

# The textuality of friendship: homosocial hermeneutic exchanges in early modern English drama

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**The Textuality of Friendship:  
Homosocial Hermeneutic Exchanges in Early Modern English Drama**

Julianne Mentzer

**Abstract**

My thesis argues that textually embedded intimacy and exclusivity between men opens up ethical problems concerning the use of education and persuasive powers—the ability to reconfigure vice as virtue, to argue a case for transgressions, and to navigate political, economic, and social spheres for personal self-advancement.

My argument is based first on the proposition that masculine elite friendship in the early modern period is situated in specific pedagogical practices, engagement with particular rhetorical manuals and classical texts, and manipulation of texts which determine the affectionate, ‘textual’, nature of these relationships. From this, I propose, second, that a hermeneutic process of rhetorical and poetic composition and exclusionary understanding is embedded within these textual relationships. From these two propositions, I analyse the textual surface of homosocial relationships in order to ask questions about ethical dilemmas concerning the forms of power they represent.

How can an enclosed system of affection be useful for political, social, or financial advancement by making a vice (self-interest) of a virtue (fidelity), a dubious idea in the early modern period? How are homosocial networks developed and depicted through an engagement with their own textuality? Are they shown as transgressive and dangerous in further marginalizing those who are not privy to the system of textual exchange between men?

The creation of homosocial male friendships is predicated on the idea that there are shared texts and methodologies for internalizing ideas from classical sources (*imitatio*) and for using these as starting points for the creation of arguments (*inventio*) to suit social, political, and even domestic situations. I focus on fictitious relationships developed in early modern English drama—as playwrights represent masculine discourse, textual knowledge, and rhetorical techniques. The friendships and fellowships in these dramatic productions contain questions about the use of masculine networks in socio-political and economic navigation.

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For my family

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*Fig. 1. Allegory of Eloquence.* After Albrecht Dürer (1486-1528) Showing Hermes rising on winged feet at r, wearing a winged hat and holding a caduceus, he ensnares a group of figures including a cleric and soldier with 'the golden chain of his eloquence'. Registration: SL,5218.176. ©Trustees of the British Museum. This item is reproduced by permission of *The British Museum*.

*Fig.2 “Apollo sitting on Parnassus surrounded by the muses and famous poets”* Marcantonio Raimondi (ca. 1517–20) After Raphael (Raffaello Sanzio or Santi) (Italian, Urbino 1483–1520 Rome) 31.54.166 Reproduction of image CC0 1.0 Universal Public Domain, *The Met Museum*.

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## CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

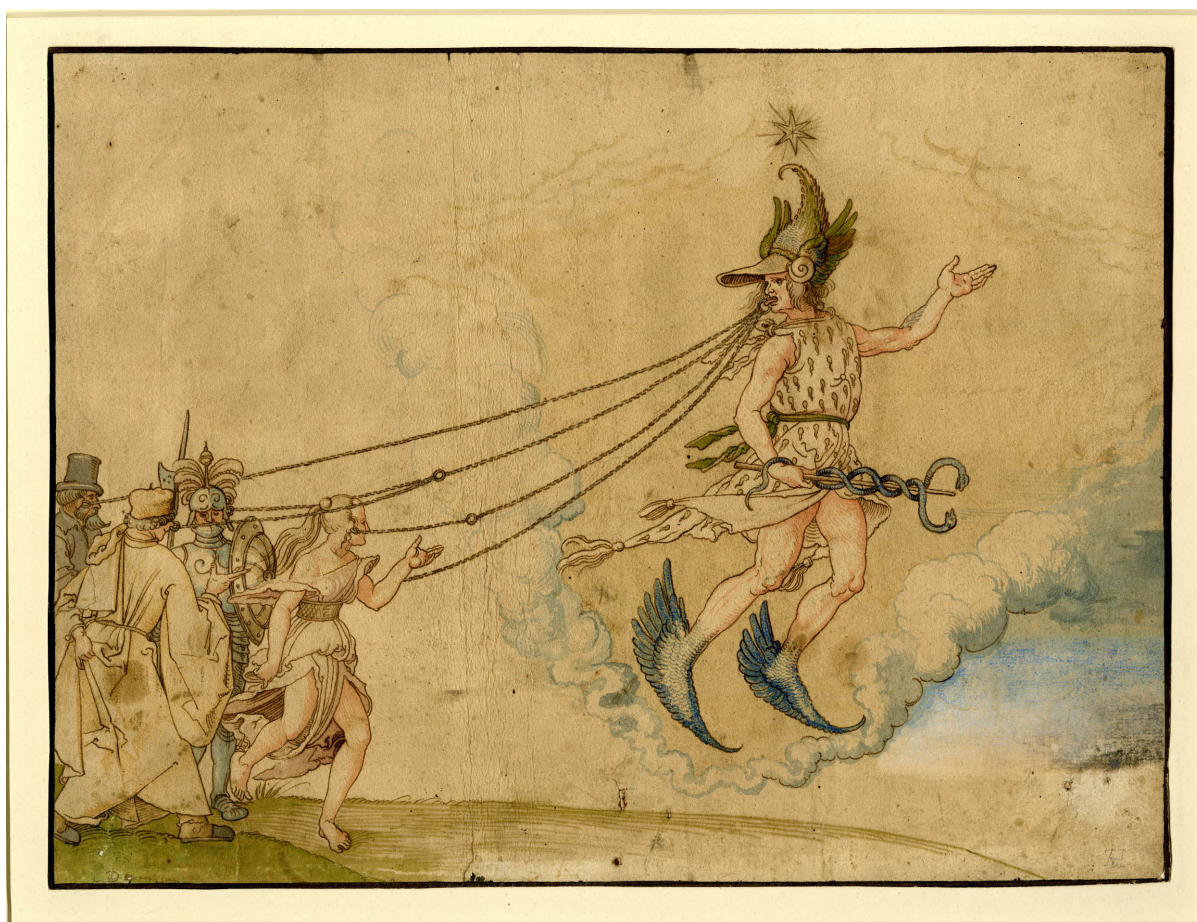


Fig.1 *Allegory of Eloquence*. After Albrecht Dürer (1486-1528)<sup>1</sup>

### ***Amicitia: Hermeneutics and Textual Affinity***

This thesis argues that textual friendships between young, educated men function in a hermeneutic exchange and open up the ethical issues concerning the use and abuse of marginalised characters and the exculpation of vicious behaviours through rhetorical

<sup>1</sup> Showing “Hermes rising on winged feet at r, wearing a winged hat and holding a caduceus, he ensnares a group of figures including a cleric and soldier with ‘the golden chain of his eloquence’”, Registration: SL,5218.176. This item is reproduced by permission of *The British Museum*.

mastery.<sup>2</sup> Young male friends utilise their mutual education and persuasive powers to reconfigure vice as virtue, to argue their case for transgressions, and to navigate the political and social spheres for their own self-advancement or self-preservation. My argument is based first on the proposition that male friendship in the early modern period is situated in specific pedagogical practices, engagement with particular rhetorical manuals and classical works, and manipulation of texts which determine the affectionate, textual, nature of these relationships. From this, I propose, second, that a hermeneutic process of rhetorical composition and exclusionary understanding is embedded within these textual relationships. From these two propositions, I analyse the textual surface of homosocial relationships in drama in order to ask questions about ethical dilemmas concerning the forms of power and exclusion they represent. Masculine friendship in the period was defined by a process by which intimates engage with texts, rhetorical devices, and experiences to transform meaning, give advice, and display affection in a self consciously public manner. This thesis deals with the problematic convergence of masculine fidelity and subversive powers that intimacy may conceal, focusing on dramatic works as playwrights represent masculine discourse, textual knowledge, and rhetorical techniques.

In order to understand how masculine friendship encompasses a hermeneutic process of deliberative exchange, it is prudent to consider a few examples. In John Donne's verse epistle *To Sir Henry Wotton*, the initial address succinctly displays a form of homosocial affection in textual exchange. He writes of the connection that can be forged between two men by textual means, stating, "Sir, more than kisses, letters mingle souls, / For, thus friends

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<sup>2</sup> I primarily use the term "homosocial" to describe male-male social bonds. This meaning informed Eve Sedgwick's redefinition in order to "hypothesise the potential unbrokenness of a continuum between homosocial and homosexual". I do not deny the homoerotic nature of masculine relationships but I focus primarily on textual and not physical or sexual interactions between men. Therefore, I use the first definition. The term captures not only the idea of friendship but also the concept that social influences on relationship development influence this exclusionary form of amity. See Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), p. 1.



absent speak”.<sup>3</sup> In Erasmian fashion, Donne evokes the idea that the ‘absent friend’ is made present in an epistolary, textual state. But beyond the reconfiguration of a concept found in classical and humanist sources, he takes the verbal expression of love and adds another dimension to its meaning. Donne is changing the dialogue of affection and re-configuring Erasmus’s declaration. Erasmus states that a letter is a “mutual conversation between absent friends” in *De Conscribendis Epistolis*. Donne asserts that textual intimacy connects two men more than any physical sign of affection.<sup>5</sup>

Donne does not directly quote Desiderius Erasmus in his verse epistle *To Sir Henry Wotton*.<sup>6</sup> Instead, he transforms the Erasmian formula, daringly preferring the absent friend’s letter to physical displays of affection. In this, there is a hermeneutic process of textual transmission and adaptation; he uses *imitatio* (referencing a trope of intimate relationships) as a site for *inventio* (a means by which to utilise the source material in the creation of a new argument). His composition allows for a different understanding of the Erasmian idea: not only are letters the presence of friends, but he argues that they are a more emotive sign of a homosocial bond than a physical kiss. If Donne evokes Erasmus’ phrase, then Erasmus himself evokes Cicero, again bringing the vividness of the “presence of an absent friend” into his own cultural understanding by reconfiguring this concept.<sup>7</sup> As Cicero writes in *De amicitia*,

...he who looks upon a true friend, looks, as it were, upon a sort of image of himself.

*Wherefore friends, though absent, are at hand; though in need, yet abound; though*

<sup>3</sup> John Donne, *The Poems of John Donne*, vol. 1, ed. Robin Robbins (London and New York: Routledge, 2008), p. 214.

<sup>5</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *De Conscribendis Epistolis* in *The Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 25, ed. Charles Trinkaus and trans. Clarence H. Miller, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1974), p. 20. Though Erasmus is not a contemporary of the authors illustrated above, his textual influence did not wane in the mid-to-late sixteenth-century. In both pedagogy and literary works, as T. W. Baldwin asserts, “Erasmus laid the egg” for humanist instruction in the time of Shakespeare, and his textual presence was still forceful. See T.W. Baldwin, *William Shakespeare’s Small Latine & Lesse Greeke*, vol. 1, (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1944), p. 76. In addition, Peter Mack notes that this particular text, “was printed over 100 times in the sixteenth century” proving its textual significance through the latter half of this century. See Peter Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric: Theory and Practice*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 25.

<sup>6</sup> Erasmus had, in his own time, made the concept of textual intimacy generally available, and it was widely circulated by the time of Donne’s composition. See Lisa Jardine, *Erasmus, Man of Letters: The Construction of Charisma in Print*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2015), p. 150.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 5. Jardine shows that this is critical in the formation of his very self-conscious persona as a ‘man of letters’.

weak, are strong; and—harder saying still—though dead, are yet alive; so great is the esteem on the part of their friends, the tender recollection and the deep longing that still attends them (7.23.I, emphasis my own)<sup>8</sup>

Evoking this concept from Erasmus' *De conscribendis epistolis* (1521) and Cicero's views of letter exchange and the emotive connection between friends, Donne is engaging with source texts, changing the dialogue of affection, and re-configuring what Erasmus has himself used for *imitatio*—that a letter is a “mutual conversation between absent friends”.<sup>9</sup>

Donne and Wotton studied together, and they exchanged familiar letters. That is, they did not only have the opportunity for discursive exchange during the developmental years of their rhetorical training, but this poetic exchange suggests that they upheld a relationship.<sup>10</sup> This example does not adhere, merely, to a formalised pattern for familiar exchange, but displays style as a means to highlight affection and obfuscate any instrumentality in textual or discursive exchange. The development of style through rhetorical training in effect “creates the man” and cannot be separated from the experience in the world. For this reason, letters become the presence of friends absent, as the affection of male friendship is based upon the creation of the mind. In weighing the virtues and vices of the country, the city, and the Court, Donne demonstrates that textual affection between men frames the dilemmas, and even dangers, of their personal and professional lives. Considering the contexts of Donne's verse epistle can illuminate the manner by which friendship is textualised and is shown to be purposefully persuasive, and reactive. There are three verse epistles which constitute a specific exchange between John Donne and Sir Henry Wotton in the Summer of 1598. They were “written in the midst of the ominous breach between Queen Elizabeth and the Earl of

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<sup>8</sup> Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De amicitia*, Loeb Classical Library, trans. William Armistead (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1953), p. 133.

<sup>9</sup> See Desiderius Erasmus, *De Conscribendis Epistolis*, (1974), p. 27. Kathy Eden begins her work tracing the concepts from classical sources in their reception in intimate humanist exchanges in *The Renaissance Rediscovery of Intimacy*, (Chicago and London: Chicago University Press, 2012), p. 1.

<sup>10</sup> A. J. Smith notes that these two friends studied at Oxford together. See John Donne, *John Donne: The Complete English Poems*, ed. A. J. Smith, (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1971), p. 534.

Essex that lasted through July and August”. This conveys an exchange of ideas in the face of dangerous circumstances.<sup>15</sup> I chose the example of Donne’s epistolary poem as it directly assesses the vices and dangers of three different locales. Though this is a topic that has been addressed in many cultural productions of the time, Donne frames his argument in epistolary exchange.

Socio-political navigation is an essential issue in the description and representation of friendship. In the next example, the method of self-advancement takes the form of epideictic rhetoric: praising the friend as an extension of the self, thereby both advancing the friend and oneself in a single speech. This occurs in Shakespeare’s *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. As Proteus is soon to arrive at the foreign court of Milan, following fast on the heels of his friend, Valentine. As they are both attempting to secure a position at court at this point in the play, Valentine provides an epideictic oration:

I knew him as myself, for from our infancy  
 We have conversed, and spent hours together.  
 And though myself have been an idle truant,  
 Omitting the sweet benefit of time  
 To clothe mine age with angel-like perfection  
 Yet hath Sir Proteus—for that’s his name—  
 Made use and fair advantage of his days:  
 His years be young, but his experience old;  
 His head unmellowed, but his judgment ripe.  
 And in a word—for far behind his worth  
 Comes all the praises that I now bestow—  
 He is complete, in feature and in mind,

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<sup>15</sup> Ted-Larry Pebworth and Claude J. Summers, “‘Thus Friends Absent Speak’: The Exchange of Verse Letters between John Donne and Henry Wotton”, *Modern Philology*, Vo. 81. No. 4 (May, 1984), p. 361; Also in Donne, *The Poems of John Donne*, (2008), p. 81.

With all good grace to grace a gentleman (II.iv.55-67).

This encomium would not only aid in securing Proteus a position at the court, an alliance that Valentine would desire as he secures a position in a foreign land. This is secured through the public display of their friendship. Additionally, this epideictic oration mobilises and reconfigures specific ideas concerning *amicitia* from humanist and classical sources. Valentine proclaims, “I knew him as myself”, he may not only be indicating that he knows Proteus as well as himself. In presenting his friend to the court as the paragon of gentlemanliness, with sound acumen and all good graces, he aligns himself with these virtues as “from [their] infancy” they have been fellows. In this way, his speech begins with the concept of equality; Valentine knows Proteus as well as himself. This hints towards an appropriation of the concept of the *alter ipse*, which is one of the main Erasmian adages, “Friendship is equality. A friend is another self”.<sup>33</sup> Again, this idea is adopted from classical and humanist sources and reconfigured to fit the circumstances. It is originally a Ciceronian idea,

For everyone loves himself, not with a view to acquiring some profit for himself from his self-love, but because he is dear to himself on his own account; and unless this same feeling were transferred to friendship, the real friend would never be found; for he is, as it were, another self” (Book II, XXI 80).<sup>34</sup>

However, counter to the Ciceronian view, this instance of praise also works to promote Valentine himself.

In another example, Michel de Montaigne’s essays employ the use of textual sources in order to make his own arguments more vivid in his essays and contemplations. His works were translated into English by John Florio and published in 1603 (and is therefore included

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<sup>33</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *Adages in The Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 3, trans. Margaret Mann Phillips, (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1982), p. 31.

<sup>34</sup> Cicero, *De amicitia*, (1953), p. 189.

in this list of English examples).<sup>36</sup> He states, "...the fact that as a young man I was brought to appreciate the delicious savour of one single perfect friendship has genuinely made the others insipid to me and impressed on my faculty of perception that (as one ancient writer said) friendship is a companionable [sic.], not gregarious, beast".<sup>37</sup> Though he does not mention him by name, this concept arises from Plutarch. His concept is that,

...one thing which stands out among many others, as particularly antagonistic to our acquisition of friendship, is the craving for numerous friends, which is like that of licentious women, for because of our frequent intimacies with many different persons we cannot keep our hold on our earlier associates, who are neglected and drift away.<sup>38</sup>

Because of his experience of "one single perfect friendship", any desire for multiple associations have vanished. Montaigne flips the logic of his reference. Plutarch observed that if we crave too many friends, we will not acquire true friendship, while Montaigne says that through his experience of a perfect friendship he is undesirous of any other companions. The widely recognised idea that the foundational exercises of composition permeated textual culture is the starting point for my analysis of the hermeneutics of masculine affectionate exchange. From the humanist late Tudor training programmes we can see the effects of these studies in Elizabethan and Jacobean writing, not only in learned Latin composition, but in correspondence, poetry, and the drama. The rudiments of grammar school training and further education at the university are continually brought to the fore in compositions that deal with the topic of homosocial male friendship.

Exercises in grammar and sentence construction, as well as more intense rhetorical study, are formative not only of the textual production of the period but, as I aim to prove, are

<sup>36</sup> I refer to this edition: Michel de Montaigne, *The essayes or morall, politike and millitarie discourses: Michaell de Montaigne*, trans. John Florio (London: By Val. Sims for Edward Blount, 1603).

<sup>37</sup> Michel de Montaigne, *The Essays: A Selection*, trans. M. A. Screech, (London: Penguin, 2004), p. 250. Screech provides a footnote that makes the connection between Montaigne's "ancient writer" and Plutarch. He writes that Plutarch stresses "that great friendships come in pairs, not in groups". All quotations are from the modernised edition.

<sup>38</sup> Plutarch, *Moralia, How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend* vol. 2, trans. F. C. Babbitt, Loeb Classical Library, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1928), p. 49.

embedded in the construction of homosocial relationships as they play out discursively on the stage.<sup>39</sup> The expression of masculine friendship is built upon the foundations of mutual learning. Men engage in emotive hermeneutics of exchanges with one another through formative and exemplary texts. Erasmus, in his friendship with Thomas More, provides an early model of this. Their public letter-exchanges, married with their humanist scholarship, provide a textual framework for expressions of their intimacy. Marc D. Schachter provides a concise and complete overview of the textuality of their friendship by considering one of their mutual literary endeavors:

Erasmus's *Toxaris* translation first appeared in a 1506 volume that resulted from a collaboration with Thomas More. It included a selection of Lucian's works translated by one or the other of the men as well as several of their own treatises. The volume as a whole functions as a testament not only to the humanist project of recuperating antiquity...but also to the friendships of men of letters.<sup>46</sup>

This conflates many elements of the textual nature of male friendship founded in humanist learning: translation, collaboration, and the exclusivity of the subject matter. Erika Rummel writes,

The collaborators were well matched. Both Erasmus and More had begun their Greek studies a few years earlier. Like Cato the Censor, whose example Erasmus invoked [sic.], they started late in life and achieved proficiency through industry and determination.<sup>47</sup>

I begin with these examples of a few instances in which male friendship is displayed as deeply interconnected with humanist reading practices and the immense engagement with homosocial friendship in the writing of the early modern period. My examples illustrate mere

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<sup>46</sup> Marc D. Schachter, "Translating Friendship in the Circle of Marguerite de Navarre: Plato's *Lysis* and Lucian's *Toxaris*", *Men and Women Making Friends in Early Modern France*, eds. Lewis C. Seifert and Rebecca M. Wilkin, (London and New York: Routledge, 2016), p.102.

<sup>47</sup> Erika Rummel, *Erasmus as a Translator of the Classics*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985), p. 50.

snapshots of the plentiful material concerning textually-embedded affectionate friendship that spans from its educational foundations and mutual exclusivity of style to rhetorical use in the public sphere found in poetry, plays, prose, essays, familiar letters, and commonplace books.<sup>49</sup> These are features that directly correspond to my analysis of young male friends in the English drama of the 1590s and early 1600s. As Ben Jonson wrote, in Epigram 86 (1616) “To The Same [Sir Henry Goodere]”,

When I would know thee, Goodere, my thought looks  
Upon thy well-made choice of friends and books;  
Then do I love thee, and behold thy ends  
In making thy friends books, and thy books friends.<sup>50</sup>

### **Drama and Critical Contexts**

I chose to look at drama specifically because it represents masculine homosocial discourse as an active process in which rhetoric and hermeneutics are directly connected. Representing masculine elite networks in “conversation” is important to understanding how elite men mobilised texts as tools for rhetorical construction, means to display intimacy, and methods for advancement in the period. I also consider drama as I can trace cultural features of specific audiences. Played for the public, for university men or Inns of Court men, this performative use of rhetoric and the concepts surrounding friendship allows for a reflection of their cultural contexts. For instance, I look at the mimetic features of the scholarly friendships

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<sup>49</sup> I have included examples from three forms, an epistolary poem, a passage from a play, and a passage from a prose essay, in order to illustrate this point.

<sup>50</sup> Ben Jonson, *Epigrams*, ed. Colin Burrow, 2012.

depicted in university plays as they refer to their exclusionary audience.<sup>52</sup> Early modern drama is, by nature, both ephemeral and textual; varied printed texts and manuscripts survive but we can imagine audiences. Drama in particular because the use of rhetorical processes and friendship in action; that is, in how it informs the performative as well as compositional practices in the period. This mobilisation of rhetorical skills and the tropes of *amicitia* is key in understanding the ways by which these two elements were integrated into both the literary works of the period and the cultural contexts. Additionally, I look at drama specifically to add to the wealth of studies on this topic beyond the works centred specifically on masculine friendship. Laurens J. Mills seems to start this critical analysis. He notices that, “The decade from 1590 to 1600 saw numerous performances of plays that used in part or depended wholly upon the friendship theme”.<sup>53</sup> He looks primarily on the former, focusing on *Edward II*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, *Timon of Athens*, and *The Merchant of Venice*. These plays have been considered in other studies of the “friendship theme” in late Elizabethan and early Stuart drama. He provides a foundational overview of the friendship theme in many additional plays, looking at the aspects of “love” between men, and rivalry.<sup>54</sup> There are few critical works that focus exclusively on drama concerning textual friendship, however. An exception is Tom MacFaul’s work, where he argues that male friendship in Shakespearean drama did not adhere to the classical ideals of antiquarian thought. MacFaul argues “that friendship is a *fictional* relationship” when displayed in drama. He goes on to assert that though humanists tried to make the ideal friendship seem “natural” and achievable, dramatists and poets at the time depict more complicated versions of friendship.<sup>57</sup> However, he does not focus on the

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<sup>52</sup> I must concede, in this regard, that early modern Latin works on friendship and manuscripts in private circulation would have exclusive audiences as well, though of a different type. Institutionally educated boys form exclusive networks as they would have all read the same texts in their schooling. The curriculum was not set in stone for private tutelage.

<sup>53</sup> Laurens J Mills, *One Soul in Bodies Twain: Friendship in Tudor Literature and Stuart Drama*, (Bloomington: The Principia Press, Inc., 1937), p.245.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid., See especially pp. 270-2 (for the consideration of “positive friendship”), pp. 320; 331 (for rivalry and “duels”), and p. 337 (for “pretend friendship”).

<sup>57</sup> Tom MacFaul, *Male Friendship in Shakespeare and his Contemporaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), p. 1. John Cox also traces examples of friendship in Shakespeare’s works, noticing that the absence of “true” perfect friendships. He argues that this proves that Shakespeare was sceptical of possibilities for this kind of relationship to exist in



fact that the classical ideals of “perfect friendship” are themselves fictive. Though I also evaluate the place of classical thought in early modern drama, my aim is not to show that homosocial friendships are flawed in and of themselves, but to draw attention to the positions of power and exclusion that they may enact.

This thesis picks up from Lorna Hutson’s observation of the textuality of early modern male *amicitia*, in which she answers, “the question of the impact of that [the] humanist programme [had] upon the way in which relations of exchange, reciprocity, and affection between men were henceforth to be imagined.”<sup>61</sup> She argues that the humanist programme directly affected how masculine friendship was imagined in early modern literary works. In her extensive study she is primarily concerned with the convergence of two ideas; that women become sites of credit between men and that,

...humanist rhetoric undoes the proper place of friendship as the surest form of capital investment in a traditional economy. Conceptually speaking, humanism relocates the instrumentality of male friendships, translating it from alliance and gift-exchange to persuasive communication.<sup>63</sup>

In focusing on the ethics of masculine friendship, I also pick up from Ullrich Langer’s research on the foundations of friendship networks, though not in the same manner. Langer’s work is a “historically based ‘ethical’ criticism” addressing “the interplay between literary worlds and moral philosophy in the early modern period”.<sup>64</sup> He argues that fictions of idealised friendship either pre-empt or interpret ethical and moral issues of the time. He looks at the problems *within* these relationships, primarily arguing that creating a “perfectly ethical relationship to another being...for his own sake” is an insurmountable task.<sup>65</sup> Thus, in as

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reality. John D. Cox, “Shakespeare and the Ethics of Friendship”, *Religion and Literature*, vol. 40, no. 3, (The University of Notre Dame: 2008), p. 2.

<sup>61</sup> Lorna Hutson, *The Usurer’s Daughter: Male Friendship and Fictions of Women in Sixteenth-Century England*, (London and New York: Routledge, 1994), p. 53.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 11.

<sup>64</sup> Ullrich Langer, *Perfect Friendship*, (1994), p. 3.

<sup>65</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 39.

Langer looks to the internal problems associated with friendship. Langer does explain the exclusionary nature of masculine friendship, a point that underpins my study of manipulation, misuse, and exclusion of marginalised characters and the ability for friendship networks to evade retribution for unethical behaviours. I add to his discussion the ethical problems concerning the manipulation of others and the misuses of persuasive powers. I focus on different ethical problems of male *amicitia* and anxieties presented or produced—not the ethical problems concerning rivalry within these relationships but the moral issues that arise through manipulation and control of those outside these educationally privileged coteries.

Additionally, I aim to add another dimension to the extensive critical work undertaken by Kathy Eden on the Renaissance views of masculine intimacy and the hermeneutics of exchange. Eden traces the intimacy ‘rediscovered’ by textual means through reconfigurations of the style of epistolary exchange. She uses Gadamer’s philosophical hermeneutics as a theoretical framework, focusing on his assessment of the interconnectivity of rhetoric and hermeneutics, composition and understanding. If young gentlemen-to-be were trained to appropriate certain rhetorical skills, they were also taught the interconnection between ‘literary composition and literary interpretation’.<sup>68</sup> It is in this affectionate composition that intimacy can be understood through humanist textuality in the Renaissance. Eden also focuses on intimacy through textual means.<sup>69</sup>

I focus primarily on the dangers of enclosed systems of masculine exchange in drama. Beyond the textually-informed intimacy created through the humanist study of literature and classical rhetoric, are the often precarious uses of rhetorical argument and exclusivity. Educated young men could use these skills as a means for enacting transgressive behaviours, as I will show in the proceeding chapters. These men are able to manipulate social and political outcomes and justify their actions, as well as to shift power structures and self-policing beyond

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<sup>68</sup> Eden, *The Renaissance Rediscovery of Intimacy*, (2001), p. 4.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, pp.1-5. Eden begins her work by tracing the transmission of ideas from classical sources through to the Renaissance. I use a similar method to set up my analysis here.

the law. Thus, I look at ethical implications beyond affectionate exchanges, not as dangers to the men themselves but as transgressive behaviours that can harm others. My chapters look at four particular early modern English plays as case studies to specifically address the concepts of my thesis.

These plays employ rhetorical strategies that demonstrate masculine elite engagement with classical and neo-classical authors. Through books and textual study, one can converse with authors as friends, though long dead. This concept is more than a nicety, the formulation of style through the uses of textual engagement deals with coming to an understanding of a man's mind through their textual presence. It is seen as a virtue of mind to bring concepts from textual sources into current significance. I add to the established critical research concerning textual, intimate exchange the interconnectedness between rhetorical practices and deception, emotive persuasion and transgression.

Most critical work that focuses on the dangers associated with male friendship considers the threats to the young men within these relationships.<sup>81</sup> Alan Bray unpacks the common practices of early modern male friendship and shows how public affection became, over time, dangerously analogous to perceived signs of "sodomitical relations". In place of evidence, accusations became a real threat as the signs of friendship and sodomy were increasingly paralleled in the early modern mindset.<sup>82</sup> Alan Stewart looks at the physical practices in humanist education as a site for charges of sodomy. He primarily argues that physical intimacy, like bed sharing, could be interpreted as a sign of male-male sexual relations.<sup>83</sup> Will Tosh extensively analyses historical documents concerning Anthony Bacon's relationships with influential political figures in the period including Robert Devereux, the first Earl of Essex. He illuminates the fatal consequences when power friends

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<sup>81</sup> Hutson, *The Usurer's Daughter*, (1994), p. 52. Hutson's work is an exception; she looks at how women are disempowered as they are signs of credit between male friends.

<sup>82</sup> See Alan Bray, "Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship in Elizabethan England" in *History Workshop*, no. 29 (1990), pp. 1-19, (p. 2).

<sup>83</sup> Alan Stewart, *Close Readers: Humanism and Sodomy in Early Modern England* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997). See especially p. 84 for an overview of this argument in the context of humanist education.

betray one another.<sup>84</sup> His focus is on “same-sex emotional intimacy” to study epistolary expressions of “the language of friendship, love, service, and loyalty”.<sup>85</sup> Tosh additionally investigates the multiple uses for friendships as represented in literature and composed in epistolary exchanges, from the crafting of social bonds and political alliances to consolation, affection, and allegiance. Though these studies show that homosocial networks can be dangerous to the parties within, they do not focus on the possible moral and ethical problems associated with the way by which male coterie *use* friendship to obtain power over others.

There is a much more radical reconfiguration of the concepts of male friendship in dramatic works in the period. Fictions of male friends utilise the discourse of idealised friendship to transform the idea of what constitutes virtue. The homosocial hermeneutic network that is created between educated men allows for their use of language to manipulate prevailing cultural *mores* to their own ends. In effect, this exclusionary discourse constitutes the capacity to transform these *mores* in ways that seem to us, as modern readers of these texts, at best extremely unsettling, and oftentimes exceptionally exploitative of those on the margins of these relationships. Outside the educated friendship circle, other individuals often become even more disempowered within the narratives.

The hermeneutic process of textual exchange between men constructs a view of dynamic friendship expressions. Artful rhetoric, which highlights emotion, may bring historically distant texts into the immediacy of experience. Through mutual literary reading and translation, grammar school boys in the early modern classroom found affinity with one another in shared experiences. The content of curriculum was meant to shape their mutual textual knowledge as a means to vividly express affection and shape their moral characters. Young men, in their grammar school and university education, were taught to be in dialogue

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<sup>84</sup> Will Tosh, *Male Friendship and Testimonies of Love in Shakespeare's England*, (London: Palgrave, 2016), p. 6.

<sup>85</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 15.

with texts, to know the style of writing was to understand its author. Peter Mack observes that,

From their training in the analysis of classical texts, pupils learned how to read and how they, in turn, might be expected to read. At the same time, they were trained to reuse the moral substance (and even the verbal expression) of their reading in their own composition.<sup>111</sup>

This is illuminating when it comes to hermeneutic exchanges. The reading practices informed their understanding of their moral duties. The process of recognisable *imitatio*, a creative reconfiguration of classical ideas or emulation of style, closes a gap between the original source and the pupils. This is not merely an appropriation but a continuation of a dialogue between texts, between minds, and therefore between learned men. A mutual understanding of texts between educated young men indicates a different approach to historical works. They were taught to be in continual dialogue with these texts to further their own ideas. This seems obvious, but it is the manner by which students were taught to assimilate moral precepts into their later rhetorical mastery. In the plays, I examine how young scholar-friends continuously reconfigure classical texts and maintain a dialogue with these texts across temporal and cultural space.

According to Quentin Skinner, the early modern concept of historicity is very different from modern approaches to temporally distant texts. That is, a literary text of the ancient world holds a different kind of significance to learned men in the early modern period. Quentin Skinner argues that humanists didn't think about yoking multiple rhetorical authorities together as "unhistorical" as humanists did not seem to think in "historical" terms. Skinner states,

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<sup>111</sup> Peter Mack, *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric 1380-1620*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 2.

To do so [combine Greek, Roman, or contemporary ideas] is simply to reflect the extraordinarily strong sense of cultural continuity with which the humanists confronted their classical authorities.<sup>115</sup>

However, A. B. Ferguson provides a conflicting view, writing about Renaissance historiography. His argument aims to,

follow certain of the representative and/or prescriptive minds of Renaissance England as they explored the remains of the social and cultural past in search of perspective on the changing scene of contemporary life, to inquire how and to what extent their perceptions help to explain the transition from medieval to modern historical consciousness, and to trace the acceptance of investigation into the past as a valid function of historical study.<sup>116</sup>

In my assessment, I believe that both of these assessments, however contradictory, seem to explain how educated men thought of texts. They certainly recognised that these texts came from a specific historical context, but they sought ways to mediate this, bringing those same ideas into immediate significance.

The remains of the social and cultural past are not erased when scholar-friends think of ancient authors as “friends”. To engage in dialogue with texts is a creative process. Still, this begs the question: how much do early modern readers read classical texts as if they come from their own time? As classical texts were consistently integrated into early modern composition, writers indicate their immediate significance. There was a dialogue between ancient ideas and current literary production in that *imitatio* was not mere imitation but an evocation of style, a reconfiguration of sources, and a transference of ideas. This is basic but fundamental; it brings out in my study the question of intelligibility and understanding by *whom*? If composition and interpretation are based on mutual education and the ability to

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<sup>115</sup> Quentin Skinner, *Forensic Shakespeare*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 25.

<sup>116</sup> Arthur B. Ferguson, *Clio Unbound: Perception of the Social and Cultural Past in Renaissance England*, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 1979), p. xi.

understand rhetorical processes: who may be left out of these interactions and to what ends? Education processes allowed men to imagine authors as friends, metaphorically, and friends as textual sources. Their education also allows these learned individuals to compose and interpret multiple layers of meaning. But before venturing into an analysis of fictive friends and fellows, my next section provides an overview of the processes and curriculum of humanist education in established institutions. I first argue that because the grammar school curriculum was becoming more systematised in the sixteenth-century, it indicates that educated young boys certainly shared mutual literary texts and learned similar methods for both translation and composition. From this, I consider the features of higher education that come to the fore in my analysis of textual friendships between young men.

### **Grammar School Foundations**

There were a plethora of educational manuals in the period, outlining the course of study and the methods that should be used by teachers. Roger Ascham, John Brinsley, William Kempe, Richard Mulcaster, as well as earlier humanists like Desiderius Erasmus, all outlined pedagogical approaches to institutional education. Peter Mack notices the main reasons for shaping the grammar school syllabus thus:

Erasmus, Sturm, Ascham, Brinsley and the founders of the grammar schools agreed that education served to promote religion, moral virtue, wisdom and eloquence, that these qualities were linked and that the training best suited to produce them was a study of classical languages and literature.<sup>121</sup>

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<sup>121</sup> Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric*, (2005), p. 12

Conduct manuals and courtly treatises also demonstrated how young noblemen, and sometimes their middling counterparts, should act during the course of their studies. Henry Peacham, Thomas Elyot, wrote instructional texts in this vein. Thomas Hoby also translated Castiglione's *The Courtier* in 1561. Imperative to these works was the concept that one should cultivate good and virtuous friendships to aid in both one's reputation and one's moral development. Within the schools themselves, even beginning at the lower grammar school, young boys were given exercises that included moral dicta as they learned to Latin grammar and rudimentary compositional skills. One particular text, which seems to be used in most lower school curricula was the *Distichs Catonis* (or the Distichs of Cato). This compilation of pithy couplets was expected to not only be translated, parsed and reconstructed in the Latin but was also used to instil moral and social values from the earliest age. Students were also, of course, expected to use their Primer; the authoritative text was instated in 1545. They had to study their catechism as well.<sup>122</sup> In the continuation of study in the upper school, more sophisticated classical texts were used for this same end: the development of good moral fortitude as well as a more comprehensive understanding of both Latin reading and composition. As Foster Watson asserts,

Rhetoric indeed remained to the Elizabethan and Stuart schools, and, by the reading of authors, came to the highest position in the curriculum, that is, for the highest pupils. The high repute of Rhetoric, and its important place in the curriculum, is perhaps to the modern reader the most striking feature of the school work of the first half of the 17th century. But throughout the school course Grammar was the 'first' of school studies.<sup>123</sup>

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<sup>122</sup> Foster Watson, *The English Grammar School to 1660: Their Curriculum and Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908), p. 69.

<sup>123</sup> Foster Watson, *The English Grammar School to 1660: Their Curriculum and Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908), pp. 2-3.



In university study, of course, the texts were added concerning Logic, Dialectic, and, importantly, Rhetoric. Watson notes that in the grammar school, students still focused on Rhetoric, though logic was displaced (and studied at the university).<sup>124</sup> A sophisticated of not only the content and contexts of antiquarian texts were to be joined with a mastery of compositional style of these authors: something to be creatively imitated (*imitatio*) and used as the *loci* for the development of Rhetorical arguments or unique compositions (*inventio*).

As institutional education became more formalised, there is more evidence that young, educated men at the end of the sixteenth-century would have read the same literary texts and practised the similar methods of learning.<sup>125</sup> To understand how the textuality of *amicitia* is represented on the early modern stage, it is imperative to trace these same foundations. The purpose of this section is to show that the exercises in rhetorical development during formative years greatly informs the representation of friendship between men in early modern drama, where linguistic exchange focuses on the continual development of rhetorical and, thereby, hermeneutic exchange. Thus, I focus on a few specific concepts that directly inform my analysis of male homosocial friendship, as represented in Elizabethan and Jacobean drama—from *imitatio* to *inventio*, the use of circumstances as *loci* for the invention of arguments, and the use of literary texts as a means to develop their style.

Through the course of humanist education, works of Roman statesmen, classical poets and playwrights, and social philosophers were internalised by young pupils. They did not only learn to recognise the subject matter but also to interpret changes in style and employment. This education would have a profound effect not only on the creation of rhetorical argument but also in the textually-situated manner by which they can persuade, and

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid., p. 86. He states “The 17th century requirements of the University from the student in his preliminary training were greater than those of the earlier centuries, for the development of the grammar-demands were intensified whilst rhetoric was second only in its urgency to grammar. Accordingly logic was gradually crowded out from the Grammar School course”.

<sup>125</sup> Though private instruction was still prevalent for individuals, the fictional male friends in the dramatic works that I examine are overwhelmingly associated with institutional learning. Hamlet and Horatio come from Wittenberg; Studioso and Philomuses complete their training at Cambridge; Knowell and Wellbred are both figured as “scholars”; and Freevill and Malheureux display Marston’s connection to the Inns of Court.

by which they develop friendship. Importantly, the humanist curriculum shaped how Renaissance pupils and scholars thought about their obligations to state and fellow men, and of course in their construction of relationships—especially male friendships.

My first aim, here, is to provide a brief overview of pedagogical texts, the Elizabethan grammar school curriculum, and the classical narratives, prose, and poetry, used first for Latin translation and acquisition. The latter provided examples for style and different modes of literary production. This foregrounds my analysis of fictive male friendship. To start at the beginning would be a monumental task (and one already undertaken by historians of the rhetorical tradition).<sup>128</sup> Therefore, I will look at a few specific rhetorical and pedagogical texts influence the creation of male friendships in youth and the dramatic representations of fictive relationships on the early modern stage. In first outlining the purposes and importance of these educational guides, Latin textbooks, and literary sources, I will continue by outlining the texts that were the focus of study, and finally further investigate the methods of study focusing on the the “intentionally rigid forms, exercising the pupil in simplified versions of different aspects of invention, while consciously building up towards the oration”.<sup>129</sup>

There has been a wealth of studies concerning the curriculum of early modern English grammar schools and the universities of Oxford and Cambridge. T.W. Baldwin outlines the sixteenth-century syllabi that would have constituted Shakespeare’s education in his extensive study of pedagogical treatises, education manuals, and statutes. Peter Mack has also looked at the history of rhetoric and its development in pedagogical texts. In both Baldwin and Mack’s work, they illustrated the systemization of the curriculum that began in the 1530s and continued in synthesis in later years. In addition, works of Brian Vickers and James J. Murphy address the substantial influences of rhetorical training on early modern composition. Baldwin writes that by 1530 the system that “has been evolved at Eton is

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<sup>128</sup> Crucially, Peter Mack, who has worked on multiple projects to provide an extensive history of Humanism and Rhetoric, strongly affirms this. *A History of Renaissance Rhetoric 1380-1620* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 1.

<sup>129</sup> Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric*, (2005), p. 28.

hardened into uniformity, and spreads to other schools”.<sup>130</sup> The pedagogical texts that I have chosen to look at in this study are still influential in the 1570s and 1580s when the playwrights I consider would have been educated in formalised institutions. Indeed, Brian Vickers traces the reception of curriculum development and sees a pattern, saying,

Founders of schools naturally looked to the authorities for models, and so the ideas of a few great educators (Erasmus, Vives, Sturm) and the curricula of the pioneer schools (St. Paul’s, Eton Winchester, Westminster) became repeated all over the country, with slight variations or compromises.<sup>131</sup>

He even repeats this same assertion in another work, reiterating this important point.<sup>132</sup> In addition, Peter Mack compares four grammar school statutes, where we can see a continuation and systematised overview of the methods for instruction and the literary texts that informed educational training.<sup>134</sup> A young boy’s education would begin at the “petty school” where they were taught their catechism and how to read English. From this starting point, they would move into the lower grammar school, where the focus shifted to Latin language acquisition and specific Latin texts that primarily dealt with basic moral aphorisms or *fabulae*. At the start of the grammar school education, the focus was on translations of Aesop, Cato, Terence, which are all named between the statutes.

In the upper school, pupils were not only focused on rhetorical mastery but remained intimately engaged with literature. These shared literary texts—from classical myths to epic poetry, ancient drama to examples of letters, provided not only ideas for plots and characters but also allowed for the representation of different styles and modes of thought. Neil Rhodes attests that these educational practices were so pervasive that they move toward the study of the “Humanities” as a modern discipline. He writes, “The great strength of Tudor education

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<sup>130</sup> T.W. Baldwin, *William Shakespeare’s Small Latine & Lesse Greeke*, vol. 1, (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1944), p. 164.

<sup>131</sup> Brian Vickers, *Classical Rhetoric in English Poetry*, (London: Macmillan, 1970), p. 47.

<sup>132</sup> Brian Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 147.

<sup>134</sup> Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric*, (2005), p. 13.

lay in its integration of the language arts in a programme that combined poetry, oratory, and (in a modest way) drama”.<sup>136</sup>

In the *Trivium*, students are first provided with prefatory material for each text (author, genre, narrative outline, and verso form). The teacher then construes the Latin in sections, then explains its parts (grammatical, etymological, and syntactical). Finally, the *res*, as matter and content, is considered (the circumstances, adages, and narratives). This subject matter is later used as sites for both *imitatio* and *inventio*.<sup>145</sup> Erasmus, among others, outlines the ‘subject matter’ and ‘methods’ suitable for different levels. Reading copiously was important at all stages. That is, as Erasmus states, “acquiring grammar rests upon reading and not upon definitions and rules” (Book 3.521).<sup>147</sup>

Grammar school boys were lead through certain exercises to develop their compositional as well as reading skills. Young schoolboys were taught meaning these three exercises: fable (*fabula*), narration (*narratio*), and situated anecdote (*chreia*). The foundations of education were built not only in conjunction with reading specific texts (mostly classical) but were part of dissecting, restructuring, and coming to an understanding of both the texts and the style of the authors. Anecdotes, for instance, exercised the students’ ability to appeal to authority figures to justify their actions or views. From early on, this helped to shape their abilities for argument construction. If an appeal to learned and ‘great’, they learn to justify their own behaviour. This enables the student to align their own view with the ‘wisdom’ of an authoritative figure and to bring a classical idea into a current context. To discuss a virtue in the context of both a classical text and the current situation was a way to align the current topic to an authoritative past.

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<sup>136</sup> Neil Rhodes, *Shakespeare and the Origins of English*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 31.

<sup>145</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 16.

<sup>147</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *De Copia / De Ratione Studii*, in *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 24, ed. Craig R. Thompson, (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1978), p. 163.

