don Vincentio, but that he wants her to marry his friend Don Antonio. Don Pedro opposes the authority of the father as well. the young women rail against these choices, Hellena taking up the fight as though it were her own. Florinda bargains like Euphemia, only against marriage:
Let him consider my Youth, Beauty and Fortune; which ought not be thrown away on his Age and Joynture. (5: 456)

Both Hellena and Florinda describe what they think a marriage to an old man will be like: "to lye in a wide motheaten Bed Chamber. . .in his foul sheets" (5: 457).

Finally Hellena equates the physical with the financial And this Man you must kiss, nay you must kiss none but him too -- and nuzel through his Beard to find his Lips. -- And this you must submit to for Threescore years, and all for a Joynture. (5: 457)

These valuations and exchanges are much more grim than those in The Dutch Lover. As in that play the men must submit to this valuation process as well. Don Pedro reminds Florinda that Belvile is a cavalier and "has no Fortune to bring you to, is banisht his country, dispis'd at home and pitty'd abroad" (t: 457). Rather than reinforce the valuation motif, this undermines it for the audience. Cavaliers were not universally despised or pitied; in fact much of the original audience was composed of cavaliers and royalist supporters. Belvile, as a Colonel, does command the support of his country and of the restored monarch. Don Pedro ignores the power of the monarch (passed down through his military leaders), but greatly respects the power of money. Blunt too sees his gold and his lands in England as an asset. The fact that he still has family land means that he is not a supporter
of the king. He, like Don Pedro, ignores the king, but respects the power of money.

In addition to being "politically incorrect," Blunt is also the fool, much like Haunce in The Dutch Lover. Almost echoing Hellena's list of assets. Blunt lists his own:

this Shape and Size Gentlemen are not to be dispis'd -- my Waist too tolerably long, and with other inviting signs, that shall be nameless. (5: 468)

This is not the same inviting list that Hellena presented. But then Hellena is a shrewd judge of her own personal attributes, her own value and Blunt is not. Belvile wonders if these attributes are really attractive to women:

Dost thou perceive any such tempting things about him, that shou'd make a fine Woman, of Quality, pick him out from all Mankind, to throw away her Youth and Beauty upon, nay and her dear heart too! (5: 468)

Blunt is not merely a humorous figure, he is truly a political one and though he is landed gentry, he is powerless in the world of this play.

For their part, Willmore and Blunt are only looking for sexual pleasure. Belvile has fallen in love with florinda and wants to find her to settle down and have a family. While bantering about women, the Englishmen enunciate one of the core issues of this play. Belvile says "That's thy joy, a cheap Whore" and Blunt replies "When did you ever hear of an honest Woman that took a Man's Money?" (5: 460). Blunt's line reverberates
throughout the play. He mistakes the luxury of a whore's home for that of a wealthy woman of quality. He and Willmore nearly rape Florinda twice, unaware that she really is a woman of quality. Finally he doesn't recognize Hellena as a woman of quality and a wealthy one, but when Angellica tells him, he immediately chooses Hellena to marry, not for her beauty of wit, but for her money.

At the first meeting of Hellena and Willmore, she is masked and chooses him out of all the available men. It is unclear to the Englishmen whether these women are whores or not. Hellena flirts with Willmore using almost the same lines that Euphemia used with Alonzo in *The Dutch Lover*:

Willmore: If she be Young and Handsome.

Hellena: Ay, there's it -- but if she be not -- (5: 463).

Like Euphemia and Alonzo, Hellena and Willmore continue bargaining about her beauty. Hellena is not veiled as Euphemia was, but is masked several ways for the carnival. She is masked when she meets him and she is masked again in the third act. In spite of the mask, he recognizes her as his "little Gipsey." He again asks to see her face and she refuses. She wonders if he would "fall to, before a Priest says Grace" (5: 479). And he tells her that the only thing that would upset him more than that remark would be an ugly face. This is simply a long version of the negotiations between Euphemia to see her face. A few moments later,
Hellena talks to Willmore of marriage, but declares that she has much to do while she is young and handsome (has value?). If she were to fall in love, she would be undone. When she decides that they are well matched, she takes off her mask and he is startled by her beauty. She is indeed valuable -- both witty and beautiful.

This motif of beauty as value is much more complex in *The Rover*. In *The Dutch Lover* Euphemia kept herself veiled because to unveil was to become vulnerable, to have all her "assets" available for public consumption. Like her virginity, a woman's face was something to be used as a trump card. The virginity was the true value, but a beautiful face was an important indicator of her virtue and thus value. If a woman was beautiful then she was virtuous, but if she displayed her beauty she was not.

Hellena follows these same rules as does Florinda. There is a scene where Florinda is masked and testing Belvile's love for her. She offers him a ring, for "Bills of Exchange may sometimes miscarry" (5: 481). He tells her that he's made a vow to a very fair lady and she is reassured. She gives him the ring and leaves and he discovers who she is because the ring contains her picture.

I have shown how Bills of Exchange (credit between men) go wrong in *The Dutch Lover*. Behn has cleverly used the way that men communicate and turned that around to have Florinda give something of value (jewelry) which is also
informative and a piece of herself to prove her identity and value to Belvile. Unlike the impetuous Hellena and the mercenary Angellica, Florinda has not had to show her face to prove herself (although of course Belvile had seen her long before).

Angellica on the other hand advertises her beauty with large and small pictures displayed at her house. Behn calls attention to the signs when she has Angellica's men hang them for Willmore and his friends. The men also mention the exorbitant price of a thousand crowns a month. Don Pedro and his friend Don Antonio both admire the picture and Don Pedro mentions that the original is more wonderful than the picture. Willmore is so enthralled with her image, that he takes the picture. He is too poor to purchase the woman, so he steals the sign of the woman. Behn calls constant attention to the sign, building up curiosity for the real woman and pointing out the constructedness of the whore's role. She did the same for Hippolyta as both Antonio and her brothers talk about the woman who has become a whore. Both the mask and the sign are ways that women take power and manipulate the sexual economic system and the men who view women as commodities. The sign advertises the whore in a public way -- the face is the advertisement. But the vizard mask used in The Rover is the kind of mask worn by prostitutes. This mask marks the woman as a prostitute. , much as Angellica's
sign marks her as a prostitute, but the mask hides the woman's identity. Both advertise sex for sale, but the vizard is more protective in its denial of the pleasure of the male gaze.