Reading copiously, sharing reading, participating in oral exercises and following the teacher's instructions were part of the daily lives of these young boys. Their educational environment, as well as the content of their studies, greatly influenced how they developed a sense of their manhood. Walter Ong calls the movement from grammar school to higher levels of education as a "rite of passage" in the development of adolescents and William Weaver notes as the rudiments of boyhood instruction and representation and the exercised rhetoric of adolescent "coming of age".<sup>150</sup>

T.W. Baldwin says that it is unwise to begin any analysis of Elizabethan grammar school with anyone but Erasmus.<sup>156</sup> However, Erasmus himself provides a distillation of multiple classical sources, and Baldwin focuses only on Shakespeare's education. In Baldwin's extensive two-volume work, he not only argues for Shakespeare's grounded knowledge in the classics but also provides an immense amount of information on the grammar school in sixteenth-century England.<sup>157</sup> My aim here is not to omit Rudolph Agricola, John Sturm, John Cheke, Juan Luis Vives and other foundational humanists, nor to ignore the divergence between rhetoric and dialectic created through the work of Petrus Ramus. I focus on a sample of pedagogical texts and conduct manuals that span the early 1500s through the early seventeenth-century in England. Debates concerning the influences of multiple different humanist thinkers on Tudor pedagogy have been manifold. However, these sources draw upon classical thinkers, primarily Quintilian and Cicero, as sources for

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<sup>150</sup> See Walter Ong, "Latin Language Study as Puberty Rite", *Studies in Philology*, vol. 56, no. 2 (Apr., 1959), pp. 103-124 (p. 104); William P. Weaver, *Untutored Lines: The Making of the English Epyllion*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2012), pp. 14-43. These both provide an overview of the rites of passage concerning instruction in Latin language acquisition and the mastery of the *epyllion* (short narrative poem), respectively.

<sup>156</sup> Baldwin, *Small Latine & Lesse Greeke*, vol. 1, (1944), p. 77. Recent critics also could not dispute the influence of Erasmus. Erasmus' textbooks and ideas of instruction are subsumed into the basic structure of sixteenth-century grammar school curricula. Indeed, Peter Mack also notes that the instructions set out by Cardinal Wolsey in his 1529 statute employ the basic structure of Erasmian pedagogy in Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric*, (2005), p. 16.

<sup>157</sup> Beginning with Erasmus' *De Ratione Studii* (1511), as Baldwin insists, is crucial; this forms the main structure for grammar school methodology, and indeed, also influences the curriculum. Baldwin, *Small Latine & Lesse Greeke*, (1944), pp. 78-9.

rhetorical study.<sup>158</sup> Howard Jones explains the importance of Cicero, primarily, in education spanning from grammar schools to institutions of higher learning. He writes, “While it was at the more advanced stages, in particular, that Cicero played a dominant role... he did play a role, albeit a less commanding one in the early stages of the curriculum as well”.<sup>159</sup> Since I am concerned with representations of university-educated men in drama, Cicero plays a leading part in my analysis. However, Watson exclaims with great exuberance Quintilian’s significance in educational institutions. He writes,

For, in questions of education, the cry of the Renaissance [sic.] writers was, ‘Back to Quintilian!’ With Quintilian, Grammar was founded upon, and inclusive of, the study of humanistic literature. The enthronement of literature, and the minimising of formalistic Grammar, was the position taken up in England by Sir Thomas Elyot in *The Book Called the Gouvernour* (1531) and in Roger Ascham’s *Scholemaster* (1570).<sup>160</sup>

Therefore, a select few textbooks are important to address before looking at any additional pedagogical methodologies which underpin the creation of rhetorical style. These are Cicero’s *De inventione* and *De oratore*, Erasmus’ *De copia*, Quintilian’s *Institutio oratoria*, and the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. These texts provided much of the foundations for rhetorical training.<sup>161</sup> Additionally, they often outline overlapping rhetorical concepts and approaches. The first, crucially, indicates the “five elements of the art of rhetoric” as *inventio*, *dispositio*, *elocutio*, *memoria*, and *pronuntiatio*. In the second, Cicero further marries concepts of argument composition with vivid expression (*enargeia*) with concepts of good

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<sup>158</sup> Baldwin outlines multiple texts that were used across increasingly systematised educational institutions in *Shakespeare’s Small Latine & Lesse Greeke*, (1944), p. 494. He writes that “grammar schools of sixteenth-century England were essentially uniform”.

<sup>159</sup> Howard Jones, *Master Tully*, (Nieuwkoop: De Graff Publishers, 1998), p. 158.

<sup>160</sup> Foster Watson, *The English Grammar School to 1660: Their Curriculum and Practice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1908), p. 4.

<sup>161</sup> The proven significance of these texts in humanist rhetorical training is outlined in many critical studies on Renaissance pedagogy. See, for instance, Peter Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric*, (2005), pp. 40; 52 and Quentin Skinner, *Forensic Shakespeare*, (2014), pp. 11-12.

statesmanship. The final text provides the primary basis of the creation of rhetorical, persuasive speech acts: outlining types of speech (deliberative, forensic, epideictic) and the arrangement of speeches, “Introduction, Statement of Facts, Division, Proof, Refutation, and Conclusion” with an additional arrangement of arguments.<sup>162</sup> To add to this, John Brinsley’s *Ludis Literarius* provides a distillation of the lists “circumstances” as *topoi* for invention, adding to the basic outlines of the construction and types of oratory, enabling a movement towards the creation of rhetorical arguments. Thomas Wilson outlines the circumstances as topics of invention as well, stating, that they “helpe wonderfully, to set out any mat|ter, and to amplifie it to the vttermoste, not onely in praisynge, or dispraisynge but also in all other causes where any aduisement is to bee vsed”.<sup>163</sup> Both Brinsley and Wilson adapt these ideas from Quintilian and Erasmus and translate these concepts into English.

These texts provide the rhetorical outlines and advanced training that built upon the Latin *trivium*.<sup>164</sup> William Lily’s *Grammar*, to return to the Latin training of the early grammar school years, set the standard for the textbooks of the day and outlined the eight parts of speech to bring school boys to an understanding of Latin. Crucially, these texts were used in conjunction with the set classical literature, and formed the subject matter of the study of rhetoric. There is a movement towards uniformity in grammar schools, as Baldwin asserts; it is clear that these texts do not only stand the test of time but are also the foundations of the literary curriculum for the English grammar school as an institution.<sup>165</sup>

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<sup>162</sup> Anon., [Cicero attr.], *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, Book III, trans. Harry Caplan, (London and Cambridge, Cambridge University Press: 1964), p. 189.

<sup>163</sup> Ceri Sullivan explains the three methods for *inventio* (proofs through induction or deduction, common proofs, and reliance on commonplaces) in *Dismembered Rhetoric: English Recusant Writing, 1580 to 1603*, (London: Associated University Press, 1995), p. 64-70.

<sup>164</sup> Peter Mack, “Learning and Transforming Conventional Wisdom: Reading and Rhetoric in the Elizabethan Grammar School” in *Theatres of Learning: Education in Early Modern England (1500-1750)* (Folger Shakespeare Library Conference, 17 October, 2015). Cicero was not the only classical author whose work formed the matter of study in the grammar school environment. Thus, through the texts of Cicero and the anonymous text attributed to him, schoolboys could progress from an understanding of duties, a knowledge of friendship discourse, and the basic construction of persuasive orations.

<sup>165</sup> See both Peter Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric*, (2005), p. 13 for a table of these works, and Baldwin, *Small Latine & Lesse Greeke*, vol. 1, (1944), pp. 122-124; 164 for an explanation of the “movement towards authorized uniformity” in grammar schools.

Beyond this formal instruction, conduct manuals supplemented the learning process. Tomas Elyot produced a translation of Plutarch's *The education or bringinge vp of children...* (1532), no doubt deeply connected to his educational manual *The Boke Named the Governour* (1531). In section IV of *The Boke*, Elyot notes that the child of a gentleman should be provided "such companions and playfellows, which shall not do in his presence any reproachable act, or speak any unclean word" in order to "persuade him to virtue, or to withdraw him from vice".<sup>168</sup> This companionship was deemed necessary even before the age of seven years when educational instruction and 'breeching' is to commence. Indeed, Elyot suggests teaching the nobleman's child Greek or Latin even before this tender age. Appearing alongside pedagogical texts for the grammar school, and dealing with the tutelage of the gentry *exclusively*, Elyot's texts can nonetheless shed light on the early sixteenth-century desire for a more humanist version of education, despite the fact that Elyot wrote about instruction in music, dancing, exercising, and other 'courtly' practices that would not be necessary for the middling sort.<sup>169</sup> His text is crucial in understanding the significance of humanist education programmes in its focus on the 'common weal' or (as Elyot himself points out) the *res publica*. Phil Withington notices that there is a shift in this line of thinking, as Mulcaster felt that with the correct instruction and disposition, any educated man could serve the commonweal.<sup>170</sup> The duty of the gentry and the common citizen is also formed through 'virtuous' childhood camaraderie.

Roger Ascham's *Schoolemaster* (1570) is critical to understanding the foundational claim that systems of learning greatly influenced male modes of understanding; that is to say, in particular, that the action of *translating* was not a mere method in learning Latin. His insistence on 'double translation' leads to a systematic approach to interpretation: one in

<sup>168</sup> Thomas Elyot, *The Book Named the Governor, 1531, A Facsimile Printing. English linguistics, 1500-1800*, no. 246, (Menston, Yorkshire: Menston Scholar Press, 1970), p. 28.

<sup>169</sup> It may be argued that, concerning flamboyant courtly practices, by the late 1500s these modes of education become a source of ridicule on the stage.

<sup>170</sup> Phil Withington, *The Politics of Commonwealth: Citizens and Freemen in Early Modern England*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005), p. 55



which the pupil *anticipates* the reaction of the master, and, in adulthood, in which the individual constructs a rhetorical narrative in order to consciously anticipate the reaction of the reader or listener. Effectively, the grammar school practice of active translation lead to the internalisation idea of the interconnectivity of rhetoric and hermeneutics; it mobilised speech and anticipated interpretation. He also advocated a strict regulation of what is read and how texts are studied within the classroom. This is important to note because it indicates a regulation not only of the methodology of learning but of the texts that were taught so that the pupil did not “seek to be helped by some other book”.<sup>171</sup>

This strict regulation had a specific effect upon schoolboys: overall they were learning the same materials, as the syllabi were increasingly standardised. This can be seen as both the process of understanding the source material and its employment and reconfiguration in the current textual situation. Because standardised education is, for all intents and purposes, based on a mutual understanding of texts and similar exercises used to internalize ideas, students may come to a mutual understanding through a hermeneutic process of perception. This could distance individuals who would not be privy to the method and matter of the education system.

Crucial to my analysis of masculine friendship in English dramatic works is the representation of fictional rhetorical practices in the vernacular. Though rhetorical training from the English grammar school and the universities was firmly centred on mastery of expression in Latin, rhetorical use in dramatic works of the stage would primarily be presented in English. University entertainments were usually presented entirely in Latin; with few exceptions, such as *Club Law* and *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus*. Latin phrases and *sententiae* were utilised to indicate status, knowledge, or even pedantry on the public stage. The public literary outputs are overwhelmingly presented in the vernacular; as this would

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<sup>171</sup> Roger Ascham, *The Schoolmaster* (1570), ed. Lawrence V. Ryan, (Charlottesville, Virginia: The University of Virginia Press, 1967), p. 16

provide access to the widest audiences. Hackel argues that the readership was not as confined to the elite masculine audience as was once assumed. However, in popular reading practices, and reading in English, are often seen as ‘passive’ literacies. That is, without institutional instruction, compositional practices may be limited, if non-existent, for these readers.<sup>173</sup>

However, the concept that eloquence could also be obtained and applied to work in the vernacular gained popularity. For scholars, this did not mean that their Latin studies were disturbed. Rather, it meant that authors of rhetorical manuals in the late sixteenth-century extended some of this knowledge to a literate audience. But as Hackel has shown, public literacy may have been limited and is difficult to reconstruct. She calls this passive reading, and it stands in opposition to active, educated literacy.<sup>174</sup>

It is important to see the cultural significance of rhetorical manuals outside the education system when thinking about the production and reception of vernacular, popular plays. Thomas Wilson’s *The Arte of Rhetorique* distils the information from both Cicero’s main concepts and the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium* in an English (and Protestant) context. It is an important text, which has gone through eight editions, though its popularity was waning in the late 1590s. Thomas J. Derrick states, “The middle period, beginning with the second edition (1560) and continuing through the fifth edition (1562, 1563, 1567), marked the height of the popular appeal of the *Arte*” notes the decline as a result of a rise in popularity of “Ramist rhetoric”.<sup>175</sup> However, the ‘rise’ of Ramist dialectic doesn’t imply any decline in institutional rhetorical education, as Skinner affirms. He writes, “But in fact, there is little evidence that these [Ramist] reforms had much impact on the teaching in English schools”.<sup>176</sup> What is crucial to note about this and its connection with my project, is that this

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<sup>173</sup> Heidi Brayman Hackel, *Reading Material in Early Modern England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), pp. 180

<sup>174</sup> Ibid. p. 127.

<sup>175</sup> Thomas Wilson, *The Arte of Rhetorique*, ed. Thomas J. Derrick in *The Renaissance Imagination: Important Literary and Theatrical Texts from the late Middle Ages through the Seventeenth Century*, ed. Stephen Orgel, vol.1, (New York and London: Garland Publishing, Ltd., 1982) Introduction, pp. lxxxvii; xci

<sup>176</sup> Skinner, *Forensic Shakespeare*, (2014), p. 39.

rhetorical understanding in the vernacular may have only been a “passive” literacy. Warren Boutcher claims that vernacular texts “*collectively* played a large role alongside—or even to the exclusion of—Latin and Greek”, though Quentin Skinner (and Peter Mack) only concede that vernacular texts were used to supplement their Latin counterparts.<sup>177</sup> There is no doubt that there is a transmission of Latinate ideology, literary style, and rhetoric to Renaissance compositional and discursive practices, how else would we have such a long history of English literature and drama? However, many of the ‘great’ authors of the time had some kind of formal training. The convergence of compositional practices and literacy is complicated and difficult to reproduce. I contend that we would not have the literary representation of ‘gulls’ who cannot compose their own works without pinching pieces from other authors or plagiarising entire poems or passages. Two examples in the plays that I consider here are the feigned poet and city gull, Matthew, in *Every Man in His Humour* and the pompous patron, Gullio, in the *Parnassus Plays*.

Richard Rainolde notices the desire for vernacular exercise texts. In his translation of the *Progymnasmata* (1563), he calls this, “a learned work of Rhetoric compiled and made in the English tongue, of one, who floweth in all excellencie of art, who in judgment is profound, in wisdom and eloquence most famous”.<sup>181</sup> It is the importance of language in the early modern period, and the desire for understanding, that leads to the simultaneous production of Latin and vernacular texts on rhetoric and rhetorical exercises. And, indeed, this English eloquence is depicted on the public stage. Nicholas Grimalde notes a more equalising force in the translation of *De officiis* to the English, in *Marcus Tullius Ciceroes thre bokes of duties* (1556). The Preface to the reader outlines some of Grimalde’s ‘personal’ reasons for both translating Cicero’s text and the benefits of both the translation (accessibility

<sup>177</sup> See Warren Boutcher, ““Who taught thee Rhetoricke to deceive a maid?”: Christopher Marlowe’s *Hero and Leander*, Juan Boscan’s *Leandro*, and Renaissance Vernacular Humanism”, *Comparative Literature*, vol. 52, no. 1, (Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2000), p. 12.

<sup>181</sup> Richard Rainolde, *A booke called the Foundation of rhetorike*, (London: 1563), sig. A2<sup>r</sup> Bodleian Library copy, Early English Books Online <eebo.chadwyck.com> Accessed May 18, 2014.

to fellow ‘contriemene’, that is, “chiefly for our vnlatined people”) and the matter of the text in teaching youth to become ‘masters of manliness’ and “so rightly pointing oute the pathway to all vertue”.<sup>182</sup>

It is, then, essential to note the pervasive nature of rhetorical training and knowledge acquisition in both formal educational settings and vernacular print. Brian Vickers states,

The history of Renaissance rhetoric is in part the story of the assimilation and synthesis of a great number if classical treatises, together with the many handbooks in the European vernaculars that they inspired.<sup>183</sup>

As I will focus on fictive masculine relationships of the educated and their uneducated counterparts, it is essential to describe the overall desire for mastery of eloquence in this period. The uneducated ‘gulls’ of many city comedies understand both the importance of rhetoric, and imitation of great writers but become sites of ridicule for their inability to compose their own poetry, letters, and similar texts. Also, they are unable to invent their own arguments without a rudimentary knowledge of classical works and a strong reliance on contemporary popular literature. Style and eloquence *were* important not only for the educated men but for negotiating the relationships between men in general. The difference, then, is the tenuous lines between active and compositional rhetorical understanding and piecemeal ‘borrowing’.

Thomas Wilson, in the first book of *The Arte of Rhetorique*, explains the importance of *imitatio* as not only textual imitation but as a process of “following” based in the Ciceronian concept. He states, “Now, before we vse either to write, or speake eloquently, wee must dedicate our myndes wholly, *to followe the most wise and learned men*, and seeke to fashion as wel their speache and gesturing, as their witte or edyting”.<sup>185</sup> The idea of following

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<sup>182</sup> Marcus Tullius Cicero, *Marcus Tullius Ciceroes thre bokes of duties*[...], trans. Nicholas Grimalde, (London: 1556), sig. A1<sup>r</sup>. Henry E. Huntington Library copy, Early English Books Online <eebo.chadwyck.com> Accessed May 18, 2014.

<sup>183</sup> Brian Vickers, *In Defence of Rhetoric*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988), p. 255.

<sup>185</sup> Thomas Wilson, *The Arte of Rhetorique*, (London, 1553), sig A3<sup>r</sup>.

the style and rhetorical skill of “wise and learned men” becomes not only a way to mediate problems of temporal detachment from patrician antiquity but also a means to focus on contemporary emulation of friends and fellows. In *De oratore*, Cicero states,

This, then, must be the first rule I give to the prospective orator: I will show him whom he should imitate...Anyone who is going to do things properly must, first, be very careful in making his choice; and he must also devote all his attention to attaining those qualities of his approved model that are truly outstanding. (Book II. 90-92)<sup>186</sup>

Roger Ascham writes about the scope of *imitatio*, in *On imitation* (1570) that “Imitation is a faculty to express lively and perfectly that example which ye go about to follow. And of itself it is large and wide; for all the works of nature, in a manner, be examples for art to follow.”<sup>187</sup> He follows this idea with the concept that one can only learn to “speak as the best and wisest” if one inhabits the same spaces as the best and wisest men. Though, in his consideration, this is a nationalistic assertion that the cultivated and civilised English nation would be the only nursery for cultivating eloquence. Academic institutions, then, could be seen as nurseries within the national nursery: the perfect enclosed space. He brings together an intellectual and special element to *imitatio*, and indicates that one’s “mother tongue” is not best for learning to speak eloquently. This can be only found in Greek and Latin: “the only two learned tongues which be kept not in common talk but in private books.”<sup>188</sup> He insists, unlike Wilson, that successful *imitatio* is directly connected to the processes of reading and composing works in Latin or Greek. Wilson’s text opened up the possibility for eloquence in the vernacular, but it leaves out the rigorous educational practices of translation in the development of style and eloquence. His own work was an endeavour to bring the primarily elite practices of institutional learning to a much wider audience. What may result from such

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<sup>186</sup> Cicero, *De Oratore*, trans. E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham, (1942), p. 147.

<sup>187</sup> Ascham, *On Imitation in English Literary Criticism*, ed. Brian Vickers, (1999), p. 141.

<sup>188</sup> *Ibid.*, p.141.

an endeavour is a great deal of friction between the educated elite and those who only possess, as Ascham might say, a “superficial” engagement with the “wisdom and eloquence, good matter and good utterance” that should be followed.<sup>189</sup>

The humanist education system in England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries produced young men who were versed in classical literature and were familiar with the uses of rhetoric. Homosocial networks between young men are prevalent in the literature of the period; indeed, there seems to be a preoccupation with the ‘anxious’ time between boyhood/adolescence and the development of ‘manhood’. One need only to examine this focus in both pedagogical theory and advice manuals on the proper ways to become a virtuous man through the cultivation of what is often deemed “good fellows”. I see this as reactionary. These guides not only teach persuasion but are sites of instruction for navigating masculine development. To begin to understand these hermeneutic networks of young, educated gentlemen, one must first understand the direct correlation between the humanist education system, which produces the majority of playwrights, writers, poets, and political figures in this period, and the mastery of rhetorical skills. A connection can be seen between representational friendships in these works and their scholarly underpinnings, which made them possible. To say that there is a well-established critical field in the areas of the history of rhetoric and the study of the humanist educational programme in England is an understatement.<sup>190</sup> I did not aim to fully summarise, or reiterate, all of the scholarly work that has been undertaken in this field. Rather, I aimed to highlight specific features that inform the textuality of masculine friendship that I will examine in the proceeding chapters.

## Chapter Outline

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<sup>189</sup> Ibid., p.141.

<sup>190</sup> T.W. Baldwin “laid the egg” (to borrow his own phrasing) in the two-volume tome *William Shakespeare’s Small Latine & Lesse Greeke*, vols. 1; 2, (Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1944).

The texts I have chosen vary from Shakespeare's *Hamlet* to the more obscure university plays, *The Parnassus Plays*. I aim to show the pervasive nature of textualised male friendship and the ethical problems that arise from the use of homosocial relationships in various examples of late Elizabethan and early Jacobean drama. Textual production, whether epistolary, poetic, dramatic or otherwise, is built upon the concept that one can 'know' the author or even befriend the author, of classical and neoclassical texts. As Montaigne writes, "Converse with books...is more reliable and more properly our own". He goes on to assert that they "are more real, more alive, more natural" to him than a physical friend and that they "always come...with the same expression".<sup>191</sup> To converse with books is to come to an understanding of the active nature of composition and understanding. In this way, each translation or reconfiguration is based on *imitatio* as a *locus* for *inventio*. This makes subtle reconfigurations purposeful; they are imbued with another deliberate layer of meaning. Conveying an idea across cultural, temporal, and linguistic distance, or bringing a concept into immediate significance was seen as aesthetic and rhetorical reconfiguring of a known text as a means to mediate historical distance. This makes for an exclusive circle of eloquent discourse, not only used as a means to develop intimacy but, precariously, as a means to develop political and social power. Embedded in this is the connectivity of the author/playwright to the audience for which the work is created.

The discourse of male friendship, founded in an environment where translation was the key to unlocking wisdom and knowledge, employs this same outlook in the creation of friendships. Reading a classical text is a way of uncovering the intention, or even the mind, of the author; as Nicholas Grimalde states in his English translation of *De officiis*, "Cicero

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<sup>191</sup> Michel de Montaigne. *The essays or morall, politike and millitarie discourses of Lo: Michaell de Montaigne* [...], trans. John Florio, (London: By Val. Sims for Edward Blount, 1603). Quotation from modernised edition: Michel de Montaigne, *The Essays: A Selection*, trans. M. A. Screech, (London: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 25.

hath tolde his minde, and left it vs in this boke”.<sup>198</sup> I focus on this hermeneutic process as both communicating with the past and translating these authors into contemporary use. This is a method by which men build their own affectionate groups: with textual intimacy and a continual mediation and manipulation of ideas.

The first chapter analyses the relationship between Hamlet and Horatio in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*, looking at both how friendship is textualised and how men use their amity to explain their situations and actions. I claim that these characters employ university learning in their navigation of the Danish court, which frustrates Hamlet’s revenge plotting but allows for Horatio to argue for and support his actions. First, because these two friends are both scholars and built their friendship at university, they utilise learning to both explain and work through Hamlet’s politically dangerous situation. Second, the construction of friendship between the two stands in stark contrast to the fellowship between Hamlet and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Their companionable relationship hinges not on affection and mutual learning but on the political connections they could make in association with powerful political figure. They are, then, not friends but upstart courtiers. As Hamlet is displaced from his proper role as successor to the throne, his two friends betray him to aid Claudius. Finally, the main argument of this chapter is that Hamlet’s use of Horatio’s fidelity, *honestas*, and learning serve as the *locus* for building an argument to support his revenge plan and actions.<sup>199</sup> Horatio knows of the situations and circumstances that arise within the play. He takes part interpreting the meaning of the ghost’s presence. He knows about the execution warrant drafted by Claudius and carried by Hamlet’s fellows. His own *honestas* and position as a scholar outside the political process itself, in conjunction with the other two elements of his character, all allow for Horatio to build an argument in defence of his friend and for the explanation of the current state of the political

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<sup>198</sup> Cicero, *Marcus Tullius Ciceroes thre bokesof duties*[...], trans. Nicholas Grimalde, (London: 1556), sig. A4<sup>v</sup>. Henry E. Huntington Library Copy. Early English Books Online, <eebo.chadwyck.com> Accessed October 3, 2015

<sup>199</sup> For the concept of “bearing witness” see Stephen Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), pp. 211, 228.



system. There is, of course, an ethical problem in the formation of this argument. Horatio has no concrete proof of Old Hamlet's murder and the consequent usurpation of the throne. His reasons for exculpating Hamlet arise from his affection for the prince.

The second chapter connects an understanding of *imitatio* in traversing both the humanist curriculum and then the marketplace outside the university setting. As the previous chapter analyses the uses of humanist learning in political situations in the court setting, this chapter looks at the processes and products of humanist pedagogy in the economic systems of early modern England. In a different genre, *imitatio* of texts and 'following' one another through the education process is the main focus. *Imitatio* is not just textual in these plays; following one another means utilising each other as support while completing an undergraduate degree. I consider the textual foundations of the friendship between the two protagonists of these three plays, Philomusus and Studioso. In addition to forming intimate relationships in which the friend is the *alter ipse*, these plays situate university youths and recent graduates in the process of entering the economic world outside the university. I look at both the allegorical first play *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus* and more satirical *Returns from Parnassus*. I investigate how knowledge acquisition, the development of rhetorical skill, and 'keeping good fellows' become exclusionary practices that lead to a sense of superiority through their enclosed exchange. The scholar-poets' frustrated attempts to reap economic gain from their learning produces great hostility towards the 'lessers' and the patrons who do not appreciate the cultural value of poetry and study. I consider this in the context of satirical pamphlets, in which satire can possibly be a vehicle for tainting someone's reputation. In this vein, I consider the role of Ingenioso, who represents Thomas Nashe in the plays. This hostility could lead to more extreme forms of violence and friction between scholar-poets of the middling sort and those who do not reward or understand the value of their work. I look at *Club Law*, a university play in which the academic cohort of educated, young men exert

extreme violence to obtain their legal powers over the town to supplement my argument that hostility can lead to force.

Many critics have discussed, at length, the prevailing features of humanist *amicitia* in the contexts of the early modern courtly tradition, the dramatic pastoral landscape, in connection with ideas of medieval kinship traditions, and in the context of economics and sovereignty. However, the majority have not focused on depictions of homosocial relationships in the context of the urban environment, where, critically, friendship is forged, represented, and/or reconfigured in the London ‘underworld’ of brothels or ‘suspected houses,’ taverns and the marketplace. In these texts, themes of legal punishment, clandestine marriage, and plots cuckoldry, deception, and usury are the usual focus, but I will argue that these plot constructions not only include narratives of classical and humanist *amicitia* but are shaped through the depictions of male fellowship and friendship. More crucially, the male-male relationships depicted in these texts construct a network of ‘homosocial hermeneutics’—by which the protagonists control the plot through an exclusionary discourse built upon mutual rhetorical mastery and textuality. I argue that through these narratives gentlemen friends are depicted as appropriating urban spaces, unthreatened by the possibilities of damaged reputations, corruption, debt, disinheritance, or legal retribution. The homosocial friendship and fellowships in this urban context operate on redefined codes of morality and social conduct. These homosocial networks, in effect, determine laws for themselves and others.

The third chapter analyses the textual homosocial relationships of the city environment in Ben Jonson’s *Every Man in His Humour*. In this, I first consider Ben Jonson’s own understanding of textual friendship, formed through mutual study. I then analyse the conversational and intimate letter between the two protagonists at the start of the play. The intimacy between the two young friends is depicted as primarily textual: the first presence of

one party is as a letter, his epistolary style is interpreted as indicative of his moral state and compositional skill. Crucially, their intimacy allows them to escape any retribution for their ethically dubious, if not downright threatening actions. That is, they are able to reconfigure the themes of earlier admonition literature to champion their ‘jesting’ at the end of the play. Their ‘jests’ centre on the orchestration and concealment of a clandestine marriage, a seriously hazardous threat to a woman’s honour. They also prod the humours of other characters, skirting the line between jesting and manipulation. The characters, Prospero and Lorenzon in the Quarto, and Wellbred and Knowell in the Folio, use both of their rhetorical skills to effectively control the humours of other characters to obtain their desires. This textualised friendship is mirrored by the city ‘gulls’ Matthew and Bobadil, who attempt to show both their affection and status through textually derived allusion, references, and ‘theft of wit’ from writers of the age. This indicates not only the pervasiveness of the concept of textually-informed intimacy between men but also highlights the differences between the masculine elite and the perceived mastery of textual understanding and direct plagiarism show in a misunderstanding of the difference between *imitatio* and direct appropriation. Within the play, I primarily look at ethical problems associated with elite masculine friendship: manipulation of others, using others as sites for entertainment and gifts, and concealment of motivations. In enacting these, the two protagonists become laws unto themselves. This is, oddly akin to a very different type of relationship based on mutual understanding: cony-catchers. I argue that in the representation of these rogues we see transient fellowships that allow for the orchestration of vice. For these tricksters, they rely on an enclosed canting language. Just as the gallants are able to manipulate others, these hustlers are celebrated in popular print as sources of ‘merry jests’. They do not get away without chastisement, but the gallants, based on their status as educated gentlemen, they are celebrated as cunning pranksters.

In the final chapter, I shift my focus back to sources for *inventio* in creating arguments to support vicious behaviours and the ability of men to police one another in their own enclosed relationships. John Marston's *The Dutch Courtesan* begins with two friends, Freevill and Malheureux, drinking in a tavern. Freevill plans to go to his courtesan "a pretty, nimble-eyed Dutch Tanakin" (I.i.147-8) and provides a mock-encomium on the benefits of prostitution. This takes the form of an Inns of Court moot, that is, practice in legal argumentation. He convinces his reluctant friend to accompany him to the brothel. Using his rhetorical mastery, gained through his education, he is able to subvert admonition texts and conduct manuals. He utilises his humanist education to construct an argument to support vicious behaviours that threaten domestic duty. This play portrays young masculine networks as self-policing; when Malheureux succumbs to his lusts for the courtesan, he Freevill effectively takes the place of legal authorities. In this play, we also encounter Cocledemoy, a combination of educated gentleman and cony-catcher. His status mirrors Freevill, highlighting the vicious behaviours of educated men in the city, and their ability to control and manipulate others.

The art of persuasive speech, with its humanist roots in the systemised educational institutions, is at the heart of the ethical questions concerning relationship formation in the context of early modern drama. It is unsettling that protagonists can, and do, manipulate a plot through their argumentation and control of emotive force. These fictions ultimately champion such behaviour because of the style of execution. Because elite friendships stand in for a fictive construction that underpins the humanist educational system—that rhetorical mastery and virtuous action are interconnected, they can become dangerously transgressive if they do not 'adhere' to this concept.

I aim to add an ethical dimension to the critical analysis of the interconnectivity of composition and hermeneutics in early modern male friendships. What it means to employ

rhetorical strategy, and use of mutual knowledge and perspectives is also what it means to be amicable within a network of the educated elite. In Latin texts concerning the “perfect” orator, powerful men were called to use their skills in rhetoric to benefit one another and the commonweal. This was bound up in the ethics of not only what it means to be a skilled and learned man, but what it meant to be a good friend. The problem that arises concerns the ethical use of knowledge and specific pedagogical practices that are unattainable to the vast majority in order to achieve one’s desires. Joan Simon writes about the purposes of education, stating,

The northern humanists consistently emphasised that close and detailed study of classical tongues and authors, both in regard to form and content, was the best and most useful preparation for life, whether active or scholarly.<sup>202</sup>

The products of education were not always this rosy. Rhetorical mastery could often be utilised for both self-advancement and vindication under the auspices of amity.

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<sup>202</sup> Joan Simon, *Education and Society*, (1979), p.103.

## CHAPTER II: *HAMLET*

### Hamlet's Horatio: "a living and moving Library"

"Entertain therefore the acquaintance of men of the soundest reputation for Religion, Life and Learning," states Henry Peacham in his educational text for gentlemen, "whose conference and company may be unto you a living and moving library".<sup>203</sup> Peacham's *The Compleat Gentleman* (1622) continues to develop modes of humanist instruction. As the models of patrician antiquity are textual prototypes for imitation, so are the good fellows acquired in the course of study. Peacham describes how one should choose associations and indicates that homosocial relationships are both textual and instrumental. Not only were friends to act as references, as a 'library', but books were also considered friends. This concept has its roots in Erasmus and Cicero's description of books and correspondence. As Laurens J. Mills has noted, Erasmus's familiarity with Cicero's *De amicitia* takes the form of calling books his friends. Mills writes, "[Erasmus] imitates passages in Cicero's *De amicitia*, calling books his friends and speaking of them in a language like that of Cicero".<sup>205</sup> Thus Erasmus writes to a now unknown recipient,

I devote myself to my friends, with whom I enjoy the most delightful intercourse.

With them I shut myself in some corner, where I avoid the gaping crowd, and either

speak to them in sweet whispers or listen to their gentle voices, talking with them as

with myself... They speak when bidden, and when not bidden they hold their tongue.

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<sup>203</sup> Henry Peacham, *Peacham's Compleat Gentleman 1634 Facsimile*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1906), sig. D2<sup>r</sup>. The first publication of this work was in 1622, but he reconfigures concepts from earlier works in this vein, so it may be relevant to this discussion. Peacham is aware of the multiple books which precede his on the conduct and learning of gentlemen, stating in his preface to the reader, "I am not ignorant (judicious reader) of how many pieces of the most curious Masters have been uttered to the world of this subject, as Plutarch, Erasmus, Vives, Sadolet, Sturmius, Osorius, Sir Thomas Eliot, M. Askham, with sundry others...", sig. A1<sup>v</sup>. These earlier texts inform his work, and he is therefore considered in this thesis.

<sup>205</sup> Mills, *One Soul in Bodies Twain*, (1932), p. 94.

They talk of what you wish, as much as you wish and as long as you wish; do not flatter, feign nothing, keep back nothing, freely tell you of your faults, and take no man's character away. What they say is either amusing or wholesome. In prosperity they moderate, in affliction they console, do not vary with fortune, follow you in all dangers, and last out to the very grave.<sup>206</sup>

In William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Horatio possesses many of the qualities that Erasmus outlines above. He speaks when Hamlet asks him to speak, he does not 'flatter', and he 'feigns nothing'. He also fulfils the role of a constant companion, ushering Hamlet through his torment, with all of the dangers that this entails. He even attempts to take himself to the grave at Hamlet's death. In many ways, Horatio would be Erasmus's idea of the perfect textual companion. Erasmus concludes this passage by saying "If there is any obscurity in our metaphor, all that I have said about friends is to be understood of books".<sup>207</sup> Metaphorically, Horatio's presence is textual; he is like a book that Hamlet references for the development of his forensic modes of enquiry. To understand the circumstances of his situation, the 'truth' of the ghost's presence, and the guilt of Claudius, he looks to Horatio for confirmation. Additionally, Hamlet requires not only a witness to his deliberations and actions, but an ally who can testify as to his motivations. He asks Horatio to 'tell his story', but Horatio's role within the play implies that there is more to this request than just narrative. Horatio is not merely the only survivor at the end of the play; he is the only one to provide an argument to exculpate Hamlet.

Peacham's "library of men" is meant to develop one's character and grow one's esteem. Peacham goes on to write that this good company will make one "wise by the

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<sup>206</sup> Francis Morgan Nichols, *The Epistles of Erasmus*, Epistle 119, (New York: Longmans, Green, and Co., 1901), pp. 240-241. Erasmus wrote this letter during his illness in France in 1500, and sends the unknown recipient a copy of his partially-prepared *Adagia*. See footnote, p. 241.

<sup>207</sup> Nichols, *The Epistles of Erasmus*, (1901), p. 241.

judgements and examples of many”.<sup>208</sup> In *Hamlet*, Horatio’s reputation for learning makes him a source of counsel and judgement. As previously stated in the introductory chapter, Montaigne writes that he enjoys ‘conversing’ with his books. Additionally, in his *Defence of Seneca and Plutarch*, he writes, “My intimacy with those two great men and the help they give me in my old age, as well as to my book which is built entirely out of their spoils, bind me to espouse their honour”.<sup>209</sup> Discourse with authors or texts is often bound up with amity. Intimacy with capable and esteemed men allows one to align one’s self with their virtues, to imitate them, and to trust in their sound judgement. There is a substantial overlap in the way that early to late humanists think about books, their authors, *epistolae familiares*, and the relationship between friends who are physically present. One can converse with each as well as utilise their knowledge. One can find great affection in all forms of friends, and interlink companions with textuality.

In this chapter, I will examine the rhetorical strategies employed in *Hamlet*. These types of arguments and modes of enquiry arise from Shakespeare’s learning and his understanding of classical training at early modern universities. Though he did not attend educational institutions beyond grammar school, he imagines a homosocial pair that employs rhetorical mastery as an output of their educational training. There are three particular strands of my analysis. First I will investigate the ways by which *imitatio* proves the affectionate nature of depictions of homosocial pairs. Second I describe how Horatio’s sound judgment and *honestas* are used to imply the just causes of Hamlet’s investigation and actions. And finally, I argue that Horatio is called upon to provide an argument and explanation to exonerate Hamlet. The final point opens up the question of the ethical use of classical argumentation in vindicating immoral actions, no matter the causes. Additionally, I will explain how Horatio’s scholarly status provides a sounding board for Hamlet’s attempt to

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<sup>208</sup> Peacham, *Peacham’s Compleat Gentleman*, (1906), sig. D2<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>209</sup> Michel de Montaigne, *The Essays: A Selection*, ed. and trans. M. A. Screech (London: Penguin Books, 1991), p. 186



gather evidence for his father's murder. To understand Horatio's part in the play, I will also look at the other highly-educated masculine characters: Polonius, Rosencrantz, and Guildenstern. Focusing on the latter two, I argue that their duplicity results in exclusion from Hamlet's affections and confidences. He questions, many times, the circumstances of their presence at court and their loyalty; he understands that they work at the behest of Claudius. As Hamlet rewrites their warrant of execution, he exposes the immense dangers that arise from duplicitous fellowships.

The way by which humanist education transformed and developed the style and content of masculine writing and discourse dealt not only with imagining friends as texts, and texts as friends, but finding sources and ideas for the creation of arguments that befit a current situation. A man's transformation of a classical concept to his immediate use and purpose is *imitatio* which leads, then, to *inventio*. This signifies a hermeneutics of exchange, transforming source material and imbuing the text with a new, adapted meaning. Henry Peacham's courtly manual, like many other supplemental materials for education, indicates the durability and mutability of affectionate and efficacious friendships. These elements are developed through textual manipulation and the description of others *as texts*. As Eve Rachele Sanders has concluded, "What the conduct manuals set out are... modes of reading and self-fashioning"; she notes that they call for "active imitation, for male readers...".<sup>212</sup> Peacham's advice to keep a library of others is found in a section of this text concerning conduct at the university, where the skills obtained in Latin reading and translation are realised through oral exercises, *imitatio*, and the development of rhetorical lines of argument. Peacham's text calls not only for 'active imitation' of classical material but also the imitation of good friends as sources for counsel, as a means to align one's self to their good reputation, and to use their judgment and knowledge in conjunction with one's own. In *Hamlet*, this

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<sup>212</sup> Eve Rachele Sanders, *Gender and Literacy on Stage in Early Modern England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 67.

concept is fundamental in the formulation of rhetorical arguments that aid in navigating the socio-political sphere outside the university.

The sound counsel of a friend is deeply entrenched in the manner by which men were taught to utilise texts and to bring classical material and rhetorical practices to immediate significance. In other words, interactions in the Danish court at Elsinore depict Horatio as a fusion of both this idea of the “just” companion and a literary source, which allows Hamlet to use him to justify the action of the revenge plot. His *honestas* in conjunction with his constant companionship and, as Quentin Skinner and Lorna Hutson have argued, knowledge of the circumstances of Hamlet’s plight will provide the *locus* for a forensic argument exculpating Hamlet (and himself).<sup>213</sup> Hutson argues,

Hamlet’s relationship with Horatio is marked by the former’s constant anticipation of having his ‘cause’ or motives publicly misinterpreted and misconstrued after the fact...The point of charging Horatio’s memory, and of ensuring that he has the circumstantial details right, will, of course, emerge in the final scene, when Hamlet, dying, surveys the slaughter and (we imagine) anticipates the questions that will arise after his death at the sight of the baffling double regicide.<sup>214</sup>

Skinner also asserts that “[Hamlet] is calling on Horatio not merely to tell his story, but to take up his cause and mount a judicial accusation against Claudius, just as the ghost at the beginning of the play had called upon him to do the same”.<sup>215</sup> He calls Horatio to ‘report me and my *cause* aright’ (V.ii.343, emphasis my own). Skinner and Hutson both point out that this arises from rhetorical training at the university. Additionally, Skinner intimates, though briefly, that Hamlet is anxious to make sure that it is Horatio who pleads his case.<sup>216</sup> I argue that Horatio’s constancy, affection, honest judgements, and scholarly position all contribute

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<sup>213</sup> See Skinner, *Forensic Shakespeare*, (2014), pp. 86-89 and Lorna Hutson, *The Invention of Suspicion: Law and Mimesis in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 144.

<sup>214</sup> Lorna Hutson, *The Invention of Suspicion*, (2007), pp. 144-45.

<sup>215</sup> Quentin Skinner, *Forensic Shakespeare*, (2014), p. 86.

<sup>216</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 87.

to this necessity. His function in the play is more than a scholar who can provide a judicial argument: he is Hamlet's source, his companion, his confidant. Hamlet is overwhelmingly invested in determining the honesty of other characters within the play, and Horatio's rectitude is continuously brought to the fore in Hamlet's speech. Though not all men who tell truths are friends, it is a prerequisite for friends to be truth-tellers. The one to argue the case for Hamlet must be reliable and just, and the case must be, as Horatio says himself, "truly delivered" (V.ii.369). This statement connects two specific concepts central to the understanding Horatio in *Hamlet*. First, that one's confidences should be kept with those of a virtuous disposition, that Horatio is 'just'. Second, that the figure of a friend, as a source of good counsel, becomes an instrument for formulating arguments to support one's courses of action. That is, Horatio's testimony is a source of proof.

Embedded in their discourse, there are references to Hamlet and Horatio's mutual education. What primarily arises from their imagined learning is the implied mastery of rhetorical modes of enquiry that arise from humanist instruction. Though this play certainly utilises texts that Hamlet and Horatio would have studied, including Plutarch, the poets Horace, Vigil, Ovid, Juvenal, and Lucan, and the playwrights Seneca and Terence, among many others cited as part of the grammar school and university curriculum, their textual friendship is situated in their mutual rhetorical and analytical skill.<sup>220</sup> The elements of the humanist curriculum that are used for instruction of rhetoric are brought to the fore, including Cicero, Quintilian, and the anonymous *Rhetorica ad Herennium*. T. W. Baldwin looks at William Kempe's 1588 discussion of rhetorical instruction as the central part of the upper school education.<sup>221</sup> Baldwin writes, "Along with Cicero, Quintilian was *the Rhetorician*, at

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<sup>220</sup> This can be evident in private tutelage, though the institutional education practices increasingly relied on specific texts as the curriculum was systematised. For this argument, see Lawrence Stone, "The Educational Revolution in England, 1560-1640", *Past and Present*, vol. 28. Issue 1, (1964), pp. 41-8.

<sup>221</sup> Baldwin, *Small Latine & Less Greeke*, vol. 1, (1944), p. 1.

the pinnacle of grammar school [instruction].”<sup>222</sup> In this way, the development of the hermeneutic exchange between friends centres both on shared texts and shared rhetorical practice; the production of rhetorical arguments and the dialectical nature of the play’s philosophical questioning is a sign and a product of this.

Also at work within the play are concepts arising from educational manuals which aimed to supplement humanist learning. Erasmus’ *The Education of a Christian Prince* (1516) first distilled the Ciceronian ideals of education and governance based on virtue for a Christian audience; Thomas Elyot’s *The Book named the Governour* (1531) also provides prescriptive material concerning the cultivation of virtuous intimates.<sup>223</sup> Though they precede works of the late sixteenth-century writers, their content was distilled in following educational manuals. It has been widely recognised that Erasmus especially held great significance in late sixteenth-century humanist pedagogy. His works were, as we might call them, ‘modern classics’ and used in conjunction with successive instructional material. Also, conduct manuals are not merely prescriptive; they employ similar techniques taught in the early modern grammar school and university. They provide a distillation of classical ideas about apt *imitatio* of principles for conduct, governance, and reading practices that are primarily derived from Latinate sources. That is, the subject matter displays a hermeneutic modification of classical pedagogy and moral concepts. Though sections of early conduct manuals may contain material that was outdated by the mid-to-late sixteenth-century, some of their moral and educational arguments were still relevant. As the supplemental material for

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<sup>222</sup> Ibid., p. 197.

<sup>223</sup> Elyot’s work was reprinted in 1580 so it can be considered in the analysis of later sixteenth century instruction manuals. This work includes instruction for multiple other ‘necessary’ elements fitting to a courtier: cosmology, geography, history, music, antiquity, fine arts, blazons, armoury, bodily exercise, reputation and carriage, travel, and military knowledge. Additionally, in discussing the relevance of ‘conduct manuals’, and both histories and romances, Peter Mack argues that most had features “of grammar school teaching” and provide “both material (moral sentences, stories, commonplace themes) and methods for storing, varying and presenting [subject matter].” He goes on to argue that later texts “reuse material from earlier writings and in turn present subject-matter for further reuse.” Peter Mack, *Elizabethan Rhetoric* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), p.135. For this reason, the hermeneutic reconfigurations of ideas from texts earlier in the period are considered in this thesis. Thomas Elyot, *The booke Named the Gouvernour*, (London:1580), sig. A4<sup>r</sup>-B1<sup>v</sup>. Folger Shakespeare Library, Early English Books Online <eebo.chadwyck.com> Accessed March 3, 2015.

the elite, these texts are worth considering in the context of friendship formation and models of *imitatio*.

The discourse between Hamlet and Horatio not only reiterates the common tropes of *amicitia*, nor is it merely a cross-status university relationship. It is also a textually situated affectionate bond that holds its emotive force in the subtle reworking of learned rhetoric. First, I consider imagining the play without Horatio; his emotive relationship with Hamlet informs this analysis. Second, I investigate the language of the instance where Hamlet first encounters Horatio in Elsinore and is brought to the battlements for the ‘nightly watch’ to see the ghost of his father. Interwoven in their interactions are the concepts that Horatio is both the *alter ipse* to Hamlet and a just companion. This becomes clear in comparison to the manner by which Hamlet receives Rosencrantz and Guildenstern,. That is, the differences built into these exchanges display the bond between Hamlet and Horatio in comparison to the tentative fellowship with other schoolfellows. These differences are based on an investigation of the ‘honesty’ of friends. This shatters any feigned verisimilitude that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern aim to produce in their seemingly-casual encounter with Hamlet, which is an exercise of *sprezzatura* that backfires. Third, I focus on Hamlet’s reliance on the judgements and proofs that Horatio may provide. Hamlet relies on both Horatio’s witness in the case of the ghost’s appearance and on Horatio’s assessment of Claudius’s guilt. Hamlet attempts to use Horatio as a second viewer of Claudius’s reaction to his staging of ‘The Mousetrap’. Though his friend provides no concrete *confirmatio*, Hamlet’s own deliberations necessitate Horatio’s judgement; Horatio is fully entrusted with marking any truth that they reveal. I look at Hamlet’s death, in which Horatio’s mimetic action expresses the emotive the nature of their bond. Finally, I argue that Horatio is the one to provide the argument for Hamlet’s action. Thus, in this chapter, I analyse an example of textualised affection between fictional male friends beyond the grammar school, out of the university. I focus on a play that depicts

a prince and his fellow scholar caught between their academic study and their obligations to Denmark, between what they desire to be and what they must be, between Parnassus and governmental and civic duty.

### ***Hamlet Without Horatio***

Horatio's presence is a reminder of Hamlet's dual nature as a Prince who is caught in a usurpation plot and a scholar who analyses this position.<sup>230</sup> Horatio's intimate connection to Hamlet shows that he is central to building an understanding of Hamlet's situation. Horatio tries to decipher the meaning of the ghost's appearance; he is knowledgeable of Hamlet's 'antic disposition'; he is called upon to support the argument of 'The Mousetrap'; and he presents Hamlet's judicial argument at the end of the play.<sup>231</sup> To imagine *Hamlet* without Horatio is to imagine a revenge play without justification for action or inaction, without a witness and defence, without the use of scholarly debate. Without Horatio, Hamlet's belief in the ghost might not be realised, his 'character' as a scholar would be less developed, and the argument justifying his actions to Fortinbras would never be delivered. Horatio's presence is necessitated by the convergence of two crucial features of the play. The first is the self-conscious use of rhetoric and hermeneutics in the scholarly judgement of the circumstances of murder and justifications for revenge. The second is its depiction of faithful and useful friendship. This is used in the creation of vivid and believable inferred motivations, which allows the audience to partake in the investigative plot.

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<sup>230</sup> See Alex Newell, "The Etiology of Horatio's Inconsistencies", *"Bad" Shakespeare: Revaluations in the Shakespeare Canon*, ed. Maurice Charney, (London and Toronto: Associated University Press, 1988), pp. 143–45. Alex Newell argues that "Horatio's characterisation indicates the purely Shakespearean creation of a Hamlet as a scholar".

<sup>231</sup> Skinner, *Forensic Shakespeare*, (2014), p. 86 and Hutson, *The Invention of Suspicion*, (2007), p. 144.

Hamlet and Horatio are both drawn from their studies in Wittenberg, Hamlet, by the death of his father and Horatio to attend the funeral—and the marriage that “followed hard upon [it]”. The textual nature of their friendship is grounded in the ‘unscene’ of Wittenberg. Though this is never a setting in the play, others consistently refer to the university in conjunction with both Hamlet and Horatio. Hamlet desires to return to it; Horatio’s status as a scholar is regularly called to mind. Marjorie Garber termed the offstage action, unseen by the audience and developed through the rhetorical creation of the world beyond the stage, the “unscene”.<sup>232</sup> Though no messages come from this unseen place in *Hamlet* and there is little description of this imagined space, I use this term to describe the implied, formative education that Hamlet and Horatio share at Wittenberg. The audience can imagine the university’s impact on the two friends through the uses of their education in the onstage narrative. In this way, by referencing this off-stage place, and utilising rhetorical modes of enquiry, Shakespeare allows the audience not only to see Hamlet thrust into a revenge plot but to infer that his deliberations are informed by his education. In addition, at the close of the play, the onstage action is what becomes the ‘unscene’ to Fortinbras. Horatio acts as the messenger to not only deliver the details of the events, but to vividly explain the causes that informed Hamlet’s action and persuasively argue to vindicate the prince.

Wittenberg is referenced as part of the world offstage, beyond Elsinore, but underpins Hamlet’s interpretation of his place within the plot. Lorna Hutson observes,

The 1590s and 1600s brought to the world a kind of theatrical realism that is based not in the realm of visibility—what is seen and enacted on stage—but on the use of the generativity of inference and conjecture: the ability to work imaginatively with the

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<sup>232</sup> Marjorie Garber, “‘The Rest is Silence’: Ineffability and the ‘Unscene’ in Shakespeare’s Plays”, *Ineffability: Naming the Unnamable from Dante to Beckett*, eds. Peter S. Hawkins and Anne Howland, (New York: AMS Press, 1984), p. 44.

hidden, causal, or motivational elements of dramatic action which can be derived from dialogue and narrative.<sup>233</sup>

The mastery of rhetoric and the descriptive ‘scholarly’ attributes assigned to both Horatio and Hamlet allow the audience to infer the formative impact of Wittenberg to their ‘motivations’ and deliberations. Additionally, there are instances where one can surmise that Hamlet desires to return to this unseen locale. Claudius notes Hamlet’s “intent / In going back to school in Wittenberg” and Gertrude beseeches him to “go not to Wittenberg” (I.ii.112-3; 119). The sense of the play’s completeness relies on understanding Hamlet and Horatio’s formative, yet unseen, education. Hamlet has been torn away from his place at Wittenberg and thrust into a political succession crisis. His attempts to use his learned skill to navigate this position are, of course, disastrously futile. Hamlet is caught in a temporally liminal space, between what can be known and the unknown, and between a desire for a scholar’s life at Wittenberg and his duty to Denmark.<sup>234</sup>

Much of the critical work on Horatio and Hamlet’s relationship within the play has not examined the necessity of Horatio as part of the forensic investigation. Elisabeth Hanson sees the presence of Horatio as means by which the play figures the threat of education to Hamlet’s position. In her view, education is a detriment, not a contributing factor for both investigation and implied motivation. She states, “I argue that while *Hamlet* begins by attempting to assert the congruence of learning and nobility, it ends by exposing learning’s challenge to nobility. The vehicle for this exposure is the friendship between Hamlet and Horatio”.<sup>235</sup> However, Hamlet uses his learning to try to make sense of the actual threat to his ‘nobility’: usurpation. What is also missing from this analysis is Horatio’s function in

<sup>233</sup> Lorna Hutson, “Lively Evidence: Legal Enquiry and the *Evidentia* of Shakespearean Drama”, *Shakespeare and the Law: A Conversation among Disciplines and Professions*, eds. Bradin Cormack, Martha C. Nussbaum, and Richard Strier, (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2013), p. 72.

<sup>234</sup> Greenblatt, *Hamlet in Purgatory*, (2001), p. 45. He reads the play as a product of the problem of death after the Protestant abolition of the position of Purgatory from religious doctrine. Though this New Historical approach is not wholly relevant to this current study, his work offers a different kind of view of the “in-between” nature of Hamlet’s character.

<sup>235</sup> Elisabeth Hanson, “Fellow Students: Hamlet, Horatio, and the Early Modern University”, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 62, No. 2, (2011), pp. 205-301.



understanding the place of a dispossessed prince, an understanding that is predicated on their mutual education.

As Margreta de Grazia observes, this play deals with two scholars caught both within an archaic plot of princely dispossession and in a theological debate, the focus of Stephen Greenblatt's New Historicist reading.<sup>236</sup> The humanist education that they share cannot stop the tragedy unfolding but is used to attempt to understand the entirety of the situation and to exonerate Hamlet's murderous actions. In other words, what arises from this tragedy is a dramatic instance of affectionate humanist friendship whereby intimacy is used as a vehicle to understand the usurpation disclosed only by a spectral witness and to justify Hamlet's actions. In the evaluation of circumstances, Hamlet must determine the validity of the ghost of his father and the truth that he discloses. Horatio's understanding of the ghost is prefigured by his assessment that it will not, or cannot, appear; it is outside the bounds the natural world. However, Hamlet argues that "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, / Than are dreamt of in your philosophy" (I.v.165-6). This is the first instance where Hamlet uses the judgement of his friend to determine 'truth', though he merely discloses to Horatio near the end of the scene that the ghost is 'honest'. Nonetheless, Hamlet relies on Horatio's knowledge to determine proof and their shared intimacy to conceal his implied motivations.

As far back as Edward Bliss Reed's assessment of the play's close connection to the universities, the importance of Horatio's status as a scholar has been of interest to literary critics. In considering the 1603 version of the play, *The Tragical History of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark*, Reed's argument hinges upon the idea that Horatio is connected to the university audience: "The important fact...in considering the title of *QI* [of *Hamlet*] is that this play...was acted at the Universities, and that it was a success there is understood by such an announcement".<sup>237</sup> He argues that the university audience that informs the "college element"

<sup>236</sup> Margreta De Grazia, "Hamlet" *without Hamlet*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 5-6.

<sup>237</sup> Edward Bliss Reed, "The College Element in 'Hamlet'", *Modern Philology*, vol. 6. No. 4, (1909), pp. 458-9.

of the play is important to understanding the depiction of friends and fellows from a university setting, as imagined by a grammar-school educated Shakespeare.<sup>238</sup> Horatio's presence is more than a means to connect with the audience. In his relation to Hamlet we see how learned men attempt to utilise their education—though in this case ineffectively—to navigate a political crisis.

Elizabeth Hanson notes the importance of the fact that Hamlet is “escorted through his tragedy by his poor “fellow-student”, Horatio”.<sup>250</sup> Hamlet's judgements are moulded, for the audience, by the “justice, foresight, and wisdom of his friend”. The hermeneutics of deliberation between men is textually situated in its expression and is the *locus* for argumentation of the ‘just’ motives of a dispossessed prince. Horatio's presence is an antithesis to what Plutarch identifies as a flatterer. Hamlet views Horatio as one who will always provide the ‘truth’. This is not, of course, an objective truth but rather both Hamlet's version of the revenge plot and the exoneration of his actions. That is, Horatio attempts to aid Hamlet to be an “honest and unbiased judge of himself”, as far as this is possible (Plutarch, I.1).<sup>251</sup>

Hamlet and Horatio attempt to employ their mutual humanist education as a means to make sense of the thematics of tragedy and to provide arguments to explain and support vengeful action. In this way, the play depicts the adaptation of shared knowledge as a possible mode of understanding applied to the situation at hand. Horatio's presence not only

<sup>238</sup> William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*, The Arden Shakespeare, eds. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor (London: Bloomsbury, 2006), Introduction p. 56. Alan H. Nelson concludes this it had not been played at the universities, but there is little evidence to support this. All citations for the play come from this Arden edition. To draw a complete picture of the relationship between Hamlet and Horatio, it is necessary to consult not only the editorially proclaimed complete text of Q2 but also the texts Q1 (1603) and F (1623). Q1 may contain subtle, yet important, interactions between the two male characters that had been altered in Q2 (and further altered in F). To understand the full representation of the friendship formed at Wittenberg, all three texts must be considered. I primarily use the Arden Critical edition of *Hamlet*. eds. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, (London: Bloomsbury, 2006) as the main text (as it is the edition of Q2); any differences from this text, important to the study of the discourse of hamlet/Horatio will come from the Arden Critical edition, *Hamlet: The Texts of 1603 and 1623*, eds. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor, (London: Bloomsbury, 2006) which presents a modernised Q1 and F1.

<sup>250</sup> Elizabeth Hanson, “Fellow Students: Hamlet, Horatio, and the Early Modern University”, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 62, No. 2, (2011), p. 209.

<sup>251</sup> Plutarch, *Moralia, How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend*. trans. Frank Cole Babbitt, (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1957), p. 265. As Helen Moore asserts, Plutarch's *Moralia* “was also widely read and *absorbed into* the commonplace books of generations of early modern schoolboys and gentlemen” (emphasis my own) in “Of Marriage, Morals and Civility”, *Early Modern Civil Discourses*, ed. Jennifer Richards, (London: Palgrave, 2003), p. 38.

keeps the 'scholar' aspect of their characters clear but also is necessary for Hamlet's forensic enquiry. Hamlet's friend not only guides him through the plot, but provides honest and faithful constancy and becomes the *locus* for proving the necessities and circumstances of Hamlet's actions.

### **“Or do I forget myself”: Situating the Friendship of Hamlet and Horatio**

When called to reveal themselves, “friends to this ground,” is Horatio's answer to Francisco upon the battlements; it is the soldier Marcellus who adds, “and liegemen to the Dane” (I.i.13-4). From the outset, Horatio has dual status as a scholar of Wittenberg and Danish citizen. He is a second to the nightly watch, aligning him with the soldiers on the ramparts. The audience is presented with Horatio as an inhabitant of multiple roles: friend to Hamlet, ‘friend’ to Denmark, and a scholar from Wittenberg. These multiple roles mirror the conflicting attributes in Hamlet: dispossessed Prince, revenge actor, scholar. That is, Hamlet and Horatio mirror one another in the multiplicity of their positions. The relationship between Hamlet and Horatio integrates the affectionate nature of homosocial *amicitia* and the textures of emotive expression. Within the play, there is a mobilisation of the concept that a friend is ‘another self’. Additionally, the assessment of Horatio's ‘justness’, which is directly linked to the prescribed advice of education manuals, is mobilised as Hamlet proceeds with his rhetorical enquiry. He aligns himself with a just and honest friend.

Aroused from his contemplations by Horatio and the sentinels, Hamlet asks, “Horatio, or do I forget myself?” (I.ii.161). This is, of course, a question of recognition.<sup>254</sup> However, Hamlet's choice of words subtly echoes a common trope of *amicitia* that will be developed throughout the play. That is to say ‘do I forget myself’ calls to mind the concept of

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<sup>254</sup> To forget one's self also is also an indication that one has forgotten one's manners or one's position. This is, of course, the accepted reading of this line. However, it does echo the concepts of the ‘alter ipse’ when taken with Hamlet and Horatio's interactions overall.

the *alter ipse*, the other self.<sup>255</sup> Looking at both the 1603 Quarto version of the play, and the revised Folio edition of 1623, Hamlet does not phrase his initial recognition of Horatio as a question. The Q1 version of this line is: “I am very glad to see you / Horatio or I forget myself.” (II.76-7). In F, the phrase is not framed as a question either. Hamlet states, “I am glad to see you well— / Horatio, or I do forget myself.” (I.ii.59). Though not persuasive on its own, this initial meeting leads to subtle indications of Hamlet and Horatio’s bounded intimacy. Hamlet later “seals his soul” to Horatio and he “wears him in his heart”: this affectionate concept is repetitively called to mind. In their first meeting in Elsinore, when Horatio replies, “The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever”, Hamlet asserts, “Sir, my good friend, I’ll change that name with you” (I.i.162-3). This not only indicates a levelling effect between himself and his poor scholar friend but suggests the affectionate connections between himself and Horatio.

Horatio’s language has been brought into critical focus as a mark of his social status; it is a means to differentiate between the two scholars taken out of Wittenberg.<sup>256</sup> Christopher Waley figures ‘a Horatio’ eclipsed by his low social standing in the court and his polite speech. His assessment does not examine the congruence of the two characters’ educational background as a means to display affection and depict their mobilisation of classical ideas concerning *amicitia*. Wiley asserts that we see Horatio as a foil for Hamlet. However, Hamlet continuously attempts to bridge this gap, aiming not to differentiate between the marked imbalance of Hamlet and Horatio’s social positions but to emphasise the congruence of their modes of enquiry and their shared knowledge.

This is a kind of ‘interchangeability’ based on what they hold in common. Hamlet’s obsession with truth-finding and his trust in Horatio as an honest companion also informs

<sup>255</sup> Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. David Ross and ed. Lesley Brown (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 169. In Book IX.4, Aristotle outlines the basis of friendship on ‘self love’ and states, that because of the love of the self (in the good man) and the attributes of this love, friendship is like the love of a second self. “Therefore, since each of these characteristics belongs to the good man in relation to himself, and he is related to his friend as to himself (for his friend is another self), friendship too is thought to be one of these attributes and those who have these attributes to be friends”.

<sup>256</sup> See Christopher Warley, “Specters of Horatio”, *ELH*, vol. 75. No. 4 (2008), pp. 1023-1050.

their affectionate relationship.<sup>257</sup> Horatio's *decorum* and polite speech hold within them an affectionate tone, mirrored in Hamlet's subtle *encomium* of his friend's justness. Horatio's speech is met with affirmation of his virtues:

HAMLET...But what in faith make you from Wittenberg?

HORATIO A truant disposition, my good lord.

HAMLET I would not hear your enemy say so,

Nor shall you do my ear that violence

To make it truster of your own report

Against yourself. I know you are no truant;

But what is your affair in Elsinore?

We'll teach you for to drink ere you depart. (I.ii.170-78)

Horatio's 'report against himself' is outright rejected by his 'fellow student'; he will be 'taught to drink' in the court, a subtle indication of his sobriety—in all senses of the word—in the unseen Wittenberg. In conduct manuals the cultivation of such friends furnishes noble men with sources for *imitatio*. If Hamlet esteems Horatio as a man of good character, he attempts to align himself to him by way of these virtues. Thomas Elyot makes this argument, stating,

prouide for them suche companions and playfelowes, whiche shal nat... aduaunt hym with flattery, remembrynge his nobilitie, or any other like thyng wherein he mought glory: onlas it be to perswade hym to vertue, or to withdrawe him from vice, in the remembryng to hym the daunger of his euill example. For noble men more greuously offende by theyr example than by their dede.<sup>258</sup>

<sup>257</sup> There are many examples of Hamlet's enquiry in this regard. He asks Polonius to be 'honest' and states, "to be honest as this world goes to be / one man picked out of ten thousand." (II.ii.175-6) When Rosencrantz asserts that "the world has grown honest" Hamlet refutes his claim outright. As he compiles this evidence for Claudius's murderous actions, he uses his trusted friend to pass judgement on his investigation. His just and honest 'other self' allows for a projection of justification. Horatio is not only a witness but is called to evaluate the circumstances of the plot.

<sup>258</sup> Sir Thomas Elyot, *The Boke named The Governour*. ed. Ben Ross Schneider, Jr., (Eugene: Oregon University Press, 1998), p. 16. See also Thomas Elyot, *The Book Named the Governor, 1531, A Facsimile Printing. English linguistics, 1500-*

It is clear that an estimation of Horatio is already formulated. Horatio is not trying to secure a position of privilege; if so, he would seek this from those currently in positions of power.<sup>260</sup> Though the lines, “I would not hear your enemy say so, / Nor shall you do my ear that violence”, are not present in Q1, the same formulation “I know you are no truant” signifies Hamlet’s estimation of Horatio’s virtues. In the central exchange presenting the affectionate relationship between Hamlet and Horatio, Hamlet continues an *encomium* of the ‘just’ nature of his friend, saying: “Horatio, thou art e’en as just a man / As e’er my conversation coped withal” (III.ii.50-1). This justness is heightened by the inclusion of Horatio’s status as a good man, the *vir bonus*. Hamlet’s only other model is his father, whom he describes in the same terms: “A was a man, take him for all in all, / I shall not look upon his like again” (I.ii.186-7). Both figures can be seen as *exempla* for Hamlet, in the way that schoolboys were taught emulation of great classical figures both in style and in action. The speech that shows Hamlet’s affection to Horatio is not only a form of *encomium*. Hamlet subtly aligns himself to both the justness of his father by taking up his just cause and to Horatio by indirectly signifying his *honestas*. It seems that he has nothing to gain from Horatio but Hamlet’s possible exoneration relies on this connection:

HAMLET Since my dear soul was mistress of her choice  
 And could of men distinguish her election  
 Sh’ath sealed thee for herself. For thou hast been  
 As one, in suffering all that suffers nothing,  
 A man that Fortune’s buffets and rewards  
 Hast ta’en with equal thanks. (III.ii.53-56;59-64)

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1800, no. 246 (1970) and *The booke Named the Gouvernour* (London:1534), Folger Shakespeare Library, A2<sup>f</sup>, Early English Books Online < eebo.chadwyck.com> Accessed March 3, 2015.

<sup>260</sup> Frank Whigham, *Ambition and Privilege: The Social Tropes of Elizabethan Courtesy Theor*, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984), p.13.

Hamlet cannot claim material or economic advancement from Horatio; this is a connection between two men that is not predicated on materiality. However, he relies on the fact that he distinguishes Horatio as the *vir bonus*, like his father.

Elizabeth Hanson writes that this is a reminder of the marked class differentiation between Hamlet and Horatio.<sup>261</sup> She states that “the dramatic passages do not just reiterate the doctrine of friendship; they *situate* it as the declaration of a learned nobleman to a poor scholar” and goes on to argue that this kind of friendship indicates that some elite students may envy the skills and wit of their social inferiors.<sup>262</sup> But Hamlet is collapsing their roles: they are both scholars, and he will ‘change the name [“servant”]’ with Horatio. Additionally, this speech mobilises the rhetoric of *amicitia* and develops the textualised nature by which Hamlet and Horatio express their friendship. Hamlet asserts,

Nay, do not think I flatter.

For what advancement may I hope from thee

That no revenue hast but thy good spirits

To feed and clothe thee? Why should the poor be flattered? (III.ii.52-5)

Hamlet takes a commonplace, that flatterers cannot be friends, and inverts the primary and secondary clauses to create a different meaning, and to explicate the conditions of his homosocial love. In this way, commonplace citation and adaptation suit the situation at hand. They are used to profess friendship and to clarify why Horatio’s judgment and ‘justness’ are valuable to Hamlet. This is a hermeneutic process by which Hamlet claims Horatio as a friend of the stature that Erasmus outlines:

Of what consequence is it to have begot a son for the throne, unless you educate him for his rule? ...He should not be allowed to associate with whatever playmates appear

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<sup>261</sup> See especially Warley, “Specters of Horatio”, (2008), pp. 1023-1050.

<sup>262</sup> Elizabeth Hanson, “Fellow Students”, (2011), p. 207.

but only with those boys of good and modest character; he should be reared and trained most carefully and as becomes a gentleman.<sup>263</sup>

This particular statement deals with more than comradeship forged through university learning; it deals with the language through which affection is shown between men. Hamlet calls to mind the *topoi* of Plutarch's *How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend* and makes this into a literary occasion. "Give me that man / That is not passion's slave, and I will wear him / In my heart's core, ay, in my heart of heart, / As I do thee" (III.ii.67-70). These three lines continue a hermeneutic reconfiguration of the concept that, in Aristotelian terms, friends are 'one soul in bodies twain'. In Q2, Hamlet states, "Let flattery sit on those time-pleasing tongues / to gloze with them that loves to hear their praise, / and not with such as thou, Horatio" (ix.49-51). He displays his affection by transforming ideas of *amicitia* that were developed in classical texts: that he does not flatter Horatio; that his soul is sealed to him; and that he binds Horatio in his 'heart of hearts'. Not only does this indicate the textual aspect of friendship; it also brings the idea of 'one soul in bodies twain' to the fore.<sup>264</sup> As Horatio is no flatterer, he does not feign, and they are bound together. Hamlet projects the kind of 'self' that he desires for his own.

In the encounter with the ghost, we see a vivid instance in which Horatio shows his affectionate concern for Hamlet. The use of rhetoric in this passage is another way in which the emotive force of *amicitia* is mobilised in the play. As Hamlet is beckoned to follow the ghost, Horatio asks,

What if it tempt you to the flood, my lord,  
Or to the dreadful summit of the cliff  
That beetles o'er his base into the sea,

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<sup>263</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, *Education of a Christian Prince (1516)*, trans. Lester K. Born, (New York: Octagon Books, 1963), p. 143.

<sup>264</sup> The lines in Q1 have a different but no less significant production. That flattery is 'not with such as thou, Horatio' is an assertion of the *honestas* found in his character.



And there assume some other horrible form  
 Which might deprive your sovereignty of reason  
 And draw you into madness? Think of it:  
 The very place puts toys of desperation  
 Without more motive into every brain  
 That looks so many fathoms to the sea  
 And hears it roar beneath. (I.iv.60-78)

Before the mind's eye, he presents Hamlet with a hypothetical realism. His persuasive plea is not answered, but this vivid expression of concern, of enquiry into motivations and reality, are what inform the relationship between Hamlet and Horatio. The power of vivid description will also inform Hamlet's need for Horatio to assess Claudius's 'looks' as the old king's murder is vividly enacted before him. Neil Rhodes also indicated the power of *enargeia*, stating,

If speech is life, it is also uniquely capable of recreating life. This is established in classical rhetoric by the concept of *enargeia*. The idea that effective expression depends on the speaker's ability to communicate felt life was forcefully outlined by Quintilian, who used the Greek term to mean 'vivid illustration, or as some prefer to call it, representation', which can display 'the living truth to the eyes of the mind'.<sup>265</sup>

Within the play, there are multiple instances in which the 'truth' is displayed for the mind's eye. Horatio utilises *enargeia* as a means to show his affectionate homosocial bond with Hamlet.

Hamlet and Horatio's imaginative conjectural power is the product of mutual reading and mastery of rhetorical exercises. One particular instance is linked by the way both friends

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<sup>265</sup> Neil Rhodes, *Shakespeare and the Origins of English*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 7. He refers, here to Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria*, 8.3.61-61; 12.1.61-2.

‘see’ the murdered king. When Horatio is first summoned by the sentinels to see the apparition of the ghost upon the battlements, he reacts by saying,

A mote it is to trouble the mind’s eye.  
 In the most high and palmy state of Rome  
 A little ere the mightiest Julius fell  
 The graves stood tenantless and the sheeted dead  
 Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets;  
 As stars with trains of fire and dews of blood,  
 Disasters in the sun; and the moist star  
 Upon whose influence Neptune’s empire stands  
 Was sick almost to doomsday with eclipse. (I.i.111-119)

Hamlet’s later statement, before hearing of the ghost’s appearance, uses the concept as well:

HAMLET My father, methinks I see my father.  
 HORATIO Where my lord?  
 HAMLET In my mind’s eye, Horatio. (I.ii.183-4)

In both instances, there is a connection between the apparition and the productions of *enargeia* or vividness: seeing Old Hamlet in the mind’s eye is the evidence that something foul has occurred. And, indeed, Hamlet and Horatio come to the same conclusion that this apparition portends some “doomsday”. Hamlet states that “foul deeds will rise / Though all the earth o’erwhelm them to men’s eyes” (I.ii.256). These forms of rhetorical enquiry are presented in a humanistic manner: Horatio draws from Plutarch’s account of Caesar’s murder, creates a poetic argument, and most crucially, situates the portent of the ghost

through a historical, textual moment “a little ere the mightiest Julius fell”—this can be linked to the thematics of Hamlet’s own demise.<sup>266</sup>

The usurpation plot and its dangers to Hamlet are framed in literary considerations of tragic figures. Horatio connects the fall of Caesar to his philosophical enquiry into the apparition’s motivations, and what it may ultimately portend. This mobilisation of humanist education in a philosophical enquiry was deeply entrenched in university study. Mordechai Feingold investigates the curriculum of Oxford in the seventeenth-century as a “compression” of humanist learning—countering the interpretation that university study was purely concerned with “logic and philosophy”. He argues against previous misconceptions that medieval scholasticism dominated the curriculum as outlined in the *Nova statuta* of 1564–5 and the Laudian statutes.<sup>267</sup> He looks to advice manuals and student guides, which prove that the curriculum was deeply entrenched in the mastery of classical languages. Additionally a rigorous knowledge of classical literature underscored ‘the pertinence of philological and literary concerns in the study of philosophy as well’.<sup>268</sup>

In this way, humanist composition and understanding are embedded in the dialogue between Hamlet and Horatio. Indeed, as Andrew Hui states,

Like a good humanist, Horatio employs *exempla* from antiquity to help him understand the present. Following the Ciceronian model of *historia magistra vitae*, Horatio employs Roman biography as a model for current events, which foreshadows the many later references to the classical world: Orestes, Hyperion and Satyr, the Fall of Troy, Hecuba, Polonius playing Julius Caesar, Alexander, and finally his own ‘I am more an antique Roman than a Dane’.<sup>269</sup>

<sup>266</sup> Plutarch, *Roman Lives*, trans. Robin Waterfield, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), p. 358. See also *The lives of the noble Grecians and Romaines* [...], trans. Thomas North, (London: Richard Field, 1603) British Library, Early English Books Online <eebo.chadwyck.com> Accessed December 12, 2017.

<sup>267</sup> Mordechai Feingold, “The Humanities”, *The History of the University of Oxford: Volume IV Seventeenth-Century Oxford*, ed. Nicholas Tyacke, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 215.

<sup>268</sup> Mordechai Feingold, “The Humanities”, (1997), p. 216.

<sup>269</sup> Andrew Hui, “Horatio’s Philosophy in *Hamlet*”, *Renaissance Drama*, Vol. 41, No. 1/2, (2013), p. 157.

What Hui does not do, however, is link these “humanist” textual moments with Hamlet and Horatio’s homosocial relationship. How Hamlet and Horatio understand the succession crisis and the continuation of their enquiry are connected to their mutual humanist education. Horatio and Hamlet see the dispossession crisis in the same manner: tragic figures are examples of the fall of great men. Hamlet, as well as Horatio, mobilise humanist subject matter and their rhetorical training in order to navigate the space of the play.

### **“The Book and volume of my brain” and Determining Proof**

In making Horatio swear to secrecy, concerning the spectre and his feigned ‘antic disposition’, he ensures that his confidant may deliver his argument. It is solely the place for Horatio, then, to remember the details of not only Hamlet’s situation but the justifications for his actions. Hamlet vows,

Yea, from the table of my memory  
 I’ll wipe away all trivial fond records,  
 All saws of books, all forms, all pressures past  
 That youth and observation copied there  
 And thy commandment all alone shall live  
 Within the book and volume of my brain  
 Unmixed with baser matter. (I.v.98-104)

Hamlet figures his mind as a commonplace book, that must be purged if he is to remember his father and perform his duty to avenge his death. Though he may undertake his own investigation of the murder, Hamlet continuously calls upon Horatio. First, in disclosing that “It is an honest ghost—let me tell you” he entrusts Horatio with his assessment of the spectre. Entrusting him with the ‘truth’ and the circumstances of his means for revenge, he

metaphorically records these details through Horatio. Second, he uses Horatio's educated status as a means to justify his own judicial arguments; he looks to his friend for confirmation of Claudius's guilt. And finally, in asking Horatio "to tell my story", he desires to utilise Horatio's just reasoning. Horatio becomes a source of artificial proof, and must argue the case to justify Hamlet's actions.

After hearing the tale of murder from his father's ghost, Hamlet proclaims that his own scholarship is to be lost in adherence to the revenge plot. He does not, in fact, wipe the 'tables' of his memory. If anything, he relies upon the rhetorical construction of arguments and methods of investigation in trying to prove Claudius's guilt. These are the products of his education.<sup>271</sup> It is in the use of rhetorical modes of enquiry that Hamlet and Horatio's friendship is textual. In the ghostly encounter, Hamlet says to Horatio, "It is a damned ghost that we have seen / And my imaginations are as foul / as Vulcan's stithy" (III.ii.78-80). Horatio is pulled into the forensic enquiry, as he will be pulled into the determination of Claudius's guilt. After the ghost unfolds the details of the murder to Hamlet, the prince claims to eschew one major element of Ciceronian rhetoric, *memoria*, which is itself drawn from Aristotle.<sup>272</sup> *Memoria* is not merely recounting a memory, but the act of remembering the material for a speech or argument. Hamlet vows to wipe all 'saws of books', all remnants of his education and previous 'pressures', to focus only on the ghost's commands. However, he consistently utilises his education in his investigations, calling upon his confidante to aid in his assessments. Additionally, his investigative process relies on Horatio's mobilisation of *memoria*. At the close, Horatio must not only remember the events of the play, but must

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<sup>271</sup> Hamlet and Horatio do, in the course of the play, refer to the literary content of humanist study. When he follows the ghost of his father, Hamlet exclaims, "My fate cries out / And makes each petty artery in this body / As hardy as the Nemean lion's nerve." (I.iv.81-3). He does not only refer to himself as the final challenge of Hercules, but to other 'great' men from humanist sources—Alexander and Hercules included. These examples, taken alone, do not prove much of the function of textual friendship. Indeed, Polonius also refers to his knowledge of literature. Additionally, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern would be privy to the same education as Hamlet and Horatio.

<sup>272</sup> Cicero outlines the 'material' of rhetorical production thus, "Therefore the material of the art of rhetoric seems to me to be that which we said Aristotle approved. The parts of it, as most authorities have stated, are Invention, Arrangement, Expression, Memory, Delivery. Invention is the discovery of valid or seemingly valid arguments to render one's cause plausible... Memory is the firm mental grasp of matter and words" (I.vii). In Cicero, *De inventione*, trans. H. M. Hubbell, Loeb Classical Library, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1949), pp. 19-20.

memorise the events and methods of deliberation, to produce a speech that exculpates Hamlet.

Hamlet's reliance on Horatio's judgement is a sign of his affection for his confidant. However, it is also a product of the concept that friends can be *usable* resources. As Skinner and Hutson have shown, 'The Mousetrap' is a forensic investigation of the circumstances of Old Hamlet's murder, in which Hamlet looks to Horatio for his *confirmatio*.<sup>276</sup> Hamlet is not only playing his father's murder in order to come to his own deliberation, but he is also attempting to present proof—the guilt perceived in Claudius's reaction—to Horatio. He prepares Horatio to be attentive to his purposes before sets the argument on stage.<sup>277</sup> Hamlet states,

One scene of it comes near the circumstance  
Which I have told thee of my father's death.  
I prithee when thou seest that act afoot,  
Even with the very comment of thy soul  
Observe my uncle. (III.ii.79-83)

Horatio is primed to search for signs of guilt, prepared to determine if there is a 'confession' in Claudius's reactions:

If his occulted guilt  
Do not itself unkennel in one speech  
It is a damned ghost that we have seen  
And my imaginations are as foul  
As Vulcan's stithy. Give him heedful note,  
For I mine eyes will rivet to his face

<sup>276</sup> Skinner, *Shakespeare*, (2014), pp. 239; 245 and Lorna Hutson, *The Invention of Suspicion*, (2007), pp. 144-45.

<sup>277</sup> Just as Skinner argues that the dumb-show is Hamlet's attempt to introduce the subject matter, he also prepares Horatio to witness the argument's effect in Claudius's reactions. This can be seen as a kind of introduction or *exordium*. As Cicero writes, the purpose of *exordium* is to bring "the mind of the auditor into a proper condition to receive the rest of the speech. This will be accomplished if he becomes well-disposed, attentive, and receptive." (XV. 21) See Cicero, *De inventione*, trans. H. M. Hubbell, Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1949), p. 41.

And after we will both our judgements join

In censure of his seeming. (III.ii.72-83)

Hamlet hopes that in Horatio's mutual assessment of Claudius's reaction he will have proven his argument. However, Horatio's reaction anxiously ambiguous. By playing out the scene, Hamlet hopes to create mimetic theatre, akin to witnessing Claudius with the murder weapon. "The paradigm for such narrative vividness or *evidentia*", Kathy Eden explains, "is the palpable presence of physical evidence—the bloody knife or, better still, the perpetrator caught in the act with his hand on the murder weapon".<sup>278</sup> Additionally, Heinrich F. Plett describes the classical treatment of this *enargeia*, stating,

Cicero and Quintilian place special value on the ability of a rhetorical description to produce the semblance of reality. The *enargeia* or *evidentia* of the description thus aims to generate effective images, which depict as present that which is temporally and spatially absent.<sup>279</sup>

In *Hamlet* determination of Claudius's guilt is dependent on Hamlet's ability to generate striking images in his attempts to establish multiple forms of proof. Aristotle in *The Art of Rhetoric*, writes of the two forms that proof can take:

As for proofs, some are inartificial, others artificial. By the former I understand all those which have not been furnished by ourselves but were already in existence, such as witnesses, tortures, contracts, and the like; by the latter, all that can be constructed by system and by our own efforts. Thus we have only to make use of the former, whereas we must invent the latter. (I.ii.2)<sup>280</sup>

Quintilian takes up the same definition of the two types of proof, stating that the inartificial relies primarily on tangible evidence or testimony of the guilty or witnesses (*Oratoria* Book

<sup>278</sup> Kathy Eden, "Forensic Rhetoric and Humanist Education", *Oxford Handbook of Law and Literature*, ed. Lorna Hutson, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 35.

<sup>279</sup> Heinrich F. Plett, *Enargeia in Classical Antiquity and the Early Modern Age: The Aesthetics of Evidence*, (Leiden: Brill, 2012), p. 12.

<sup>280</sup> Aristotle, *The Art of Rhetoric*, trans. J. H. Freese, Loeb Classical Library, (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1926), p. 15.

V.i).<sup>281</sup> Hamlet's assessment hinges on the judgements of the "cause and questions" that arise (*Institutio*, V.i).<sup>282</sup> Within the play the two types of proof are often interwoven in ways that are dubious and reliant on circular logic. The ghost is a witness to his own murder, a form of inartificial proof—that is, if the ghost can be trusted. Hamlet tells Horatio that the ghost is "honest" but then relies on reading the signs of Claudius's guilt through the artificial construction of proof, hoping to determine whether what the spectre disclosed was true. Hamlet turns to Horatio at each point of his assessment.

In producing 'The Mousetrap', the vividness of the narrative, or *enargeia*, is meant to reconstruct the murder in a way that literally performs the act in front of Claudius's eyes.<sup>284</sup> As the 'inartificial' proof found in the ghostly encounter is tinged with doubt, Hamlet looks to Horatio to confirm any assessment that he makes concerning the truth of Claudius's guilt. Though Horatio has seen the ghost, he has not heard the ghost's testimony. Though he 'marks' Claudius's reaction to the play-within-the-play, he does not offer an evaluation. As Hutson asserts, "...*enargeia/evidentia* can be produced by 'nothingnesses' or questionable hints, arousing inferences, just as much as it can be produced by sensuous particulars".<sup>285</sup> Horatio's belief in Claudius's guilt would be based on this kind of nothingness but he does not confirm Hamlet's argument. In the two sources of proof, the 'inartificial' presence of the ghost and his testimony as well as the 'artificial' proof gleaned through Claudius's reaction, are perilously interwoven. Horatio's reluctance to pass judgement on the king's reaction to the theatrical spectacle of the circumstances frustrates Hamlet's assessment of the revenge plot. Without the definitive counsel and judgement of his 'just' friend, his enquiry must continue.

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<sup>281</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, ed. and trans. Donald A. Russell, (Cambridge, Massachusetts and London: Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 159. He writes, "To begin with it may be noted that the division laid down by Aristotle has met with almost universal approval. It is to the effect that there are some proofs adopted by the orator which lie outside the art of speaking, and others which he himself deduces or, if I may use the term, begets out of his case. The former therefore have been styled *inartificial* proofs, the latter *artificial*."

<sup>282</sup> Quintilian, *The Orator's Education*, ed. and trans. Donald A. Russell, 5 vols., Loeb Classical Library, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2001), p. 415.

<sup>284</sup> See Hutson, "Lively Evidence", (2013), p. 76. Hutson succinctly explains the purposes of imbuing a narrative with *enargeia* as "a way of telling a story so vividly that it seems to take place before one's eyes".

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.



### Fates ‘Sealed’: Fellowship and Betrayal

To further understand the importance of Horatio’s position in the play, the issue of constancy in friendships and fellowships must be considered. As Ralph M. Sargent observes, concerning *The Boke Named the Gouvernour*,

Elyot points out that true friendship is only likely between equals, and that these men must be of similar minds, of virtuous conduct, and given to liberality and ‘swete countenance’. But the one essential quality of friendship to which Elyot returns, again and again, is constancy.<sup>289</sup>

Sargent notices that he, “refers to [this concept] no less than four times in his short chapter on friendship.” Horatio, if anything, proves to be a constant companion to Hamlet throughout the play. This kind of fidelity allows for the final justification of Hamlet’s murderous actions: we infer that Horatio will argue in support of his “sweet Prince”. In stark contrast, Shakespeare presents two of Hamlet’s schoolfellows to demonstrate not only their inconstancy but emphasise Horatio’s own fidelity. Rosencrantz and Guildenstern consistently speak to Hamlet in familiar terms. This is usually a sign of intimacy, but their position as his subjects makes their over-familiarity *indecorous*. Additionally, they are willing to agree with what Hamlet says, but turn treacherous when the opportunity arises. Erasmus, in *The Education of a Christian Prince*, outlines the threats to good governance, including deception:

Now there are countless things which can turn the minds of princes from the true course—great fortune, worldly wealth in abundance, the pleasures of luxurious extravagance, freedom to do anything they please, the precedents of great but foolish

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<sup>289</sup> Ralph M. Sargent, “Sir Thomas Elyot and the Integrity of the Two Gentlemen of Verona”, *PMLA*, vol. 65, No. 6, (1950), p. 1171.

princes, the storms and turmoil of human affairs themselves, and above all else, flattery,

*spoken in the guise of faith and frankness*” (emphasis my own).<sup>291</sup>

Rosencrantz and Guildenstern both lack any of the constancy that would be expected of friends; and they feign frankness in dealing with Hamlet. Though Hamlet first welcomes his schoolfellows warmly, he soon uncovers their duplicity. Crucially, it is the King and Queen who insist that Hamlet holds these fellows in good esteem. Claudius explains that they are “being of so young days brought up with him” and “neighboured to his youth and ’haviour” (II.ii.11,12). In addition, Gertrude states that Hamlet “And sure I am two men there is not living / to whom he most adheres” (II.ii.20-1). Though they are connected in their developmental stages and education, the play does not indicate that Hamlet truly esteems his fellows. Though Hamlet greets them as “my excellent good friends” this quickly falls away to show that their exchange depicts merely the trappings and the suits of friendship (II.ii.19). Rosencrantz and Guildenstern consistently evade the truth of their presence at court. The only news that Rosencrantz brings is that “the world’s grown honest,” which is rebutted by Hamlet, who replies, “but your news is not true” (II.ii.233, 235). Hamlet’s assertion of the ‘justness’ of Horatio, which continues in the next Act, can be seen in stark contrast to his plea for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, “Come, come, *deal justly with me*” (II.ii.241, emphasis my own). Horatio is associated with conceit, “the faculty for conceiving, apprehending, or understanding something”, and Rosencrantz and Guildenstern with deceit.<sup>292</sup> J. Duncan Spaeth focuses primarily on the affection of the relationship, stating,

Shakespeare as is his manner emphasises Horatio's Hamlet by way of dramatic contrast, with the Hamlet of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern. Like Horatio, they are

<sup>291</sup> Erasmus, *Education of a Christian Prince*, trans. Lester K. Born, (1936), p. 146.

<sup>292</sup> By ‘conceit’ I mean this definition: conceit, v. a. To form a conception or notion of (some objective fact); to apprehend, understand. Also: to understand (a person) in *Oxford English Dictionary*, (online) Oxford University Press, p.1., <<http://www.oed.com/>> , Accessed 27 Sep. 2015.

boyhood friends and fellow-students of Hamlet but while Horatio puts friendship above self-interest, they put self-interest and advancement at court, above friendship, crooking the pregnant hinges of the knee where thrift may follow fawning.<sup>294</sup>

This vice of self-advancement is cloaked, though temporarily, with the concept of faithful friendship. However, when first deceived as to their purposes at Elsinore, it becomes clear that this homosocial fellowship is perilously feigned. Plutarch writes,

But true friendship seeks after three things above all else: virtue as a good thing, intimacy as a pleasant thing, and usefulness as a necessary thing, for a man, ought to use judgement before accepting a friend, and to enjoy being with him and to use him when in need of him, and all these things stand in the way of one's having many friends; but most in the way is the first (which is the most important)—the approval through judgement.<sup>295</sup>

Hamlet's judgement of his schoolfellows proves to be correct. Whether they knew or not that they carried a warrant of execution, they still agree to take Hamlet away from the court at the behest of the usurper King:

KING [CLAUDIUS] I like him no, nor stands it safe with us  
To let his madness range. Therefore prepare you.  
I your commission will forthwith dispatch  
And he to England shall along with you.  
The terms of our estate may not endure  
Hazard so near us as doth hourly grow  
Out of his brows. (III.iii.1-7)

The schoolfellows agree to Claudius's request, proclaiming that it is what is best for the commonweal. Guildenstern asserts that the king has the weight of fear "To keep those many

<sup>294</sup> J. Duncan Spaeth, "Horatio's Hamlet", *The Shakespeare Association Bulletin*, Vol. 24, No. 1, (1949), p. 42.