Janet Todd, who edited the recent publication of Behn's complete works, chose "the sign of Angellica" as the title to her earlier study of the early women writers of fiction. In her introduction she explains why -

In Aphra Behn's The Rover (1677), a prostitute named Angellica Bianca attracts customers by displaying an inviting and provocative sign of herself. At the end of the play, after her patrons have been merry over her 'price and picture,' Angellica Bianca is denied the hero: the message of her portrait is too frank too crude. Had she worn it close to her face as a mask, matters might have been different, but instead she chose to distance it and to draw attention to its construction. The action was conscious, blatant, unfeminine and professional. (Todd The Sign of Angellica 1)

I disagree with Todd that Angellica is "denied the hero" and that "matters might have been different," but I do agree that the sign was conscious, blatant and professional and her actions were quite different from the other women of the play who hide their faces with masks.

Moments after he steals the picture, Willmore is forced to explain to Angellica that he could not afford the woman, so he took the image and she invites him into her home. Angellica does not have her whole heart in the business for when Moretta explains that these men admired her beauty but joked about her price, she replies "their
wonder feeds my vanity, and he that wishes but to buy, gives me more Pride, than he that gives my Price, can make my pleasure" (5: 469). Yet at the prospect of a paying customer, she declares that "nothing but Gold, shall charm my heart" (5: 469).

Willmore and Angelica argue over the price she has set on her favors, tempting "poor Am'rous Mortals with so much excellence" (5: 473). He rails against "that which is Love's due is meanly barter'd for" (5: 473). Moretta interferes to plead for the business "wee only sell by the whole piece" (5: 473). Angellica for her part, has been conquered by Willmore's charm, but despises his railing. He sees himself as deserving of a woman's love, as highly superior (morally perhaps?). He says "poor as I am, I wou'd not sell my self, no not to gain your Charming high priz'd Person" (5: 474). In his view, she can sell herself, but he would never sell himself. He certainly cannot see the two of them as equal, or equally valuable commodities. But Angellica points out that men do sell themselves in order to secure a wealthy wife:

Pray tell me, Sir. are not you guilty of the same Mercenary Crime, when a Lady is propos'd to you for a Wife, you never ask, how fair -- discreet -- or virtuous is she; but what's her Fortune -- which if but small, you cry -- she will not do my business -- and basely leave her, thou she languish for you. . . (5: 474-475)

He protests that "it is a Barbarous Custome, which I will scorn to defend in our Sex, and do despise in yours" (5: 71)
475). She answers "put up thy Gold, and know. That were thy Fortune large as is thy Soul, Thou shoud'rst not buy my Love" (5: 475). She wishes that he could think of sex with her without thinking she was mercenary. She wishes he could see her as equally valuable and she wishes that he would love her without being forced to or without the financial arrangements being uppermost in his mind. This is a very difficult conversation because she is almost throwing herself at him, but he just doesn't understand that she is offering herself, her love, her lovemaking. When he finally does understand, he agrees in financial terms: "I'll pay thee back my Soul! my Life!" (5: 476). She asks "And will you pay me then the price I ask?" (5: 476). When he again doesn't understand, she offers "They pay, I mean, is but thy Love for mine. -- Can you give that?" (5: 476). She wants a simple exchange, "thy love for mine." They are commodities among themselves and she is pleading for a different kind of bargaining, the kind without the valuation of the marketplace that Luce Irigaray writes about. It is the same kind of bargain that Hellena and Florinda hope to make. Finally, he understands her plain language and answers "intirely" and whisks her off to bed.

What he has understood is the mutual pleasure of lovemaking, but she has been bargaining for mutual love. I doubt that she is "giving up" the profession of
prostitution, but she is asking to be seen as a woman like every other and not as a whore. Willmore also confuses love and lovemaking when he meets Hellena and she confronts him with "Is there no difference between leave to love me, and leave to lie with me?" (5: 463). "Love" like "exchange" is a slippery word with many meanings and both Angellica and Willmore have misunderstood this bargain. As they exit, Moretta calls him "a no Purchase, no Pay Taterdemalion and English Piccaroon" (5: 476).

This is by far Behn's most forthright statement of her ideas about the inequality of the sexual economy. Women of quality have money to attract men: men can choose the richest of women depending on their own assets and the deal they strike. Men benefit. But there seems to be no way that women can become wealthy through this process unless they pay a sacrificial price. For Angellica that price is to have the title "mercenary whore" thrown in her face. For Florinda and Hellena, the price is to spend a lifetime married to a disgusting old man.

Willmore also plays the part of the whore, taking money from Angellica after their first lovemaking. He has found the proverbial cheap whore and he boasts to his comrades -- "all the Honey of Matrimony, but none of the sting" (5: 479). He pulls out coins, money given to him by Angellica: "tis he and she Gold whil'st here, and shall beget new Pleasures every moment" (5: 479). It is possible
that he is equating his own sexuality, his own ability to please with money -- he has been paid for sex. His term "he and she Gold" is very curious, that the gold belongs to both the man and the woman as does the pleasure. The money and the pleasure can create and recreate each other -- money can create pleasure and pleasure can create money. But most of all Willmore is pleased to have money again: pox of Poverty, it makes a Man a slave, makes Wit and Honour sneak, my Soul grew rusty for want of credit" (5: 479). Willmore again takes the role of mercenary whore in Act IV, Scene I, when Angellica confronts Willmore for his inconstancy in his dalliance with Hellena. Angellica says "I will not answer for your Mistress's Virtue. . .'Twas the Two Hundred Thousand Crowns you Courted" (5: 496), meaning that he was more interested in Hellena's money than her beauty or honor. Willmore was indeed taken with Hellena's beauty, but he is delighted to know that his gypsy has a major fortune. It is obvious in the next few lines that he is desperate to get away to make the deal for the beautiful, young, witty and wealthy Hellena. He has made a love choice based on money rather than anything else, exactly what Angellica accused most men of doing. The very thing he has accused Angellica of, he has done himself.

When he is finally able to make a bargain with Hellena in the last moments of the play, his first words to her are from the endings of most classic comedies: "my Friends are
all provided for within, each Man his kind Woman" (5: 516). Then he proceeds with his own words of love to her: "I defie foul weather to part us" and "I'm parlously afraid of being in Love (5: 516). She agrees and cautions him "to lose no time," to which he replies that they should go to his bed chamber and make love. She holds out for a legitimate marriage and he refuses: "no we'll have no Vows but Love" (5: 517). Hellena reminds him of the outcome of lovemaking "what shall I get? a cradle full of noise and mischief, with a pack of repentance at my back?" (5: 517). when he realizes that he cannot change her mind, that her will is stronger than his, he kisses her hand and offers to let "Love and Fortune. . .do their worst" (5: 517). She is surprised at his pretty words. He finalizes the match with "the bargain is now made" (5: 517). And it is ultimately that: a bargain in which they both give up their freedom, but one in which he gains her enormous fortune.