<sup>295</sup> Plutarch, *How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend*, (1957), pp. 45-69.

bodies safe / That live and feed upon your majesty” (III.iii.9-10). And Rosencrantz affirms, “Never alone / Did the king sigh but with a general groan” (III.iii.22-3).

Hamlet works to uncover the reasons why his schoolfellows would investigate his ‘antic disposition’ at the behest of his uncle. After the death of Polonius we see this exchange:

ROSENCRANTZ: Take you me for a sponge, my lord?

HAMLET: Aye, sir—that soaks up the King’s countenance, his rewards, his authorities. But such officers do the King best service in the end: he keeps them like an ape in the corner of his jaw, first mouthed to be last swallowed. When he needs what you have gleaned, it is but squeezing you and, sponge, you shall be dry again!

ROSENCRANTZ: I understand you not, my lord.

HAMLET: I am glad of it. A knavish speech sleeps in a foolish ear. (IV.ii.13-22)

Not only has Hamlet uncovered Rosencrantz and Guildenstern’s true purposes at the court but he understands the contrast between Horatio and these fellows as a matter of fidelity. This puts Rosencrantz and Guildenstern in a perilous position. Hamlet is suspicious of their motives; every action he takes will be tinged with doubt. Importantly, there is another element of this exchange that deals with the formation of homosocial relationships: mutual understanding. When Rosencrantz replies, “I understand you not, my lord”, Hamlet notices a break from his “speech” to the hermeneutic process in his fellow’s “ear” (IV.ii.21, 22). While Horatio is drawn into the investigative deliberations, Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are excluded.

Claudius seems to be aware of the ability of friends to translate and understand motivations in a kind of hermeneutics of exchange. In the first scene of Act 4, the King enters with Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, stating, “There’s matter in these sighs, these profound

heaves. / You must *translate*; 'tis fit we *understand* them" (IV.i.1-2, emphasis my own).<sup>296</sup> As 'friends' they are called to decipher Hamlet's true meaning, to understand his discourse although it is framed as 'madness'. As Horatio is party to Hamlet's mission in uncovering 'truth', his schoolfellows are unable to 'translate' the reasons and the 'truth' of his distraction. The disrupted hermeneutics of exchange is also mirrored in the textures of this masculine network: their betrayal is written in Hamlet's execution letter. This is textual proof of Claudius's treachery—in which they are seen as complicit. Hamlet's textual exchange with Horatio stands in contrast to their betrayal. Hamlet passes letters to Claudius through Horatio, trusting him with his messages. In his own correspondence with his companion, he both alludes to the fate of Rosencrantz and Guildenstern and affirms, in the very next line, his love for his faithful Horatio. The letter ends, "*Rosencrantz and Guildenstern hold their course for England. Of them I have much to tell. Farewell. He that thou knowest thine*" (IV.xii.26-27). It transpires that he has sealed a new warrant, ensuring their execution and highlighting the dangers of unfaithful fellowships. In contrast, the familiar letter to Horatio both upholds the textuality of their friendship, their affectionate bond, and seeks to disclose another fact that can be used to argue Claudius's guilt and justify Hamlet's action. Horatio must know all of this to exculpate his prince.

### ***Oratio* and Horatio: Hamlet's Argument 'Truly' Delivered**

At the close of the play, Horatio knows of the circumstances and possesses the warrant for Hamlet's execution. Hamlet gives this over to him in the 'Graveyard Scene', stating, "Here's the commission; read it at more leisure" (V.ii.26).<sup>297</sup> As Horatio aims to

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<sup>296</sup> In the Folio Hamlet's schoolfellows do not enter the scene until after this is delivered, presumably to Gertrude; it makes more sense to see this directed primarily at them. Indeed, they are present in Q2, the authoritative text used here.

<sup>297</sup> It must be noted that in Q2 scene 14 is cut from Q1 in which Horatio has spoken with Gertrude privately. In this, he discloses the "subtle treason that the King has plotted" in sending Hamlet to England but really to his death, and the fate of

drink from the poisoned cup, after the fall of his friend, he proclaims, “I am more an antique Roman than a Dane: / Here’s yet some liquor left” (V.ii.325-6). At Hamlet’s end, Horatio aligns himself with the past, by choosing death as the final means to display his constancy. He not only imitates heroic figures of antiquity, but he also proclaims that he *is* one. “As thou’rt a man”, Hamlet proclaims, he must “in this harsh world draw thy breath in pain / To tell my story” (V.ii.327, 332-33). This subtly refers to Hamlet’s assessment of Horatio’s *honestas*. As he is an honest man, Horatio must suffer the interrogation to explain the causes and motivations behind the scene of slaughter.

It is implied that Horatio must utilise the circumstances of the play’s action to formulate an argument of exoneration; he is entrusted to give Hamlet’s account of the events, as he witnesses nearly all of the circumstances from the same vantage point. One problematic feature that seems to be missing from critical research on the formation of forensic argument and systems of proof in the play is that Horatio, in exonerating Hamlet, also exonerates himself. He may be viewed as complicit, aware of all of Hamlet’s behaviours and the circumstances that inform his actions. By the end of the play, he knows that Hamlet has murdered Polonius, has resealed the execution warrant for Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, and, of course, he is present for the final massacre in the court. Horatio will argue, presumably, that the true treason was Claudius’s murder of Old Hamlet. In truthfully delivering Hamlet’s motivations to Fortinbras, he can secure his own safety under the new governmental system. This opens up another ethical dimension beyond Horatio’s own support of Hamlet’s murderous actions. Though he may wish to die with his prince, he is called to not only live but to ‘draw his breath in pain’. He must not only prove Hamlet’s judicial causes, but also disclose his own position in the tragic plot.

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‘Gilderstone and Rossencraft’ (XIV.4). In this scene Gertrude is pleased that her son is arrived safely back to Denmark. Horatio attempts to prove Claudius’s guilt, then, earlier on in the play. This supports the idea that he will later provide a judicial argument that exculpates Hamlet and proves the king’s murderous deeds.

Horatio also delivers an *exordium* to Fortinbras at the end of the play. Crucially, he talks about the “accidental judgements” and “deaths put on by cunning” in this introduction that will frame his argument (V.ii.366; 367). These qualified statements support the argument that Horatio will prove Hamlet’s ‘just’ causes.<sup>299</sup> He states that he has the “cause to speak” for Hamlet (V.ii.375). Fortinbras shows his disposition to hear Horatio’s judicial oration; he asks that four captains to bring Hamlet’s body up “For he was likely, had he been put on, / To have proved most royal” (V.ii.380-2). What Horatio prepares to deliver, the *narratio*, will display the causes for the tragic end to the play. There are distinct parallels between Hamlet’s use of judicial argument and the implied argument that Horatio will provide. Indeed, Hamlet’s investigation will inform Horatio; he must explicate the means by which Hamlet has collected evidence to prove Claudius’s guilt. His secretive confidences allow for the only ‘true’ and full argument to justify the revenge plot. Horatio indicates that the ‘inventors’ of plots to murder with no cause, had their plans ‘fall on their heads’ (V.ii.367-9). This is not an unbiased report of the eventual slaughter; it is a purposeful explanation of how Horatio will continue his argument to exculpate Hamlet.

Overall, *Hamlet* demonstrates the mobilisation of textual friendship and the use of one’s companion as a point of reference for determining proof. In many ways, Hamlet’s discursive interaction with Horatio is a continuation of the hermeneutic process of reconfiguring classical ideology and bridging the gap between the texts and practices of the early modern educational system and the immediate situation. Indeed, this is the main idea of humanist *imitatio*. However, in figuring male friendship, Shakespeare’s attention to the affection of these exchanges indicates the manner in which educated friends attempt to negotiate the space of the play. The main, if the only, indication that Hamlet possesses rightful and kingly qualities can be seen in connection with his honest and trusted friend.

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<sup>299</sup> See See Skinner, *Forensic Shakespeare*, (2014), pp. 86-89 and Hutson, *The Invention of Suspicion*, (2007), p. 144.

Erasmus's concept of princely virtues, an assessment of both duty and ideals, is connected to the idea of forging good friendships with honest and just men. Before stating this importance, Erasmus outlines the dutiful qualities that a prince should possess. He writes,

In navigation the wheel is not given to him who surpasses his fellows in birth, wealth, or appearance, but rather to him who excels in his skill as a navigator, in his alertness, and in his dependability. Just so with the rule of a state: most naturally the power should be entrusted to him who excels all in the requisite kingly qualities of wisdom, justice, moderation, foresight, and zeal for the public welfare.<sup>300</sup>

As Fortinbras states that Hamlet may have proved 'most royal', there is no indication of this in the text. It is in Horatio's preface to the judicial argument that may inform this assessment.

To conclude, *Hamlet* possesses specific features that are essential to understand the textually situated formation of university friendship and fellowship: the modes of rhetorical enquiry, invention and debate, the problems encountered when humanist learning is put into practice, and the emotional dimension of shared learning. It depicts young men together and in the transition from Wittenberg to courtly duty. The play is concerned with the application of knowledge for its best use and the differences between prescribed conduct and advice, and that which is learned through translating, reading, and engaging with classical and contemporary texts. In other words, this play figures the camaraderie produced through learned practices. And finally, it depicts a hermeneutic process of exchange between young men, use of *imitatio* as both imitation and creation, and a friendship informed by textual affinity.

If, as Peacham states in *The Compleat Gentleman*, acquaintances should be "a living and moving library" then Hamlet asks Horatio to explain his motivations and actions not only as a way to 'heal' his "wounded name" but as a *locus* for *inventio* (V.ii.328). That is, Horatio

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<sup>300</sup> Erasmus, *Education of a Christian Prince*, trans. Lester K. Born, (1936) p. 146.



is called to build an argument to support the actions of the prince. Like Greenblatt before him, Andrew Hui argues that Horatio acts as a witness throughout the play. He writes,

Horatio partakes in the structure of discourse in which storytelling, circulation of information, and memorializing are of the utmost importance and in which he will emerge as the final voice. Horatio must reconcile the disastrous outcomes of the play's action through the use of active memory. His ultimate purpose in the play, then, is to bear witness to his closest friend, to turn Hamlet into *Hamlet*.<sup>302</sup>

Hui brings out the textual features of Horatio in relationship to Hamlet. However, Horatio is not meant to passively 'record' a story but to deliver the argument vindicating Hamlet in the final scene. He asks Horatio to 'tell his story', but his story involves a complete explanation of Hamlet's treatment of the circumstances. This, then, is not merely a narration of the events, but a means by which Hamlet's actions can be justified.

In *Hamlet*, trust and fidelity are the catalysts for securing the justification of vicious behaviours, opening up serious ethical questions as to how one may employ friendship to one's own causes. Additionally, the use of secretive confidences in the formation of arguments has serious moral implications. The duplicitous Rosencrantz and Guildenstern are thrust out of these exclusionary confidences between Hamlet and Horatio. They are not denied access to the same textual knowledge that Hamlet and Horatio utilise, but their dishonesty excludes them from the homosocial pairing. Their fate, sealed in a death warrant, shows the very dangerous consequence of unfaithful fellowship, to say the very least.<sup>303</sup> This seems to imply that friends are called to act in full fidelity no matter the issue or consequence. This play shows the danger of torn allegiance and the possible uses of a faithful homosocial *amicita*. It is Horatio, in his fidelity, that imbues Hamlet with nobility after death;

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<sup>302</sup> Hui, "Horatio's Philosophy in *Hamlet*", (2013), p. 153.

<sup>303</sup> Alice Morgan, in an article on Hamlet's friendships, argued that there is no specific cause for Hamlet to counter-betray these fellows. In her analysis, there is no evidence that Rosencrantz and Guildenstern 'knew' of the contents of the death warrant that Claudius asks them to bear. See Alice Morgan, "True Friends of Hamlet", *The English Journal*, vol. 32, No. 7, (Sep., 1943), pp. 396-397.

he is to use his own learning, *honestas*, and experience of the situations to exculpate his friend, and by extension, himself. Horatio tells Fortinbras and his Ambassadors, “All this I can *truly* deliver” (V.ii.369; emphasis my own).

### CHAPTER III: *PARNASSUS*



Fig.2 “Apollo sitting on Parnassus surrounded by the muses and famous poets” Marcantonio Raimondi (ca. 1517–20) <sup>304</sup>

#### *Imitatio and Amicitia*

*The Parnassus Plays* (1598–1601) represent the frustrated desires of coteries of young university men and their attempts to use both literary mastery and their educated skills, as well as their fellowships, to secure wealth, status, and power over the unlearned.<sup>305</sup>

<sup>304</sup> After Raphael (Raffaello Sanzio or Santi), Italian, Urbino 1483–1520 Rome, 31.54.166. Reproduction of image CC0 1.0, Universal Public Domain, *The Met Museum*.

<sup>305</sup> All quotations from Anon., *The Three Parnassus Plays (1598-1601)*. ed. James Blair Leishman, (London: Nicholas and Watson, 1949). The three plays are *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus*, *The First Part of the Return from Parnassus*, and *The*

Moreover, there is a desire for prestige and widespread recognition of their status as poets and scholars. These university plays were composed and enacted at St John's College, Cambridge, to a student audience as part of the Christmas Revels.<sup>307</sup> They represent both the graduate journey through the course of study and the later attempts to secure stable positions both societally and economically. In the first play, the main protagonists, Philomusus and Studioso, follow one another through the "lands" of the educational programme. Consiliodorus, Philomusus' father and Studioso's uncle, warns them of the financial outcomes of their humanist endeavours. But he also alludes to the kind of social power that their education could provide, stating that from the height of Parnassus, the figurative utopia of poetic and scholarly learning,

There may youe scorne each Mydas of this age,  
Eache earthlie peasant and each drossie clowne

That knoweth not how to weighe your worthiness (*The Pilgrimage to Parnassus*, I.i.54-6)

The power here is not in economic gain but in scholarly superiority; scholarly may scorn the greedy, earthly clown because they have worth that they cannot appreciate. His speech closely mirrors that of Thomas Nashe in *Pierce Penilesse* (1592), where Nashe-as-Pierce proclaims that, "*Mydas* cares not at my moan".<sup>308</sup> In both the *Parnassus Plays* and Nashe's pamphlet, learned men bemoan the sin of the age: that those without learning profit while the poet and scholar are left destitute, and their talents unappreciated. However, the draw of social and intellectual power over the unlearned, especially in the final two plays, proves to be a tempting force. In the first play, Consiliodorus goes on to proclaim that, "learninge and

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*Second Part of the Return from Parnassus or The Scourge of Simony*. They will be referred to by their full titles initially and then as the *Pilgrimage*, *First Return*, and *Second Return*, subsequently.

<sup>307</sup> J. B. Leishman points out that these revels were enacted for those students who were unable to travel for their holidays; students that did not come from noble or wealthy backgrounds. See *The Three Parnassus Plays*, ed. James Blair Leishman, Introduction, (1949), p. 41.

<sup>308</sup> See Thomas Nashe, *Pierce Penniless, 1592, A Scholarly Press Facsimile*, (Menston, England: The Scholar Press Ltd., 1969), A2<sup>v</sup>.

povertie will euer kiss” but that he would “be a scholler though I liue but poore” (*Pilgrimage*, I.i.76; 64). He would choose the scholar’s path, as they have, though poverty is the outcome. In the *First Part of the Return from Parnassus* and *The Second Part of the Return from Parnassus or the Scourge of Simony*, the student authors depict the hostility that young scholars feel for those who either do not appreciate their talents, or those without the learning to understand the value of their poetic creations.

Young men at the university follow one another to attempt to achieve both scholarly success, patronage and publication, and, therefore, both financial gain and public prestige. Their frustrations are voiced to one another, and their amity is used as a means to traverse the undergraduate curriculum and to utilise their learning in their economic endeavours. The first is successful for Philomusus and Studioso as they encounter wanton students, each trapped in one particular level of the university degree. It is through their amity, mutual learning, and desire to reach Parnassus that they are able to successfully traverse the curriculum. In the marketplace it is a different story: unsatisfied with their positions as sexton and lay chaplain, they attempt to follow in the footsteps of other learned men. In the *Pilgrimage* they are warned by Ingenioso about this fate that they actually encounter in the *First Return*,

Take heed I take you not napping twentie yeares henc in a vicars seate, asking for the white cove with the blacke foote, or else interprtinge *Pueriles Confasbulationes* [an early grammar school book] to a companie of seauen yeare olde apes. (*Pilgrimage*, I.v. 651-54)

In the later plays, Studioso and Philomusus choose Ingenioso to follow, seeking his advice for how to make their learning and writing profitable, first in the town, i.e. Cambridge, and then in London. They choose Ingenioso particularly as he attempts to become a public and professional author of esteem. But, as a learned and witty author, he is unable to secure

adequate financial gain from his poetic and literary pursuits in seeking patronage for his work. His unnamed Patron in the *First Return* merely gives him “two groates” for a full book. He says, “these lines are pritie, and in time thou maist doe well. I haue no leasure as yet to reede [this] ouer” (*First Return*, I.i.318-19). He ends up pawning his wit for a paltry gain at the printhouse. He is faced with patrons who do not value their scholarly pursuits and poetic potential. Gullio, a small-time courtier rails against him for his “failings” in composing love letters to his mistress, humorously named Lesbia. Sir Raderick is worse; he is a member of the ruling elite, presumably educated, but is an “enemy of scholars”, as Leishman points out, and seeks every opportunity to hoard his wealth and revel in the destitution of the poor scholars.<sup>309</sup> Studioso and Philomusus face the same frustrations; their cloaks are worn, they live off of dwindling credit, and are unable to secure wealth. They can only find reputable work as a sexton and chaplain, but they are fired for dereliction of duty and an unwarranted sense of superiority. For the latter, Studioso is given the sack, as he says, “because I would not suffer one of the blew coates [i.e. servants] to perch aboue mee at the latter dinner” (IV.i.1302-3). They decide to follow their counterparts after they to seek what they think would be more lucrative—and less demeaning—positions abroad. They leave for the continent at the end of the second play. But this again is frustrated, and in the *Second Return* they have turned their persuasive powers to deception, pretending to be an apothecary and assistant, and trying to gain a living through coney-catching. They even try to tread the boards at the public playhouse and then become even lower, travelling fiddlers, to no avail. At the close of the *Second Return*, the final play in the trilogy, they give up their quest for economic gain and public acclaim, deciding to live out the rest of their days as shepherds.<sup>310</sup>

The first play, a satiric mock-morality “Christmas Toy” called *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus*, portrays a pair of university friends and kin on their allegorical pilgrimage

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<sup>309</sup> *The Three Parnassus Plays*, ed. James Blair Leishman, (1949), Introduction, p. 66.

<sup>310</sup> This is, however, a kind of return to Parnassus itself: the pastoral respite that they seek seems to be drawn from Spenserian idyll.

through the different lands of undergraduate study. From the lush Ovidian land of Poetry to the rocky crag of Logic, Philomuses and Studioso follows the path to the allegorical Mount Parnassus. In the different lands that they traverse they encounter fellow students that they may emulate: Madido, Stupido, Amoretto, and Ingenioso. This first play contains important features in understanding the affectionate networks of learned men through the trajectory of university study. The *Pilgrimage* is more than an allegorical journey through the university curriculum; it is also highly engaged with the specific aspects of university study that would allow for mastery of style, speech, and argumentation. Even the temptations of the characters that are met along the way inhabit a textual connection to style. For instance, Madido states, “The common people will now thinke I did drinke, and did nothings but *confer* with the ghostes of Homer, Ennius, Virgill, & they rest...”(II.158-161, emphasis my own). In stating this he confirms the idea discussed in the last chapter that “books become friends” and collapses the historical alienation between contemporary scholars and their sources. He even challenges textual ideas by saying that through translation he has made his “friend Horace” to “turne out of youre Romane coate into an English gaberdin”. (II.172-74)

The question, then, is why should there be an examination of these particular texts as demonstrative of fictional homosocial hermeneutic networks? This may seem like the inverse of the main argument of my thesis, that young men use their textualised friendship and education to subvert social mores and explain vicious behaviours. However, there are substantial similarities between the methods used to secure financial gain and the methods for enacting and explaining vicious behaviours. Though their endeavours fail miserably, the type of exclusion represented in their educated coterie is used as a means to shift power dynamics, if only verbally. The concept of academic superiority presented in these plays speaks to the desires of the university men that they were played for. If no financial security is gained, there is still the opportunity for scathing verbal abuse, public attacks in print, and the

circulation of social commentary concerning the value of scholarship. Importantly, attacks on individuals in public print could tarnish one's reputation. This is a kind of social power that educated men, turning their focus to satire, could produce. Ingenioso proves to be a model for imitation, as his pamphleteering could be likened to the works of Thomas Nashe. Nashe himself was powerful in print: scathingly mocking Gabriel Harvey and proving the power of satirical works.

In another way, the university play, *Club Law*, which was enacted at Clare College, Cambridge, represents another type of power that university men could claim over the undereducated. It demonstrates the legal power of educational institutions.<sup>314</sup> In this play, the young university men seek to uphold the legal control of the university over the town. To do so, they use collective physical violence to exert power over the less-educated. By fighting to keep the legal powers over the townsmen, these young men use not only their sense of superiority but extreme force to uphold their regulatory power and escape legal retribution.

The line between verbal abuse and all-out attack is tenuous. If young, educated men are unable to use their poetic compositional skills and the friendships forged through mutual learning to shift power dynamics, they are liable to abuse the men who hinder their successes. If these men are threatened with the dissolution of their powers, they are liable to abuse the upstart courtiers, merchants, and tradesmen of the university towns and the city.

At the close of the first play, Philomusus and Studioso revel in their place at the allegorical 'mount' of Parnassus; they focus on their superiority to the less-educated. For the scholar-friends in the *First Return* this hostility mounts. Focusing on their place in the marketplace outside the academic institution, their disdain for less educated can be linked to *Club Law*. As all of these plays were presented to fellow students, they vindicate the eruption of violent hostility towards less-educated men. The old "club law" that the students fight to

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<sup>314</sup> Anon., *Club law, a comedy acted in Clare Hall, Cambridge, about 1599-1600*, ed. G. C. Moore Smith, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1907). Though set in Athens, this play actually represents Cambridge at the current time.



have reinstated allowed for legal powers over governance of the town. The vehicle for the reestablishment of such control is the use of educated homosocial coteries.

This play shows more than just friction between the unlearned and young university students, town and gown. The ethical problem in this play is the violence enacted against the townsfolk, as Frederick Boas notices,

The chronic hostility between them [townspeople and students] arose from the peculiar privileges granted to the university by a series of royal charters and by parliamentary enactment. These privileges included powers of interference with the trade of the town, of searching the houses of citizens and of punishing them in the university courts. Every mayor on his accession to office had to take an oath to preserve the privileges of the university—an obligation which aroused the keenest resentment.<sup>349</sup>

In the course of the play, the citizens are forced, through both verbal and physical violence, to renew these privileges. The plot mainly follows Philenius and Musonius, two friends with names synonymous to Philomusus and Studioso in *The Parnassus Plays*. These protagonists in *Club Law* follow their fellow student, Cricket, in a quest to reinstate and uphold their legal powers (I.v.72). Verbal violence is aimed at the townspeople from the onset,

PHILENIUS: I durst have sworne that this place where the muses be so conversant and the good Arts so nourished could not have byn so void of humanitie. *I thought it impossible that ignorance should have nestled where knowledg is so powerful.* but now I see my conjecture falsified. For if I should point out the true visage of Clownerie, I would accept this for a true Idea.

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<sup>349</sup> Frederick. S. Boas, "University Plays", *The Cambridge History of English and American Literature in 18 Volumes* (1907–21), Volume VI. The Drama to 1642, ed. A. W. Ward and A. R. Waller, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1920), p. 308.

MUSONIUS: Ffaith to speake truly thou maist goe further and speed worse. Minerva our foundresse in my conceit was very provident in adjoyning herselfe to such druggs, how else should we have them serviceable?

PHILENIUS: Thou seest experience hath shewed the contrarie, *in stead of our servants they seem our masters, their power is too absolute, they muddy slaves [thinke them selves] to good to be our servants.*

MUSONIUS: I, and I will retaine that thought, except some true spirited Gent[lemen] make them feelee our stripes for their disobedience, and renewe the ancient Club-lawe.  
(I.v.200-207, emphasis my own)

They plot to regain legal powers in tandem, as Philenius says to Musonius, “I will follow thee, I am at thy service” (I.v.219). As a homosocial network, these two friends utilise their educational training and collective powers to reinstate their positions of superiority, both legally and intellectually. Their speech mirrors that of Philomusus and Studioso, as well as their other fellows, as they rail against the unlearned. What this shows is that a plot for the consolidation of power *can* be successful and that these kinds of “complaints” can be easily woven into acts of violence.

In this play, the protagonists’ justifications often take the form of *imitatio*; they align themselves with the wisdom that is purportedly gained through academic study. They are frustrated to see “a heard of Asses, thinking themselves a troupe of sages” (Musonius, I.v.179). Philenius add to this sense of superiority, stating, “but canst thou be well pleased to see such sepulchres the Image of divine authoritie and them govern others which can scarcely manage their owne affaires?” (I.v.181-4). This is, of course, connected to the classical-cum-humanist concept that learning breeds the best minds for governance. In reconfiguring this concept, the two friends place themselves in a position of superiority; following those leaders of the classical world justifies their reclamation of legal powers. Edmund Spenser uses this

same kind of argument, claiming that those in positions of power hinder learned young men in their aspirations, primarily political. In *The Tears of the Muses* (1591), in which the muses themselves lament the waning social value of educated poetic production, Clio and Melonene exclaim,

CLIO: And learned impes that wont to shoote up still,

And grow to hight of kingdomes government,

They underkeep, and with their spredding armes

Doo beat their buds, that perish through their harmes.

MELOPMENE: Whie then doo foolish men so much despize

The precious store of this celestiaall riches?

Why doo they banish us, that patronize

The name of learning? Most unhappie wretches! (75-8; 145-8).<sup>350</sup>

The abilities for legal powers and good governance are seen as positive outputs for educated men; but as these plays show, when they do not receive higher positions of power young men bemoan the age and vent their anger upon the undereducated.

Christopher Marlow, in work not unlike Alexandra Shepard's, analyses the construction of what he calls "scholarly masculinity" in University plays such as *Club Law* and *The Parnassus Plays*. He states that "university drama has to grapple with the literal facts of prolonged private study and the ideological construction of learning as *individual betterment* in the construction of masculine identity".<sup>354</sup> However, he also notes that university plays depict this masculinity as,

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<sup>350</sup> Edmund Spenser, *The Tears of the Muses in The Poetical Works of Edmund Spenser: In Three Volumes*, vol. 1, ed. Ernest De Selincourt, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), p. 106.

<sup>354</sup> Christopher Marlow, "Scholarly Interiority in the Parnassus Trilogy", *The Dalhousie Review*, vol. 85, no. 2, (Halifax: Dalhousie University Press, 2005), p. 7

an anxious conceptual space wherein tensions between moderation and excess, between the assertion of individual and communal identities, and between native English and academic cultures clash, struggle, and fester.<sup>355</sup>

This analysis of scholarly masculinity directly correlates with my assessment of the uses of male friendship in the university setting. The textual nature of “following” one another and the authors and *exempla* of classical texts open up ethical issues. For men whose sense of “masculinity” and status is moulded by their education, they create a sense of intellectual superiority. This becomes a site of both verbal abuse, and sometimes greatly hostile violence, as they are not presented with what they deem to be their just deserts. When they cannot effectively use their fraternal connections to obtain power and status, their hostility mounts. They believe that by their rhetorical training and textual mastery that they should rise to greater heights. As Teresa Morgan writes about Quintilian’s view of learned oratory, “the very language of the orator is different from the ordinary language of the uneducated”. This, she believes is Quintilian’s view that “There is, in other words, a particular language associated with power and authority and it is based on writing”.<sup>356</sup> The ethical problems arise when this power is not realised.

### ***Alter Ipse: Studioso and Philomusus***

Robert Streiter analyses depictions of fellowship in University drama in a manner similar to Tom Macfaul’s work; he surveys how the dramatic representation of male friendship do not uphold the *amicitia perfecta* of Cicero’s work and are instead parodies of perfect friendships in University drama. He calls them “scathing mockery of classical

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<sup>355</sup> Ibid., p. 7 (emphasis my own).

<sup>356</sup> Teresa Morgan, “A good man is skilled in politics: Quintilian’s political theory”, *Pedagogy and Power: Rhetoric of Classical Learning*, eds. Yun Lee Too and Niall Livingstone, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 258.

friendship”.<sup>370</sup> Lynn Johnson also takes this stance but argues that “friendship provided a standard for scrutiny. To attract friends and to aid them were social and personal ideals, recognised and frequently commented on for their fulfilment or failure”.<sup>371</sup> However, the main issue here is not the question of the friendship’s perfection or the virtue of amity itself, but how educated men rely on one another to traverse the obstacles of their lives. Bound up with this idea is the question of how humanist friendship can aid in the navigation of, in the *Pilgrimage*, in particular, undergraduate study.

The friendships and fellowships within the plays are textual in nature, and their intimacy is based on the citations of shared learning. The aphoristic exchanges between the protagonists, Philomusus and Studioso, has been criticised as producing “one-dimensional characters” but they actually indicate the exceptional textuality of their friendship.<sup>373</sup> Paula Glatzer, though she comes to the conclusion of the former, tends to support the latter view which I take up. She writes that these protagonists uphold their own characteristics through their speech; they are less congruent and more complementary.<sup>375</sup> Studioso, then, is more of ‘the scholar’, while Philomusus is more of ‘the poet’. They seem to merge their collective experiences and outlooks together to form the one ‘scholar-poet’. It is clear that these two characters, especially in the *Pilgrimage*, present to one another arguments for the development of both these characteristics. In this way, they use one another as complementary sources for the invention of arguments concerning the value of their educational progression. Additionally, their stylistic differences function as complementary through a hermeneutics of exchange; they take classical ideas and interweave sententiae and aphoristic statements both concerning the value of poetry and the value of study. That is, they

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<sup>370</sup> Robert Streiter, “Cicero on Stage: Damon and Pythias and the Fate of Classical Friendship in English Renaissance Drama”, *Texas Studies in Literature and Language*, vol. 47, No. 4, (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2005), p. 346.

<sup>371</sup> Lynn Jonson, “Friendship, Coercion, and Interest: Debating the Foundations of Justice in Early Modern England”, *JEMH*, vol. 8.2, (Leiden: Brill, 2004), p. 48.

<sup>373</sup> Christopher Marlow, “Scholarly Interiority in the Parnassus Trilogy”, *The Dalhousie Review*, vol. 85, no. 2, (Halifax: Dalhousie University Press, 2005), p. 279.

<sup>375</sup> Paula Glatzer, *The Complaint of the Poet: The Parnassus Plays*, 1977, p. 112.

consistently present arguments to one another in order bring their contemporary perspective to the arguments posed by authors of antiquity. In this first play, the ‘wisdom’ gathered from experience at grammar school allows for the reconfiguration of these textualised ideas for use in their own current pilgrimage.<sup>376</sup>

The play begins with counsel from Consiliodorus to both Philomusus and Studioso, to govern their activity during university study. His advice may be linked back to the *Dicta Catonis*, commonly used as a grammar school textbook.<sup>377</sup> These may be the same kind of aphoristic statements that are presented to Laertes by his pedantic father. In both cases, despite Polonius’ laughable pedantry, these kinds of statements were to be taken as sage advice for young schoolboys. The idea was that in learning these as a means to develop their Latin, they would also internalise these concepts to govern their actions and development. These short sayings provide an early framework for the study of more intricate antiquarian texts concerning correct conduct, such as Cicero’s *De officiis*. The ideas about correct conduct were also assimilated into conduct literature of the time. Thus begins Leonard Wright’s *A display of duty...*(1614) in which there is contained “sage sayings” that are “profitable to practice”:

As youth by law of nature, are bound to honour, reuerence, and obey their ancients, whose steps, either in good or euill: they are most *apt and ready to imitate*: so are elders bound in duty and conscience, by doctrine, counsell, and example of life, to traine up youth to virtue and honestie” (emphasis my own).<sup>378</sup>

<sup>376</sup> Marlow, “Scholarly Interiority”, *The Dalhousie Review*, (2005), p. 279.

<sup>377</sup> George A. Plimpton, *The Education of Shakespeare*, (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1933), p. 45. Plimpton, like Baldwin, outlines “courses of study in Shakespeare’s day” citing Brinsley as well as looking at both the free grammar school of St. Bees and the Rotherham grammar school. The textbooks and works used include Aesop’s Fables, Lily’s *Grammar*, The *Distichs of Cato*, Cicero including *De officiis* and *De amicitia*, Terence, Virgil, Horace and Ovid as well as the catechism, *Confabulationes Pueriles* and *Sententia Pueriles*.

<sup>378</sup> Leonard Wright, *A display of duty dekt vvith sage sayings*, (London: 1614), , sig. B<sup>r</sup>, Folger Shakespeare Library, Early English Books Online <eebo.chadwyck.com> Accessed February 20, 2017

In many ways, this is the kind of argument that Consiliodorus makes for his son and nephew. Importantly, the advice focuses on the concept of *imitatio*, concerning the wisdom of one's elders. He first offers these lines,

Consort not in the waye with graceless boyes,  
 That feede the taverne with their idle coyne  
 Till their leane purses starve at last for foode.  
 O why should schollars by unthriftiness  
 Seeke to weaken their own poore estate! (I.69-73)

In addition to avoiding those spendthrifts in the tavern, Consiliodorus commands that the two youths “Eschew all lozell, lazie, loitering gromes, / All foggie sleepers and all idle lumps” and avoid “Those Amorettoes” that “would etise youe to some curtezan, / And tell youe tales of itching venerie” (I.79-80; 84, 89-90). This counsel, itself, is deeply indebted to the textual past. It brings concepts that Thomas Hoby translates and reconfigures from Castiglione's *Book of the Courtier*. This translation situates the issue in English contexts. He writes,

But me thynke there is an other thyng that geueth and dimynisheth muche reputation: nam[...ly], the choyse of friendes, with whom a manne *must haue in|warde conuersation*. For vndoubtedly reason wylleth that suche as are coopled in streicte amitie and vnsepara|ble companye, should be also alike in wyll, in mynde, in iudgemente and inclination. So that who so is conuer|saunt wyth the ignoraunt or wycked, he is also counted ignoraunt and wycked. And contrariwise he that is con|uersaunt with the good, wyse, and dyscreete, he is recke|ned suche a one. For it seemeth by nature, that euerye thing doeth willingly felowshippe with his lyke. There|fore I beleaue that a man oughte to haue a respect in the first beeginning of

these frendshippes, for of two neere friendes, who euer knoweth the one, by and by he ymagi|neth the other to bee of the same condition (emphasis my own).<sup>379</sup>

Even when the young students stray from the path, they argue for the continuation of study, citing both their own arguments for the advancement of learning and Consiliodorus' advice for the cultivation of good friendships in aid of good conduct. Philomusus *almost* is taken off course by Madido, Studioso is *almost* taken by the ideas presented by the Puritan Stupido, and both are seduced by the arguments for the pleasures of bawdy poetry presented by Amoretto. However, they keep one another from falling away from their path. Studioso, for example, says, "I kept thee Philomusus from moiste Madido, / Thou sauest mee latelie fro dull Stupido" (IV. 428-9). The scholar has kept the poet from the tavern, and the poet has kept the scholar from Puritanism.<sup>380</sup> Their speech complement their positions as either scholar or poet. They use the aptest aphorisms and examples to give support to their arguments. Their interactions are textual; they cite specific ideas from classical antiquity to persuade one another to continue the course of study: *imitatio* becomes the *locus* for *inventio*.

In *The Pilgrimage to Parnassus*, Philomusus and Studioso utilise their learning in their discourse; often their rhyming couplets are interlaced aphoristic phrases on one specific topic, as in a commonplace book. In one instance, they even form a poem through their rhyming couplets, interlacing commonplace ideas about scholars and their pursuits.

PHILOMUSUS: Thartes are vnkinde that doe theire sons neglect.

STUDIOSO: Vnkinder frendes that schollers doe reiecte.

PHILOMUSUS: Dissemblinge artes lookt smoothlie on our youth.

STUDIOSO: But loade our age with discontent and ruthe.

PHILOMUSUS: Friendes foolishlie vs to this woe doe traine.

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<sup>379</sup> In the dialogue of the book, this is spoken by "Syr Fridericke". See Book 2 of Baldassarre Castiglione, *The courtyer of Count Baldessar Castilio diuided into foure bookes. Very necessary and profitable for yonge gentilmen and gentilwomen abiding in court, palaice or place, done into English by Thomas Hoby*, (Printed by John Wolfe: London, 1588), sig. D8<sup>r</sup>. Early English Books Online <eebo.chadwyck.com> Accessed December 12, 2016.

<sup>380</sup> They both also heed the advice of Consiliodorus, to not spend their time in taverns.



STUDIOSO: Ficke[l] Appollo promised future gaine.

PHILOMUSUS: Wee want the prating coyne, the speaking golde.

STUDIOSO: Yea, frends are gained by that yellow moulde.

PHILOMUSUS: Adew Parnassus, I must pack away.

STUDIOSO: Fountains farewell, where beaultuos nimphes dopleaie

PHILOMUSUS: In Hellicon noe more Ile dipp my quill.

STUDIOSO: Ile sing noe more vpon Parnassus hill.

PHILOMUSUS: Lets talk noe more, since noe relief wee finde.

STUDIOSO: In vaine to skore our losses on the winde.

(*The Return from Parnassus I*, I.i.115-128)

They also support their arguments with the use of these aphorisms and their continued insistence on following the path to their degree is marked by textual allusion and quotation.

Philomusus, when confronting the first of his wayward fellows, the drunkard Madido, states,

The harder and the craggier is the waye,

The joye will be more full another day.

Ofte pleasure got with paine wee dearlie deeme,

Things dearlie bought are had in great esteem (II.249-252)

Madido recognises this as arising from “Tullies’ *Sentences*” and Leishman, in his footnotes, writes that this is from *M.T Ciceronis Sententiae Illustriores*, “which is several times mentioned by Brinsely in *Ludius Literarius*”.<sup>381</sup> Madido continues, saying,

Leave your pulinge of prourbs and hearken to him that knows whats good for youe...

Staie with mee, and one pinte of wine shall inspire youe with more witt than all they nine muses. (I.253-55; 257-59)

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<sup>381</sup> Leishman, *The Three Parnassus Plays*, (1949), Footnote, p. 109.

Later, after encountering the Puritain Stupido, Philomusus repeats a similar version of his fellow's choice aphorism, saying, "Are then the artes foolish, prophane, and vaine / That gotten are with studie, toile, and paine?"(III. 353-4). Thus, through speech derived from textual sources, either concerning conduct or the value of education, both of these friends persuade one another to move forward through their undergraduate degree. They assert that the craggy path is worth traversing, persuading one another that lusty Ovidian poetry or persuasive Puritanical dialectic should not hold them back from their goal. They continuously bring these ideas into the context of their own struggles, something that Ann Moss argues was the main purpose of the educational practices of commonplacing. She states,

The classroom Latin composition resourced by commonplace-books is part of the humanists' attempt to recover a whole linguistic complex formulated in the past and to make it express the present.<sup>383</sup>

Philomusus and Studioso's speech forms specific arguments for the continuation of their study. They, as poet and scholar, use the arguments most fitting for their position. Again, these arguments are informed by *imitatio* of both classical ideas, pedagogical manuals, and the examples of others. In this way, they are using the other's perspective to arrive at their mutually desired goal; for instance, they ultimately conclude that they are above the baser poetics of the flesh. Studioso keeps Philomusus on the path to Parnassus by expressing the indecorous nature of some poetic constructions in the advancement of learning. He states,

Howe sourlie sweete is melting venerie:  
It yealdeth honie, bit it striaghte doth stinge.  
Ile nere hereafter counsell chaster thoughtes.  
To trauell through this lande of Poetrie.  
Here are enticing Panders, subtile baudes,

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<sup>383</sup> Ann Moss, *Printed Commonplace-Books and the Structuring of Renaissance Thought*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996) p. 135.

Catullus, Ouid, wantome Martiall:

Heare them whilest a lasciuious tale they tell,

Theile make thee fit in Shorditch for to dwell. (V. 510-17).

Not only does he note the immoral nature of following certain poets intimately and exclusively but his use of counsel is apt for the concept of following greater authors. His indication of the ends of this kind of study gives Philomusus a full argument against the unchaste thoughts brought about by bawdy style and the baser outcomes of such study. Ovid was studied for his textual qualities, not for the subject matter of his bawdy poetry, in the upper school of grammar school education. However, Philomusus provides an argument against this concept, that poetry cannot effect a chaste mind, “But who reads poets with a chaster minde / Shall nere infected be by poesie” (V. 538-39). Thus, in this exchange, the scholar argues for the poet to follow, to not stay in the land of bawdy poetry. The poet provides an argument to the contrary, but is persuaded to continue.

Studioso and Philomusus utilise commonplaces by returning to sections of the argument put forth by either ancient authorities or the wisdom of their elder, Consiliodorus. In this there is a continuation of the hermeneutics of exchange: the ideas that Consiliodorus puts forth arise from previous masters as well. They students take all of these arguments and adapt it to fit their current situation. For instance, Studioso also brings literary and educational texts into his speech. In one instance he states,

Well said the poet, that a wantom speache

Like dallying fingers tickles vp the luste.

Chast thoughtes can lodge no longer in that soule

That lendes an eare to wantom poesie. (IV. 490-93)

This poet, as Leisman also notes, is “Almost certainly Marcellus Palingenius...whose *Zodicus Vitae* (pub. c. 1531), a didactic poem of some 9000 Latin hexameters was a popular

school textbook”.<sup>387</sup> Thus, these two friends use their educational training not only to master composition, but also to formulate their arguments. Moss asserts that,

A rhetorical figure especially valued by all humanist writers was the *sententiae* or pithy remark of general import, valued not only as a form of expression in words, but as a way of encapsulating generally accepted opinions of the sort which had provided the matter of dialectical argumentation. p. 141

These were compiled from the “most authoritative authors”, those who should be followed both in style and action. Adam Fox reiterates the widely accepted idea that commonplacing was crucial in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries in England, “Contemporaries repeatedly laced their conversation with old adages, filled their writing with trusted maxims, and delighted in making collections of choice dicta”.<sup>388</sup> Fox argues that these maxims culturally informed ideas of ‘common sense’ and functioned to ‘preserve knowledge’.<sup>389</sup> However, beyond preserving knowledge, these collections aided in the navigation of social, political, and economic spheres. They could be used to support a serious line of argument as well as to demonstrate wit at a party. They pervaded, as Moss shows, the ways by which young men not only organised their intellectual world, but also how they acted in society at large.

Showing through the texture of the dialogic exchange between these two poor scholars is the concept that “Friendship is equality. A friend is another self”.<sup>395</sup> The play, then, presents the *alter ipse* through complementary speech, fusing the ‘scholar’ and the ‘poet’ into the whole of the ‘scholar-poet’ as they are described in the *Returns*: they are parts of the same whole, or ‘one soul in bodies twain’.<sup>396</sup> Additionally, it is important that there are two travellers to Parnassus, as their exclusionary and intimate camaraderie in this play will

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<sup>395</sup> Again, see Erasmus, “Adages: Ii1 to Iv100”, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 31 trans. Margaret Mann Phillips, (1982), p. 31. This is itself a mobilization of a Ciceronian concept, See again, Marcus Tullius Cicero, *De Senectute*, *De amicitia*, *De dicinatione*, trans. William Armistead Falconer, (Cambridge Massachusetts, Harvard University Press, 1923), pp. 132-133.

<sup>396</sup> This is, again, the Aristotelian idea that is reconfigured in many early modern discussion of friendship.

resonate with groups of educated young men in St John's college. This would show the intricate connection between the university characters and the student audience, allowing for an exclusive understanding of their position as followers of texts and one another.

The structure of these exchanges is indicative of the author's projection of expected responses and inferences from their intended audience. This is a rhetorical construction that would 'delight' the audience as they engage with the same issues put forth in the plays. The male audience of these plays would have direct hermeneutic engagement with the *topoi* that is presented and have the same emotive responses to the struggles and later frustrations of the scholar-poets depicted. Implicit in the construction of the plays, their content and arguments, is a connection based on recognition in the Cambridge audience. However, Glatzer states that the *Returns*,

seem to have been intended for a somewhat different audience. In the increasing disillusionment of these plays—seen in the absence of intent to reform and in an intolerant abuse of adversaries—the authors seem to be addressing not merely the sympathetic academic community at large but, more specifically, those colleagues who were also about to find themselves out on the world's doorstep.<sup>397</sup>

J. B. Leishman, however, notes that the Christmas revels were primarily aimed at the 'poor' scholars who would be less likely to travel for the holiday periods.<sup>398</sup> It seems more likely, then, that *all three* plays were aimed at young scholars who struggled through their undergraduate degrees only to find that there were few employment opportunities afterwards. As Philomusus and Studioso encounter others, the drunk, the Puritan, the lover or bawdy poetry, and the dissatisfied poet, their audience would recognise these types. As both the audience and the scholars represented in the allegorical performance have gone through the same pilgrimage or are still in the process, there is a mimetic representation of the 'real'

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<sup>397</sup> Paula Glatzer, *The Complaint of the Poet: The Parnassus Plays*, (1977), p. 7.

<sup>398</sup> J. B. Leishman, *The Three Parnassus Plays*, (1949), Footnote, p. 136.

coterie of gentlemen who would witness this play as part of the Christmas revels. In this way, the audience could see others use past texts to deal with their present concerns. This audience, then, is both exclusive and excluded. They are exclusive in their learning and shared experience but are excluded from the positions of wealth and power of the elite, noble students. Close amity is the way by which students could achieve their degree, and so it seems that they look to these kinds of relationships for help in the social and economic spheres beyond the university. The nature of their language is projected to an equally exclusive academic audience. Often, to come to an understanding of the nuanced references to educational practices and textual use, one would need to have a similar degree of knowledge. Thus, hermeneutic reconfiguration of texts within the play heightens the interiority of the plays' concerns.

In addition, Warren Boucher notes the 'very specific geographical constituency' that made up the population of certain colleges. In *St Johns*, he asserts that 'the early Elizabethan seminary establishment of Protestant humanism' at St Johns College, Cambridge "relied more heavily on certain key 'feeder' schools and the endowment of specific, local intellectual traditions".<sup>401</sup> Therefore, not only would the student audience have a knowledge of possible hazards of university study, but they also arrived from a similar geographical and educational background. The student friends on the stages are representative of the audience: they have the same social backgrounds, come from similar locales, have the same shared texts and experiences, and the same opportunities (or lack thereof). When the two protagonists meet Ingenioso in the land of Philosophy, he states, "What, Philomusus and Studioso: well metould schoolefelowes" (V. 561-62). This indicates the connection between *all* scholars in the college, mutual study and use of textual instruction creates textual bonds for traversing social economies. As Kathy Eden notes about textual transmission between friends, Cicero, and

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<sup>401</sup> Warren Boucher, "The Cultural Geography of Sixteenth-century England", *Pedagogy and Power: Rhetoric of Classical Learning*, eds. Yun Lee Too and Niall Livingstone, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 120.

then Erasmus, finds that intellectual property or intellectual capital, is “the epitome of *communitas*” which “in turn, is *amicitia* or friendship”.<sup>402</sup> Though Cicero intends this to be held between men for the good of the public, commonality in this context deals with shared textual knowledge and intellectual capital between university fellows. This intimacy is directly performed for the specific university audience.

The intimacy between Philomusus and Studioso themselves is negotiated through their equally frustrating circumstances within the *First Return*. Their main solace in this is their mutual misfortune, and their desires to advance in socio-economically together. Studioso states,

Art thou to seeke thy fortunes new againe?

And soe am I, *Ile keepe thee companie*

*Till fortune giue vs onc a resting place.*

I thinke it is ordained by destinie

That wee shoulde *still match* in adursitie. (*First Return*, IV.i.1287-91, emphasis my own)

Their two frustrated forays into the economic sphere are figured in tandem, as their later frustrations towards those who have obtained wealth without study will also be described. Philomusus responds that he will seek better employment of his talents,

I meane to change this heauen for another

And finde or better happ, or kinder graue.

Afere I will my soyle but not my minde

That liues with thee, soe soules liue where the[y] loue:

When as I treade vpon a stranger earthe

Ile thinke on thee, and with a deepe breathd sighe

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<sup>402</sup> Kathy Eden, *Friends Hold All things in Common*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), p. 105.

Recounte our springtimes hapless destinies;

Then straight a smile shall smooth my clouded browe

Whiles hope perswads mee of thy happiness.

STUDIOSO: Nay, where thy happs be nipt, my hopes must wither,

The ayre that not rewards thee scorneth mee:

Then let vs flye together with a winge

Whither good stars and hapie fates vs bringe. (*First Return*, IV.i.1327-1341)<sup>406</sup>

And when it is concluded that they will seek their fortunes together in London, Philomusus states the intimate connection to Studioso saying,

Soe nowe my partinge harte doth leape for ioy,

Since I shall haue a mate for my longe waye

*Whose talke wll add winges to the tedious daye.* (IV.i.1346-48; emphasis my own)

Their speech will alleviate the tedium of economic advancement in a marketplace that devalues the merits of educated men. Lynn Jonson argues that

...friendship served as one means to engage in the current debate about the role of virtue in human action. Precisely because material exchange and benefit were explained increasingly in terms of market forces and motives of self-interest without any reference to an overarching morality, friendship can be used to pull them in another direction. It could so, in part, as a result of the classical and medieval treatments of friendship known to so many early modern readers.<sup>407</sup>

Their relationship depended on ‘following’ one another through the course of study in the *Pilgrimage*. In the sequel, their amity is a site of solace from their frustrations. Misery likes company. The pleasure of their intimate exchange is ‘talke’ with one another and ‘companie’.

<sup>406</sup> In the footnotes, Leishman recognises a reconfiguration from Horace *Ep.* I, xi, 25. in *The Three Parnassus Plays*, (1949), p. 199.

<sup>407</sup> Lynn Johnson, “Friendship, Coercion, and Interest: Debating the Foundations of Justice in Early Modern England”, (2004), p. 48.



After resolving to seek their fortunes abroad, Glatzer notes that “his only comfort, Philomusus explains, will be his friendship with Studioso”. He states, ‘Alter I will my soyle but not my minde / That liues with thee, soe soules liue where they loue’ (II. 1331-32). But what she continues to say is, “What we have here is another of those apparently serious Philomusus-Studioso scenes that teeter on the edge of the ridiculous”.<sup>408</sup> What is not apparent to Glatzer is the serious tone that these types of relationships are given, especially by those who rely on the perceived benefits of male-male intimacy and alliance. First, in order to not seem focused on *self*-advancement, fellowship is a necessary tool to seek social, political, or economic status through a network of friends, and ideally, with the aid of an intimate other. Second, it is a sign of extremely intimate connection that one would ‘follow’ a friend because of the pleasure of their company.

Following one another, and following in the footsteps of learned men, are elements of what I consider ‘following’ or *imitatio* in *The Parnassus Plays*. Thus, I use this concept as a way to open up the ways by which young men will negotiate their social and economic space. A passage from Lucretius’ *De Rerum Natura* connects affection and admiration with textual following in poetic form,

Upon the profitable ends of man,  
 O thee I follow, glory of the Greeks,  
 And set my footsteps squarely planted now  
 Even in the impress and the marks of thine-  
 Less like one eager to dispute the palm,  
 More as one craving out of very love  
 That I may copy thee! (Book III, 4-9)<sup>409</sup>

<sup>408</sup> Paula Glatzer, *The Complaint of the Poet*, (1977), pp. 156-7.

<sup>409</sup> Lucretius, *De Rerum Natura*, ed. William Ellery Leonard, (Boston: E. P. Dutton, 1916), p. 167.

The concept, ‘following in the footsteps’ of another individual, has a long literary history. As Cicero writes in the *De oratore*, young men in their learning “are anxious to learn the opinion of the man whose footsteps they long to follow” (I.xxiii, 106).<sup>410</sup> In these plays, the scholar-poet friends follow on another to Parnassus and seek to follow their fellows into the marketplace. However, their amity, learning, and collective poetic powers are frustrated, and they turn to the abuse of their “lessers”.

### **“Mossy Idiotts”**

Philomusus and Studioso are presented in the introduction to the first play as outside the members of the ruling elite; they are neither noble nor gentle. However, based on their advanced education, they try to place themselves in positions of equal prestige. Looking forward, the *Returns* deal primarily with negotiating relationships in the economies of textual production outside the university structure and the frustration of scholar-poets when success is not achievable. All three plays present friendship and fellowship produced in the university, with educational processes embedded in the structure of their dialogue. These plays can be viewed as literary products of humanist pedagogical instruction in their own right, if exclusive to the university audiences. That is to say; they are part of the continued exercises of rhetorical humanist education of the university: imitating dramatic forms, presenting arguments (and complaints), and demonstrating rhetorical and compositional outcomes of university training.

The social positions of the protagonists only adds to the hostility towards the merchants, yeomen, householders and other town or city types which were, arguably, of the same stock. This also causes friction from the top-down. The Draper, in the *First Return*,

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<sup>410</sup> Cicero, *De Oratore*, trans. E. W. Sutton and H. Rackham, (1942), p. 75.

bemoans the way that the scholars have treated him, both in running up debts and fleeing as well as “abusing” him through a letter. He states to his fellow tradesman,

Neighbour Birde, wee townsmen haue such kinde hartes that it will goe neare to vndue vs. Why, who woulde thinke that men in such graue gounes and capps, & that can say soe brauley, woulde vse honest men soe badlie? Philomusus and Studioso hath not beene aschamed to run nobles in my debt for apparel, & after their departure abuse me with a letter (*First Return*, II.i.469-75)

He goes on to say that others have faced this hostility, that Giles, a shopkeeper was ‘laughed at by them’ and the Taylor said that a scholar had called him “Pagan, Tartarian, hethan man, base Plebleian, (and which griued mee moste of all) he caled mee simple animal” (*First Return*, II.i.478;511-13). The Draper notes more of this verbal abuse as he tried to interrupt when a student was “making an oration”. The student, either one of the protagonists or their fellow, said that during his compositional practice, “euerie scuruey vular felowe, euerie measuring pesante, must not interrupt him”. Importantly, the scholar went on to say that “he was about a sentence that was worth all the cloth in my shopp” (*First Return*, II.i.519-522). This final insult is an attempt to show the worth of study in the market economy: his one sentence is worth more than any commodity. Their position as scholars not only gives them a sense of superiority that would allow for this kind of verbal abuse, it also is a means by which they run up debt to the townsmen and tradesmen. Their clothes, their drink and other commodities seem to be their ‘right’. They misuse and abuse their ‘lessers’ both verbally and commercially: they feel that these commodities in some way are ‘due’ to them.

This is not to say that the mercantile ‘class’ did not utilise their own textual rhetorical prowess. As Ceri Sullivan astutely observes, the vast textual production concerning the emergent proto-capitalist system proves that merchants had not only their own cultural capital to exchange but were able to argue for the benefits of this economic system. She

states, of these ‘commodity manuals’, primers, treatises, and handbooks, that, “They are public persuasive stances, intended for established fellow merchants, newcomers to the trade, or people of influence; they do not intend to express what a merchant thought about his own actions or the trade affairs but what he wanted to be thought about them”.<sup>411</sup> The self-conscious illustration, according to Sullivan, is ridiculed in the satire of the period. She considers plays that were often performed before a public that would include individuals of the mercantile class. But this particular play is not only intended for a learned audience but was limited to that audience. The hostility towards this group, then, moves beyond the satirical and into the anxious.

Returning to the problem of ‘abuse’ in these plays, characters like Sir Raderick in the *Second Return* are shown to be just as hostile to the scholar-poets as these poets are to their own ‘lessers’. In turn, the hostility mounts between all of the social ‘classes’. The tension is cyclical; each type turns to abuse of the others. The scholar-poets feel that their status as educated men should give them more financial and social mobility. They desire the wealth of the tradesmen and merchants and to be part of the same ranks as gentlemen, courtiers, and statesmen. Their uncertain position arises from their status at the universities. There has been a scholarly dispute as to whether the ‘clerical’ or ‘plebeian’ scholars, as Lawrence Stone terms them, were still the predominant attendees at the universities of Cambridge and Oxford at the time. Lawrence Stone explains that at Oxford,

Students describing themselves as sons of plebeians were coming to Oxford in very considerable numbers in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. They comprised the largest single element in the university, amounting to over 50 percent in the 1570s and 1630s.<sup>412</sup>

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<sup>411</sup> Sullivan, *The Rhetoric of Credit*, (2002), pp. 12-13.

<sup>412</sup> Stone, “Size and Composition of Oxford Student Body”, (1974), p. 19.

However, as Elizabeth Hanson has explained, there is a significant ‘increase in numbers’ of students of noble and gentlemanly status, “as well as the sons of wealthy merchants and professionals”.<sup>413</sup> Though these two assessments come to a markedly different conclusion about the actual population of elite scholars at the universities at the time, they both concede that there was a mingling of social status at Oxford and Cambridge.<sup>414</sup> At the universities, young men of ‘baser’ stock would co-mingle with their ‘betters’, and it seems that there was a deal of friction between these classes. The affinity between the two protagonists can be seen as different from elite and privileged relationships. Thus, their pilgrimage to and from the seat of the Muses provides an intimate view of not only like minds but those from very similar middling backgrounds.<sup>415</sup>

In Thomas Greene’s work on imitation, he writes about how Renaissance poets were able to use the remnants of ancient learning to forge new ideas and identities. He notices that the most educated uses of *imitatio* often require a sophisticated and conscious engagement with the cultural and social past of classical texts. This was never a straightforward process but required the Renaissance writer to constantly reimagine the contexts and histories of the works that they aimed to imitate. The gulls would have, in his view, the least sophisticated understanding of imitation and its purposes: they do not grapple with the historical meaning of antiquarian ideas and the problems of anachronism that they may represent.<sup>439</sup> *Imitatio* was not to be direct and piecemeal borrowing, but a way to come up with new ideas by conversing, in a sense, with past literature. Gullio’s own under-appreciation of the labours of true intellectual study makes him a site of ridicule. As Quintilian asserts, “First of all, then, imitation is not sufficient on its own. For one thing, only a lazy mind is content with what

<sup>413</sup> Hanson, “Fellow Students: Hamlet, Horatio, and the Early Modern University, (2011), p. 213.

<sup>414</sup> Lawrence Stone also concedes that for Oxford, “It is essential that the reader should at no point lose sight of the fact that all figures for total annual enrolment before 1660 are estimates based on inadequate data” in “Size and Composition of Oxford Student Body”, (1974), p. 12. Stone calls the specific status of scholars as ‘plebeian’ in opposition to their economically advantaged peers on p. 19.

<sup>415</sup> These were well-known tropes of so-called ‘classical’ and ‘perfect’ friendship of the time—similar in perspectives, minds, and, though merely implicit, similar in status.

<sup>439</sup> Thomas Greene, *The Light in Troy*, (1982), p. 42

others have discovered” (X.II. 4)<sup>440</sup> Not only does Gullio value lesser poets and dramatists over the classical texts taught in higher education, but he does not understand *why* he should value literary works and how they may be used creatively. More so, he does not engage in the academic processes needed for creative imitation and invention.

Within the *First Return*, it is clear that piecemeal appropriation and unknowledgeable use of aphorisms, indecorous speech and misappropriation of lines, all indicate the misuse and abuses of style and composition. Additionally, this is the *locus* for intense power struggles between the wits of universities and their prospective patrons or employers. This collapses two ideas in the play: that imitation of texts and others is necessary to advance and that the unlearned man’s inability to properly compose texts is a sign of one’s inferiority.

Gullio presents some snippets of his ‘knowledge’ to Ingenioso, trying to claim his superiority not only in economic and social spheres but also in intellect. Not only does Gullio steal whole lines, he both mistranslates and misattributes them. He says, “I think there is such a saying in Homer, *vt ameris amabilis esto*, that is, to be a complot gentleman, and they ladies will love thee” (IV.i.1116-1117). It is actually “If you want to be loved, be lovable” from Ovid’s *Ars Amatoria* (Book II, 107), as Leishman corrects in his footnote.<sup>441</sup> His quotation of “Tullie” in the same passage is interlaced with quotations from Robert Greene; and, as Leishman notices, “The audience was perhaps intended to infer that Gullio had derived his knowledge of Tully mainly from Greene’s *Ciceronis Amor*.”<sup>442</sup> Thus, he is stealing the wit of his contemporaries, who have laboured over antiquarian sources for ideas for invention, and refuses to disclose this true source: plays and romances. That is, he cannot and does not trace these ideas back to their origins, even as Cicero himself taught, but learns them by the sweat of another scholar’s brow. To add insult to injury, he claims that these

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<sup>440</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, ed. and trans. Donald A. Russell, (2001), pp. 324, 325.

<sup>441</sup> J.B. Leishman notes that this is *imitatio* of Shakespeare’s sonnet 81 in *The Three Parnassus Plays (1598-1601)*, (1949), Footnote, p. 188.

<sup>442</sup> *Ibid.*, Footnote, p. 189

ideas came from his extensive reading and that “a dull vniversitues heade woulde haue bene a month about thus much” (*First Return*, IV.i.1130). It would be clear to the audience that these snippets did *not*, in fact, arise from scholarly pursuits, but from a superficial engagement with public print and theatre. The scholarly audience would possess not only a sophisticated knowledge of the classical sources for imitation, but also could engage in what Christopher Marlow calls the scholarly “interiority” of the plays’ language. He uses only one example of an inkhorn term first found in the play to make this point. He writes,

As J .B. Leishman, the pioneering modern editor of the plays, notes, the Oxford English Dictionary's only examples of the use of word “mossy” to mean “stupid” or “dull” come from the *Parnassus* plays. So, in his words, "it may be assumed that we have here a piece of contemporary university slang. What this first illustrates, then, is the strong coterie element of university drama: these plays were produced in and by a community that shared learning and living experiences, and that spoke about those experiences by using a familiar language that encompassed everything from Aristotelian logic to slang and in-jokes.<sup>443</sup>

The exclusionary nature of the plays is found in relation to this audience, as they are enacted by university men and for university men. Robert Cockcroft attempts to reconstruct the reactions of this exclusive audience. Cockcroft aims “to reconstruct some of the mental schemata presupposed (with all their emotional connotations) in the minds of a reader...or theatre audience”.<sup>444</sup> If this is the case for the end of the *Pilgrimage* the emotive connection between men is found through antagonism towards all “mossy idiots”, imagined or real. In this way, their position against the ‘Gullio[s]’ of the age would have an emotive force for the scholars of the audience.

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<sup>443</sup> Christopher Marlow, “Scholarly Interiority”, (2005) p. 276

<sup>444</sup> Robert Cockcroft, *Rhetorical Affect in Early Modern Writing*, (New York: Palgrave, 2003), p. 141.

Returning to Gullio, he likens himself to Sir Philip Sidney in an unsupported desire to ‘follow’ in the style of a great contemporary. As Lucy Munro states, “Gullio is a debased imitation of Sidney...”.<sup>446</sup> When asking Ingenioso to compose a letter for his love interest, Gullio suggests English poets for stylistic *imitatio*. Ingenioso does provide this, with witty success. As Gullio recognises that Ingenioso’s use of the word “jape” in his letter has sexual connotations, he fails to realise the imitation of Chaucerian style (including the use of bawdy speech). His lack of understanding of this particular feature is used to ridicule him. Ingenioso defends the usage of this particular term from “...the worde as Chaucer vseth it, hath noe vn timerly meaning in it, for it signifieth a ieste” (VI.i.1175-6). Munro focuses on the ‘antiquity’ of Chaucer that, “makes him stylistically suspect” for Gullio but what she fails to note is the Gullio’s position is outside the hermeneutics of *imitatio* in which one could understand antiquated style could be employed in compositions that fit the current circumstances.<sup>447</sup> Indeed, Ingenioso does exactly what Gullio asks of him. Munro also notes that what Gullio also does not recognise is that Ingenioso’s letter is “constructed around a series of quotations from Book 2 of *Troilus and Criseyde*” with additional lines “taken from Pandarus’ advice on the composition of love-letters (II.1041-3, 1026-7), the former retaining the allusion to the opening lines of Horace’s *Ars poetica*”.<sup>448</sup> His ‘knowledge’ of poetry is not from private books but from the public stage; his use of “pure” Shakespeare is blatant pinching of the playwright’s exact phrasing, not an invention of his own devising. Ingenioso laments, “Marke Romeo and Iuliet; o monstrous theft, I thinke he will runn through a whole booke of Samuell Daniells”. (III.i.991-3) Gullio sees the English poets as “sweet masters” and claims that he will “take some of there wordes and applie them to mine owne matters by a scholasticall imitation” a task that he cannot complete, so he puts on Ingenioso to carry out

<sup>446</sup> Lucy Munro, *Archaic Style in English Literature, 1590-1674*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), p. 87.

<sup>447</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.

<sup>448</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 89.



*First Return*, III.i.1006-8). The verbal sparring that ensues is a direct result of Gullio's perceived ignorance. Roger Ascham, in *On Imitation* writes,

Some that make Chaucer in English, and Petrarch in Italian, their gods in verses, and yet be not able to make the true difference what is a fault and what is a just praise in those two worthy wits, will much mislike this my writing. p. 158

This is exactly what Gullio does concerning Chaucer, he cannot see that Ingenioso's imitation of Chaucer as anything more than his own. The concept of *imitatio* itself was evolving in this time period. Ascham chides what he considers to be the Erasmian manner of "following"; that is, to take piecemeal from certain authors of antiquity without considering where they themselves have imitated other authors. He writes for the continuation of their hermeneutic process of bringing past ideas into their current contexts by acknowledging the historiography and legacy of these ideas. He writes, "Even so, only to point out, and nakedly to join together their sentences, with no further declaring the manner and way how the one doth follow the other, were but a cold help to the increase of learning".<sup>449</sup> p. 145 Also alike to Gullio, Ascham writes,

And you, that be able to understand no more than ye find in the Italian tongue, and never went further than the school of Petrarch and Aristo abroad, or else of Chaucer at home; though you have pleasure to wander blindly still in your foul wrong way, envy not those that seek, as wise men have done before them, the fairest and rightest way...because either for idleness you will not, or ignorance ye cannot come by no better yourself.<sup>450</sup>

Ingenioso is excluded from economic gain in courtly patronage, forced to write love letters for courtiers, and therefore expresses an extremely antagonistic hostility to his "gouty" patron. Additionally, his textually-situated learning is his means to claim his authority and

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<sup>449</sup> Roger Ascham, *The Schoolmaster* (1570). ed. Lawrence V. Ryan, (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1967), p. 145.

<sup>450</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 160.

power over him, not economically but intellectually. It is easy to understand why this sense of superiority would be admirable for the characters (and the audience) who have no economic claims. Contained within the discourse of poor, learned men is exclusivity, and also a vehement discontent with their exclusion from advancement. The play depicts more than this ‘town vs. gown’ antagonism; as the patron dismisses Ingenioso’s work, there is a clear depiction of the middling elite blocking the advancement of scholars. Outside the ‘coterie of eloquence’ stand these satirised gulls. This is shown from the very start of the trilogy, as Philomusus states,

Let vulgar witts admire the common songes,  
 I’le lie with Phoebus by the Muses’ springes,  
 Where wee will sit free from all envie’s rage,  
 And scorn each earthly Gullio of this age. (*Pilgrimage to Parnassus*, V.i.726-29)

In sum, figured as frustrated poor poets, the graduates in these plays display a marked hostility towards characters who, as the play seems to argue, *should* be of lower socio-economic status than this coterie of educated men. Thus, built into the textual surface are questions of the ethical use of learning and the social positions that scholars should inhabit—two elements that prove to be the *loci* of arguments and complaints within the play—and the ethics of linguistic power structures against the ‘lesser’ tradesmen and underappreciative patrons. In connection with *Club Law*, as well, there is a threat that these relationships might exhibit violence towards the citizens and even their patrons. In other words, the frustrations voiced in the *Returns* arises from a projection of elitism produced in educational systems when met with prospective employment and dealing with patrons, tradesmen, and clergymen who are not able to meet their level of learning. On the other hand, the coterie of educated scholars are unable to use their learning to advance themselves in higher social circles; this

does not even seem to be an option. In this way, Philomusus, Studios, and their fellows are caught between Parnassus and the fruits of academic labour.

### ***Vacui viatores: Traversing Market Economies***

Ingenioso uses a quotation from Juvenal's *Satires* to greet his friends as fellow *vacui viatores*. Specifically, this is from Satire 10, "*cantabit vacuus coram latrone viator*" or "a traveller who is empty-handed can sing in the mugger's face" (10.23).<sup>470</sup> Studioso and Philomusus' fellow exclaims,

What? Philomusus and Studioso? Haue noe hungrie schools swallowed youe vp before this time? Yts merie y faith when *vacui viatores* meete. As for my state, I am not put to my shiftes; for I wante shiftes of shirtes, bandes, and all things els, yet I remaine thrise humblie & most affectionatele bounde to the right honourable printing house for my poore shiftes of apparell (*First Return*, I.i.148-154).

Leishman notices that Nashe also calls himself, as Pierce in *Pierce Penilesse*, an "empty traveller".<sup>471</sup> The implication is that they, as fellow "empty" travellers, must follow one another in the navigation of social and economic spheres.

Most of the critical allusions to the *Returns* have focused on the topical features and satirical elements within the plays. That is, critics have examined which persons certain characters were likely to be modelled from, what allusions are made to individuals specific to Cambridge, who might be the author of the plays, and how these texts function as part of the public theatre competition and satire.<sup>472</sup> Leishman uncovers a great deal of these nuanced

<sup>470</sup> Juvenal, *Satires*, ed. and trans., Susanna Morton Braund, Loeb Classical Library, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004), p. 369.

<sup>471</sup> Leishman, *Three Parnassus Plays* (1949), Footnote, p. 127.

<sup>472</sup> See, for instance, Jeanne H. McCarthy, "Classicism on the English Stage during Shakespeare's Youth and Maturity: Popularizing Classical Learning" in *The Routledge Research Companion to Shakespeare and Classical Literature*, eds. Sean Keilen and Nick Moschovakis, (London and New York: Routledge, 2017), pp. 221-2; Charles Cathcart, *Marston, Rivalry*,

allusions and topical connections within the text. Crucial for this study, he writes about the connection of the character Ingenioso to Thomas Nashe, who is seen to be greatly influential on the style and substance of the plays, especially the final play. In addition, Marjorie Reyburn offers ‘new facts and theories’ concerning the topicality of these plays.<sup>473</sup>

It is important to look at the case of Ingenioso as one who, with learning and ambition, seeks to gain prestige and wealth through his poetry (in opposition to the satirical pamphlets he produces) but is continuously dissatisfied with his patronage. Studioso recounts (in the *First Return*) that, “Ingenioso is in the town following a goutie patron by the smell, hoping to wringe some water from a flinte” (I.i.139-141). However, he attempts to shift the power into his favour stating his position thus, “[I have] immortalitie in my pen and bestow it on whome I will” to the serving-man who asks him to write a love letter for him (I.i.252). Though his learning could enable him to compose great things, the patron seeks to marginalise his textual accomplishments, and only a mere servant appreciates his work. He exclaims, “but a verie goose quill scorns such a base subject, and there is no inke fit to write his servill name but a scholeboye’s, that hath been made by the mixture of urin and water”(I.i.283-86).

Thus, the feel their superiority and seek to differentiate themselves from the uneducated. The moral implications of this are twofold. First, there is a disregard for the services that their education may provide; their pursuits are consistently self-interested. Second, in the *Returns*, they seek to follow their fellow, a satirist of scathing wit but one who makes his paltry wage from the public abuse of others. His connection to Thomas Nashe is clear; the implication is that these fellows may use their writing to shift power dynamics. That is, they could have the power to make others famous, or indeed, infamous through their

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*Rapprochement, and Jonson*, (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 2008), pp. 142-7; James Bednarz, *Shakespeare and the Poets’ War*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2001), p. 22.

<sup>473</sup> Leishman, *Three Parnassus Plays*, (1949), Footnote, pp. 61-92 and Marjorie L. Reyburn, “New Facts and Theories about the Parnassus Plays”, *PMLA*, vol. 74, no. 4, (Modern Language Association, 1959), pp. 325-335.

writing. This may not seem to be an ethical problem to modern readers, but legal repercussions for slander and libel were serious offences (depending upon *whom* was the topic of this slander). Their learning and compositional skills, then, are not put to use in service to the state nor in advancements in “worthy” literary pursuits. However, the social influence that he displays is the main locus for *imitatio*, imitation of his style, his social endeavours and his perceived power. Though he does not succeed in financial success, if he is modelled on Thomas Nashe, he certainly would succeed in literary and cultural endeavours. As Nashe so humbly quotes Ovid in *Pierce Penniless*, “whoever I have willed is made famous by my art”.<sup>474</sup> Whether that fame is for good or ill, it is clear that writers like the university wits had significant social impact.

The masculine friends are thrust into the market economy as they seek to publish their public works. Jean-Christophe Agnew examines, with an interdisciplinary approach, the two initially seemingly disparate realms of the ‘Market’ and the ‘Theatre’. Agnew states that these times show “expansion and differentiation of trade”, “unrelenting inflation”, and the “commodification of land and labour”. He writes,

...it may be true that the historical movement away from ritual, kin, and prescriptive bonds and toward contractual, commutable, and convertible forms of compensation multiplied the occasions for exploitation without necessarily (or at first) increasing its measure in absolute terms.<sup>475</sup>

Agnew uses this analysis to direct his research on the commercial purposes of theatrical and popular writing; it is not different from the problems faced in the *Returns*. The scholars’ attempts are to make a commercial enterprise, or at least to gain a profitable future, by using their intelligence and compositional skill as cultural capital. That is, the two scholars and

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<sup>474</sup> See Jose Manuel Blanco Mayor, *Power Play in Latin Love Elegy and its Multiple Forms of Continuity in Ovid’s Metamorphoses*, (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2017), p.121.

<sup>475</sup> Jean-Christophe Agnew, *Worlds Apart: The Market and the Theatre in Anglo-American Thought, 1500-1750*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 7-8.

their fellows attempt to navigate the economies of textual production and exchange. Alexandra Halasz notices that this is a main component of many satirical popular pamphlets, but she complicates the issue by asserting that popular print was not only commodified but also “owned” by the authors themselves. She looks at the marketplace for popular print, and how frustrated authors attempted to use their cultural capital for profitable publication, the dissemination of their own self-image, and as social commentary of the time. She argues, mainly, that “the perception of pamphlets as a marginal format notwithstanding, they became an important focus for anxieties and hopes about print culture in general”.<sup>476</sup> Considering the plight of the scholar-poets, the anxieties that print could not furnish them with a significant profit is a primary concern. She goes on to assert that,

The book trade’s accumulation of textual property had a doubling effect, reproducing the patrimony of learned men simultaneously as economic capital and as cultural capital. The attraction of such an argument arises from its suggestion of a deep connection between economic and cultural capital, one that makes cultural capital neither a metaphor nor a concept that depends on a loose notion of capital as an accumulated power of one kind or another, but an effect of economic capital, a product of its transformation of social relations.<sup>477</sup>

The authors of popular print, in opposition to private manuscript, were fashioning themselves through a self-conscious understanding of their own literary and economic desires, and the impact of their printed commodities. As many of the scholars within the *Parnassus Plays* are these types of learned men, attempting to find both economic gain and public notoriety through their works, their frustrations at the problems concerning patronage and literary economies fits with this assessment. These young men are frustrated; they rail against the age that sees their work as unprofitable. Richard Kirwan states, “Research on student

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<sup>476</sup> Alexandra Halasz, *The Marketplace of Print: pamphlets and the Public Sphere in Early Modern England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 4.

<sup>477</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 99.

culture...has revealed the early modern university to have been an important theatre for the definition of elite masculinity, habits, identity and attitudes".<sup>478</sup> The attitudes represented in the *First Return* are deeply rooted in a sense of privilege. The young men are desirous of the just deserts for their academic study but through their 'masculinity, habits, identity and attitudes', they cannot permeate the circles that would allow for prestige and advancement. On the other side, their poetic works are just as unprofitable in the market economies of print.

Kirwan is correct in saying, "What is clear is that by the dawn of the early modern period a sizeable proportion of learned men regarded their academic credentials as being especially important and sought to define themselves primarily in relation to them".<sup>479</sup> This seems true of the scholar-poets depicted in the *First Return*, but this leaves them in a particularly frustrating position. Indeed, there seems to be a great hostility depicted in these plays towards the learned university men, which is matched by increasing levels of hostility in return. In addition, there is no sense of agency given by their academic credentials. Though the disenfranchisement makes for great satire, it is also more than ethically ambiguous. If the purposes of humanist education are for services to the commonweal, the desire for more prestige problematically pits the economically advantaged against the educated.

Because of this, Studioso and Philomuses' dialogue verbalises the frustrations in both the university and the marketplace. As Marlow notices,

But it is the Parnassus plays that offer the most sustained treatment of the frustrated poet, and in doing so they ask questions about the individual ethical response of the artist to the unforgiving world of commerce and corruption. Yet the educated self is also the product of structures of power dominant in the early modern period, for the

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<sup>478</sup> Richard Kirwan, "Scholarly Self-Fashioning and the Cultural History of Universities", *Scholarly Self-Fashioning and Community in the Early Modern University*, ed. Richard Kirwan, (Surrey: Ashgate, 2013), p. 14.

<sup>479</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

plays dramatize the situation of young men from the lower classes that have taken up places at a university populated by the nobility and landed gentry.<sup>480</sup>

In the *First Return*, the intimate nature of Philomusus and Studioso's friendship is not helpful in obtaining prestigious positions either socially or economically. The contingent factor that makes the protagonists unable to obtain wealth through the use of their education seems to be that they are not members of the elite, not courtiers, and indeed, the play indicates that they are not only outside the nobility but also gentlemanly circles. Though Daniel Javitch writes that the "court acted virtually as a nursery of English Renaissance poetry", it is the satirical crux of the argument presented in these university plays that this method of courtly patronage is the scourge of the age, in actuality.<sup>481</sup> While the graduates in *The Parnassus Plays* bemoan their need for patronage, Javitch asserts that courtly conduct books

...possess marked affinities with poetry. Such affinities... proved decisively beneficial

for the growth of Elizabethan poetry. First of all, they indicate more precisely why courtiers would be especially sympathetic to poetic art and would offer it opportunities to

flourish. These affinities also explain how English poetry improved the precarious status

it had throughout the sixteenth-century.<sup>482</sup>

However, there are no willing courtly patrons present in these plays, and Gullio and Sir Raderick both hinder the aspirations of the scholar-poets. Many of the scholarly characters within the plays are contained within a paradoxical inner circle of educated men and a marginalised position as poor, educated men. This exclusive coterie of eloquence is shown to be excessively antagonistic in the duality of this position, and take out their frustrations on

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<sup>480</sup> Marlow, "Scholarly Interiority", (2005), p. 275.

<sup>481</sup> Daniel Javitch, *Poetry and Courtliness in Renaissance England*, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), p. 3.

<sup>482</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 6.



the less educated. Kirwan's overview of the cultural history of universities brings to the fore some potentially stark differences between the opportunities afforded by England's educational systems and those afforded by the 'market' economies. He first asserts that there are different outcomes of university learning, which is in keeping with the thematics of the *Parnassus* trilogy. He writes, "The scholar, for example, may lead a humble and perilous existence as a casual and peripatetic tutor (very much an outsider) or enjoy the status and riches of high governmental office (the ultimate insider)". However, Kirwan states that the university, "endowed social and cultural capital on its members and as such could facilitate considerable social mobility".<sup>483</sup> But this may not have been the case for scholars of Cambridge at the turn of the century. Indeed, quite the opposite seems to be the case, that there is no sense of any social or cultural 'capital' that can be used.

The economically advantaged gulls, both tradesmen and patrons, are the sites of extreme hostility for the protagonists and their counterparts as a whole. Though characters, such as Gullio in particular, try to imitate the style, aphoristic sayings, and knowledge of the learned scholar-poets, they are mocked for their superficial understanding of rhetoric and literature. Gullio also uses Latin, but merely to pepper his speech for the appearance of learning. He steals from the English poets and contemporary playwrights and touts these pilfered phrases as signs of intellectual prowess. Ingenioso laments that when listening to Gullio's ideas for wooing his mistress, "We will haue nothinge but pure Shakspeare, and shreds of poetrie tha he hath gathered at the theators". (*First Return*, III.i.986-7)

Thomas Nashe begins pamphlet *Pierce Penilesse His Supplication to the Devil* with the Latin quotation, taken from Ovid (*Amores*, Elegy VIII), "barbaria grandis habere nihil".<sup>485</sup> This is a change from Ovid's phrase where he writes, "barbaria est grandis, habere nihil". Ovid's elegy begins, "And does anyone still respect the freeborn arts, or deem tender

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<sup>483</sup> Kirwan, "Scholarly Self-Fashioning and the Cultural History of Universities", (2013), pp. 1-2.

<sup>485</sup> Thomas Nashe, *Pierce Pennilesse in Three Elizabethan Pamphlets*, ed. G. R. Hibbard, (London: George G. Harrap and Co., 1951), p. 71.

verse brings any dower? Time was when genius was more precious than gold; but now to have nothing is monstrous barbarism”.<sup>486</sup> Translating this lament into his own *fabuale argumetum*, Nashe ascribes the same problem to his own cultural context. *Pierce Penilesse* is, of course, about a writer’s complaints to the devil about the woefully scarce appreciation of poets and their educated arts.

Pierce begins,

Having spent many years I studying how to live, and lived a long time without money, having tired my youth with folly and surfeited my mind with vanity, I began at length to look back to repentance and address my endeavours to prosperity. But all in vain I sat up late and rose early, contended with the cold, and conversed with scarcity; for all my labours turned to loss, my vulgar Muse was despised and neglected, my pains not regarded or slightly rewarded, and I myself, in prime of my best wit, laid open to poverty. Whereupon, in a malcontent humour, I accused my fortune, *railed on my patrons*, bit my pen, rent my papers, and raged in all points like a madman (emphasis my own).<sup>487</sup>

In the university plays considered in this chapter, both the development of rhetorical skill and ‘keeping good fellows’ are meant to secure positions for young, educated men in the academic and social spheres. However, these young men, though elite in their learning, are poor scholars at the university and unable to secure financial successes by their learning and the poetic value of their writing. In these plays, however, the audience cannot judge their poetic works—they never provide examples. This network of scholars reacts to their perceived disenfranchisement and the disregard for the aesthetic value of their poetic creations by venting frustrations on the less-educated. It would be a tenuous argument, if not

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<sup>486</sup> Ovid, *Amores*, Trans. Grant Showerman, Loeb Classical Library, (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1977), p. 481.

<sup>487</sup> Thomas Nashe, *Pierce Pennilesse in Three Elizabethan Pamphlets*, Ed. G. R. Hibbard, (London: George G. Harrap and Co., 1951), pp. 73-4

wholly unsupportable, to propose that these plays (especially *The Return*) depict successful manipulation of the less-educated. Rather, I assert that the satirical view of displaced learned coterie depicts a frustration with economic systems that do not value humanist learning. Paula Glatzer identifies this feature.<sup>491</sup> They mock those unable to compose Petrarchan letters to their lovers, they point out their ‘upstart’ desire to become part of elite circles, and they castigate them for their choices of reading material. In these plays, the protagonists themselves choose to ‘follow’ different fellows and paths to financial gain. In the *Pilgrimage* Studioso and Philomuses follow one another through the ‘lands’ of university education. They use one another to provide good counsel as they both succumb to different temptations. In the *Returns*, they follow different fellows—primarily Ingenioso, who is styled after Thomas Nashe. The university audiences for these ‘Christmas toys’ could recognise both their connection to Nashe’s satire and the mimetic force of the plight of poor scholars that these works present.

It is important to note, finally, that there are no prospective wives or love-matches presented within any of the three plays. Lorna Hutson unpacks Xenophon’s idea of ‘good husbandry’ as it was “understood to signify the transformative potential of the humanist education programme itself”.<sup>492</sup> The patriarch-prescribed ideals of manhood dealt with wisdom, self-temperance, reason and rationale, and good husbandry (among others).<sup>493</sup> As wisdom and reason are associated primarily with education, the protagonists are frustrated with their inability to obtain financial and domestic goals, the next steps in the so-called ‘stages of man’. However, there seems to be no desire for social advancement through this stage of masculinity. The scholars are always portrayed within the contexts of their male coterie. Thus, any social advancement that could be gained through the products of marriage

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<sup>491</sup> Paula Glatzer, *The Complaint of the Poet: The Parnassus Plays*, (Salzburg: University of Salzburg, 1977).

<sup>492</sup> Lorna Hutson, *The Usurer’s Daughter*, 1994.

<sup>493</sup> For an in-depth analysis of the duty to good husbandry see Hutson, *The Usurer’s Daughter*, (1994), pp. 22-37

is not at play. Instead, the learned young men seek to find partnership not in wives but in patrons.

## CHAPTER IV: *EVERY MAN IN HIS HUMOUR*

### Textual ‘Fellowship in Vice’

Ben Jonson dedicates the Folio edition of his comedy, *Every Man in His Humour* (1616) to William Camden, whom he studied under at his Westminster School.<sup>514</sup> He begins this dedication with censure of the times and those who do not appreciate the works of learned men, saying, “so solemn a vice it is with them to use the authority of their ignorance to the crying down of poetry of the professors”(3-4).<sup>515</sup> Jonson’s play takes this idea no further, unlike the laments in the *Parnassus Plays*. However, it gives an idea of how he interwove his educational background, friendship, and textuality into his work. He also writes a Latin dedication to William Camden for *Cynthia’s Revels* (1601). In this, he reconfigures a line from Horace, “I will not be silent about you, leaving you unhonoured in my writings” (*Odes*, 4.9.30–1).<sup>516</sup> Importantly, he adds the line, “*alumnus olim, aeternum amicus*” which roughly translates to “a pupil once, a friend forever”.<sup>517</sup> In Ian Donaldson’s extensive biography of Ben Jonson, he writes that “‘Friend’ is a word that Jonson always used with measured care, and warmly invoked in relation to Camden”.<sup>518</sup> It is, therefore, safe to say that Jonson was very self-conscious of the specific meaning of the word ‘friend’ in his works.

<sup>514</sup> Ben Jonson, *Every Man in His Humour, (Folio Version)* vol. 4, ed. David Bevington, in *The Cambridge Edition to to Works of Ben Jonson*. ed. David Bevington. eds. Martin Butler, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 629.

<sup>515</sup> Jonson, *Every Man in His Humour, (Folio Version)* ed. David Bevington. (2012), p. 629.

<sup>516</sup> See Horace, *Commentary on Horace: Odes Book II*, ed. R. G. M. Nisbet, and M. Hubbard, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978), p. 196.

<sup>517</sup> Ben Jonson, *The Fountain of Self-Love, or Cynthia’s Revels, 1601*, eds. Eric Rasmussen and Matthew Steggle in *The Cambridge Edition to to Works of Ben Jonson*. ed. David Bevington. eds. Martin Butler, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 441.

<sup>518</sup> Ian Donaldson, *Ben Jonson: A Life*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 27.

This term can take on many meanings, from kinsman to lover, but Jonson uses this to specifically refer to an exceptionally deep form of affectionate amity.

This is not his only work dedicated to, or about, Camden. He wrote Epigram 14 about him (published in the 1616 Folio of his *Works*), saying that all he has learned was due to his instruction,

Camden, most reverend head, to whom I owe  
 All that I am in arts, all that I know.  
 (How nothing's that?) to whom my country owes  
 The great renown, and name where with she goes.  
 Then thee the age sees not that thing more grave,  
 More high, more holy, that she more would crave.  
 What name, what skill, what faith hast thou in things!  
 What sight in searching the most antique springs!  
 What weight, and what authority in thy speech! (1-9)<sup>520</sup>

Borrowing the initial pattern of his epigrams from Martial, Jonson is reconfiguring ancient modes of writing (*imitatio*) and breathing new life into the form.

Jonson, of course, is following a long literary tradition of dedication and address to friends, but his special and learned friendship with Camden is shown through his writing; it is textual amity. They are fashioned, by Jonson, as ‘men of letters’. Additionally, he brings up important features about this type of homosocial friendship and what makes a great man: his renown, skill, knowledge of the classics and authority in speech.

The intimate and learned friendship depicted in *Every Man in His Humour* functions in a similar textual manner. This may be more evident in the Quarto version of the play (1598), in which Jonson uses more classical allusion. However, in both versions, the audience

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<sup>520</sup> Ben Jonson, *Epigrams* vol. 3, ed. Colin Burrow in *The Cambridge Edition to the Works of Ben Jonson*, eds. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 119.

first encounters one of the main protagonists as a textual presence. The gentleman Lorenzo Senior intercepts a letter from Prospero to his friend and fellow protagonist, Lorenzo (for clarity: these characters are renamed Old Knowell, Wellbred, and Ned Knowell in the Folio). The initial *locus* for the depiction of affection between the two protagonists is found within the style of his letter. Conversational and irreverent, we see their connection is expressly intimate. Erasmus tells us as much. In *De Conscribendis Epistolis* (1522), he writes,

Since we know an epistle differs almost not at all from the common speech of ordinary conversation, we know that they are greatly in error who use a certain tragic grandiloquence in composing epistles; they strain all their powers of intellect, seeking splendour and the glory of ostentation where it is least appropriate (Letter 117, I. 26-32).<sup>521</sup>

The proper form of the familiar letter, as Jonson displays in his play, is to represent the person as if he were actually speaking to the recipient. For Prospero, then, this is to be frank and open. He does not care, it seems, about what his friend may think about the content and style of the letter. However, he indicates that it may seem scandalous to another's eyes. He writes, "Sirrah, how if thy father should see this now? What would he think of me? Well, however I write to the, I reverence him in my soul" (Quarto, I.i.145-6). To his friend, this letter's style shows their close amity. Who else could one be so open with; so informal? After all, for Jonson 'style *is* the man'. He writes, in the *Discoveries*, "Language most shows a man; speak, that I may see thee. It springs out of the most retired and inward parts of us, and is the image and the parent of it, the mind. No glass renders a man's form or likeness so true as his speech".<sup>522</sup> We see from Prospero's style what he acts like in the play: this letter is his

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<sup>521</sup> Erasmus, *De Conscribendis Epistolis*, trans. Charles Fantazzi, in *The Collected Works of Erasmus*, vol. 25. ed. J.K. Sowards, (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1985), p. 7.

<sup>522</sup> Ben Jonson, *Discoveries*, ed. Lorna Hutson in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, vol 7. eds. David Bevington, Martin Butler, and Ian Donaldson, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), p. 493. This concept is,

presence, ‘the presence of an absent friend’. In his conversational style, he both shows his intimacy and his roguishness. He clearly knows the manner by which Erasmus says to speak to a peer and close confidant. This suggests not only the close affinity between the men in the content of the letter, but also points to the ‘literary’ establishment of humanist *amicitia*: a friendship of writing and reading; composition and hermeneutics. As such, the style of a letter could indicate the type of persona one was crafting, to be understood by the recipient.