Behn uses real money in The Rover, not simply the abstract valuation of a pretty face in exchange for a brave soldier, or a life in exchange for "poor ruined Hippolyta." Behn shows her audience the coins Anaellica gave Willmore. Giving her heart hurt her more than giving him her money. Frederick takes the precaution of taking their joint savings from Blunt, their "banker" before he goes to meet Lucetta. Blunt offers them his own savings, but they give it back. Frederick says "No, keep that to be couzen'd,
that we may laugh” (5: 467). Finally, Behn shows Lucetta taking Blunt’s valuables, not only coins, but "family jewels," part of his Essex estate. Like Florinda’s picture ring, he loses family pictures and he loses something real and valuable, part of his own identity. He exclaims later: "I have a Bill of Exchange at home wou’d have saved my credit” (5:485), but again, Bills of Exchange miscarry, and Lucetta offers nothing in exchange except the promise of pleasure.

The beginning and the end of the utopian episode are different from the beginning and ending scenes in classic comedies and those in The_Dutch_Lover. The charming first scene between Hellena and Florinda is almost like Irigaray’s “commodities among themselves,” the calm before the storm. this is the beginning of the power struggle, which can be seen simply as adolescent disobedience or the beginning of the classic comic narrative. Or it can be seen as a call to struggle against the patriarchy. Most comedies feature a younger generation in opposition to the older generation, generally over a love match. But in this case, it is the women who are opposing not just the older generation, but the entire social order of patriarchal exchange of women. The simple act of a woman "shopping" for a man of her own choice can thus be seen as a revolutionary act.
The scene before the denouement is the final negotiation between Hellena and Willmore. Hellena is still in her breeches. This pas de deux reads like any of Behn's scenes of bargaining, but the scene on stage is in extraordinary contrast to the sweet romantic vision usually ending these comedies. Willmore in military buff coat seems to be romancing a boy. The audience may have ignored to costume, concentrating on the very attractive Elizabeth Barry and William Smith, but this image of man-boy love could not have gone unnoticed by a culture which openly acknowledged sexuality in all its forms. Even though this is the main romantic couple of the play, it doesn't look like the couple the genre assumes.

Following this scene, Don Pedro and the other couples enter and all the loose ends are tied up. Florinda and Belvile have been married moments before as have Frederick and Valeria. Don Pedro, the authority figure, cannot offer maid to man, in the grand gesture which ended *The Dutch Lover*. The couples have run off and given themselves to each other. Throughout the play Don Pedro has been unable to prohibit any of these love matches as well as being unsuccessful in his own negotiations with Angellica. he and the authority he represents are powerless over these lovers. The older generation is put aside for the younger generation as in all classic comedy. But his own inability to win Angellica (with money) makes him seem unfortunately

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impotent and there is a sadness to his uncoupled state at the end. The matches are made and the patriarchy is reaffirmed, but this ending is at such variance with the classic endings (the man-boy couple, the flustered and impotent patriarch, the lack of a wedding feast) that it must constitute an incomplete return to the status quo. It is truly not an open ending, but it is not as closed as that of *The Dutch Lover* of other classic comedies. Behn will produce more open endings as her technique develops.
CHAPTER 4

THE SECOND PART OF THE ROVER

The Second Part of the Rover is vastly different from its predecessor. The whole mood of the play is darker, less hopeful, typical of plays following the Popish Plot. In this play it is not the women plotting to find a husband suitable to their assets; it is the men who are desperately seeking women with enormous fortunes. This is not a play which seeks a cheap whore for every man, but one which seeks fortune and safe sanctuary. It is not a play about pleasure, but about survival and greed. The men have money, but they want more. This is the world that Angellica Bianca warned against, where men seek women for their family fortunes, not for their beauty, discretion or virtue. Money is everything, pleasure means nothing. It is hard to find love in this world. And it is almost as hard to find sex. Sex is everywhere in The Rover, in the streets, between Willmore and Angellica, in every man's mind. But there is no sex in this play, although much talk about it.

It is the whores and the woman dressed as a boy who continue to make these differences and inequalities clear. The whore and the cross dressed woman take up their old positions opposite each other. In this play, La Nuche is the whore and Ariadne is the cross dressed woman. Both chase after Willmore and both are content with Beaumond, when Willmore is occupied. They are both much less inter-
ested in the old Don Carlo. For La Nuche and Petronella, her baud, he is still a good source of income, but Ariadne will have little to do with him. La Nuche is as outspoken of any of Behn's whores when she speaks of her livelihood as a trade with a service worth its price. She also rails at Ariadne for being a woman of quality. She tells her that her own business "is only to be belov'd not to Love" (Behn 6: 272). She leaves the "slavery" of love to someone like Ariadne who must "invite or die without the blessing" (6: 272) because the men lack the confidence to ask first. La Nuche compares the lovemaking of a wife to "deeds of darkness", but her own to "cheerful Birds in open day" (6: 273).

More than the other plays, this whore has the most positive position, in that she gets the hero, she wins the prize. La Nuche can freely choose to love like other women. She has achieved with Willmore what Angellica Bianca was never able to do: to be thought of as just a woman, not a whore. Ariadne loves Beaumond and is happy with the match, but Willmore has been designated as the prize throughout the play. The whore and breeches role usually dominate the utopian portion of the plays and their greatest achievement is their choice of mate. Yet in this play the men take the center of the usually utopian stage, vying for the attentions of wealthy women as well as for La Nuche. This interest in money obscures the fact that these women have fewer choices than most of Behn's heroines. La Nuche, the whore,
is the character who makes the greatest change. In the beginning, she is mercenary, taught well by old Petronella to look out for number one. But in the end, she throws all of it away for the love of Willmore. The rover, himself, also goes against this dark world and pursues not a fortune, but a passionate love match with the La Nuche. Ariadne, dressed as a boy, flirts with La Nuche just as Hellena flirted with Angellica Bianca. It is her way of slipping through the system to see what Willmore is really like.

There is bargaining between lovers, but these are arguments about paying for love and the evils of capitalism. Passion, patriotism and fortune are separate gods and the lovers must be sure of their beliefs before they choose a mate. There is none of the flirtatious unveiling of faces or debates about fortunes made by traders on the exchange. There is one grand confusion of women, similar to those in The Dutch Lover, but it comprises the entire fourth act, with Willmore and Beaumond constantly mistaking La Nuche for Ariadne and vice versa. Blunt and Fetherfool still cannot tell the difference between whores and women of quality.

The women bring themselves to the bargaining table as they are, though some would make major changes, if they could. Willmore seems alone in his poverty in The Rover, but most of the men in The Second Part of the Rover are bargaining from a similar position of vulnerability and desperation, even though they are rich.
The Oreo cookie has completely crumbled. This structure which provided a consistent framework, a female utopia and a return to the status quo fails on almost all levels. There are no families for the romantic leads to oppose, no convents or odious arranged marriages from which to escape. Willmore, is completely unattached to family. La Nuche, the prostitute, also lives outside a family system. Willmore enjoys this freedom, for when he is confronted with a man who wants to marry La Nuche, he sneers "marry him, and be cursed by all his Family" (6: 284). Beaumond lives with his uncle in the same house with his cousin and betrothed, Ariadne, yet the uncle is never a real presence in the narrative. This Ariadne-Beaumond match is not exciting, but it is far from the dreadful arranged marriages of Euphemia or Florinda. There simply is no patriarch ignoring the interests of the daughter in order to create a strong alliance with another man.

If there are no families at the beginning, there are certainly no families to celebrate the matches in the final moments, no patriarch delivering the virgin to another man and the celebration of a meal and a dance. In fact, in Act IV, La Nuche gives Beaumond to Ariadne who gives him back (6: 272), parodying the giving of women to men by patriarchs. The two couples come together, but not in marriage. Beaumond and Ariadne agree to a trial courtship only. Beaumond offers to
try to love so well to be content to marry; if we find that amendment in our hearts, to say we dare believe and trust each other, then let it be a match. (6: 297)

Willmore and La Nuche pair off but without marrying. She declares "now I am yours, and o're the habitable World will follow you, and live and starve by turns as fortune pleases" (6: 294). He replies "no poverty shall part us. -- so -- now here's a bargain made without the formal foppery of Marriage" (6: 294). Beaumond and Ariadne will not receive the overwhelming family support that Euphemia and Hippolyta receive. And Willmore and La Nuche will wander, cut off from the capitalistic economy and society in general. It feels like a very modern 90's kind of world, where each member of the couple accepts responsibility for their feelings and their own decisions in the relationship. These seem like sensible, mature, workable relationships, unlike the overly romantic ones in The Rover and those determined by family decisions as in those in The Dutch Lover.

The central portion of the play is no utopia for the women either. Ariadne chases Willmore, but never catches him and La Nuche must give up everything, including her financial independence -- her livelihood for her man. The wealthy sisters courted by several men are cruelly used and ridiculed. The men seem to dominate the central portion as well as the beginning and end.

The play was probably performed by the Duke's Company at Dorset Garden Theater some time before January 18, 1681
"since the epilogue refers to Parliament, which sat from 15 October 1680 to 18 January 1681" (Behn 6: 225). There probably was a revival April 4, 1681 (Behn 6:225, The London Stage I: 293). The play was well received but was not as popular as The Rover (Behn 6: 225).

Like the other plays, the cast was exceptional. William Smith played Willmore, reprising the great success he had in the role in The Rover (The London Stage I: 293, Behn 6: 225). Elizabeth Barry played the prostitute, La Nuche, instead of the outspoken and daring virgin (The London Stage I: 293, Behn 6: 225). Finally the bad girl is allowed to be bad. But it is still William Smith and Elizabeth Barry, still Willmore and Behn's most successful heroine. Ariadne (the breeches role) was played by Betty Currer (The London Stage I: 293). This role called for an audacious and opinionated woman which Currer could easily handle. Joseph Williams played Beaumond. Very little is known about him because of confusion between him and another actor with a similar name. Colley Cibber found him a good actor (Dictionary of National Biography 432). The character name reminds us of Belville, but this is no constant lover played by Betterton. He is alternatively frantic, whiny and angry when he doesn't get his way.

The comic subplot was the most elaborate of these plays with a giants, a mountebank and two fools. Some of the humor is comedia inspired. Cave Underhill reprised the role
of Ned Blunt (The London Stage I: 256), but this time he is accompanied by Fetherfool, played by James Nokes (London Stage I: 293). Never have such a dismal pair plotted to marry such improbable wealthy women (a giantess and a dwarf) and failed so utterly. Not only are they fools, but they are insensitive and cruel as well. Only Willmore, in his relations with Angellica could be considered more despicable. In this comic subplot, Willmore impersonates a charlatan who sells sham charms to rectify nature's mistakes. His intention is simply to trick Blunt and Fetherfool. He is aided by Beaumond's companions Hunt and Shift who play the parts of Scaramouche and Harlequin. The humor of this play always pokes fun at someone, sometimes cruelly. Willmore sets out to make fun of Blunt and Fetherfool from the first scene. The whole town is the butt of Willmore's mountebank impersonation. And the giantess and dwarf become the butt of his joke by default. But all of Behn's comic sub-plots need a cully to be funny -- Haunce in The Dutch Lover, Blunt in The Rover.

The Second Part of the Rover, like its predecessor was also taken from Thomas Killigrew's ten-act play, Thomaso. Much of the plot and many of the characters are lifted directly from Killigrew's work: the mountebank, the wealthy giantess and dwarf, the old whore and the commedia dell'arte characters (6: 226-27). Much of the talk of economics comes directly from Thomaso. Janet Todd suggests that Behn "pres-
ents the dwarf and giant as real characters with considerable understanding of the exploitation they are suffering" (6: 225).

The plot of The Second Part of the Rover is much simpler than that of the other plays. Behn juggles only two couples, but she handles the mistakes of the night in Act IV with dazzling speed. Willmore, Blunt and Fetherfool begin their time in Madrid trying to find Beaumond, the English Ambassador's nephew recently arrived from Paris. When Beaumond arrives at the door, the companions exchange news and gossip. Willmore explains that his dear Hellena has died and he has spent her entire fortune in Brussels, trying to forget his grief. They also discover that Belville and Florinda are healthy and happy in Paris. Willmore also explains to Beaumond that Blunt and Fetherfool are rich and foolish and that he delights in tricking them.