In this chapter, I aim to situate the nature of male friendship not only in the urban environment but as a practice of textual intimacy. Humours comedy has not usually been associated with friendship, but the humanist practice of rhetorical mastery and coterie formation permeates even the most unlikely of works. In *Every Man in His Humour* style indicates not only an affectionate male friendship but foregrounds the way by which the two protagonists exclude and manipulate marginalised characters of the play. Bound up in the textual surface of Jonson’s work are serious questions of the ethical use of enclosed systems of textual and linguistic exchange between men. In *Every Man in His Humour*, this is a question of the dangerously persuasive power of masculine coterie. The ending of this play is exceptionally disturbing when fully considered. After orchestrating a clandestine marriage, the two protagonists, Prospero/Wellbred and Lorenzo/Knowell are celebrated, along with the servant Musco/Brainworm as great ‘wits’. Throughout the play, the two gallants are able to ‘exchange’ gulls between themselves as a fun, and mainly harmless, jest. However, in prodding the humours of the gulls, they come dangerously close to putting a seriously distressing problem on the table. Considering the susceptibility of Thorello/Kitly to suspicion, his wife is especially in danger. If Shakespeare imagines Othello to be the tragic form of the jealous husband, playing with Thorello’s mind could make for a tragic, rather

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again, reconfigured from the works of Juan Luis Vives as noted first by Ian Donaldson in *Ben Jonson*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), p. 574 and then by Neil Rhodes in *Shakespeare and the Origins of English*, (2004), p. 14. Additionally, it is once again reconfigured as “manners makes the man” in S.R., *A nevv yeeres gift The court of ciuill courtesie: fitly furnished with a plesant porte of stately phrases and pithy precepts*, Henry E. Huntington Library, (London: 1582) Sig. A1<sup>1</sup> Early English Books Online <eebo.chadwyck.com> Accessed February 19, 2017.



than comedic, end to the play. Even if his jealousy and worry are only humorous, there is still a threat to his reputation; and a person's reputation in this period was a valuable thing to lose. There is a clear threat to Hesperida/Brigit in this play as well. Though she is married to Lorenzo/Wellbred in the final scene, they toy with her reputation in orchestrating the clandestine marriage. When the currency for marriage is one's honour, the loss of one's reputation for sexual purity is a serious matter.

*Every Man in His Humour* exists in two forms: The Italianate Quarto of 1598 and the revised Folio version of 1616. Jonson not only changes the scene and Anglicanised the names, but he also changed much of his style. In the Folio he favours:

*...deeds and language such as men do use*

And persons such as Comedy would choose

When she would show an image of the times,

And sport with human follies, not with crimes—(Prologue 21-4)

This prologue transfers the revised version of this play from the setting in Florence to the new locale of contemporary London, focuses not only on the 'low' characters of Aristotelian comedy and, of course, the Ciceronian *imitatio vitae* of the comic form. Crucially, it also indicates Jonson's deliberate change of style from the 1601 Quarto: 'language such as men do use,' the conversational and affectionately colloquial, if not crass, style.

Beginning with the letter from Wellbred to Knowell in the Folio, we can see the shift in style does not affect the feeling of amity or the conversational tone of the epistle. The letter reads,

Why, Ned, I beseech thee; has thou forsworn all thy friends i' the Old Jewry, or dost thou think us all Jews that inhabit there yet? If thou dost, come over and but see our frippery; change an old shirt, for a whole smock, with us. Do not conceive that antipathy between us and Hoxton as was between Jews and hogs' flesh. Leave thy

vigilant father alone, to number over his green apricots evening and morning o' the north-west wall. An I had been his son, I had saved him the labour long since, if taking in all the young wenches that pass by at the back-door, and coddling every kernel of the fruit for 'em, would ha' served. But prithee, come over to me quickly, this morning; I have such a present for thee (our Turkey company never sent the like to the Grand Signior)! One is a rhymer, sir, o'your own batch, your own leaven but doth think himself poet-major o' the town, willing to be shown and worthy to be seen. The other—I will not venture his description with you till you come, because I would ha' you make hither with an appetite. If the worst of 'em be not worth your journey, draw your bill of charges as unconscionable as any Guildhall verdict will give it you, and you shall be allowed your viaticum. From the Windmill. (I.i.60-76)

It is important to read the letter in its entirety, as it suggests critical elements of the nature of the relationship between Wellbred and Knowell. His friend is not merely calling him to visit; his gift of two gulls indicates an exclusionary alliance between the two. Though they run in a larger circle, they are excluding those gulls around them. This may not seem to be an issue, of course; close friendships are by definition exclusive. However, they both pretend that their 'gulls' are party to their relationship. Of course, they also toy with the humours of these gulls: making it a competition between the two to see how far they can take their jests. The style of this letter is irreverent and quick-witted. In this style the reader sees the formation of the character of Wellbred, the city 'sophisticate,' calling on his friend to see the amusements he had set up for him in the town so that they might revel in these entertainments together. Even if this seems innocent enough, that they play the rogues and no harm is done, this was not what 'style' was supposed to achieve. James D. Tracey writes that,

Erasmus had added a new refinement to the humanist belief that harmony of style would foster harmony of character: a habit of writing rapidly, extemporaneously, would inculcate a natural grace and candor.<sup>525</sup>

This is what Old Knowell is worried about: that his son is consorting with unsavoury types. He is afraid of the vicious behaviours that they might indulge in the city environment. However, their actual behaviour is worse than drinking or gaming: they toy with Bridgit's honour, they 'trade' and torment the gulls for their own amusement. Nevertheless, it is the content and style of the letter itself that greatly upsets Old Knowell.

According to Bray, "The intimate letter of friendship...had become the quintessential expression of friendship among men".<sup>526</sup> Though this may seem to be a totalising argument, which does not consider the place of physical friendships and the rituals and rites that men also displayed affection, he nonetheless hearkens to a serious claim in the time period. If, as Donne says that the mingling of souls through letters is more expressive than 'kisses', and Jonson asserts that 'style makes the man', we may see the full significance of textual exchange between men. That is, letters represented the man through style and expressed the most forceful form of amity. Letters also have 'a readily recognisable literary convention' based on the subject matter taught in institutional instruction.<sup>527</sup> This 'convention' is not to be confused with a kind of meaningless appropriation of friendship tropes, but an understanding that friendship's vehicle was a literary form.

Kathy Eden states, "Epistolary reading and writing, then, sets a standard that applies to more than just reading and writing letters; and this standard is defined by the stylistic quality of intimacy".<sup>528</sup> In this way, the letter indicates that the manner in which they communicate is more complex than frivolous.

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<sup>525</sup> James D. Tracy, *Erasmus, The Growth of a Mind*, (Geneva: Librairie Droz, 1972), p. 75.

<sup>526</sup> Alan Bray, *The Friend*, (2003), p. 47.

<sup>527</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

<sup>528</sup> Kathy Eden, *The Renaissance Rediscovery of Intimacy*, 2012, p. 96.

Eden traces the classical sources through humanist thought which created the early modern idea of intimacy through letters. She looks at theories of reading and writing practices, focusing her research on the deep connection between rhetoric and hermeneutics. For this she looks to the theoretical work of Hans-Georg Gadamer, that is, “Gadamerian insight regarding the inseparability of rhetoric and hermeneutics—literary composition and literary interpretation”.<sup>530</sup> The letter, in *Every Man in his Humour*, then can only be truly deciphered correctly by its intended recipient. It is written to imply an intimate connection between Knowell and Wellbred, a connection in which these two gentlemen know each other’s minds. The style shows that Knowell’s counterpart is revealed in his composed presence. Bray focuses on the “combination of convention and affection” depicted in this epistolary style.<sup>531</sup> The assumptions made by Old Knowell in his interception of the letter depict a misunderstanding of the true nature of the friendship between his son and Wellbred. Their relationship is based on mutual affection, and the understanding of each other’s minds: a re-appropriation of very classical ideas about gentlemanly correspondence in, as Hutson may affirm, a virile ‘plain style of eloquence’.<sup>532</sup>

Old Knowell exclaims, “Is this the man, /My son hath sung so for the happiest wit, /The choicest brain the times hath sent us forth?”(I.ii.78-80). Indeed, the ‘familiar epistle’ meant for exchange between two gentlemen *seems* to subvert the expected forms of epistolary exchange young friends. Old Knowell’s shock is based on what he perceives as the letter’s blatant disregard for the precepts of gentlemanly correspondence.<sup>533</sup> It is the content of this letter that is the source of anxiety for Old Knowell; it is a sign to him that his son is not outwardly adhering to a socially prescribed role. His excuse for breaking the seal was not only that “old men are curious,” but also that he would examine it, “for the style’s sake and

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<sup>530</sup> Eden, *The Renaissance Rediscovery of Intimacy*, (2012). p. 4.

<sup>531</sup> Bray, *The Friend*, (2003), p. 52.

<sup>532</sup> Hutson, “Civility and Virility in Ben Jonson”, (2002), pp. 1-27.

<sup>533</sup> For instance, the copiousness of familiar exchange exemplified by Petrarchan familiar epistles in *Epistolae familiares* (deriving their style from Ciceronian exchange) and the practice of copiousness found in Erasmus’ *De copia*.

the phrase”(I.i.56). The written style of this letter poses as evidence of a multiplicity of anxieties. Wellbred is scurrilous, according to Old Knowell, he does not know how to compose a letter in a way that is fitting of his status as gentleman and scholar. It also opens up some of the anxieties that the older generation may feel about the younger. These were once things that young men should repent, in the prodigality literature that preceded this play. There is a worry that scholars are habitually visiting taverns instead of attending to their studies; that gentlemen frequent brothels instead tending to their estates; that friends are formed through mutual vice instead of mutual virtue, that the socially prescribed roles can be upturned (aided by companionship). However, the audience is clearly supposed to understand that Old Knowell has misunderstood the overly affectionate and familiar tone of this letter and that he is outside the formation of the homosocial hermeneutic network between the two young gentlemen friends. This letter was not meant for his eyes. The letter, as it is presented to Ed Knowell is understood in a different manner. He notes that it was not the type of letter one would want to be intercepted because of the lewdness of the style. However, he sees the letter for its intended purposes, as an *intimate* connection between men.

Jonson's own clear style in continues the engagement with classical writers, bring the issues of rhetorical composition into current significance. To fit the occasion of his revision, Jonson creates a feeling of contemporaneous significance. This is exceedingly similar to the conditions for the epistolary exchange between Knowell and Wellbred. This intimate letter depicts a convergence between intimate style and enclosed hermeneutic exchange.

Lorenzo Senior/Old Knowell, in both Q and F versions of the play, concludes that this friendship is actually a 'fellowships in vice'

Lorna Hutson's analysis of the 'virile' style of writing is key to understanding how this change in language is hugely important to understanding relationships in the Folio

edition, a point I will elaborate on presently. The discursive power of ‘inference’ (to borrow Hutson’s terminology) that is made through the familiar epistle intercepted by Old Knowell in the first scene.<sup>548</sup> By paring down the letter in terms of style from the Quarto edition, Jonson shows an affinity between the two gentlemen. The Folio version of the letter has an equalling force, while the Quarto edition seems to implore more fervently that Knowell comes to the city (in this case, Florence). Instead of “‘Sblood I doubt, Apollo hath got thee to be his ingle, that thou comest not abroad to visit thine old friends” (1.1.129-130) becomes, “Why, Ned, I beseech thee; has thou forsworn all thy friends i’ the Old Jewry, or dost thou think us all Jews that inhabit there yet? If thou dost, come over and but see our frippery” (I.i.60-63). First, the verse lines are made more casual prose in the change of the letter, indicating the affection between the two gentlemen. Additionally, overt praise found in the Quarto edition is omitted. Wellbred no longer addresses his friend as ‘Ingle’ or ‘sweet villain,’ he no longer offers him ‘a world of good jests’. These changes indicate that Jonson may have wanted the affection between the two friends to be *implied* through casual exchanges, that the letter need not contain praise or offerings of ‘a world’ but only the suggestion that there are two men, such gulls, that Wellbred knows that Knowell will enjoy. By showing that Wellbred, in the Folio edition, has no concern with how he appears in the letter attests to the kind of ‘gentlemanly’ confidence he assumes. He says merely, of Old Knowell’s interception, “‘Slid, you jest I hope” to which Knowell replies, “Indeed, the best use we can turn it to is to make a jest on’t now” (III.i.36; 37-8).

The letter between these two gentlemen friends does indicate an older generation’s anxieties (hyperbolically depicted in Old Knowell’s response to the letter) about gentlemanly conduct (the disposition to fall into waywardness and ‘prodigality’) and then serves to depict

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<sup>548</sup> Lorna Hutson, “Civility and Virility in Ben Jonson”, pp. 1-27.

a ‘subversive’ form of friendship that is ultimately unproblematic in the formation of the plot. Upon finding that his father intercepted his letter, Ed Knowell states,

Here was a letter indeed, to be intercepted by a man’s father, and do him good with him! He cannot but think most virtuously both of me and the sender, sure, that make the careful costermonger of him in our ‘Familiar Epistles’. (I.iii.43-46)

His (correct) projection of his father’s reaction, however, does not lead him to think that he has been lead into a “fellowship of vice”. As he tells Wellbred, he believes that his father thinks, “Marry, that thou art some strange dissolute young fellow, / and I a grain or two better, for keeping thee company” (III.i.44-45). Indeed, these gentlemen friends do not see a cause for concern in the interception of the letter, (Jonson makes this clear by omitting Wellbred’s line within the letter itself, concerned with Knowell’s father’s possible reaction to it). The letter would not be read correctly by anyone else, as it is an indication of the fidelity *between* this pair of friends. Through this letter, and through their discursive exchanges within the play, the friendship is under no threat, and their mutual understanding of one another, and affection, is clear.<sup>549</sup> The projected dangers of the city and the fear of ‘prodigality’ in wayward behaviour is ill-founded, as Jonson depicts a relationship between two friends through their controlled language (and mutual understanding of each others’ intentions) and orchestration of the plot through a series of merry jests, witticisms, and deceptions. The power of ‘allusion’ (the power of inference attributed to the plain style of language) is aided by the play’s insistence on *illusion*: illusions created through the remnant discourses of prodigality: of danger in the city, of fears of sexual licentiousness and cuckoldry, of misdirection in deception.<sup>550</sup> These illusions are created not only in the gentlemen friend’s power to manipulate the humours of other characters through their mastery of language but in the overall structure of the play as a subversive success story of

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<sup>549</sup> Lorna Hutson, “Liking Men: Ben Jonson’s Closet Opened”, 2004, pp. 1065-1096.

<sup>550</sup> See again Lorna Hutson, “Civility and Virility in Ben Jonson”, pp. 1-27.

friendship based on the understanding of each other, and the ability to manipulate circumstances. In this way, it is a re-envisioning of *amicitia* in the urban context: the reality behind the smoke and mirrors of illusion. Power belongs to wit and control and is founded on deception and ‘allusion’.<sup>551</sup> This points to a clear ethical dilemma (manipulation of others), but ultimately it champions the subtle and affectionate male-male relationship as a force of power for ‘comedic’ ends.

The theme of ‘exchange’ between gentlemen friends is apparent at the onset of the play, with the idea that Wellbred brings Knowell to the city in order to make a gift of the gulls Bobadil and Matthew. This gift giving is at once a parody of benefit exchange between friends, given in goodwill, and the promise of manipulation of others through an enclosed system of exchange. Knowell matches this ‘gift’ as he decides to bring his cousin Stephen into the city for Wellbred’s amusement. It is exceptionally unsettling that these characters are exchanged between the friends, as signs of friendship. If this is unsettling, then the final act of exchange, in Wellbred’s persuasion of Kately’s kinswoman, Bridget, to marry his friend, is *dangerous*, “You are ripe for a husband, and a minute’s loss to such an occasion is a great trespass in a wise beauty. What say you, sister? On my soul he loves you. Will you give him the meeting?” (IV.xiii.100-2).

Bridget’s sexual purity, as perceived by others, is loosely gambled in this suggestion for a clandestine marriage. She is persuaded through Wellbred’s insistence for haste, a sign that the marriage is secretive and that the proper avenues are not taken to ensure the intent of all parties involved (including, of course, the consent of Bridget’s kin). The ethical problem is not that Ed Knowell will, invariably, cause *direct* damage to Bridget. He is, after all, ‘well-knowing’. The danger is that this exchange can have a perilous effect on her honour, as perceived by others. However, the exchange does take place within the playtext, as it

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<sup>551</sup> Lorna Hutson, “Civility and Virility in Ben Jonson”, 2002, p. 2.



ultimately binds the *friends* together. When she exclaims that he is acting as if Ned is a knight, and he his 'squire' (either as the assistant to a knight but with a double meaning as possibly 'apple squire'/bawd) he replies, "I would be such an one for my friend"(IV.xiii.108). The alliance of his friend with his kin becomes a kind of friendship bond in and of itself. Through this orchestrated union, there is an indication of what Alan Bray had written extensively on: *fraters iurati*, "wedded brothers".<sup>555</sup> Through Bridget, Wellbred is ultimately bound to Knowell. The danger that lies at the heart of this is the same kind of danger hyperbolically imagined by the 'old generation' of the play. Old Knowell fears the degradation of his son in the wanton pleasures of the city. Kately fears for the sexual reputation of his kinswoman. And yet, those these anxieties are manipulated, indeed, heightened by the deceptive words and deeds of the protagonists, the actual threat to the social order, and the actual threat to reputation, is bound up in the hidden trick: the married of Ed Knowell and Bridget. Proof of her sexual purity could not be made. If her soon-husband decided *not* to marry her at the play's end, there would be considerable consequences to her future prospects, and to the honour of her family. As the exchange of gulls may seem to be harmless, it is still unsettling that gentlemen friends try to torment these gulls as much as possible, for their own amusement. It is beyond unsettling, though, that the exchange of Bridget is done clandestinely, and is ultimately blessed by the 'merry magistrate' Justice Clement.

Who be these? Oh, the young company. Welcome, welcome! Gi' you joy. Nay, Mistress Bridget, blush not; you are not so fresh a bride but the news of it is come hither afore you. Master Bridegroom, I ha' made your peace; give me your hand.  
(5.4.9-12)

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<sup>555</sup> Alan Bray, *The Friend*, 2003, p. 32.

Thus, it seems as if gentlemanly friendship determines its own ethical code of conduct, one that is upheld by the 'merry magistrate' but is, at the same time, exceptionally unsettling in the closure of the play. Manipulation of 'foolish' characters is humorous, and the threat of prodigality satirized. So easily are gulls passed between friends, so easily is a clandestine marriage, of such a serious nature, justified. These elements are sites of major anxiety in the period, and yet are parodied and made comedic through Jonson's representations of young male friends in the city.

There is also another threat in this play in the connection between Thorello and Shakespeare's character Othello. It has been widely recognised that there are striking similarities between these two characters. They are both wracked with suspicious thoughts, and they both work through arguments to try to determine the proof of their speculations by considering the circumstances in which infidelity could occur. They look for tangible signs of proof, from the permeability of Thorello's household and the presence of city gallants to the 'sign' of the handkerchief. When the protagonists prod his jealous humour, they run the risk of turning this comic character into a tragic one. This may seem like an illogical syllogism, but if Shakespeare could invert the comedic figure of the anxious cuckold into a tragic hero, it means that there is something about the dangers of jealousy that pose a real threat. Russ McDonald notices that,

About five years before he wrote Othello, Shakespeare acted in the first performance of *Every Man in His Humour*, and if the suggestion of the 1616 Folio text is accurate, he took the role of Lorenzo Senior, 'this hoary headed letcher, this olde goate,' whom Thorello assails for consorting with his wife. 'Othello' is very nearly an anagram of 'Thorello,' and it is tempting to suppose that acquaintance with Jonson's fool guided Shakespeare in selecting a name for Cinthio's 'Moor.' Othello certainly indicates that

Shakespeare's familiarity with the comic husband, gained on the stage and in the study, influenced his adaptation of the Italian tale of intrigue and jealousy.<sup>556</sup>

The jealous husband, though clearly a stock comedic character, is easily persuaded of the vulnerability of his wife and the threat to his household. Thorello paces back and forth in front of his home, trying to decide whether it is safe to leave his kinswomen alone. He exclaims about his overwhelming suspicion,

like a pestilence it doth infect  
 The house of the brain. First it begins  
 Solely to work upon the fantasy,  
 Filling her seat with such pestiferous air  
 As soon corrupts the judgment; and from thence  
 Sends like a contagion to the memory,  
 Such each of other catching infection,  
 Which, as a searching vapour, spreads itself  
 Confusedly through every sensitive part  
 Till not a motion in the mind  
 Be free from the black poison of suspect. (Quarto, I.iv.193-203)

This speech would not be out of place in *Othello*. His hyperbolic treatment of the dangers of his suspicions is, of course, humorous. His pacing, his worrying, and his obsession, all mock his overwhelming jealous humour. However, the language of disease, the power of fantasy as the threat of infidelity fills the mind, is clearly an anxiety. Lorna Hutson also indicates the connection between Thorello and Othello's suspicions, saying,

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<sup>556</sup> Russ McDonald, "Othello, Thorello, and the Problem of the Foolish Hero", *Shakespeare Quarterly*, vol. 30, No. 1 (Winter, 1979), p. 56. There has been further study in this regard. According to digital humanities research conducted by Stephen Ramsay, *Othello* "ought to be a comedy". This "corroborates from a very different angle earlier discussions of the inverted comic character of that play". See Martin Mueller, Digital Shakespeare, or Towards a Literary Informatics, *Shakespeare*, vol. 4, No. 3, (September 2008), p.299.

Jonson has been seen, by generations of critics, as a source for *Othello*. Thorello, oppressed with weighing the circumstantial likelihood of his wife's adultery with one of Prospero's lascivious mates, feels suddenly unwell: 'Troth my head aches extremely on a sudden'... just as Othello feels 'a pain upon my forehead' after Iago's first teasing hints of the probability of Desdemona's infidelity.<sup>557</sup>

A scene much later on shows both the susceptibility of Thorello to any kind of suspicion; and the power of the gallants' words to sway others. Prospero knows of this overwhelming humour, and inadvertently "convinces" Thorello that he has been poisoned. Prospero says that since nothing happened at his house, Bianca was not unfaithful, so there is no need to worry. However, to bring this point home, he offers an example of a ridiculous worry: that for all he knows his clothes or his cup could have been poisoned. Thorello takes this to mean that because he *might* be poisoned, that he *has* been poisoned. Prospero exclaims, "My very breath has poisoned him" (IV.iii.25). Bianca then chides him for what he has 'done' to Thorello, "Beshrew your heart-blood, brother Prospero, / For putting such a toy into his head!" (IV.iii.28-9).

### **The Unrepentant Gallants**

Jonson responds to the admonishing nature of former prodigality texts by staging a *comedy* that points to prevailing anxieties of the age: a perception of gentlemen friends luxuriating in the wanton pleasures of the urban environment. It is presumed that they are, thereby, ignoring the duties put forth by their humanist education for service to the state. There is also the pervading fear of cuckoldry in a setting where one's home is never completely private, and the fear of older generations leading their progeny into a 'fellowship

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<sup>557</sup> Lorna Hutson. *The Invention of Suspicion: Law and Mimesis in Shakespeare and Renaissance Drama*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 310.

of vice'.<sup>577</sup> These anxieties often have very serious implications, but in the playtexts' city environment, with two well-knowing, and well-bred gentlemen friends serving as the moving force to the plot, these anxieties are given a new context and an unsettling resolution. Jonson subverts the earlier generic tone of admonition in moralized 'prodigality' texts, while, at the same time containing these very real anxieties in the actions of characters who are well-knowing/bred.<sup>578</sup> And the catalyst servant who, for all his trickery and deception, acts at the behest of his 'well-knowing' master—and is ultimately rewarded for executing such actions with considerable skill.<sup>579</sup> As Lorna Hutson focuses on the virile style of discourse between the gentlemen Knowell and Wellbred as wrought with crafted 'allusion,' I will look at the play's performative qualities of 'illusion': that is, while the gentlemen friends create inferences through their manipulative language. In prodding the humours of the city gulls, distracting their kinsmen, they are able to hide their main transgressive action, the clandestine marriage, in plain sight. They exclude these characters from their discourse. Thus, what is at the heart of this comedy is an affectionate friendship that is deeply embroiled in the questions of ethical conduct at the time. Yet somehow, despite the prevailing anxieties associated with the actions of these characters, the protagonists are ultimately championed in the final scene.<sup>580</sup> Based on mutuality, an abundance of wit, and affection, this friendship can create an *illusion* of gallantry in petty vices, in order to hide the clandestine marriage. The other characters become so overwhelmed by their prodded humours, that they don't notice that

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<sup>577</sup> Old Knowell's soliloquy in Act 1 Scene 1 clearly identifies this anxiety.

<sup>578</sup> In keeping with Stephen Greenblatt's analysis of 'subversion' and 'containment' as presented in "Invisible Bullets", *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), pp. 21-65.

<sup>579</sup> The nature of this character is made malicious in the character of Iago in Shakespeare's *Othello*. This play, based on the subplot of the 1601 quarto edition of *Every Man in His Humour*, makes this anxiety of cuckoldry into a very real and destructive force. Othello's character is based on the character of Kitley (in the 1616 Folio edition of Jonson), called Thorello in the 1601 Quarto. It is his character whose nature is greatly susceptible to persuasion and overwhelming fear of (imagined) cuckoldry. See David Bevington's Introductory notes for the play in *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*, 2012 and Martin Seymour-Smith's Introduction for the New Mermaids edition of the play *Every Man in His Humour*, 1988.

<sup>580</sup> See Lorna Hutson, "Civility and Virility in Ben Jonson", *Representations*, vol.78, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), pp. 1-27. Hutson claims that it is through the power of speech that the protagonists can control the imaginative faculties of other characters within the play.

they are preoccupied with smoke and mirrors while the true ‘trick’ is hidden in plain sight.<sup>581</sup> Thus, an illusion of Thorello/Kitely’s cuckoldry, for instance, is created to misdirect characters from the *actual* manipulation at play: a clandestine marriage. Jonson may have been making the question of the ethical conduct of gentlemen friends into a ‘merry jest’, but the anxieties that underlie the ultimately comic end hearken to a reconstruction of ethical values, based on the power of friendship to manipulate situations and break societal norms.<sup>582</sup> In *Every Man in His Humour*, Ed Knowell and Wellbred control the actions and inflate the humours of alternate characters to satisfy their ultimate goals.

Writing about John Lyly and his *Euphues* (1578), Richard Helgerson states that authors, of mid-century prodigality literature “were trying to reconcile their humanistic education and their often rebellious tastes and aspirations; and that... they found in the figure of the repentant prodigal a role that would do just that”. *Every Man in his Humour* responds, on multiple levels, to the anxieties put forth in the ‘prodigal son’ texts of the 1570s and 1580s. In these texts, as Helgerson points out, the protagonists reject the advice of their humanist schoolmasters, fathers, or ‘wise’ elders, and find themselves embroiled in the vices of excess and wanton pleasures. Darryl Tippens observes that there is a common pattern to these types of texts “...marked by conflict, recognition, discovery, and resolution”.<sup>583</sup> His essay primarily deals with tracing the thematic ideas of the Prodigal Son parable through art and drama (though he only writes about Shakespeare) but this pattern recognition is in line with Helgerson’s own ideas of the evolving theme of prodigality in early modern literary production from the uncertain times of the mid-1500s. Indeed, Helgerson begins his analysis by noting a pattern in early Elizabethan fiction in which the text begins with “admonition”

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<sup>581</sup> The definition of term is complex. In this instance, the gentlemen friends seem to create this illusory image of themselves as ‘lowlife’ through their discourse. However, this is supposed to be illusory; this type of image of ‘vice’ is not a real threat in the context of the play, the *real* ethical dilemma arises when they utilise deceptive manipulation to create the opportunity for a clandestine marriage.

<sup>582</sup> A ‘merry jest’ is a phrase that is often used to describe the cozenage of the cony-catchers, as demonstrated in the introductions to these texts.

<sup>583</sup> Darryl Tippens, “Shakespeare and the Prodigal Son Tradition”, *Explorations in Renaissance Culture*, vol. 14, (Leiden: Brill, 1988), p. 60.

and, “invariably the young man (it is always a young man) to whom the admonition is addressed goes out and does exactly what he has been told not to do”.<sup>584</sup> More importantly, the closure of the episode of ‘waywardness’ ends in one of two distinct ways, corresponding to either the “didactic or romantic”.<sup>585</sup> Admonition and repentance, then, are key to the outcomes of these prodigal fictions. However, over time the tone and outcome could favour a more romantic end: in which earlier axiomatic advice is re-figured for the protagonist. However, there is never a complete subversion of moral precepts in these mid-fifteenth-century fictions. In Jonson’s play, the lack of repentance for even the slightest of transgressions shows that young men were celebrated for their abilities to manipulate their circumstances for their own profit or entertainment. Thus, *imitatio* makes way for re-appropriation of themes in their modern contexts.

In addition to the theme of prodigality formed through moralistic, humanist terms, there is also an apparent economic feature to the production of these earlier texts. Lorna Hutson responds to Helgerson’s work arguing that not only were these mid-century texts concerned with morality but also with ‘consuming resources’ in an economic sense, and the immorality implied in excess.<sup>586</sup> There was, she argues, “a very close connection between the moral implications of ‘prodigal’ writing and the pragmatic, morally neutral sense in which ‘prodigality’ defined the waste of economic resources”.<sup>587</sup> Indeed, the thematics of a wasted life and wasted resources underpin the earlier prodigality texts of George Gascoigne, John Lyly, Robert Greene, Thomas Lodge, and even Philip Sidney, all of whom Helgerson addresses in his analysis. Thus, there is a solid foundation set for anxieties of an older generation in the context of the early modern city by the 1590s, and through the early 1600s. The remnants of these anxieties become the locus for satire and parody for later writers .

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<sup>584</sup> Richard Helgerson, *The Elizabethan Prodigals*, 1976, p. 1.

<sup>585</sup> Richard Helgerson, *The Elizabethan Prodigals*, 1976, p. 1.

<sup>586</sup> Lorna Hutson, *Thomas Nashe in Context*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 15.

<sup>587</sup> Lorna Hutson, *Thomas Nashe in Context*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p. 15.

However, the result is an unsettling reconciliation of vice and jest.

These prodigality texts inform other types of popular writing. Primarily, educated authors, such as Robert Greene, write about their engagement with the London lowlife and their repentance for these actions. The cony-catching pamphlets outline the changing dynamics and ethical questions of gentlemanly friendship and transient fellowship. Greene presents himself in these popular pamphlets as a repentant sinner; apologising for his lewdness and transgressions. However, the genre itself is meant for entertainment more than any kind of instruction. Greene is sure to make these texts as humorous as possible to feign his contrition.

If the instability of government, the economic problems of inflation, and the overall humanist pedagogical initiative to educate men are a basis for themes of prodigality, then the comedies of the latter-half of the seventeenth-century incorporate these issues into their works. The changing economic and civic environment in which fictions are created develops the re-envisioning of contractual obligations to others and new manners by which to conduct one's life in the urban environment. Gail Kern Paster notes the pervasive "ambivalence" concerning ideas of "the city" in the dramatic productions of this time. The city was both a place for literary production, and a literary subject in its own right. More importantly, it allowed for a multiplicity of new forms of literature to arise. The city was idealised in court masques and satirized in city comedies, and becomes the locus for many new voices of educated male authors: from the grovelling to the gallant, the didactic to the amusing.<sup>588</sup> This ambivalence, in the context of my analysis, can be seen as *responsive*: there are new ways to conduct one's self in the city and the bonds of kinship are undergoing redefinition. Thematics that were once constricted to a set of possible outcomes could now—in the context of the city—be contested, or even mocked. It is at this point that playwrights and popular writers

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<sup>588</sup> Gail Kern Paster uses the term 'city comedy' as it was defined by Brian Gibbons in *Jacobean City Comedy*, 1968.



can revel in the “excellent badness of London”.<sup>589</sup>

### The Language of Vice as Self-Interest

Keith Thomas attests that ‘ambition’ was a dirty word in the early modern era. However, he refers to a specific type of *self-interested* ambition. Though the ‘official’ stance on individualistic social mobility was that of distaste, as Thomas asserts, “The social order was one of constant mutability”.<sup>590</sup> And, it can be said, that relationships based on mutual utility contributed considerably to this ‘mutability’. The anxiety that provides a foundation for the cony-catching pamphlets is not only created through the fear of losing capital but primarily through fear of overall deception. This subverts the admonition literature of prodigality texts that precede this comedy. Control and manipulation are at the heart of the cony-catching pamphlets as well, a genre that additionally subverts the admonition of prodigality. These texts depict fellowships based on instrumentality. In Aristotelian terms, the ‘friendship’ formations between cony-catchers could be considered “incidental”(1156a.17): it is for the utility of the individual, and focus of one’s individual self-interest that these relationships are formed.<sup>591</sup> *Every Man in His Humour* displays a kind of friendship that, though also concerned with the instrumentality of others, is affectionate and stable in and of itself. However, these texts focus primarily on the manifest distrustful relationships that can be formed without adherence to an *affectionate* bond between men; without status, privilege, and the authority of textual mastery, these relationships are depicted as merely instrumental.

<sup>589</sup> Gail Kern Paster, *The Idea of the City in the Age of Shakespeare*, (Athens, Georgia: The University of Georgia Press, 1985), p. 150.

<sup>590</sup> Keith Thomas, *The Ends of Life: Roads to Fulfilment in Early Modern England*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 30.

<sup>591</sup> Aristotle, *The Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. Lesley Brown, trans. David Ross, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), p. 144.

Thomas Harman, in *A Caveat for Common Cursitors* (1566), translates the “pelting speech” or “canting” of the criminal networks of the London underbelly, saying, “Here I set before the good reader the lewd, lousy language of these loitering lusks and lazy lorels, wherewith they *buy and sell the common people* as they pass through the country” (emphasis my own).<sup>592</sup> Harman’s address to the reader introduces his spurious lexicography; he will proceed to define all of the jargon to benefit his “new friend of the city”. The theory is, that by studying his dictionary of cant, they can avoid any deception one might encounter. Cony-catching pamphleteers create a very deceptive illusion of their close affinity to criminality. This feigned verisimilitude arises from purposefully crafted rhetorical techniques. Harman’s description of criminal cant is oddly reminiscent of inkhorn locution associated with educated youths (like the Cambridge students’ term “mossy”, noted above). Rogue literature and cony-catching pamphlets mobilise anxieties about groups who use enclosed jargon that will not allow the “common people” to understand their true intentions.

There are a few ways by which City Comedies, such as *Every Man in His Humour*, and rogue pamphlets poke fun at the same anxieties of normalised social *mores*. On the stage, gallants drunkenly tip out of taverns, skip their studies to partake in the wanton pleasures of the city, play pranks on city gulls. In these plays, cunning deception and skilful misdirection are prized as sites of mirth. In cony-catching pamphlets But these two carefully-crafted fictions do open up certain anxieties about the dangers of fellowships. Harman himself was a gentleman and the heir to estates in Kent, but in his dedication to the Countess of Shrewsbury and his Epistle to the Reader, he presents himself very differently.<sup>593</sup> He proclaims, “Eloquence have I none; I never was acquainted with the muses; I never tasted of

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<sup>592</sup> Thomas Harman, “A Caveat for Common Cursitors”, *Cony-Catchers and Bawdy Baskets: An Anthology of Elizabethan Low Life*, ed. Gamini Salgado (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1972), p. 146

<sup>593</sup> A.L. Beier, “On the Boundaries of New and Old Historicisms: Thomas Harman and the Literature of Roguery”, *English Literary Renaissance*, no. 33 (2003), p.190.

Helicon”.<sup>594</sup> Joad Raymond writes that these texts “are commercially produced works of quasi-fiction that speak to a broad audience in lively prose” and that Harman’s prose is marked by a bold plainness.”<sup>595</sup> But what this may show is a very self-conscious choice of style and presentation: Harman’s feigned “plain speech” gives him a sense of authority concerning London lowlives. If he were to write with protracted erudition, his readership would be alienated from his prose.

Linda Woodbridge brings up this point in her rebuttal to early twentieth-century critics who deemed Harman as deft as a “sociologist” in uncovering features of the London criminal underground. The features of Harman’s own life do not adhere to the carefully constructed persona that he presents. “Harman presents himself as a justice of the peace, and we know that the historical Harman owned three manor houses; he dedicated his work to Bess of Hardwick, one of England’s richest women.”<sup>596</sup> Woodbridge, among others, refutes the idea that these texts somehow provided a mimetic view of London’s cohorts of vicious criminals. She notices the

professionalized system of criminal specializations [which] stands in stark contrast to the improvisational, hand-to-mouth subsistence of real vagrants as established by nearly all modern historians of vagrancy.<sup>598</sup>

Thus, rogue pamphlets are primarily a fictitious representation of the “loitering lunks and lazy lorels, wherewith they *buy and sell the common people*”. There are some striking similarities to the way manipulation between fellows are imagined in these pamphlets and the way that friendship works as a vehicle for manipulation in city comedies. That is not to say, of course, that the power of cony-catchers arises from institutionalised education, but rather is

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<sup>594</sup> Thomas Harman, “A Caveat for Common Cursitors”, *Cony-Catchers and Bawdy Baskets: An Anthology of Elizabethan Low Life*, ed. Gamini Salgado (Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1972), pp. 87-8

<sup>595</sup> Joad Raymond, *Pamphlets and Pamphleteering in Early Modern Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 18.

<sup>596</sup> Linda Woodbridge, “Jest Books, the Literature of Roguery, and the Vagrant Poor in Renaissance England”, *English Literary Renaissance*, Vol. 33 No. 2 (May 2003), pp. 201-210 (p. 202).

<sup>598</sup> *Ibid.* p. 203.

represented as an education of the streets: cony-catchers must have attended the school of hard knocks.

Harman's opening asserts, however, is an ethical problem critical to the idea of the early modern city: that criminals can "buy and sell the common people". It seems straightforward enough: they will manipulate others out of their money. However, the terminology hearkens to deeper anxieties: if one cannot understand someone's jargon or intentions, they can be manipulated, tricked, bought and sold. The ethics of these fictional cony-catchers is not a question; these fellowships of cozeners are based on the vice of acquiring, by multiple means of trickery and deception, their means. They are associated with self-interested benefit, yet their enclosed systems of discursive exchange, used as a means for manipulation, is uncannily similar to the deceptiveness of gallant friends in city comedy. That is, in both fictions of fellowship, the educated authors show the process of manipulation concerns knowing information that is not available to others.

In order to connect these works to Ben Jonson's play, as Brian Gibbons (in his seminal work) states, "The Coney-Catching pamphlet is a minor genre just preceding the beginnings of city comedy; it could not develop further without *being absorbed into drama*, and this is what in fact happened" (emphasis my own).<sup>600</sup> City Comedy's educated city gallants are young men that are *supposed* virtuous. However, they employ the same types of manipulation and deception as the cony-catchers through rhetorical strategy and enclosed systems of exchange built upon exclusionary knowledge and discourse. What the cony-catching pamphlets purport to address is the anxiety of finding one's self outside a hermeneutic system of exchange. If one is given access to the terms used, the types of individuals, the language of the urban underbelly, one is able to decipher the employment of manipulative tricks. Paula Blank writes:

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<sup>600</sup> Brian Gibbons, *Jacobean City Comedy*, (1968), p. 13.

The canting language may well have existed—in some form—but its authentication ultimately depends on literary and semi-literary sources like Harman's pamphlet. Early English lexicography displayed, from the beginning, the inventiveness of its authors, and their exclusive mastery of a specialized body of knowledge.<sup>601</sup>

The terminology of the London criminal is divulged, as these fictions would suggest, to assuage the fears of the urban newcomer.

In rogue and cony-catching pamphlets there is a rhetorical aim to form an alliance with "honest" men: dictated as the proposed audience for the works.<sup>611</sup> For example, Robert Greene begins one of his pamphlets by addressing it to, "Gentlemen, Countrey men, and kinde friends, for so I value all that are honest and enemies of bad actions".<sup>612</sup> The creation of the initial bond in these texts is based on a presumed mutual moral code of both the 'author' and the reader. Cony-catching pamphlets utilise this rhetoric to attempt to establish a discourse of trust between men through the vehicle of the written word. The author understands something that is unknown to the reader and is willing to impart valuable information for the safety of the 'new friends of the city', through the medium of the printed text. However, there is a duplicity in the nature of these pamphlets. While at once claiming a near-humanist, textual affinity with the proposed reader, they also contain tales of 'merry jests' enacted between the instrumental fellowships of tricksters in the city.

Thus, the discourse of friendship in cony-catching pamphlets posits an obvious contradiction. The texts themselves are addressed to the reader in a manner that suggests one-to-one confidence, as if between friends. Often addressing the reader as "gentleman" or "friend" these works attempt to create an illusory alignment between the reader and the

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<sup>601</sup> Paula Blank, "The Prose of Language Reform", *The Project of Prose in Early Modern Europe and the New World*. eds. Elizabeth Fowler and Roland Greene, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 37-8.

<sup>611</sup> Paola Pugliatti, *Beggary and Theatre in Early Modern England*, (Surrey: Ashgate, 2003), p. 6. The chapter, "The Rogue Pamphlets, the Conny-catching Pamphlets and the Picaresque Novels" begins with a discussion of the differentiation between the two forms, most commonly addressed as *one* form.

<sup>612</sup> Robert Greene, *A disputation, betweene a hee conny-catcher, and a shee conny-catcher...* (London: 1592), sig. A1<sup>r</sup> Henry E. Huntington Library, Early English Books Online <eebo.chadwyck.com> Accessed November 12, 2013.

‘author’. The initial address to the reader contains certain tropes of friendly confidence. The connection that is made rhetorically, then, is that the ‘author’ of these pamphlets shares a similar level of virtue with the reader. Thus, the cony-catching pamphlets themselves contain a basic problem in their attempt at persuasiveness. They claim, in their content, that strangers in the city are not to be trusted by the newcomer, as most ‘new friends’ and friendly acquaintances one can make may trick and cheat. However, these pamphlets at the same time assert that the reader should trust the information in the *pamphlet* itself. The connection that is made, rhetorically, between the ‘author’ and the ‘reader’ is that of new friendly confidence, and yet, the reader does not *know* the author, they are, in effect, strangers in the city as well. It is, though, through the vehicle of the printed word that authors claim a connection to their readers. The problem that these pamphlets seem to create is that of ambiguity. The reader may laugh at the expense of the gulls tricked by the rogues but at the same time may be faced with the same threats of manipulation in the city environment himself.

It is crucial to note an additional layer to this genre: that the pamphlets themselves never depict the ‘cony-catchers’ as individuals, they are always grouped, categorized, and work together ‘in fellowship’. These characters are only ever shown to work in tandem with others of the same immoral fibre. Thus, cony-catching pamphlets at once utilise rhetoric of friendship, in friendly address, to attempt to persuade the reader of the texts’ usefulness. They also, then, depict a different kind of transient fellowships in the city ‘fellowship *in vice*’ between the cony-catchers. In *Every Man in His Humour*, Old Knowell describes the gallants in the same terms. The waters are muddied between representations of textual friendships and cursory fellowships. The educated authors of these popular texts and city comedies are able to complicate the distinction between what is acceptable and what is wrongful. What is clear about both the cony-catching pamphlets and *Every Man in His Humour* are that they directly respond to the anxieties put forth in earlier prodigality texts, and make light of the situations

in which gentlemen may find themselves ‘fallen into vice’. This descent into vice is made ‘merry’. As long as one could control others, use rational thinking and the art of persuasion, and enter into friendships of an even match, there was no need for repentance for one’s words and deeds in the city environment. This new sense of masculine control is at the heart of these texts.

### **Mimetic Textuality of the Gulls: “and this is done as he saw great men do”**

Knowell and Wellbred’s friendship, founded in irreverent wit and a casual epistolary style is parodied, by Jonson, in the interactions between Bobadil and Matthew. Their knowledge, however, that the manner by which youthful, educated, male friendships are formed through texts, is seen in their imitations of Knowell and Wellbred’s affectionate and textual interactions. Though unable to enact a very effective textual relationship (that is, to utilise rhetorical skill in both the enclosed expression of intimacy and in the control of others) Bobadil and Matthew do represent specific individual types of urban upstarts who recognise the benefits associated with textual, affectionate homosocial relationships. They are clearly humorous types, and fit their roles as such. Bobadil is a cowardly gentleman soldier, or ‘Paul’s man’, and Matthew is a terrible poet and ‘city gull’. Their first encounter, within Bobadil’s chambers, shows them sharing their ‘knowledge’ of lines from Kyd’s *Spanish Tragedy*. As Wellbred’s first presence on the stage is textual, so Matthew is linked with textuality by entering with a book (presumably a version of Kyd’s play). This may be a visual cue as to the nature of ‘true’ textuality: Wellbred is more expressive in his presence as a familiar letter than Matthew is in his oblique discussion of a text. This is how gentlemanly friendship was superficially understood, and it is made farcical in the interplay between these two gulls. It is because of Knowell and Wellbred’s affectionate and sophisticatedly textual

friendship that they are depicted as the new paradigm of gentlemanly gallantry. They are able to escape admonition for their morally dubious behaviours by their wit and rhetorical mastery. The gulls, on the other hand, are punished for the most trivial transgressions.

Cob is first to introduce Matthew's character. Cob is jesting about the fashion for pedigrees in the time period, tracing his back through herrings, and being able to 'smell the ghost' of these, his 'ancestor(s)'. Cob asks him to 'upsolve' a mock-syllogism, saying "You are a scholar, upsolve me that now".(I.iv.21) The 'argument' is of no importance but Matthew proves that he is no 'scholar' by evading this jest, in his search for Bobadil. When they are together, they share a mutual knowledge of the playtext of Kyd's *Spanish Tragedy* but do not effectively use this knowledge to converse. Instead, they seem to compete in their superficial knowledge, Bobadil insisting that it was not only 'well penned', but that other plays seem superficial in comparison, and Matthew reciting a 'number of fine speeches in this book' (I.v.41;46). This engagement with textuality is specifically depicted as shallow to highlight the gull's position outside the enclosed systems of educated exchange. Though they can discuss a playtext, they are unable to embody the style that they praise; Matthew is only able to recite verbatim, and Bobadil is only able to praise the fineness of speech. For Jonson, textual friendship between men must include a mutual understanding of specific texts and modes of thought but also the 'subtle' employment of this education to conversation and the navigation of the urban space. Listing platitudes (and plagiarism of whole passages of text) are not the signifiers of wit or the means by which to form a bond between men.

When Matthew and Bobadil meet with Wellbred, they complain about their ill-treatment by Wellbred's brother Downright. Matthew's main argument is that he 'doth not carry himself like a gentleman of fashion' to which Wellbred responds, "Oh, Master Matthew, that's a grace peculiar to a few: *quos aequus / amavit Jupiter*".(III.i.14-17). This subtle allusion to Virgil's *Aeneid* is met with Matthew's "I understand you, sir".(III.i.18).



This exchange takes place directly before Ned Knowell's entrance, and it depicts the difference between coteries built upon the same fore-structures of understanding (texts such as *The Aeneid*) and the exclusion of those not privy to the use of textual allusion in conversational speech. Instead of responding to Wellbred's statement, Matthew completely ends the discursive exchange. Wellbred's fairly basic use of a Latin allusion (not even expertly witty in this context) is met with a basic agreement. Matthew can neither weave his reading into his discourse nor respond to this ability in Wellbred. This widens the gap between the gulls and the masterful elite friends in this text.

The mimetic quality of Matthew's textual exchange with Wellbred is shown in the stark contrast to the exchanges between Wellbred and Knowell that follow hard upon this brief discussion. Wellbred cuts off from his statement to Matthew (indicating that it is no matter, whether he understands or not),

WELLBRED: No question you do or you do not, sir. – Ned Knowell! By my soul, welcome! How dost thou, sweet spirit, my genius? 'Slid, I shall love Apollo and the mad Thespian girls the better while I live, for this. My dear fury, now I see there's some love in thee. [*Wellbred and Edward Knowell converse privately between themselves.*] Sirrah, these be the two [*Indicating Bobadil and Matthew*] I writ to thee of. Nay, what a drowsy humour is this now? Why dost thou not speak?

KNOWELL: Oh, you are a fine gallant! You sent me a rare letter.

WELLBRED: Why, was't not rare?

KNOWELL: Yes, I'll be sworn I was ne'er guilty of reading the like; match it in all Pliny or Symmachus' epistles, and I'll have my judgement burned in the ear for a rogue. Make much of thy vein, for it is inimitable (III.i.30-41)

The allusion-heavy meeting of these two friends marks the vastly different type of exchange between learned gentlemen. Not only is the affection clear, Wellbred addressing his

friend as ‘sweet spirit, my genius’ and jestingly ‘my dear fury’ (as they are reunited) but the exchange is stylistically matched. In addition, Knowell shows his critical awareness to the style of Wellbred’s letter (and the ‘inimitable’ nature of his lewd plain style—that is, no one would *want* to imitate it). While Matthew is unable to show his understanding, Knowell and Wellbred consistently exchange witticisms based on their mutual textual knowledge and mastery of rhetoric. The use of knowledge is not in mimicry but in embedded witty discourse. This is the mark of the intelligent man, the foundation for friendships, and the way by which masculine elite friendships are expressed.

Matthew’s direct plagiarism is another indicator of his status outside the circles of learned gentlemen. In Act IV, he recited a passage from Christopher Marlowe’s *Hero and Leander*, which both Knowell and Wellbred immediately recognise. His ‘sto’n remnants’ are seen by Knowell as “sacrilege” as they are stolen “from the dead”(IV.ii.54-55). However, there is a dubious power play at work here. *Imitatio* is, indeed, both imitation and creation but as Trevor Cook recognises, “Most writers in the period did not acknowledge originality. Instead, they strove to distinguish themselves from their peers by punishing others for their failure to imitate successfully, more often than not taking up the whip as their figurative punishment of choice”.<sup>667</sup> However, this is not active imitation it is passive plagiarism; the connection (that William Crane notes as far back as the 1960s) between “wit and rhetoric” is lost in piecemeal plagiarism—there is no amplification nor ornamentation of the past text, there is no wit gained without ‘knowledge and practice’.<sup>668</sup> Justice Clement discovers the ‘stolen’ papers in Matthews’ house the final scene (‘stolen’ as in that it is plagiarised). For this transgression, Matthew is punished. Clement exclaims, “But these paper-peddlers! These ink-dabblers! They cannot expect reprehension or reproach. They have it with the fact”. (V.v.35-

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<sup>667</sup> Trevor Cook, “The Scourge of Plagiarism: Perversions of Imitation in the English Renaissance”, *University of Toronto Quarterly*, vol. 83, no. 1, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2014), p. 41.

<sup>668</sup> William G. Crane, *Wit and Rhetoric in the Renaissance: The Formal Basis of Elizabethan Prose Style*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1964) p. 1, 81-85.

37) And yet, he punished Matthew (and Bobadil) anyway. And though I have focused on Matthew, there is a distinct punishment for Bobadil as well, as his quick-fire words do not match with his cowardly persona. When the words do not match deeds, there is, as the play suggests, a need for recrimination. In this way, Jonson is able to punish those who aspire beyond their means. Matthew and Bobadil seems to resonate with the subject of *On Don Surly*.

Don Surly, to aspire the glorious name  
 Of a great man, and to be thought the same,  
 Makes serious use of all great trade he knows.  
 He speaks to men with a rhinocerote's nose,  
 Which he thinks great, and so reads verses too:  
*And that is done as he saw great men do.*

H' has tympanies of business in his face  
 And can forget men's names with a great grace.

He will both argue and discourse in oaths,... (Epigram 28, 1-9, emphasis my own).

In this epigram, Jonson mocks the aspirational fool who mimics the learned gentleman, insinuated here as the *vir bonus* (good/great man) as well as the master of discourse. Cicero, in *De amicitia*, expresses this idea, stating, "But the fair thing is, first of all, to be a good man yourself and then to seek another like yourself". (Book II, XXII)<sup>669</sup> Don Surly (like Don Adriano de Armado in Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* and Bobadil) is figured as both superficially aspirational and superficially knowledgeable, and inverse of the classical Ciceronian qualities for 'perfect' orators and 'perfect' friends. His mock-arts are poor attempts at deceit, and lead to the position as a gull, "Surly, use other arts; these only can / Style thee a most great fool but no great man" (Epigram 28, 21-2).

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<sup>669</sup> Cicero, *De amicitia*, trans. William Armistead, (1953). p. 189.

In the final act of the Quarto edition, Jonson presents an ‘apology for poetry’ through Lorenzo. Directly proceeding this, Lorenzo’s father makes a concrete connection between Matheo’s stolen verses and Lorenzo’s own, arguing that the state of poetry itself in public opinion, as shown in Clement’s admonition, is precarious at best. In this, he directly aligns Lorenzo’s “vain studies” with Matheo’s own stylistic follies: his ‘borrowed’ poetry, the pilfering of sententious speech and poetic plagiarism.<sup>670</sup> Terence Cave observes, “the possibility of transgressive borrowing most often arises in the interstices between the practices most widely cultivated during the humanist period: translation, paraphrase, imitation, quotation, and ‘borrowing’ (acknowledged or unacknowledged)”.<sup>671</sup> But Lorenzo is quick to differentiate himself his poetry from Matheo’s pilfered lines. He elaborates on the problems ‘of the times’ by focusing on a distinction between piecemeal collections of antiquated cliché and true poetic *inventio*:

...if you will look on poesy  
 As she appears in many – poor and lame,  
 Patched up in remnants and old worn rags,  
 Half-starved for want of her peculiar food,  
 Sacred invention – then I must confirm  
 Both your conceit and censure of her merit.  
 But view her in her glorious ornaments,  
 Attired in the majesty of art,  
 Set high in spirit with the precious taste  
 Of sweet philosophy, and, which is most,  
 Crowned with the rich traditions of a soul

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<sup>670</sup> In the essays of *Borrowed Feathers: Plagiarism and the Limits of Imitation in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Hall Bjørnstad, (Oslo: Oslo University Press, 2008) the idea of plagiarism is opened up beyond theories of textual ‘authority’ that have often dominated the field. Instead, the focus is often on *imitatio*.

<sup>671</sup> Terence Cave, “Epilogue: The Prehistories of Plagiarism”, *Borrowed Feathers: Plagiarism and the Limits of Imitation in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Hall Bjørnstad, (Oslo: University of Oslo Press, 2008), p. 236.

That hates to have her dignity profaned (V.iii.264-75).

He distinguishes, then, between what could be considered to be artful use of poetry, and what makes her “poor and lame”. He goes on to say that it is terrible

That such lean, ignorant, and blasted wits,  
 Such brainless gulls, should utter their stol’n wares  
 With such applauses in our vulgar ears,  
 Or that their slubbered lines have current pass  
 From the fat judgements of the multitude,  
 (V.iii.264-288)

There is a distinction, then, to be made between the appropriation of ideas and plagiarism: re-interpretation and theft. This defines a man as either a wit or a gull. In addition, words and deeds are also intrinsically bound with the creation of not only the individual but in the creation of amicable relationships. In this way, the gulls are shown as distinctly different from the educated gallants. They have not reinterpreted their source material, they have not presented it in a manner which indicates a fore-structured understanding of their sources, and they have not employed it to effective use. Matthew uses his ‘textual knowledge’ to try to impress others but he is unsuccessful. Wellbred and Knowell appropriate the methods of argument to elude retribution for their vices, to trick other characters to the point of distraction, and to convince Bridget to marry Knowell clandestinely.

## CHAPTER V: THE DUTCH COURTESAN



Fig.3 “Facundia difficilis”. Alciato, Andrea. *Emblemata / Les emblemes* (1584)<sup>684</sup>

<sup>684</sup> Depicting Mercury presenting Ithaca with moly. Antidotum Aeaee medicata in pocula Circes / Mercurium hoc Ithaco fama dedisse fuit. / Moly vocant, id vix radice evellitur atra, / Purpureus sed flos, lactis & instar habet. / Eloquii candor facundiaque allicit omnes: / Sed multi res est tanta laboris opus”. Final lines, “The brilliance of eloquence and readiness of speech attracts all men but this mighty thing is a work of much labour”. Sig. Z7v f247v. This item is reproduced by permission of *The University of Glasgow*.

### Enclosed Policing: Tempering and Punishing the ‘other self’

Quintilian, in the *Institutio oratoria*, concedes that “a bad man will sometimes produce a Prooemium and a Narrative and a set of Arguments which leave nothing to be desired” (2.20.10).<sup>685</sup> He opens up the ethical question: what if an immoral man is skilled in oratory and misuses its power? *The Dutch Courtesan* (1605) opens up similar anxieties about effective argumentation. In this play, mastery of rhetorical skill enables young, educated men to police themselves and others, outside legal sanctions and structures. John Marston depicts a homosocial a pair of textually-adept and well-versed gallants involved in an increasingly tenuous relationship. From the very start, as they drunkenly tip out of a tavern, their unsavoury discussions indicate to the audience that their friendship is associated with features of more transient fellowships. However, Marston seems to collapse into one the features of classical, ideal friendship and the insubstantial features of fellowships forged through mutual gallantry. The two protagonists, Freevill and Malheureux, are both a well-educated and clearly affectionate pair of friends who participate in unsavoury actions often associated with wayward youth. Malheureux attempts to become a source of moral *imitatio* for his friend, concerned with the detriment it may cause to his “health and strength and name” (I.i.92). Freevill beseeches his friend to join him at a brothel stating “You must go as you love me” (I.i.156). Malheureux, upon succumbing to his lusts, worries that in pursuing Freevill’s cast-off courtesan that it would “offend” of the “vow bond” of their “friendship” (II.i.98-9). In this way, Marston alludes to classical concepts of friendship pairing: friends should enhance one another’s virtues. Additionally, he echoes a prevalent feature of conduct manuals, whereby one’s friendships

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<sup>685</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, ed. and trans. Donald A. Russell, 2001, p. 407.

should reinforce one's good name and reputation. Their "vow bond" also recalls the trope of "sworn brotherhood": an idea that continues through works of the sixteenth-century.<sup>686</sup>

However, the connection between these two friends, clearly derived from textual sources concerning classical "perfect friendship" is paired with the moral degradation often found in fleeting urban fellowships. Alexandra Shepard investigates the differences between the classical concepts of "perfect friendship" developed from Aristotle to Cicero and brought into Renaissance humanist ideology in opposition to what she terms "collective misrule". She observes,

Such bonds were the basis for assertions of inverted codes of manhood rooted in excesses and clamorous misrule. At its extremes, fraternal camaraderie permitted and encouraged not only the misappropriation of authority but also the rejection and inversion of patriarchal codes of conduct in the pursuit of an alternatively defined manhood of immoderation.<sup>687</sup>

Marston merges two forms of homosocial relationships in the play. There is a sense of obligation and affection between Freevill and Malheureux but also this aspect of masculine youthful transgression that is, as I will show, ultimately arbitrated by self-policing.

*The Dutch Courtesan* exhibits a form of youthful manliness in the city environment: men who can control situations through the power of persuasive speech—and use their skills in rhetoric to justify transgressive behaviours. In *Every Man in his Humour*, gentlemen friends create scenarios of their own prodigality to subvert the reform found in admonition texts. In *The Dutch Courtesan*, we see this same form of masculine control at work in the protagonists, Freevill and Malheureux—though it is decidedly one-sided. While Freevill is steadily in control of situations within the plot structure, his unhappy friend falls victim to his

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<sup>686</sup> Alan Bray notices this feature, primarily citing Robert Greene's play *Frier Bacon and Frier Bongay*. In this, he writes that "two young scholars" proclaim that they are "sworn brothers" representing a "familiar pair in the sixteenth-century universities". See Alan Bray, *The Friend*, p. 94.

<sup>687</sup> Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, 2003, p. 125.



own overwhelming lusts. His decidedly superficial and aphoristic language is a vehicle for understanding his increasingly aberrant passions and vice. As he cannot formulate a full argument against the use of prostitutes, he falls into immorality; as he lusts after his friend's former courtesan, his language degrades. Finally, he formulates a plot with the courtesan, Franceschina, to murder his friend. Although he discloses that he will divulge this plot to his friend and trick Franceschina into bed, he faces admonition from Freevill alone. In this fall he alludes to the "good sense" of his friend and its connection to linguistic expression. Indeed, upon his final repentance, he proclaims that only "Rich sense makes good bad language" (V.iii.63).

The transformation of Malheureux's "bad language" to "good sense" is determined by his friend's policing of the situation. Donna B. Hamilton argues that it is his lack of control and substantial argumentation that augments his decline in position, resulting in an emasculation of the character.<sup>688</sup> However, though the power shift is clearly in place between the two friends, Malheureux is able to come to his good sense through the self-policing strategies of masculine elite relationships. Malheureux's uncontrollable lust, focused on a woman who is unfit for marriage, is amplified by his inability to exhibit control of his speech. His shortcomings in control and linguistic mastery make him unequal to his friend; they warrant his punishment. The inability to use 'good' language to support moral attitudes leads, oddly, to extreme forms of immorality. One can fall victim to deception through ineffective response to persuasive speech or an inability to control and manipulate others; one instance of misdirection can lead to dangerous consequences.

In this chapter, I present three main arguments concerning the use of rhetorical mastery that substantiates arguments for the place of vice in the city. I also analyse the differentiation between earlier prodigality narratives and admonition texts in the play. The

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<sup>688</sup> Donna B. Hamilton, "Language as Theme in *The Dutch Courtesan*", *Renaissance Drama, New Series*, vol. 5, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1972), p. 77.

textual friendship between Freevill and Malheureux is a way by which classical concepts of homosocial friendships are transformed to suit the immediate circumstances concerning unsavoury and vicious behaviours. First, I argue that Freevill and Malheureux utilise rhetorical practices like those taught through humanist learning at the Inns of Court. There is a hermeneutic reconfiguration of widely accepted patriarchal norms for the governance of the household and the place of vice in the city in these rhetorical reconfigurations of concepts concerning masculine “coming of age”. I investigate Freevill’s mock-moot as an oral practice of utter-barristers in the Inns of Court and the transgressive nature of the arguments he presents. Second, I analyse the implications of this persuasive speech in the subversion of prodigal narratives. Finally, I investigate the city-trickster Cocledemoy’s mimetic mock-epidictic of bawds and brothels in the city environment. I argue that this further links rhetorical mastery to the unsavoury behaviours of the city environment.

*The Dutch Courtesan* is concerned with a satiric view of London’s viciousness, the control and manipulation of others through persuasive speech, and questions of ethical conduct between friends.<sup>697</sup> Most critical work on the play centres on the unusual plot structure and genre, and attempts to situate the play within ideological views of the early modern city. Recently, Kate Aughterson has argued that the character of Freevill stands for the stock morality character of Vice in the play, stating

Freevill articulates a range of discourses which delineate urban masculinity in the early modern period: husbandry, heterosexual desire, phallicism, acquisitive economics, rationality, in binary opposition to femininity...His ‘free’ nature and

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<sup>697</sup> For John Marston’s *The Dutch Courtesan*, quotations are from the modernised 1997 New Mermaids Edition, edited by David Crane which engages directly with the 1605 quarto edition of the play (and does not use the 1633 version, printed without Marston’s authorisation, and deemed by Crane to be of “no substantive authority” for this reason (Introduction, xxxi). David Crane, *The Dutch Courtesan*, (London: Bloomsbury, 1997). All following citations are from this New Mermaids version of the text. I also consult a facsimile of the original, John Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, Printed by T.P. for John Hodgetts, (London, 1605). Early English Books Online <eebo.chadwyck.com> Accessed November 3, 2016.

<sup>697</sup> *Every Man in His Humour* has been defined as either humours comedy or city comedy, depending on the critical approach and the text used in the analysis. For my purposes, the 1601 (Q) edition can be considered humoral, and the 1616 (F) edition as a humours comedy reworked to fit with what would be considered ‘city’ comedy. Marston’s *The Dutch Courtesan* functions under the generic title of ‘city comedy’ in my estimation of the play, and as supported by the generic criticism made by Brian Gibbons in *Jacobean City Comedy*, 1968.

libertine views are placed clearly within the allegorical tradition of the Morality Play's Vice figure, which discourse wittily inverts conventional moral thinking and acts as tempter to the Everyman figure.<sup>699</sup>

Though I agree that Freevill "articulates a range of discourses which delineate urban masculinity in the period", I do not think that he stands as a Vice figure in the allegorical sense, nor that the play follows conventions of morality plays or admonition texts centred on the concept of prodigality. He is not tempting Malheureux but seeking to "educate" him. In this way, he is calling Malheureux to follow him, an *imitatio* of behaviours that can be likened to the treatment of following in *The Parnassus Plays*. He also gifts the courtesan to his friend, with an assumption that if he were to "use" her, he would come to the same rational view of the place of vice in masculine development. This is ethically deplorable: she is no longer wanted, no longer desired by Freevill as he intends to marry the constant and chaste Beatrice. However, he presents the use of a prostitute as a 'rational' act; clearly subverting patriarchal objectives.

In a way, this text closely engages with themes of prodigality. However, any repentance and admonition are reconfigured between friends; it is not an older generation's admonition of the follies of youth. The folly within this text is, unsettlingly, figured as Malheureux's lack of control and active manipulation—his inadequacy at performing the very features of urban masculinity that Aughterson rightly points out as frighteningly transgressive. The problem in this play, as with *Every Man in his Humour*, lies in hermeneutics: the understanding of intention. While Ed Knowell and Wellbred mirror each other perfectly know each other's minds and intentions, only one of the friends within Marston's text can "read" his fellow. Freevill, through his own argumentative style, is able to pre-empt Malheureux's responses to his argument; he is aware of his own ability to

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<sup>699</sup> Kate Aughterson, "'Going the Way of All Flesh': Masculinity and Vice in *The Dutch Courtesan*", *Cahiers Elisabethains*, vol. 76, (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009), p. 21.

manipulate and control others and recognises the feigned moral artifice that his friend displays. This indicates the disparity between effective use of rhetorical and logical methods and the dangers of unpersuasive speech as connected to immoral behaviours.

Additionally, Marston's own use of Montaigne's *Essais* can be seen as a reconfiguration of ideas: a hermeneutic process of understanding and reconfiguring the text to fit his own social situation in early modern London.<sup>700</sup> This further indicated early modern playwrights' use of *imitatio* for the invention of new arguments. Marston's own father famously admonished him for his vain studies and his creative dramatic works. In his will he bequeathed his son his law books, stating, "God bless him and give him good knowledge of himself" asking that he "forgo his delight in plays and vain studies and fooleries".<sup>701</sup> The amalgamation of his Inns of Court education and use of *imitatio* within his plays indicate Marston's close connection to the audience of his play. Like the anonymous authors of *The Parnassus Plays*, there is an exclusionary nature to the work itself; the satirical crux partially depends on this connection.

Freevill's visits to a courtesan do not make a mark upon his character as he is still able to marry an honest woman, his use of the brothel is problematically depicted as a reasonable action. There is limited emotive force behind his use of the courtesan, and he is even able to provide argumentative support for the benefits of brothels. As I will discuss in the next section, he argues for the "necessity" of such buildings as they dissuade virile youths from seeking their "fleshy entertainments" with honest women (I.i.65-70). He also asserts

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<sup>700</sup> Montaigne's works were translated into English by John Florio in 1603 and David Crane, among others, recognises that this is the main source for many of the play's arguments. He states, in the introduction to his modernised edition, "Marston clearly found Montaigne's essays of such importance that they must count almost as a second source for the main action of the play". Of course, the main plot of the play is derived from *Les Bergeries de Juliette* (1585) which was "tremendously popular" as John J. O'Conner finds. He writes, "Marston did not display an unusual degree of originality. His plot follows so closely that of a tale told in Nicholas de Moontreux's *Le premier livre des bergeries de Julliette* that there can be little doubt it is his primary source". See both John Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, ed. David Crane, 1997, Introduction p. xiii and "John J. O'Conner, "The Chief Source of Marston's *Dutch Courtesan* [sic.]", *Studies in Philology* 54 (1957) p. 509.

<sup>701</sup> See Philip J. Finklepearl, *John Marston of the Middle Temple: An Elizabethan Dramatist in His Social Setting*, (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 84. This is also noted in the introductions to critical editions. See John Marston, *The Selected Plays of John Marston*, eds. Macdonald P. Jackson and Michael Neill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), Introduction, p. x and John Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, ed. David Crane, (London: Bloomsbury, 1997), p. xi.

that prostitution provides financial gain for women “brought low” by the fall of their husbands; he asserts that men could not “bestow” their money on a worthier commodity (I.i.101-110;114-5). He finishes his mock-argument with an inversion of moral precepts: that women merely sell their bodies, while others’ souls and “honour, justice, faith—nay, even God himself” have been sold. (I.i.125-6) However, Malheureux reads his friend’s actions, initially, as threatening due to their transgression of stable moral and religious codes of the time. In this way, Marston engages with a reformation of the conduct of young men in the city context; he provides a new form of masculine identity based on their virility, effective use of argumentation, and reasoning—however transgressive and immoral the uses become.

To understand the linguistic relationship between the two learned friends, it is important to look at the overall structure of the plot and the text. Interestingly, though the play is framed with the prologue’s common idea that the play is merely “to delight”, Marston also presents a *fabulae argumentum* for the text. The moral argument of the narrative is not admonition of city vice, however but that of “The difference betwixt the love of a courtesan and a wife”.<sup>702</sup> What follows, then, cannot be seen as a prodigal narrative for the wayward Malheureux, even if his friend polices his behaviours. At the very start, Freevill and Malheureux seem to be equal partners in their friendship: educated, witty, and decidedly urban. They are drinking in a tavern to begin with, when Freevill leaves to visit his courtesan, Franceschina, and Malheureux attempts to dissuade him. It is important to note that Malheureux has already entered the space of London’s entertainments, which were often associated with moral degradation. Freevill then persuades Malheureux to accompany him to the bawdy house where he instantly—despite his previous moral pontificating—lusts after the courtesan. His fall marks the relationship as unequal, he is manipulated by Freevill, and is eventually spared from legal retribution by his friend. That is, as Freevill controls his policing

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<sup>702</sup> Marston, *The Dutch Courtesan*, ed. David Crane, 1997, Footnote, p. 3.

and sentence, he “discovers” himself at the last minute and pardons his friend both from corporal punishment and for his moral duplicity. The subplot follows Cocledemoy, a “knavishly witty city companion” of the London underground who continuously thieves from and tortures the dishonest and gullible vintner, Mulligrub. His cunning deceptions lead to the arrest of Mulligrub, until he finally gives up the jest in the end. In this way, his trickery and deception is likened to Freevill’s own rhetorical mastery. Additionally, Cocledemoy provides an oration on the benefits of bawds which is uncannily similar to Freevill’s persuasive case on the proper place for prostitutes in the city. He is able to punish Mulligrub through a mastery of situations, just as Freevill punishes the lusts of his friend. An observation of the mirrored plot and subplot of this play is not new; however, I argue that they are connected by more than mere deception. Both the plot and subplot are engaged in the concept of linguistic mastery as a method for policing others in the city environment, and for displaying self-control as a means to regulate others.

As Ian Archer observes, elite men were able to effectively subvert attempts to police brothels as criminal enterprises. He states

The very peculiarity of the patterns of clientage [sic.] of prostitution suggests that the connections of brothels keeper with the court were not typical of other types of criminal activity, and it would therefore be unwise to read sinister motives into the involvement of courtiers in the granting of reprieves.<sup>703</sup>

Archer notes the possibility that the connection to elite clientele from the liberties and the criminal enterprises themselves are brought about by “personal misfortune”. This indicates that the place of brothels in the city was not policed as thoroughly as other criminal activity. This assertion supports Freevill’s argument and actions: prostitution is a useful profession chosen by those who have fallen and men can police this criminal activity outside of the

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<sup>703</sup> Ian W. Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), p. 231.

proper legal procedure. However, young gentlemen and scholars, like Freevill, conceal their vices by framing vice as a fashion of the time. Wilfrid R. Prest argues that

Young gentlemen had every incentive to adopt attitudes and patterns of behaviour which would clearly distinguish them from the common lawyers with whom they were nominally associated. Hence the aggressive insistence on their own gentility, fully echoed by the poets and dramatists whom they patronised; hence also that competitive aping of court modes in dress and taste, the cult of wit, the incessant versifying (for private circulation, not mercenary publication), even perhaps the obsessive drinking, gaming and womanising.<sup>704</sup>

Combining the ‘fashions’ for vicious behaviours and the ability to provide argumentative justification through rhetorical skill, makes for a problematic question in the early modern city: who is really in charge of legal retribution? The purpose of justices is “to supresse iniurious force and violence, moued against the person, his goods, or possessions”.<sup>705</sup> However, Freevill could easily cause mortal injury to his friend, and Cocledemoy, his underworld counterpart, is able to steal Mulligrub’s possessions, both without rebuke. At a critical point in the play, Freevill tries to temper his friend’s lusts, exclaiming, “Think of it! Come, away! Virtue, let sleep thy passions; / What old times held as crimes are now but fashions” (III.i.262-3). The domestic danger that a lack of brothels may effect, along with his own inferences about his own sense of morality in his decision to marry, all contribute to the success of his arguments. He is referencing contemporary issues, legal understanding, and his rhetorical mastery to both justify his transgressive behaviours and persuade his friend of the benefits of certain criminal acts.

Jean E. Howard discusses the interconnectedness between the London stage and the understanding and negotiation of the urban contexts in which they were played. She looks at

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<sup>704</sup> Prest, *The Inns of Court under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts*, (1972), p. 4.

<sup>705</sup> William Lambarde, *Eirenarcha: or of the office of Justice of the Peace*, (London, 1581) D1<sup>v</sup>.

the place of the whorehouse, as a pervasive feature of early modern city comedies.<sup>706</sup> She writes of brothels

In their many incarnations, the bawdy houses and whores of London comedy nearly always exceed their predictable function as the site and emblem of urban vice and abjection. Rather, they are key to the genre's innovative examination of the effects on social relations of the city's expanding market economy, of the special pressures put on gender relations in the metropolis, and of the necessary, if sometimes fear-provoking, cosmopolitanism of urban life.<sup>707</sup>

In this way, the protagonist Freevill is able to establish whoring as a practice of urban, youthful masculine virility as long as there are no expectations for a marital outcome. In Brian Gibbons's seminal work, he describes important features to what is known as early modern City Comedy. These comedies, including Marston's work, deal with "developing thought about the subject of the city" and focus on "the theatrical vitality and wit which make city comedy come alive".<sup>708</sup> According to Gibbons, playwrights observe social affairs of the time by "transforming typical elements of city life" through satire and "suggesting deeper sources of conflict and change".<sup>709</sup>

Freevill does not deny the affection he once felt for Franceschina, though he later contradicts this, "I loved her with my heart until my soul showed me the imperfection of my body, and placed my affection in a lawful love". (I.ii.92-94). However, he shows that this has not overwhelmed him, he is able to differentiate, as the *fabulae argumentum* states, between the love of a courtesan and of a wife. When Malheureux is overwhelmed by lust and is fully enamoured with the courtesan, he expresses his need to police his friend's passions. Though he is passionate in his love for Beatrice—indeed, she admonishes him by saying, "be not so

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<sup>706</sup> Jean E. Howard, *Theater of a City: The Places of London Comedy, 1598-1642*, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2009).

<sup>707</sup> Jean E. Howard, *Theater of a City*, 2009, p. 161.

<sup>708</sup> Brian Gibbons, *Jacobean City Comedy*, 1968, pp. 2, 3.

<sup>709</sup> Brian Gibbons, *Jacobean City Comedy*, 1968, p. 4.



passionate; / Nothing extreme lives long”—he recognises that this passion is not misplaced (II.i.49-50). He is aware of his own ability to move from lusty affection to lawful affection. He resigns Franceschina to Malheureux, not as a Vice character tempting him into sin but as a way to instruct him about the use of a courtesan—they are for pleasure, in his view—and to differentiate between fleeting lust and marital affection. Malheureux is worried about this ‘gift’, but Freevill is quick to dissuade his trepidation.

In a way, he reconfigures the Erasmian adage, alluding to Seneca’s discussion of gift-exchange and friendship, that “between friends all is common” (I.i.1).<sup>710</sup> Lorna Hutson astutely observes the affection and possible, if not blatant, homoerotic feature to “sharing” women between men. In conjunction with this affection, she notices “the importance of women as signs of credit between men”.<sup>711</sup> In what may be considered a “triangulation of desire”, in Eve Sedgwick’s terms, Freevill sees the courtesan as a means by which affection can be transmitted between men through the body of a common woman. When Freevill entreats Malheureux to visit the courtesan, he states, “You must go as you love / *me*” (I.i.157-158, emphasis my own). Natalie Zemon Davis outlines the importance of gift-giving in the process of friendship formations as a form of creating an “obligation” as well as a sign of affection between men.<sup>712</sup> This is a problematic feature in creating a sense of reciprocity, in which the power structures between men are constantly shifting. Freevill’s “gift” of Franceschina is both a vicious perversion of the symbolic gestures of homosocial friendship

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<sup>710</sup> Desiderius Erasmus, “Adages: Ii1 to Iv100”, *Collected Works of Erasmus*, Vol. 31, trans. Margaret Mann Phillips, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982), p. 13. This concept may be derived from Seneca where he discusses both gift-giving and commonality between friends stating, “there is nothing to prevent my making a gift to a friend, although we say that friends have all things in common. For I have all things in common with my friend, not as I would with a partner, when one share would belong to me, and another to him” (VII.12.1). See Seneca the Younger, *De Beneficiis*, trans. John W. Basore, Loeb Classical Library (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1935), p. 483. Alan Bray discusses the importance of this concept of “the gift” or *beneficium* in the late sixteenth-century stating, “The term is that in Seneca’s *De Beneficiis*, which became a more readily familiar part of humanist learning with the editions of Seneca’s works published by Justus Lipsius in the 1570s but more popularly, in England, with the translation of Arthur Golding in 1578”. Bray, *The Friend*, 2003, p. 151.

<sup>711</sup> See Lorna Hutson, *The Usurer’s Daughter*, 1994, as well as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1985), pp.1-27.

<sup>712</sup> See Natalie Zemon Davis, *The Gift in Sixteenth Century France*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000). Additionally, for courtly gift-giving as a form of negotiating power and forming ties (in addition to an overview of gift exchange) see Felicity Heal, *The Power of Gifts: Gift Exchange in Early Modern England*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), pp. 86-92.

formation and a sign of obligation. However, Malheureux is anxious about this gift exchange, only because it might have a detrimental effect on their “bond”.

MALHEUREUX: Shall I not offend the vow-bond of our friendship?

FREEVILL: What, to affect that which thy friend affected? By heaven, I resign her freely. The creature and I must grow off. (II.i.97-99)

Frevill mobilises Erasmian concepts of friendship as a means for persuasion. Gift exchange and the idea that friends “hold all things in common” are means by which to transform humanist learning to fit contemporary experiences. After handing over the courtesan to his friend, he entreats her, “Marry, salute my friend, clip his neck, and kiss him welcome” (I.ii.83-4).

Malheureux, as he transforms commonplaces of friendship, is decidedly less forceful. Later in the play, when Franceschina offers to sleep with Malheureux only if he murders Freevill, he also reconfigures a concept arising from the classical descriptions of friendship: that of the *alter ipse*. He proclaims, “To kill my friend! O ’tis to kill myself” (II.ii.202). Yet Malheureux considers the possibility of actually committing the crime. He argues to himself, seeing the killing of beasts as oddly akin to the killing of men stating that it is “no murder to kill these [beasts]” (II.ii.206). Throughout the play, Malheureux displays his limited ability to invent arguments and to persuasively incorporate maxims into the current context.

Malheureux immediately recognises the failure of his own argument to support the possibility of murder. As from the start he is unable to speak persuasively to Freevill through moralistic precepts, he now displays his inability to persuade himself. His passions do not allow him to think rationally. He exclaims, “Lord, how I was misgone! How easy ’tis to err / When passion will not give us leave to think!” (II.ii.220-221). He uses the discourse of perfect friendship in this precarious assessment of the circumstances. It seems as if his connection to his friend and his inability to clearly “think” are the only reasons that he

reconsiders murder. This is a fine thread that holds him back from the most horrific crime. But though he does not commit murder and tells Freevill of Franceschina's plot, he attempts to create a counter-plot that is just as ineffective as his counter-arguments.

Freevill's legal control of Malheureux is based on his use of self-regulatory moderation and good sense. When Malheureux is in the full grip of his lust, Freevill privately exclaims

Now repentance, the fool's whip, seize thee!

Nay, if there be no means, I'll be thy friend,

but not thy vice's; and *with greatest sense*

*I'll force thee* feel thy errors to the worst (IV.ii.31-4, emphasis my own).

Understanding the persuasive speech that Freevill presents, and his ability to control the outcome of his friend's legal retribution is predicated on understanding the forms of forensic argumentation he utilises in his initial argument for the profitability of prostitution. As Quintilian writes

For the next subject is the layout of forensic Causes, which are particularly various and complex: what is the function of a Prooemium; what are the principles of Narrative; how credibility is achieved in Proofs, either in confirming our own propositions or in demolishing those of our opponents; wherein lies the force of the Epilogue, if we have either to refresh the judge's memory by a brief recapitulation of the facts, or (much more important) to stir his emotions (Book 4.6).<sup>715</sup>

Freevill first establishes a *prooemium* (or *exordium*) to introduce the *causa* in question and prepare Malheureux, the auditor, to engage in his oratory. The question concerns, of course, the immorality or necessity of prostitution. Freevill's reasoning (*ratio*) is based on an inversion of common moral and social issues: the virtue and governances of the domestic

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<sup>715</sup> Quintilian, *De oratore*, p. 179

household, charity for the less fortunate, and the proper uses of finances. In the main section of his argument, he uses hypothetical circumstances as topics of invention. This will be discussed in detail in the next section.

Freevill is a character versed in law and its administrative institutions as well as rhetorical methods. There are intersectional possibilities between these two distinct pedagogical approaches in the mastery of both rhetorical style and logical argument formation. Both can be conjoined in male-male discourse within the play. To apply this concept to Freevill, his ability to invent new arguments in legalistic matters and his knowledge of both the efficacy of rhetoric and the procedure for policing, allows for him to not only persuade his friend but to police his actions. Subha Mukherji notes the different methods of legal instruction in the universities and at the Inns. However, she focuses on the embedded rhetorical structures that can be found in dramatic texts.<sup>717</sup> James McBain also challenges the concept of “isolationism” of law study from the university curriculum(s), arguing that “...the way in which a synthesis of rhetoric and dialectic was taught, particularly at the universities, is shown to have considerable influence on the development of legal practice”.<sup>718</sup> Thus, in Marston’s play, he collapses into one both rhetorical mastery in legal case presentation and the ability to self-police actions between educated friends.

Freevill's self-policing depends on the ability for *inventio*—he is able to recognise a set of circumstances in which vicious behaviour can be deemed positive and also a set of circumstances in which it should be policed. Justification of his own experience, that his measured affection for Franceschina is outweighed by his so-called love of the proper Beatrice, depends on projections of self-knowledge and restraint. As Freevill is able to create new arguments for his positions concerning vicious behaviours, Malheureux is shown to be

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<sup>717</sup> Subha Mukherji, *Law and Representation in Early Modern Drama*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p. 15.

<sup>718</sup> James McBain, “‘Attentive Mindes and Serious Wits’: Legal Training in Early Modern Drama”, *Oxford Handbook of Law and Literature*, ed. Lorna Hutson, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 80.

decidedly unable to defend his own position. At the start of the play, his language is composed of moralistic aphorisms; his positions concerning morality are serious, but he is unable to argue against any modified view. His inability to synthesise his learning, to reconfigure precepts of moral conduct, displays his ineffectuality. He is like a text that seemingly cannot be altered; his views are flat. Malheureux is unable to perceive a set of circumstances in which whoring would ever be less than a terrible sin. In this way, Malheureux is unable to understand not only Freevill's position on the subject matter but also to uncover his intentions for his argument. Malheureux is able to employ some basic *inventio* in eloquent speech, and Freevill recognises this (albeit limited) skill, quoting his friend's assertion that "The sight of vice augments the hate of sin" and exclaims that it is "Very fine, perdy!" (I.i.161,162) Recognition of this one fine phrase ends the scene; it seems as if Malheureux's speech does contain the possibility to be 'fine', to be eloquent. But eloquence is not the only element for persuasive speech within the play—one can be eloquent and still fail to justify vicious behaviours through inadequate forensic argumentation.

From the start, Malheureux demonstrates a desire both to create his own forceful arguments and to uncover the true intentions of his friend's arguments and actions. But, as Kathy Eden illuminates, "...the affirmer and the denier, moreover, must first agree upon and then address in their arguments the key point of contention, the so-called *status* of the case".<sup>719</sup> In the mock moot that Freevill presents, the agreed *status* is the rightful (or problematic) place for prostitution in the early modern city. It seems as if Freevill sets up a straw-man argument but in actuality, Malheureux offers the counter-point in a way that allows him to fruitfully argue against him. As Eden elaborates, concerning John Brinsley's *Ludis literarius*, a common pedagogical text utilised at the time, "Brinsley accommodates the rhetorical goal of persuasion

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<sup>719</sup> Kathy Eden, "Forensic Rhetoric and Humanist Education", *Oxford Handbook of Law and Literature*, ed. Lorna Hutson, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 26.

to the hermeneutic goal of understanding, especially textual understanding”.<sup>720</sup> In this same manner, Malheureux attempts to come to a ‘fusion of horizons’ with his friend, to fully understand his position. However, he assumes that their intentions (moral and otherwise) are mutual: that they have the same ‘values’. He attempts to engage in the process of uncovering intent but his own moral hang-ups (and, ultimately, failings) obfuscate the ‘reasoning’ of Freevill’s mock-exoneration of vicious behaviours. At the beginning of the play, it seems that Malheureux represents the aphoristic textual ideology presented in conduct manuals; something that young gentlemen would be very familiar with. His deficient reliance on these ideas indicates an inability to consider an opposing view and restructure his argument to support his ideological views. Ultimately, Malheureux cannot approach an argument from any alternative position. There is a hermeneutic process in legal judgements which takes the evidence and arguments presented to infer and understand motivations and intent. The inferences that Malheureux makes concerning the moral fibre and intentions of Freevill’s moot are misinterpreted as complete moral degradation and rejection of social codes of conduct (inferring that Freevill will not be able to move to the next stage of manhood without adherence to these social and moral codes). His interpretation is based on the perceived intentions of his friend, who indicates that his use of prostitutes, exceptionally problematically, is an expression of male virility. Freevill argues that “youth and appetite are above the club of Hercules” (I.i.70). This does not only suggest, as David Crane’s footnote explicates, that this appetite is “beyond restraint even by the greatest possible force”.<sup>721</sup> In the same speech, Freevill concludes to have its place in the formation of masculinity and even in furthering the “sanctity” of creating household with a proper woman. This opens the ethical question of the use of marginalised peoples reconfigured as necessities in social relations through the mock-moot presented: with his rhetorical flourishes, and ‘logical’ inferences,

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<sup>720</sup> Kathy Eden, “Forensic Rhetoric and Humanist Education”, *Oxford Handbook of Law and Literature*, ed. Lorna Hutson, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), p. 30.

<sup>721</sup> Crane, *Dutch Courtesan*, Introduction, p. 10.

Freevill is able to offer a transgressive view of vice in the city as a means for realising masculine virility and the process of coming of age.

In addition to mastery of persuasive speech, Freevill is able to police his friend from a position of power. Thomas Elyot connects “educacion & virtue in manners” of magistrates with “prynces, in as much as thereby they shall aswell by example, as by auctoritee” (Chapter XI, ii).<sup>722</sup> As he is the master of his own actions, in addition to his education, he is able to secure a position of ‘authority’ over his friend. His own admonition plot displaces the power from the justices in Malheureux’s arrest, withholds the truth from the court, and decides Malheureux’s punishment and subsequent acquittal. This complete control over legal processes raises serious questions about the ethical foundations of the justice system and those who are able to subvert the course of justice. William Lambarde’s *Eirenarcha* (1581) describes the ideal “compounder, as a commissioner of the peace” as a learned gentleman. He states, “I thinke him so much the meeter to steppe in betwixt those that be at variance, as (by reason of his *learning*, wisdom, authoritie, and wealth) he is like like to preuaile more, by his mediation and intreatie, then is any other man”.<sup>723</sup> As ‘learning, wisdom, authority, and wealth’ are seen as prerequisites for ‘mediation’, even Freevill can meet these criteria. J.H. Gleason analyses the dimension of power obtained by these justices, saying,

If the justices of the peace were indeed ‘the most influential class of men in England’, they earned that eminence by their activity even more than by their identity. As a group they were wealthy, well educated, ambitious, in reasonable accord with national policy both religious and political, much more than the mere creatures of the royal administration; in brief, they were the leaders of their counties.<sup>724</sup>

<sup>722</sup> Thomas Elyot, *The booke Named the Gouernour* “Thomas Elyot knight” Folger Shakespeare Library, (London:1534), B4<sup>v</sup> Early English Books Online < eebo.chadwyck.com> Accessed March 3, 2015 Thomas Elyot, *The Book Named the Gouernor, 1531, A Facsimile Printing. English linguistics, 1500-1800*, no. 246, 1970.

<sup>723</sup> William Lambarde, *Eirenarcha: or of the office of Justice of the Peace*, (London: 1581) D3<sup>r</sup> (emphasis my own) Early English Books Online < eebo.chadwyck.com> Accessed June 27, 2017

<sup>724</sup> J.H. Gleason, *The Justices of the Peace in England, 1558-1640*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 96.

This opens up a problem that Marston investigates, high-status men within learned social networks in the city are able to police their own behaviours and manipulate the justice systems put in place to control their actions—they are powerful. Freevill does not use the legal system for the public good; he uses it to admonish his friend for his feigned morality, his inability to control his passions, and his consideration of murder.

In order for Freevill to be successful in policing his friend, he implicitly acknowledges Malheureux's inability to provide proof for his arguments. As, from the first scene, we see that his ineffective rhetorical argumentation and his severe sentence and Freevill's subsequent exoneration are dependent on his aforementioned "bad language". Indeed, Malheureux's inability to persuasively argue his case is one of the reasons that Tysefew cites for his condemnation to death in the court of law. He cannot prove that the 'plot' he created with Freevill occurred. He has no one to corroborate his story. Though it would be difficult, if not impossible, to argue from this lack of evidence, he is unable to place the blame on Franceschina as the true author of the murder plot. Tysefew informs Beatrice and Crispinella of the outcome of the case, and how Malheureux relied only on the counterplot that he devised with Freevill:

He gaged his life with it; but know,  
 When all approached the test, Shatewe denied  
 He saw or heard of any such complot,  
 Or of Freevill; so that his own defence  
*Appeared so false* that, like a madman's sword,  
 He struck his own heart. He hath the course of law  
 And instantly must suffer. (V.ii.100-106, emphasis my own).

The appearance of guilt is augmented by Malheureux's inability to make his case seem plausible. Though his argument contains the truth, Freevill's deception and refutation of the



counter-plot become the means by which he polices his friend's actions. In this account of his trial, Malheureux bases his entire case on evidence that he cannot produce; he relies on witnesses to determine an inartificial proof of his innocence. As Quintilian, citing Aristotle's division of proofs, writes,

To the first class [inartificial proofs] belong decisions of previous courts, rumours, evidence extracted by torture, documents, oaths, and witnesses, for it is with these that the majority of forensic arguments are concerned. (V.i.1).