Fetherfool announces that rich "monsters" have come to town, a giant and a dwarf, "Jews of vast fortunes . . . they are worth a hundred thousand pounds a piece" (6: 236). Fetherfool and Blunt will spend the rest of the play pursuing these sisters for their fortunes. Willmore often declares that he will court the giantess for her money, but he says this to either upset Fetherfool or La Nuche. Unfortunately, Shift and Hunt, Beaumond's companions, have a prior claim to the wealthy ladies and they win them in the end. Gossip has it that the sisters are interested in the claims
reduced to a size that he can change them to a more normal size. Willmore sees this as a wonderful opportunity to play the mountebank in order to poke fun at Blunt and Fetherfool. Beaumond also mentions his wife to be, Ariadne, "very pretty, young and rich" (6: 238). But she may also interested in the ancient Don Carlo. Don Carlo is also La Nuche's lover, so he provides competition to both Beaumond and Willmore. Add to this the fact that Ariadne is chasing Willmore and Beaumond lusts for La Nuche and the plot becomes even more complex. Willmore as the mountebank dominates Act II. He offers a liquid which cures all illness of mind a body, gives courage and brings the dead back to life (6: 248). He offers a powder for those who would "be fair and wear eternal Youth" for those who "would have handsome, young and active Lovers" (6: 249). And finally he offers the "Amorous Powder" which "makes Women kind, and equals Men to Gods" (6: 250). Blunt and Fetherfool buy a bit of each cure and Petronella, La Nuche's bawd, gives the charlatan money to restore her youth.

Act IV is a grand confusion of the night, typical of Behn's intrigue plots. The women always know who the men are, but the men invariably mistake one woman for the other. Willmore goes to meet Ariadne in the Piazza, but runs into Beaumond who is followed by La Nuche. Beaumond and Willmore fight. Beaumond is confused by La Nuche and thinks she is Ariadne. Beaumond upbraids La Nuche because he thinks she
is Ariadne meeting a man and cuckolding him. He calls her a whore and La Nuche replies "and is a Whore -- a thing so much despis'd?" (6: 270) and shows him who she really is. Ariadne approaches "undrest" (6: 269) and Willmore realizes that there are two women and he will have at least one of them. La Nuche is furious with Beaumond for declaring his love for her and then calling her a whore so disparagingly. Instead of Behn creating a visual image to startle the audience and leaving them to decipher it, she creates the image (Beaumond misunderstanding who he is with) and then has the characters comment on the situation (La Nuche upbraiding Beaumond for his mistake). She adds insult to injury and calls him "thou fop of fortune, thou slavish Heir to Estate and Wife, born rich and damn'd to Matrimony" (6: 270). When Beaumond realizes that he has angered La Nuche so that she will not honor their assignation, he storms like a cheated shop customer: "Was this not my Night? my paid for Night? my own by right of Bargain, and by Love?" (6: 271). Though he acknowledges his love, he does not acknowledge that his words have hurt La Nuche. While all this is happening, Willmore takes Ariadne aside to seduce her as a stranger, much like he tried to do with Florinda in The Rover. He ruffles Lucia, Ariadne's kinswoman, and arouses the entire Ariadne-Beaumond household resulting in a rousing sword fight. Again Willmore pursues Ariadne trying to convince her to "be kind" and have sex with him. But they
are again interrupted. Ariadne asks him to meet her again at the Garden Gate and she will give herself to him. These mistakes and discoveries do not have the meaningful qualities of Hippolyta and Euphemia for several reasons. The characters are not carefully drawn, the reader/spectator doesn't have an investment in them. The confusions come and go quickly as well. It's as though Behn has put words into the mouths of her characters and does not need sight gags to convey her meanings.

Though La Nuche has pledged her night to Beaumond, Willmore slips into her bedroom prepared for lovemaking. At the point of capitulation, Beaumond enters. Beaumond claims the woman by bargain and but Willmore claims her by love. They argue about who has the largest claim on her, but Willmore decides to leave to find Ariadne and Beaumond leaves remembering how she has jilted him. They are really more interested in competing with each other than they are in the woman. One moment La Nuche has her love, Willmore, in another too many men and then none.

Confusions continue as Willmore and Beaumond go to meet Willmore's romantic assignation. Willmore goes to find her, but Beaumond finds Ariadne and takes her to the mountebank's house. La Nuche follows Willmore and he thinks she is Ariadne and takes her home to his own Lodging. When it comes time for bedding, Ariadne yields but on conditions -- she offers youth, beauty, jewels, estate, if he deliver a "hand-
som proper fellow, heart-whole and sound" (6: 293). But she must be married because she is daughter in law to the English Ambassador. Beaumont immediately knows that it is Ariadne and reveals himself to her. He realizes that had he been less pleasant, more rakish and unmanageable, they could have found happiness sooner. Willmore and La Nuche must also come to terms with their match, but she capitulates to him, promising to follow him anywhere and follow fortune. The giant and the dwarf also come to the house of the mountebank and are reconciled with their guardian. Hunt and Shift are revealed as the villains who have carried them off and married them. Blunt seems to have made a match with Petronella. All the ends are neatly tied, but there is no marriage, there is no banquet.

Like the other plays there is bargaining in almost every scene. Willmore complains of his place outside of the capitalistic system, where he has no ready cash for the beautiful whore La Nuche.

Oh Fortune! Cursed blind mistaken fortune: eternal friend to fools! Fortune! that takes the noble rate from man to place it on her Idol interest. (Behn 6: 233)

Like his time with Angellica Bianca, he is cursing his own poverty because she will not entertain him without his ready cash. His own good self is not as valuable to her as money. Moments later he calls her a "mercenary Jilt!" (6: 233). Later, Willmore whines about the language of economics
you Women have all a certain Jargon, or Giberish, peculiar to your selves: of Value, Rate, Present, Interest, Settlement, Advantage, Price, Maintenance. . . which in plain terms signifye Ready Money. (6: 245)

This is not simply the gibberish of women, but the language of money managers. It is the same language with which Haunce tries to overwhelm Euphemia in The Dutch Lover.

But this discussion centers on the difference between love and money and sex and money, men and sex and women and sex. Willmore will never have money in this world, yet this is a world where women are always offered for sale and assumed to be for sale. Almost the first thing Willmore asks upon entering the stage is about La Nuche and the fact that he has no money to purchase her. When Shift describes the giant and the dwarf, Willmore exclaims "Let's go see 'em", what do they pay for going in?" (6: 237). Willmore assumes that they are part of a carnival freak act, that they are commodities to be gazed and wondered at. Fetherfool explains that these are "Monsters of Quality," not exposed for viewing by the common rabble. They are not commodities in the sense of carnival freak acts, but they are still commodities in that they can be married and their fortunes gained. When Willmore meets Ariadne, he recognizes that she is a lady, but nevertheless an available lady: "Thou say'ast thou'rt not to be sold, and I'me sure thou'rt to be had" (6: 245). But like Florinda, Ariadne is cognizant of her worth and answers "By one that can esteem 'em to their worth, can
set a va[l]ue and a rate upon 'em" (6: 245). Unfortunately for Willmore in this mercenary world, his sexual favors are not a prize worth paying for, not like they were with Angellica Bianca. Even Fetherfool realizes the inequality of women and men. Feeling the burden of courtship, he wonders about being a woman "to be Courted with presents, and have both the pleasure and the profit" (6: 288). Fetherfool has gotten it wrong, thinking that all women get presents and all women can combine pleasure with profit. He ignores the commodity side of the equation.

For her part La Nuche lusts for Willmore, but she will not lower the "price I've set upon my self, for all the pleasures Youth or Love can bring me" (6: 239). At another point, when the mountebank tells her she is a whore, she replies "wou'd you wish this Beauty which adorns me, should be dispos'd about for Charity[?]" (6: 261). When Willmore and La Nuche meet, he complains that she sells herself for "ready money so much kindness" (6: 242). When he tells her of a woman who is devoted to a man of Quality

Tho he has stunk through all his Perfumes; one who never went all to Bed to her, but left his Teeth, an Eye, false Back and Breast, sometimes his Palate too upon her Toylite, whilst her fair Arms hug'd the dismember'd Carcase, and swore him all perfection. (6: 242)

He is echoing Hellena's description of Don Vincentio's bed and he is also using some of the rhetoric of Thomaso (6: 557). La Nuche counters with her own sense of what is right
in the transaction: "But he was rich, good Captain, was he not?" (6: 242).

Their argument culminates in the ultimate declaration of both parties. Willmore declares "'tis a Royal Cause I suffer for" (6:243), that is, he works for the King and for England and considers himself patriotic and altruistic, not really poor. She counters with

'twere a fine Trade indeed to keep Shop and give our Ware for Love, would it turn to account... to trick and dress to receive all who would enter" (6: 243).

She considers herself a shopkeeper and cannot understand why she must give her wares away for free or in exchange for love. She has a business to run. In this conversation, Behn sets up some major points in the bargaining process, quite different from the exchanges of pretty faces for a man's protection. Willmore, backed up by King, military and nation, has much power if no money. La Nuche for her part, works alone and depends on her ability to make money to give her what little power she possesses. She lives completely outside the patriarchal system, the head of which is the monarch. Willmore, by his own declaration, lives completely within the system and owes everything to that system.

Willmore is asking La Nuche to give up her slight grip on her own personal power, yet she is not asking for that, she is asking for what she considers a fair trade: sex for money. He, like Haunce in The Dutch Lover, considers himself and his position in life to be enough to bring to the
bargaining table. Behn was a staunch supporter of English monarchy, especially Charles II. In this moment, she puts women's struggles, her own included, and those of the poor in a secondary position to the power of the King. Willmore and La Nuche have come to an impasse in their bargaining. He bargains from a position of power given by the king. She bargains from a position of power created by her own beauty, power which she insures for her future in the form of money.

He also bargains with Ariadne when he meets her and calls her a lovely creature with "a promising form, a tempting motion, clean Limbs, well drest, and a most damnable inviting Air" (6: 245), like Hellena's list of her own advantages. But Ariadne asserts herself "I am not to be sold" (6: 245) which is wonderful for Willmore because he has no money. Much later when Ariadne and Willmore have become interested in each other, Ariadne mentions marriage and Willmore refuses. She ups the ante, but not only with a pretty face as Euphemia does at first, she offers him "a hundred thousand Crowns, and a Beauty of sixteen" (6: 275). But she also declares her own worth in the bargain "Maids of my Quality expect better Jointures than a Buff-coat, Scarf and Feather" (6: 275). Like La Nuche, she cannot participate in the power of the patriarchy and must depend on money rather than the power of the King. Money for women, becomes a slippery thing which can come from the patriarchy, but can
be used to escape patriarchal power. Love can also help a woman to escape patriarchal power.

When Beaumond interrupts La Nuche and Willmore late in the play all three argue over price of time with La Nuche. Willmore offers La Nuche to "settle all upon the but my Sword, and that will buy us bread. I've two led Horses too, one thou shalt manage, and follow me through dangers" (6: 283). La Nuche is not pleased "I was made for better Exercises" (6: 283). Beaumond rebukes Willmore "if thou valuest her, leave her to ease and plenty" (6: 283). But Willmore has more in store for her than ease and plenty "Leave her to love my dear, one hour of right-down Love is worth an Age of living dully on. . . ." (6: 283). La Nuche tries to decide between Beaumond and Willmore. Beaumond offers "Powerful Interest prostrate at my feet, glory, and all that Vanity can boast." But Willmore offers "Love unadorned. . . No wealth, but a full Quiver to do mischief."

For her part, La Nuche is in business and has been taught well by Petronella. After the confusion of the night, La Nuche is furious with herself for not giving in to Willmore and making love to him gratis. She loves him, but she is also aroused by him. She is jealous that he has gone off with Ariadne. She rails against her mistake and pleads for love: "I will be poor and Love" (6: 277). But it is Petronella who reminds her that if one is rich, no matter how old or ill, one will be loved by all (6: 277). She re-
minds La Nuche that the Willmore is one who will love her and leave her (6: 278). La Nuche resolves to entertain Beaumond instead of Willmore and make money from her love-making.

Early in the play, Ariadne realizes that she would prefer a lover "rough as Seas in Storms" instead of her cousin Beaumond. When she meets Willmore she decides to dress as a man to discover more about him. She approaches the mountebank dressed as a man. She also flirts with La Nuche telling her that she has stolen his heart. But La Nuche is not interested "I hate the Person of a fair conceited Boy (6: 263). Willmore enters as himself and talks for some time with La Nuche about the prospect of marrying one of the "Monsters." He would rather that than to be dominated by the Commonwealth. But La Nuche thinks she'd rather starve than be owned by a "thing of horror" (6: 263). But he also describes the beauties of the ladies -- their wealth and this upsets Ariadne as she realizes that he is saying these things only to make La Nuche jealous. But La Nuche makes a play for Ariadne as a boy to make Willmore jealous. Ariadne draws her sword to fight for La Nuche, but they are interrupted by Beaumond. Ariadne leaves quickly in order not to be recognized by Beaumond. But another time for the duel is agreed upon.

Willmore's performance as the mountebank is the kind of display often reserved for whores -- it is the equivalent of
Angellica's sign in its boldness and commercialism. Not only is he selling his wares, but he is selling himself as the all wise healer.

The humor of this piece depends on Blunt and Fetherfool as fools and the monstrous dwarf and giant and Petronella as the unattractive and old women. Blunt and Fetherfool are just later versions of the rather stupid monied Englishman ridiculed in The Rover. Petronella, dressed as a young girl is a caricature. But a woman trying to participate in the sexual economy my tricking both Carlo and Fetherfool and going to the Mountebank for a potion to bring back her youth are too real to be simply caricature. I suspect she is a mirror to Behn's own feelings of growing older and less and less able to support herself with plays. Soon after this play, she began to write her novels.

It is very uncomfortable to discuss the courting of the giant and the dwarf by Blunt and Fetherfool. The fools are so greedy and so insensitive and uncaring of the women. They put up money to arrange to see the women and to arrange marriages. When they meet the women, they are appalled at their monstrousness, especially Fetherfool with the giantess. But the ladies know these men for fools and discredit them from the very beginning. The giantess wonders if Fetherfool thinks she'll eat him (6: 258) and the dwarf wonders if "these Gentlemen are dumb" (6: 258). When even the giantess bargains "I'le marry none whose Person and
Courage shall not bear some proportion to mine" (6: 258) and when he does not answer in a positive way, she confronts him for courting "my Fortune, not my Beauty" (6: 259). The dwarf likes Blunt and wishes to marry him. In the end, when the ladies are married to Hunt and Shift and Blunt and Fetherfool have lost an opportunity again, they are truly cruel to the ladies, calling them an "ill-favour'd Baboon" and a "foul filthy o're-grown Chronacle" (6: 295).

Behn's last play of the series, presents a grim view of Behn's world. Gone is the cavalier's exploration of foreign ports. Most of the men in this play are greedy and want only security. The bargaining is cut short and men seem to win the ladies more easily. After five acts of bargaining, La Nuche gives in to Willmore and gives up her own ability to make a living. When Ariadne bargains for her own marriage to Beaumond, he immediately realizes her identity. It is not her face, but her family which he recognizes. The humor is crueller, making fun not only of the English fool, but ladies of quality as well. And the families which oppose yet support the lovers of the other plays have disappeared and Behn and her heros and heroines must make their way in the world alone. Even love seems compromised, as Willmore and La Nuche face a world of wandering and poverty and Ariadne and Beaumond look forward to a life of only belief and trust.
Ariadne cross dresses as Hellena does, to observe a man and to flirt with the competition. La Nuche is not amused by Ariadne's impersonation of a boy and she sends him on his way. The cross dresser is always a lady of quality and it seems this is the only way a lady can slip through the cracks of the sexual economy to have a glimpse of freedom. In this play, the lady of quality does not get the hero, the object of desire, Willmore. The bond is stronger between Willmore and La Nuche. It is not easy to decide if this is love or lust or even interest or affection, but both Willmore and La Nuche are committed to this life together. La Nuche as whore is as mercenary as any of Behn's whores. Like Angellica, she loses all for love, but unlike Angellica, she makes a match with Willmore. If Behn's protagonists can be judged by "who gets the man" instead of "who gets the girl," then this is a victory for the whore.
 CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

Aphra Behn has created an incredible body of work in these few intrigue plays that explore the sexual economics of women. Behn's whores and her cross dressed women are agents in their own best interests throughout the plays. They truly become equals to the men as subjects in the central utopian portions of these plays. For Behn, the figure of woman recalls Laura Brown's figure of woman, one that is both commodity and consumer. In our own world, where women are constantly pressured in the marketplace, this is a refreshing change. It is also refreshing to see male characters commodified as well as unable to participate in the marketplace for lack of funds. Men are not "the one," the singular phallic power. Men are not all made in the image of Charles II, tall, dark, handsome, fabulous, wealthy and incredibly powerful in a way that is of his own making.

All of Behn's techniques depend on an imbalance of power between women and men. The romantic bargaining and negotiation gives a glimpse into the everyday marketplace of male-female relationships and is an attempt to reestablish a balance of power between the participants. He has power, she has beauty. He has power; she has money. He has power; she has wit, virginity, audacity. His power comes from the king; her money and her looks (consequently

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her power) come from her family. Both male and female bargain from positions of strength within a patriarchy, but these are very different patriarchies. He offers sex; she says no. She offers beauty; he says no. He offers love; she says yes. She offers money; he says yes. Love and sex, power and money seem to be the bargaining chips which are truly valued; all else is of little consideration. Behn uses these tiny negotiations, hinging on one word at times, to articulate and dramatize her female view of the economy, especially the sexual economy. And that too has a dual nature for Behn. The sexual economy commodifies women, but also offers a position of consumer, IF the women can manipulate the system wisely. Men seem clueless in this aspect. They seem to already have money, to marry money or to fashion foolish schemes to make more money. Women seem so bound by economics that they must know the system and use it. Men, who control the patriarchy seem to not be very discriminating when it comes to decisions about economics.

The power base for men and women in Behn's world is fascinating. Men have power via the patriarchy. Women obtain their power with their bodies and their minds. In that way, they can be equal. But these are individuals. One woman can outwit one man. But one woman cannot outwit the entire patriarchy. One man can be outwitted, but with the power of the patriarchy behind him, he can brutalize a
woman. This is especially apparent in Willmore's and
Blunt's attempted rapes of Florinda, in Haunce's threats to
Euphemia and in Blunt's and Fetherfool's cruelty to the
giant and the dwarf. It would seem that Luce Irigaray is
correct that when commodities gather together, they can
accomplish more. What is a patriarchy except a gathering
of men with self-defined power and superiority? This is
the power of Behn's message and of her women -- that when
women gather together and create their own world, they have
a different kind of power, one that cannot be overpowered
by the patriarchy.

These plays make clear an essential duality in Behn's
work, something exemplified by the vizard mask. The mask
marks the woman's profession, but hides her identity. It
separates the woman from her sexuality and her ability to
earn money, but it advertises those aspects as well.
Behn's work at once tells all, but masks her meaning with
her casting, her humour, her dramatic structures and
especially her use of audacious whores and cross dressed
women to articulate her themes. She hides behind the
spectacle of woman, a spectacle that emphasizes woman as a
commodity, but by its very nature charms and panders to the
male members of the audience. Any of Behn's women on stage
can create an extra-diegic moment -- stopping the action,
for the breathtaking sight of a woman so beautiful that
nothing else matters but the enjoyment of looking, the
wonder of female beauty itself. But Behn uses those moments to interject her own ideas about women's worth. Her technique is so daring, crafty and oppositional that one wants to cheer, as does Hellena at Florinda's rebellion "Now hang me, if I don't love thee for that dear disobedience" (Behn 5: 455).

That dear disobedience changes across Behn's career. In *The Dutch Lover*, she explores a simple power imbalance between individuals and families. We know what the individuals bring to the bargaining table. Euphemia brings wit, beauty, fortune and Alonzo brings himself as a military man and a gentleman. His power comes from his participation in the national patriarchy. Hers comes from her natural sense and her family ties. Hippolyta on the other hand, brings a power separate from family, the individual power of her own wit. When she fights dressed as a man, she must fight her lover and her own brother as representative of her family. He is helped by Alonzo who is also without family. In the end, the patriarchy envelops and subsumes all the individuals, even Hippolyta. But for that heady diegetic moment, Hippolyta has the power (or was it potential power) to make her own way. As a wife and a part of this family, she has very little power.

*The Rover* presents a much more complex economy, a mercantile economy based on money and commodities for sale. It exists in the intersection of family/monarchy and
mercantile capitalism. It might have been easy for Willmore to talk Don Pedro into letting him marry Hellena, that is within the family power base, the patriarchy. But negotiating with Angellica Bianca, the capitalist, when one is poor, is difficult. The patriarchy and the monarchy/nation are one form of power, but capitalism is international, global and beyond the power of individual nations. Willmore's choice of Hellena and the immediate gratification of cash and beauty marks Behn's vote for the nation and not for the economics of the open market.

The Second Part of the Rover is set more completely within the world of capitalism. There are no families, no family fortunes to protect the men or the women. It is the women, the Jewish giant and dwarf and La Nuche, who can most successfully negotiate this mercantile world to get what they want. Even though the "monsters" are peripheral to the main story, their humanity and their wisdom, shine out as they reject Blunt and Fetherfool. La Nuche, too, rejects suitors who do not suit her, like Beaumond. Even Petronella, the old whore, understands the system well enough to take La Nuche's fortune and then give it back, receiving thanks from her patroness. Beaumond and Ariadne are implicated in their family system, even though they try ineptly to escape it. Willmore's choice of La Nuche reflects Behn's acceptance of the changing nature of capitalism. Perhaps this was a signal for her to stop
bringing her wares to a marketplace that no longer offered consumers or a good price.

Love as well as economics is also at the core of these plays. Behn's belief in the possibility of love waxes and wanes in this trio of plays. Nowhere do men and women love as passionately as they do in *The Rover*. There is the wild and passionate Willmore and Angellica, more lust than love. And there is the spirited Willmore and Hellena, full of youth and excitement and promise. But it is the steadfast love of Florinda and Belvile which shines through this play and a mention of continued happiness in *The Second Part of the Rover*. For Willmore and La Nuche as well as Beaumond and Ariadne there is at least the possibility of a long happy loving life together simply because the matches have been made according to understood individual wants and needs, not on fear (in the case of Hellena and Euphemia) or opportunism (Willmore in *The Rover*, Antonio in *The Dutch Lover*).

Behn's use of the language of money, the language of economics and trading is also fascinating. It borders on metonym as characters talk about their worth, they tend go beyond the metonymic nature of language to become that value, whether it is "face value," wit, sexuality or cleverness. The women have many more words to describe themselves and their value. Men seem only equivalent to
the power of the patriarchy, be it economic or national, or sexual prowess.

As Behn moves across her career with these plays, she uses the whore figure more and more, the cross dressed woman less and less. As women must be responsible for their own lives, there is less and less family support, less indication of the patriarchal family. Or maybe it is because there is less family, there must be more responsibility. Narrative closure becomes more and more tenuous and "open." And across her career the humor becomes more and more ugly and dependent on political opinion and personal imperfection. The women get stronger but the world gets harder.

In the end it is the subjectivity of the women that makes Aphra Behn a feminist writer. No matter what they do or why they do it, these women DO. They may be implicated in the patriarchy and in the sexual economy, but they are not submissive to it in its entirety. By opposing the sexual economy and the patriarchy piecemeal (one character fights for her honor, another doesn't marry, a third rails against capitalism), the characters and Behn pull down social constructs a little at a time. And in this way, Behn creates a world of hope for women.
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Mary Katherine Politz grew up in south Louisiana, excelled in school and had no idea what to do with her life. She attended Nicholls State University and studied library science at the University of Texas at Austin as a way to order the universe, or at least her own universe. Following graduation with an Master of Library Science, she worked as a librarian in public libraries in Houma and New Orleans. She developed library services for Louisiana Universities Marine Consortium in Cocodrie, Louisiana. She became a science librarian in the Reference Department at Middleton Library at Louisiana State University. She studied at the library school at Louisiana State University and earned a Certificate in Library Science. Currently she is a reference librarian with the Reference Department at the Goodwood Branch of the East Baton Rouge Parish Library.

In between stints in libraries, where she, like Aphra Behn, makes a somewhat decent living, she has done theatre. She learned all her practical theatrical skills at Le Petit Theatre de Terrebonne in Houma and at the New Orleans Opera scenic studio. She has acted in New Orleans at University of New Orleans and at the Contemporary Arts Center. She received an Master of Fine Arts in directing and costume design from University of New Orleans. She has directed at Le Petit Theatre de Terrebonne, University of New Orleans,
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Currently she is developing a theatrical company at Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women. Her goal is to develop a forum for residents to find their own theatrical voices to share with audiences inside and outside the prison walls. As a part of her own theatrical development, she discussed Aphra Behn's *The Rover* with the residents who then rewrote much of the dialogue in New Orleans street language. If she ever directs a production of this play, it will be this "translation".

Her plans include a continuation of her volunteer work at Louisiana Correctional Institute for Women with performance tours to schools and churches. She also hopes to continue a simple life with dogs, cats and father in Baton Rouge.
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Candidate: Mary Katherine Politz

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Approved:

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Date of Examination:

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