When Shatewe cannot support his case, it is implied that Malheureux is unable to produce an argument for artificial proof of his innocence; his case "appeared so false" (V.ii.104).<sup>725</sup> Just as he cannot read Freevill's intent, it is implied that he is unable to persuasively display his own intent and explicate the circumstances of his feigned murder plot and its true author.

Implicit in Lambarde's *Eirenarcha* is the concept that a governing official must be a *vir bonus*; only a good man can hold this position and act as such.<sup>726</sup> In city comedies, however, the educated young gallants are often shown to greatly influence what should be the jurisdiction of these keepers of the peace. Often, individuals escape due punishment for providing entertainment, proving their wit, or explaining their jests. Freevill both condemns and exonerates his friend with no retribution for taking the law into his own hands. The idea that one can either manipulate the law through self-regulatory means or escape punishment through one's own cunning, indicates the precarious position of official legal powers. As comedies champion rhetorical mastery, they also depict transgressive argumentation in determining the outcomes of vicious behaviours. In dramatic representations of these young men, a city comedy's ending and the lack of punishment for self-policing tendencies may be seen as a form of justification for the dubious nature of control exhibited throughout the text.

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<sup>725</sup> See Quintilian, *Institutio oratoria*, ed. and trans. Donald A. Russell, 2001, p. 159.

<sup>726</sup> Lambarde, *Eirenarcha*, 1581, D3<sup>r</sup>

### **“Give me my fee!”: Freevill’s Vicious ‘Moot’ and Forensic Argumentation**

Humanist learning provided an educational foundation for instruction at the Inns of Court. Most young men at the Inns also obtained a university education, where they had been taught dialectic and rhetoric through textual engagement. Mordechai Feingold argues that

The most pervasive misconception concerning the seventeenth-century curriculum [at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge] is that it survived and flourished as a relic of medieval scholasticism” and continues to outline the importance of textual, humanist study in the pedagogical practices of the universities.<sup>727</sup>

This humanist pedagogy does not find its ends in university instruction but was embedded within the Inns of Court. Kathy Eden observes that

the law student, like the ancient orator, must know how to identify the controversy in question, invent, arrange, and memorize his arguments, narrate events, prove his points, and refute his opponent, the very skills covered in the rhetorical manuals of Cicero and Quintilian.<sup>728</sup>

That is, the humanist educational practices of adaptation and application of classical ideology and methods of investigation are also a part of the systems of legal training and procedure.

One of the main oral exercises at the Inns was the practice of presenting “moots” or mock-cases. As Wilfrid R. Prest asserts,

Normally the first formal exercise in which students participated would be a moot, which was essentially a more elaborate case argument in the form of a mock trial,

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<sup>727</sup> Mordechai Feingold, “The Humanities”, 1997, p. 212.

<sup>728</sup> Kathy Eden, “Forensic Rhetoric and Humanist Education”, 2017, p. 23. Additionally, Subha Mukherji notes the lack of ‘codification’ in the oral practices (moots) at the Inns in *Law and Representation in Early Modern Drama*, 2006, pp. 14-15.

with two or three utter-barristers or benchers sitting as judges and two students or barristers acting as opposing counsel.<sup>729</sup>

To clarify, the utter-barristers (or inner barristers) and benchers were at a higher level, having passed the bar. Their students would present these moots for their judgement. Moots were sometimes based on common law case presentation, but like all branches of law, they utilise forensic oratory. Christopher W. Brooks describes the discursive nature of moots, writing that

Moots were more interactive forms of aural learning where tricky, even implausible, sets of circumstances were discussed in debates lead by senior members, sometimes including the judges, in order to develop habits of professional reasoning and to allow students to get a feel for what was known as the ‘common erudition’ or ‘common learning’ that constituted the common law.<sup>730</sup>

The communal nature of the Inns allowed for a wealth of literary production, and generations of male coteries engaged in poetic and dramatic works. This is the topic of Jessica Winson’s research into the uses of humanist learning in earlier Tudor entertainments at the Inns of Court. She investigates the translations of classical texts, primarily focusing on Cicero, asserting that these works “assisted members of the Inns in the move from educational to professional life, allowing them to make the skills and materials of their earlier educational experiences useful to this transition”.<sup>732</sup> This is what young men do in their navigation of their urban contexts in Marston’s work.

Inns students’ use of the classics is embedded in the poetic and dramatic productions that circulated between friends and fellows in private manuscripts or as part of the creation of dramatic showcases for the holiday revels, as Winston shows. However, the same use of humanist learning is present in the works outside these wholly private exchanges. Within

<sup>729</sup> Wilfred R. Prest, *The Inns of Court under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts, 1590-1640*, (London: Longman, 1972), p. 117.

<sup>730</sup> Christopher W. Brooks, *Law, Politics and Society in Early Modern England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 16.

<sup>732</sup> Jessica Winston, *Lawyers a Play: Literature, Law, and Politics at the Early Modern Inns of Court, 1558-1581*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 100.

Marston's play itself, the argument presented by Freevill for the benefits of prostitution relies on these methods.

Malheureux, oddly, seems to be called to judge Freevill's *intent* in order to create counter-arguments. He begins on an equal footing as his friend but is unable to argue the contrary. It is noted that they are both 'learned men', so Marston implies that they both would be well versed in argument formation. Malheureux would also be well-versed in exercises of legal forms of argumentation for cases and the strong adherence to forensic modes of inquiry and the rhetorical structure of argument sources from classical manuals of Cicero and Quintilian. However, Malheureux does not utilise these methods. And though oral disputations have their basis in the medieval pedagogical exercises for the study of law and adherence to logic, he also cannot provide persuasive 'logically' formed counterargument. Thus, in his own dramatic works, Marston depicts learned friends and fellows with varying levels of rhetorical mastery. For Freevill, mediation and adaptation (*imitatio*), allows for the *inventio*, of an argument based on both the logical and rhetorical structure, pillars of the educational systems at the Inns. Freevill utilises these in his moot.

The precarious nature of urban masculinity, as shown in this text, is complex; and Freevill's mastery of speech not only allows for control and manipulation of others but depicts the ability for educated gentlemen to 'police' one another in the city environment. In addition, this depiction of young men focuses on the expression of masculine virility, outlines the means by which they were supposed to temper their carnal lusts when faced with the prospects of being good husbandmen, and displays cunning and wit as praiseworthy. The play allows Freevill's deceptions and vicious behaviours to go unpunished and rewards his proclaimed faithfulness and love for Beatrice. However abhorrent his views on femininity and the utility of others in obtaining his desires, Freevill's mastery of legalistic argumentation and rhetorical manipulation is a sign that the educational foundations for men in this period

allow him to navigate the London underworld, legitimise his ‘recreational’ actions, and even police his ‘other self’, his friend.

It has been argued that the excesses of lust challenge the foundations of friendship, which can only be salvaged through repentance—a popular theme of prodigality that proceeds turn of the century city comedies.<sup>733</sup> However, as Donna B. Hamilton has noted, “*The Dutch Courtesan* is primarily a play about language, what it can do, and what it cannot do”.<sup>734</sup> She goes on to argue that “the irrational and the foolish [characters] render language helpless and ineffectual” and, within the play, “the quality of a person’s speech bears a direct relationship to his moral and intellectual capacities.”<sup>735</sup> Thus, it is not the threat of immorality that causes the plot’s unfolding but rather both Freevill’s ability to argue his case in favour of vice and Malheureux’s ineffectual counter-speech. The unhappy friend’s linguistic ineptitude is, therefore, linked to his moral degradation. Freevill, though he has taken part in whoring, is able persuasively to distinguish between his own vicious behaviours and Malheureux’s overwhelming lust. He alters his language to suit the circumstances: when visiting the courtesan, he sees the bawdy house as a means for a ‘healthy’ display of male virility, and even as he is betrothed, he argues for its place:

FREEVILL: Most necessary buildings, Malheureux. Ever since my intention of marriage, I do pray for their continuance.

MALHEUREUX: Loved sir, your reason?

FREEVILL: Marry, lest my house should be made one. I would have married men love the stews as Englishmen love the Low Countries: wish war should be maintained there lest it should come home to their own doors. (I.i.62-68)

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<sup>733</sup> Gustav Cross notes this view in “Marston, Montaigne, and Morality: The Dutch Courtesan Reconsidered”, *English Literary History*, vol. 27, No.1, (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1960), pp. 30-43.

<sup>734</sup> Donna B. Hamilton, “Language as Theme in *The Dutch Courtesan*”, (1972), p. 75.

<sup>735</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 75.

From the onset, he positions himself as both experienced and in transition: his concept of youthful masculine behaviours shows that visiting a brothel is not incongruent with the development of domestic security through marriage. Freevill displays his ability to police himself through his own experiential knowledge; he has used a courtesan, found an honest woman, discarded the former and embraced the latter.

Freevill's case for the necessity and good of prostitution is both mock-encomium and mock-moot, a full logically structured and derived argument but not without dependence on rhetorical learning. He amplifies the 'cause' and subject matter of his argument with copiousness. As Terence Cave writes, Renaissance theorists reinstated the meaning of amplification as "a device used in judicial and demonstrative rhetoric to give weight and substance to an argument or to praise a person or an act: it is the cause which is amplified, rather than the style itself".<sup>737</sup> In his mock-moot, Freevill amplifies the cause for his argument by conjuring the vivid images of previously 'just' women 'brought low' (in both senses of the phrase, of course). This part of his argument is as follows,

A poor, decayed mechanical man's wife, her husband is laid up; may not she *lawfully* be laid down when her husband's only rising is by his wife's falling? A captain's wife wants means, her commander lies in open field abroad; may not she lie in civil arms at home? A waiting gentlewoman, that had wont to take say to her lady, miscarries or so; the court misfortune throws her down; may not the city courtesy take her up?  
(I.i.101-109)

Freevill's obviously jocular assessment of the economic benefits for good women to take up prostitution is, of course, extremely transgressive. His argument runs on a connection between sexual innuendo: a husband is ill (laid up) his woman should be laid down (bedded), a captain is slain in battle (lies in open field) should his wife not lie with others at home? This innuendo

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<sup>737</sup> Terence Cave, *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of Writing in the French Renaissance*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p. 8.

and inversion combine wit with actual economic problems that woman may face in the urban environment. Problematically, of course, their financial gain is then reliant on their sexual dishonour.

It seems as if this joke hinges on the anxieties that orators use their powers for nefarious means. Freevill does not use precedence per se, in that he never cites specific cases (Marston probably knows that this is too exclusionary for audiences beyond the Inns; his play is a commercial enterprise and not a Revel) but rather specific scenarios and individuals as topics of invention.

Finally, Freevill's summary contains all of the aspects of contention that Malheureux may make. In Cicero's *De Inventione*, this is outlined thus, "Furthermore, in the summing-up, as has been said above, you should at times run over your own arguments one by one, and at times *combine the opposing arguments with yours*, which requires greater artistry; and after stating your argument, show how you have refuted the argument which has been made against it. Thus by this brief comparison the memory of the audience is refreshed in regard to both the confirmation and the refutation" (1.99).<sup>739</sup> Freevill, in his moot, pre-empts moralistic counter-arguments, and the kind of maxims that Malheureux could present. He seems keenly aware of the possible 'diversity of opinions' and cites quasi-particular examples of individuals to build his case. That is, when he states, "You will say..." he is anticipating a rival argument that follows in the pattern for logical argumentation in the oral exercises undertaken at the Inns.

*You will say* beasts take no money for their fleshy entertainment. True, because they are beasts, therefore beastly. Only men give to loose, because they are men, therefore manly; and, indeed, wherein should they bestow their money better? (I.i.111-114)

Prest argues that,

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<sup>739</sup> Cicero. *De inventione*, Loeb Classical Library, trans. H. M. Hubbell, (London and Cambridge Massachusetts, 1949), p. 149.

The essence of the inns' exercises was the formulation and debate of a hypothetical case or *set of circumstances* involving one or more controversial questions of law; just as in disputation the university undergraduate maintained a thesis by argument from philosophical and theological authorities, so in 'case-putting' through moots, the Inns of Court student sought to justify his interpretation of the law by citing the maxims, precedents and principles which were the authorities of his craft.<sup>740</sup>

However, it was not just using these authoritative texts and ideas that were important in these moot cases but the rhetorical arrangement of arguments and the skills by which one could interpret and reconfigure positions to fully argue a case. He continues to argue that, "The university declamation, a rhetorical set-piece designed to test the student's fluency and familiarity with classical authors, was roughly equivalent to the *memorisation and recitation* of pleadings drawn up to the cases argued in moots". p. 116 (emphasis my own). But this is not fully the case either; it was not enough to merely 'memorise' and 'recite' but rather to draw upon knowledge from multiple sources (classical and contemporary) to formulate a rhetorically astute and persuasive argument in the case. If anything, Marston uncovers the problems of merely 'reciting' of authorities (though rote memorisation was never a part of the grammar school exercises, the closest might be exercising the use of anecdote as part of the pedagogical exercises of the *Progymnasmata*). This is rudimentary, something learned at grammar school before undertaking the more difficult task of *imitatio*. Malheureux seems to rely on these basic forms of rhetorical practice: he does not directly cite authorial figures, but he relies on sententious speech.

As Laura Gowing finds, in her study of defamation cases concerning female chastity, "Women's sexuality, however neatly it seems to fit into a sexual and economic marketplace, is

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<sup>740</sup> Wilfred R. Prest, *The Inns of Court under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts*, 1972, p. 116 (emphasis my own).



fundamentally a devalued commodity and a waste of money”.<sup>741</sup> However, Freevill’s argument inverts this concept; he argues that there is no better ‘commodity’ to spend money on than in ‘enjoying’ a woman. Malheureux does identify a fallacy in Freevill’s argument. However, he only provides one reason to dispute this. He does not expand upon possible moral objections, including the social codes that it can disrupt considering the formation of domestic household, the sin brought upon women in these positions, the moral corruption of the city. Rather, he focuses on basic immorality: a premise, presumably true and agreed upon *a priori*, and therefore never in dispute. He states, “Know, sir, the strongest argument that speaks / Against the soul’s eternity is lust” (I.i.87-8). Though he states that this is a strong argument, he does not *invent* an argument; he merely provides basic aphorisms to defend this concept. In short, Freevill disputes this premise, imagining circumstances in which prostitution may be “profitable” and his friend, though he identifies the fallacy in this line of argument, cannot offer a complete refutation.

In Abraham Fraunce’s approach to law and argumentation, *The Lawyer’s Logike* (1588), he notes that fallacy is based on an unsound argument where the idea seems to be valid but, “that the reason it is not so is that it yields an unwarranted conclusion”.<sup>742</sup> Though Freevill’s conclusion is unwarranted, his friend cannot adequately defend his stance. For Malheureux, it is commonplace that prostitution should be viewed as a sin. He expects Freevill to identify this fallacy and repent, to show himself as a prodigal, not to argue in favour of immoral behaviour.

Thus, the interaction that proceeds from the mock-moot is subtly structured as basic point-and-counter-point, where Malheureux presents premises but is unable to form an argument in his own defence. For instance, when Malheureux says that prostitution is ‘a

<sup>741</sup> Laura Gowing, “Women, Status and the Popular Culture of Dishonour”, *Lecture: University of Cambridge*, (23 March, 1995) <<https://cambridge.org/core>> p. 228

<sup>742</sup> Abraham Fraunce, *The Lawyer’s Logike The Lawiers Logike, exemplifying the Praecepts of Logike by the Practise of the Common Lawe, by Abraham Fraunce*, (London: Thomas Gubbin, and T. Newman, 1588). Facsimile (Menston, Yorkshire: Menston Scholar Press, 1969), p. 239.

deadly sin', Freevill responds, 'no but 'tis a lively sin, sure!'(I.i.72,73) This interaction also sets up the argument structure for the moot that Freevill presents. The success of this mock-moot is dependent on an understanding of procedural oral exercises at the Inns of Court. Thus, Malheureux posits the systematic questions, though he does not try to tease out a flaw in Freevill's argument. Because of Freevill's anticipation of these counter-points, and Malheureux's inability to *invent* new responses, Freevill's fore-knowledge is effective and his friend's, ineffective. Freevill's friend understands the structure of a moot, understands case creation, and yet is unable to provide a counterargument beyond his moral pontificating. He is not adequately displaying the same method of 'invention'; he only provides premises that Freevill employs, and only comes into the discursive action with his pre-formed judgement: that a case for the proper place of prostitution in the city cannot be made. Freevill's argument itself follows the forensic structure outlined by Quintilian, though it is presented as a 'case' with deductive, logical construction. Quintilian, in the *Institutio Oratoria*, focuses sections on the structure of forensic argument: *divisio* as the starting point, then analysis of the possible alternative opinions, "sufficient acquaintance with the other side of the case" is necessary for operative persuasion (X.v.21), and then the full invention of the argument.<sup>743</sup> Thus in the creation of a rhetorically persuasive argument, one that properly utilises *inventio*, one must project possible opinions and prepare persuasive speech and prepare to 'invent' reactionary points. The declamation, then, is not merely a use of commonplaces but an act of construction dealing with the contentious subject matter. Freevill's mock-moot is rooted not only in considering specific cases (that arise from common-law debates as part of the Inn's pedagogical structure) but in presenting a Humanist-derived declamation based on forensic rhetoric.

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<sup>743</sup> Quintilian. *Institutio oratoria*. Ed. and Trans. Donald A. Russell, (2001), p. 326.

The moots of the Inns were often developed by a pair of students. Malheureux displays his mutual understanding of the formalised structure and goes through the motion of providing a counter-point. He seems to look for the specifics of an argument—what person would stoop so low as to become a prostitute? What person has benefitted from their use? This creates a platform for logical case construction to allow Marston to formulate a humorous, if not persuasive, case for the benefits of a ‘vicious’ trade. In Freevill’s argument, the skilful adaptation of common arguments (the benefits of diligence and hard work, the need for charitable works to help the poverty-stricken, the differences between beasts and men) allows for profitable *inventio*.

Prest notes that, “The system of aural instruction was similar to and doubtless modelled on the scholastic exercises of the medieval universities”.<sup>744</sup> Subha Mukherji succinctly addresses the problem of this argument, stating first that “...the legal tradition itself developed a resistance to acknowledging the fundamentally rhetorical character of legality, going back to Plato’s distinction between performance and law, or rather, between verbal performance and the theatre of justice which was meant to persuade truth beyond artifice”. However, she goes on to state that “...common law was based on precedence [not the Roman concept of ‘authority of the text’], and therefore implicitly on the logic of probability. But...these traditions [rhetoric and logic] were less segregated in English legal thinking than they might seem to have been”.<sup>745</sup> Thus, it was not just using specific common-law cases, nor the ‘logic of probability’ that was important in these moot cases but the rhetorical arrangement of arguments and the skills by which one could interpret and reconfigure positions to fully argue a case, as Mukherji goes on to argue. True, the concept of ‘artifice’ was (and still is) a site of anxiety in the formation of arguments but it is imperative to argument construction and persuasion. Is this ‘proximity and rivalry between law and

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<sup>744</sup> Wilfred R. Prest, *The Inns of Court under Elizabeth I and the Early Stuarts*, (1972), p. 116.

<sup>745</sup> Subha Mukherji, *Law and Representation in Early Modern Drama*, (2006), pp. 4-5.

rhetoric’ connected to the ways in which Marston incorporates legal structures for argumentation in his theatrical work? I think that the roots of forensic argumentation (and the style of encomium) are as critical as the ‘logical’ structure to the persuasiveness of Freevill’s moot. Freevill’s style of argument, which invents a ‘logical’ argument from the illogical *and* ‘eloquently’ evokes *pathos* for the plight of prostitutes (however mockingly), far surpasses his friend’s own counterarguments. Freevill does not use specific cases but specific *circumstances* on which to base his argument: men brought low, women brought low, and their need to turn to prostitution for their survival. This persuasiveness, based on humanist and scholastic training, can be used to argue for the place of ‘vice’ in the early modern city context. The transgressive possibilities of these skills allow for young male friends to justify their ‘enjoyment’ of the ‘wanton’ pleasures that the city has made available—provided that they keep their passions in check.

In the anonymous *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, there is a focus on the *interpretation* of the case given by the ‘adversaries’ as a strategy for developing profitable arguments:

The interpretation of our adversaries is either *no interpretation*, or is unreasonable, unjust, impracticable [sic.] or inconsistent with past or subsequent interpretations, or is in disagreement with the common law or with the generally binding rules of law or with previous decisions”. (II. ix. 14)<sup>746</sup>

There is, obviously, a hermeneutic process in arguing legal cases: from the evidence and arguments presented one must infer and understand motivations and intent. Malheureux infers that Freevill is of tainted moral fibre and that his intentions are corrupted. His interpretation is based on the perceived intentions of his friend, who sees the use of prostitutes as a healthy expression of male virility—which he concludes to have its place in the formation of masculinity. This is as disgusting to Malheureux as it is to the modern

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<sup>746</sup> Anon., [Cicero attr.], *Rhetorica Ad Herennium*, Book III, trans. Harry Caplan, (1964), p. 83.

audience or reader. This opens the ethical question of the use of skilful argumentation the mock-moot presented: with his bombastic rhetorical flourishes, and ‘logical’ inferences, Freevill is able to offer a transgressive view of ‘vice’ in the city. His argument and subsequent actions imply that by indulging in certain vices as a young man will enable one to fully appreciate a proper woman for marriage. Using prostitutes, then is a display of healthy masculine virility to him. He implies that it is linked to ‘coming of age’.

Freevill argues that Malheureux’s insistence that prostitution is vicious is unfounded; he finds the use of prostitutes as unjust and unreasonable to be a *misinterpretation* of their possible good in society. There is a sense of disconnect in the hermeneutic process as Malheureux is unwavering in his opinion. He bases all of his understanding and judgements on unwavering moral precepts and basic aphorisms. Indeed, as Patricia M. Crawford succinctly explains,

Although ideally men should not visit brothels, in practice the use of prostitutes by unmarried men was condoned. Reforming efforts [i.e., Blackwell] were fruitless. There was always an argument that had circulated since ancient times, that only the existence of prostitution allowed other women to walk the streets in safety.<sup>747</sup>

Freevill’s argument outlines all of these features (except the final one, as he argues not that prostitution saves good women from sexual violence but particularly the virtue of wives and the domestic household). It may seem that Malheureux’s interpretation of his intention of viciousness is correct, but he does not understand the place of brothels, as Freevill has constructed it, as a site of masculine virility. He does not counter Freevill’s argument that the use of prostitutes would inform one about how to distinguish between a ‘common’ woman and a wife. As Marston turns the argument on his head so effectively, he is able to ‘prove’ that there is a place for prostitution through Freevill. He claims that they are ‘charity’ cases

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<sup>747</sup> Patricia M. Crawford, *Blood, Bodies and Families in Early Modern England*, (London: Longman, 2004), p. 60.

and benefit young men as a means for expressing their virility and satiating their carnal passions. Freevill's subtle approach to the argument ("Alas, good creatures, what would you have them do?") is an attempt to make Malheureux 'attentive, receptive, and well-disposed' to him; To bring his friend into the debate so as to 'arrive at the same vantage point in the task of speaking'. (I.vii.10)<sup>748</sup>

Freevill also adapts his argument to provide a counterpoint to the moral ideals that Malheureux superficially alludes to. "Do you know no alderman would pity such a woman's case? Why, is charity grown a sin? or relieving the poor and impotent an offence?" (I.i.109-110). Thus, the sin of fornication is reduced by the call to be charitable to those 'brought low' by misfortune (pun intended). He follows this with a rhetorical device of ascending order of significance, a gradation of importance. The selling of one's 'body' is bad but not as much as the sale of the soul, "They sell their bodies; do not better persons sell their souls? Nay, since all things have been sold—honour, justice, faith—nay, even God himself" (I.i.124-127). As Freevill knows of his friend's flat moral argument, he appeals to 'morality' to punctuate it. He is bringing Malheureux to a 'fusion of horizons', trying to make him see the 'moral' good in prostitution and comparing the perceived vice to more serious sins.

Proper education and 'keeping good fellows' would help to cultivate the *vir bonus*. The good man is in control of himself, provides service to the state, and is expected to use his education properly. Educational systems projected the use of humanist learning for these purposes, and the exercises become a means by which to navigate one's social experience, textual and linguistic. Marston integrates the problems of misuse of these skills, not only in Freevill's appropriation of rhetorical and 'logical' skill in justifying acts of transgression but in Malheureux's inability to correctly apply these exercises in his navigation of the city. As most critics argue that Marston focuses on Malheureux's dependence on passions, I also

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<sup>748</sup> Ibid., p. 2.

contend that his inability to use his educational skills augments his moral failings. His inability for *imitatio* and his inadequacy in using specific circumstances as means for *inventio* are both imperative to understanding his later ‘fall’ from morality. That is, he does not bring past and contemporary aphorisms and examples into his immediate context, he merely hides behind sententious repetition. Without his rigid and uninventive adherence to aphoristic moral ideas, the reality of his moral incontinence is made all the more vivid. He builds a dam of phrases, but at the first sign of stress, the sight of Franceschina, his pretences burst wide open. Freevill ends his moot with a rhetorical flourish alluding to the legal nature of his speech; he knows that he is persuasive—even in a mock-moot—exclaiming, “*Give me my fee!*” (I.i.98-134)

### **“We strive not to instruct”: Subverting Prodigal Narratives?**

*The Dutch Courtesan* is deeply invested in the anxieties of vicious behaviours and the possibility of repercussion. If it does not ‘strive to instruct’, the arguments presented may still *persuade* as it is aimed at an audience who would be navigating the city environment that it so topically presents. There is a clear air of verisimilitude created in this play—performed at Blackfriars theatre, dealing with the unsavoury exploits and entertainments enjoyed by friends and fellows in the city. This audience may look for possible justifications for their own unsavoury urban pleasures. *The Dutch Courtesan* was performed by The Children of the Queen’s Revels, and Lucy Munro’s extensive study of the company addresses the implications of boys’ companies depictions of youthful gallants.<sup>751</sup> Though she does not focus exclusively on Marston, she analyses the possible threats to conventional patriarchal systems in drama. The Blackfriars theatre was situated adjacent to the Inns of Court, providing an audience of young

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<sup>751</sup> Munro primarily looks at this in her third chapter, “‘Proper gallants wordes’: comedy and the theatre audience” in *Children of the Queen’s Revels: A Jacobean Theatre Repertory*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), pp. 55-96.

men like the types that Marston portrays. The Inns of Court men who may constitute part of Marston's audience would be familiar with forms of argument construction as well as immorality within the city. Their own abilities for manipulative rhetoric and the need for self-control are paramount to understanding the ultimate outcomes of the play. Freevill is able to display power over both rhetorical argument and legal retribution. In other words, he is able to bend both argumentative modes and to destabilise the roles of justices—indeed he displays his own power over the situations—to suit his own desires. His education and social standing allow for both justifications of his own actions and power to shift legal outcomes that suit his purposes. As the youthful protagonists of Marston's play are performed by young boys, the audience, then, can participate in the mimetic representations of their own possible follies and vices.

The narratives of prodigality became popular at a time of “economic strain, religious upheaval, and uncertainty”, as Richard Helgerson argues (in the 1580s). Thus, this discourse first begins as a way for the older (humanist) generations to warn of the problems of ‘prodigality’ in the younger. As a result, the literary and dramatic productions of the time seem to have appropriated the tropes of prodigality (and the pattern of initial waywardness in the face of strong experiential warnings), resulting in a final repentance on the part of the ‘prodigal’. However, these texts were specifically moralistic. In this play, R. W. Ingram argues that “The basic situation is a common one: essentially it is the morality play plot of youthful ignorance—the simple Lusty *Juvenutus*—narrowly saved from sin. Malheureux, however, is far more sophisticated than such a young hero, and Marston's play is richer and subtler than its prototype”.<sup>753</sup>

Though this play does not ‘instruct’ nor offer a moral, it deals with a more problematic form of the ‘prodigal’—one that does not repent. Richard Helgerson outlines the

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<sup>753</sup> R. W. Ingram, *John Marston*, (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1978), p. 116.



main humanist ideal for education was that young gentlemen would learn oration and style as a means to begin their lives as a service to the state. The desired outcomes of humanist instruction are set out in William Kempe's *The Vtilitie of Schooling*; proper education will fortify a nation lead by learned men. He proclaims, "They for want of learning can haue no lawes, no ciuill pollicie, no honest meanes to liue by, no knowledge of Gods mercie and fauour, and consequently no saluation nor hope of comfort. Wee by the meanes of learning haue and may haue all these things."

The text engages with the themes of prodigality outside a desire to 'instruct'. Any concept of the wayward youth is addressed between friends and not enacted by an older generation's admonition of the follies of youth. The 'folly' within this text is, unsettlingly, figured as Malheureux's lack of control and active manipulation—his inadequacy at performing the very features of urban masculinity that Aughterson rightly points out as frighteningly transgressive. The problem in this play, as with *Every Man in his Humour*, lies in a hermeneutic understanding of intention. Luke Wilson investigates the connection between law and theatre in the period, stating that "understanding early modern English theatre and law as institutions which, despite deep and abiding dissimilarities, show a common preoccupation with representations of human action, representations shaped by evolving articulations of intention".<sup>760</sup> While Ed Knowell and Wellbred in *Every Man In His Humour* know each other's minds and intentions, Malheureux, in Marston's play, misinterprets the 'intention' of Freevill's use of the prostitute Franceschina. Freevill seems to understand his friend quite well; however, Malheureux (unhappy, indeed) cannot read the 'rationality', manipulative control of others, and outward appearances that his friend displays. As in prodigality texts, he seems to be caught up in what the play seems to suggest is an *illusion* of vicious behaviour (though we, as modern readers would argue otherwise, Freevill

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<sup>760</sup> Luke Wilson, *Theatres of Intention: Drama and the Law in Early Modern England*, (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. 4.

clearly acts viciously throughout the text): Freevill's visits to a courtesan do not make a mark upon his character (he is still able to marry an honest woman), his use of the brothel is depicted as a 'reasonable' action with tempered affection and the knowledge that this kind of arrangement is temporary in the progression to manhood. However, Malheureux reads his friend's actions, initially, as threatening due to their transgression of moral and religious codes of the time. His moralising is wholly dependent on precepts of 'correct' behaviours; it is static, and he is unable to develop an argument for the supremacy of his 'moral codes' beyond the use of moral *sententiae*. If, as Donna Hamilton claims, "the quality of a person's speech bears a direct relationship to his moral and intellectual capacities" within the play, then the ineffectual nature of Malheureux's speech is a mark of his superficial adherence religious and social morality.<sup>761</sup> His language is all pretence; it is all superficial application of norms; therefore, his swift moral failings signifies his creation of mere linguistic illusion.

Freevill is indeed depicted as a roguish character, but in the satire of the play, his language tempers his vice because he is able to speak persuasively in order to legitimise his actions. He is shown, disturbingly, to know the manner by which to use a brothel, its limitations; he knows to control emotive forces and lust (unlike Malheureux) in a way that Franceschina can be used to satisfy his sexual desires without making him lose his level-headedness. One who is temperate of body: self-sacrificing, chaste, and honourable, this is what makes for a good wife, and Freevill not only knows this from the onset but is able to ensure that he gains both the use of Franceschina and a model wife in Beatrice. This ideology, displayed in conduct manuals of the time deals with the finding of a chaste and obedient.<sup>762</sup> It is through his overtly masculine control of speech that he is able to act in an abhorrently roguish manner, and face no retribution or rebuke.

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<sup>761</sup> Donna B Hamilton, "Language as Theme in *The Dutch Courtesan*, 1972, p. 75.

<sup>762</sup> Merry Weisner famously considers, the "chaste, silent and obedient" ideals in *Women and Gender in Early Modern Europe*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).

Because Marston does not make Freevill into a prodigal, in need of repentance for vicious behaviour, he is (like Jonson) responding to admonition literature that precedes this play; he is reconfiguring an idea of masculine control in an environment of possible decline. Instead of a repentant sinner, Freevill is a rational, controlling, virile youth. This model of manhood is juxtaposed with the 'unhappy friend' who is made repentant through the text but for very different reasons. Malheureux's inability to control his lust and overwhelming emotion for the courtesan defines his hypocrisy. Malheureux accompanies Freevill under the thinly veiled precept that he will, "...make her loathe the shame she's in"(I.i.159). He claims that he will not be persuaded by Freevill's 'humorous' argument in favour of courtesans and the existence of brothels in the first scene. However, he is shown to be unequal in wit in this argument, as he is unequal in 'temperament' to his rational, calculating friend. He falls in love/lust with Franceschina at the first sight of her,

That I should love a strumpet! I, a man of snow!

Now, shame forsake me, whither I have fallen!

A creature of public use! My friend's love too!

To live to be the talk of men, a shame

To my professed virtue!...(II.i.82-86)

Through the exchanges in this first scene (examined in more detail below), Malheureux shows through his actions that he cannot temper his lusts, just as he cannot argue effectively against Freevill. He is easily persuaded, led, and becomes truly vicious in his overwhelming lustful desires. Thus, instead of an equally matched pair of friends, this play shows a need for repentance in the context of an inability to control speech and situations. Shockingly, it seems as if one is unable to keep a rational, level-headed knowledge of the 'proper use' of others, he is unequal to his friend as a counterpoint. This is not to say that this is, in any way, a depiction of a 'virtuous' partner in a friendship. It is exceptionally unsettling that Freevill

escapes admonition through his active manipulation of others and that Malheureux's inability to do so somehow causes his punishment.

This does not prove that Malheureux is a 'bad' friend in affectionate terms, though it proves that he cannot be an equal friend to Freevill: he lacks cunning and the capacity for inventive thought. Upon first sight of Franceschina, Malheureux quickly dismisses his previous assertions of his own virtue: his feeble response to Freevill's witty argument in favour of courtesans and brothels. But this 'virtue', as he so claimed, is not his primary worry. His primary concern is that she is his 'friend's love too'. Secondly, he is not worried about the corruption of his 'virtue' but that he would be "the talk of men", that his image would be tainted by the lust for Franceschina. He first addresses the problem that she is *Freevill's* courtesan. "Shall I not offend the vow-bond of our friendship?"(II.i.97), he asks Freevill. To which his reply is, "What, to affect that which thy friend affected? By heaven, I resign her freely. The creature and I must grow off". (II.i.98-99) Because of Freevill's impending marriage to a 'respectable' woman, Beatrice, he 'resigns' her to his friend. Not only that but he has little emotive connection left—she is a mere courtesan, a 'lover', not a wife. His understanding of her 'position' and his control of both his lust and emotion prove that he is a response to prodigality thematics. It is not 'prodigal' in Marston's play to visit a brothel, to engage in what may be seen (from a Christian, moralistic point of view) as 'vicious'. The true decline is that of a man who cannot control his emotive self, who is not governed by rationality.

Malheureux's lust for Franceschina soon overwhelms him. His speech takes a notable turn, from stable to exceedingly unruly. His speech at the beginning of the play is marked by individual statements of what constitutes virtue or sin. He says of Freevill's fornication, "Well, 'tis a sin".(I.i.78). He even makes a statement about the 'unruliness' that he is overcome with in lust, in trying to persuade Freevill to forgo his visit to the brothel; "Know,

sir, the strongest argument that speaks / Against the soul's eternity is lust, That wise man's folly and the fool's wisdom".(I.i.87-89). Not only is he ineffective in this speech, his manner of speech changes for the worse as he falls into the vices he so fervently rebuked at the start. After Malheureux begins to lust after Franceschina, he speaks in heightened, 'emotive' terms, unable to control his lustful appetite and overwhelming desires. When he first sees her he exclaims, "Now cold blood defend me! What a proportion afflicts me!"(I.ii.79-80). And when he begins to lust after her, he claims, "I must love her!" and "Blush not, faint breast!" (I.ii.143, 145). This proves that his inability to match Freevill in argumentation in the first scene is indicative of his inadequacies in the realm of rational thought and control of himself and the situations he encounters. He uses speech that should be reserved for *actual* love in his interaction with the courtesan. Familiar tropes of servitude and resignation of will at her behest will become the catalyst for Malheureux's need for repentance. When the courtesan finds that Freevill has 'resigned' her to his friend, because of his impending marriage to the respectable Beatrice, the courtesan reacts in an emotive frenzy. She is not in control of anything, and Malheureux becomes similarly ineffectual when he gives in to his lust for her. Franceschina devises a plot to murder Freevill for leaving her and elicits the aid of Malheureux. This was never a possibility, for however incontinent Malheureux's speech has become, he is still depicted as faithful to his friend, in the end. Although Malheureux 'must have her' he would not go as far as to murder his friend and confesses the plot to him.<sup>763</sup> Freevill then "suggests" a diabolical counter-plot to feign his death and, thereby, allow Malheureux to 'enjoy' Franceschina. But Freevill's true plan is to make the courtesan pay for the murder plot, and Malheureux learns his lesson as he states, "...the fool's whip, seize thee!" asserting, "...I'll be thy friend but not thy vice's..."(IV.ii.31-32). Freevill, then, shows his complete control of both argumentative speech, and the manipulation of situations and

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<sup>763</sup> Emphasis my own.

others. He is the tempered, rational form of ‘masculinity’ in the early modern city context, and for this he is triumphant. Malheureux, on the other hand, could not prove equal to his friend, he was no Knowell to Freevill’s Wellbred (or visa versa). The uneven match shows that the only way in which a bond of fidelity can be fully reconciled is through Malheureux’s repentance, by making him the ‘prodigal friend’ who faces punishment and admonition for his inability to assert rationalistic masculinity within the context of the friendship.

Phillip J. Finklepearl asserts that this play is “a story about love and friendship [that] becomes one about guilt and redemption”.<sup>764</sup> However, this play clearly subverts admonition and prodigality texts; it is not fully concerned with “redemption” for vicious acts. The play is concerned with temperance in a city context full of debauchery and gentlemanly self-policing as a possible justified action. In this way, it is not an exemplum, as Finklepearl states, nor a morality play but a city comedy that opens up questions of the ethical behaviours of London’s well-educated and elite mal populous, their place within the city and their ability to both manipulate and control others (as well as arguing justifications for their own vicious behaviours). Malheureux does speak in “sanctimonious sententiae”, but it is his unwavering adherence to quoting these verbatim that does not allow for any change, any independent thought, that becomes his downfall. It is either black or white; he cannot argue from the grey area of moral questioning. Additionally, his redemption does not lie in seeking forgiveness; his friend’s control of the situation. Individuals who act viciously, but are able to construct persuasive arguments to validate their actions, will ultimately go unpunished. This points to anxiety about the place of young gentlemen within the Inns of Court (and, thereby, in the city of London). The elite, educated gentlemen could not only become ‘laws unto themselves’, but the justification of their vicious behaviours soon became a mark of both their manipulative skills and their social standing.

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<sup>764</sup> Philip J. Finklepearl, *John Marston of the Middle Temple: An Elizabethan Dramatist in His Social Setting*, (Cambridge Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 202.

Though comedic in its ending, and humorous in sub-plot, this play is tremendously unsettling for multiple reasons. Both the courtesan and Freevill's betrothed, Beatrice, are stifled and controlled by the parameters of male friendship. Franceschina faces severe retribution but her exclamation, "...Torture, torture your fill, / For me am worse than hanged; me ha' lost my will".(V.iii.57-58). Additionally, there is the idea that the prodigality theme is reconfigured within the play, not as repentance for 'sins' against others but as repentance for being ineffective at displays of control and manipulation, and for being at the mercy of one's emotions and overwhelmed by malformed desires. Malheureux does not go along with a plot to betray his friend; he cannot obtain Franceschina without pandering to her lust for revenge.

### **Mimetic 'Vice': Rhetorical Strategies of Gallants and Cony-Catchers**

In Robert Greene's address to the gentlemen readership of *A Disputation Between a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher* (1592)..., he states, "I have here laid open the wily wisdom of overwise courtezans, that with their cunning can draw on, not only poor novices but such as hold themselves masters of their occupation".<sup>765</sup> The 'disputation' that follows seeks to prove, in the arguments presented between Laurence, a Foist (thief/cutpurse) and Nan, a Traffic (prostitute), "whether a whore or a thief is most prejudicial". This 'disputation' highlights the mimetic nature of fictional argumentations of vice: in both representations of educated city gallants *and* London's 'low life' social networks. To decide which criminal craft is more detrimental is also to decide which argument is more persuasive. The rhetorical techniques that Greene employs in this fictional disputation are derived from his extensive educational background. More so, the parallels between the efficacious rhetoric

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<sup>765</sup> Robert Greene, *A Disputation Between a Hee Conny-catcher, and a Shee Conny-catcher... Cony-Catchers and Bawdy Baskets: An Anthology of Elizabethan Low Life*, ed. Gamini Salgado, (Middlesex, England: Penguin, 1972), p. 268. Also see Robert Greene, *A disputation, betweene a hee conny-catcher, and a shee conny-catcher...* (London: 1592), Henry E. Huntington Library, Early English Books Online <eebo.chadwyck.com> Accessed November 12, 2013.

used by learned, elite men in the city context and the enclosed systems of exchange and persuasive prowess of the vicious are clear in this mutual form of ‘disputation’. Just as Freevill argues for the benefit of prostitutes, so Greene’s fictional criminals argue for their superiority in vice. In both forms of entertainment, the creation of forensic arguments is a site of moral and social subversion.

This is not a new concept, Erasmus’ famous mock-encomium *The Praise of Folly* (1511) is one prototype for this kind of witty subversion. However, the arguments made in both Greene’s cony-catching pamphlets and Marston’s play highlight the problematic features of arguing for vicious behaviours—they are entertaining, but there is prevailing anxiety that argumentative manipulation would allow privileged networks, connected through language, to subvert the law, social codes, and moral ideals.

In his own mock-epideictic oratory, Cocledemoy employs a humanist practice which not only supports Freevill’s argument style but also suggests the affinity between forensic oratory in use by Inns of Court men with the humanist education that so often precedes and informs their instructional debates. Marston uses these same techniques to display the similarities between argumentative persuasion and deceptive trickery. Cocledemoy becomes a representative for the criminal activities of the London underground, and his use of rhetorical technique enhances the mimesis of argumentation and rhetorical prowess for its misuse in defence of devious behaviours in the city environment. I am not the first to notice the connection between Cocledemoy’s language and Freevill’s equally problematic moot. R. W. Ingram notes that “Freevill’s mock defence of brothels is matched by Cocledemoy’s equally scintillating but more straightforward disquisition about bawds”.<sup>766</sup> But this is not just a representation of two different ways of praising vicious behaviours but two forms of

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<sup>766</sup> R. W. Ingram, *John Marston*, 1978, p. 123.



persuasive arguments that stem from an educated playwright's own reconfiguration of rhetorical forms.

Just as the merry magistrate pardons Brainworm in Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour*, so Cocledemoy escapes any and all repercussions for his vicious behaviours. Brainworm acts as a manipulator in service to his master, and Cocledemoy is a mirror-image of the gentleman Freevill. His mastery of manipulation, for the purposes of 'jest', is also linked to the control and policing of the pseudo-Puritan (and scrounger, aspiring social-climber, diluter of his wine, and self-proclaimed member of the 'Family of Love') Mulligrub. As the elite networks of individuals are able to police themselves, so are the networks of men in the London underbelly (though it may be disputed, and rightly so, if Cocledemoy and Mulligrub represent a 'network' or a mere rivalry). As Philip J. Finklepearl observes, "In his chastisement of the passionate, hypocritical, dishonest, and antisocial Puritan, Cocledemoy—the foulmouthed companion to whores and bawds whose very name sounds like an obscene pun—seems to be righting the balance of nature. Freevill's function in the main plot is similar".<sup>767</sup> However, it is their language that links them, from mock-moot to mock-encomium; their rhetorical skills that allow for their mastery of others. As Finklepearl goes on to say, "Even before we see how Freevill and Cocledemoy function in the play, we notice the similarity of their long, witty defenses [sic.] of whores and bawds in successive scenes in the first act".<sup>768</sup> He describes this as a 'worldly acceptance of the role of sex' in opposition to the 'pretensions of purity' and hypocrisy found in Malheureux and Mulligrub. However, it does not seem that Marston is adhering so closely to Montaigne's ideas (the source for concepts about loose speech and sexual encounters within the play). Malheureux's 'purity' cannot be argued and his approach to the necessity of sexual action is equally indefensible. In the end, this is not a meditation on the proper roles of sex in the personal development of a

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<sup>767</sup> Philip J. Finklepearl, *John Marston of the Middle Temple: An Elizabethan Dramatist in His Social Setting*, (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1969), p. 214.

<sup>768</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 215.

man, nor even a contemplation on the possible place of prostitution in society; rather, this play is concerned with the uses of persuasive argumentation—sometimes to support transgressive or even vicious behaviours.

Cocledemoy's mock-encomium of the bawd Mary Faugh is an expression of the same skilful rhetorical mastery as Freevill's moot. He also provides an air of verisimilitude, stating that Mary Faugh will probably die in Bridewell, which, as Laura Gowing notes, was "London's house of correction, which had its own court, where those picked up for vagrancy, prostitution or fornication were summarily questioned, whipped and imprisoned" and where governors aimed to police this 'petty' crime (though the success of this may be in question).<sup>769</sup> He begins his praise, exclaiming, "I'll make an oration, I, in praise of thy most courtly-in-fashion and most pleasurable function, I". (I.ii.26-27) The 'oration' is copious in the description of the virtues (figured as commodities) of both the bawd and her 'wares' (i.e., prostitutes). Garrett Sullivan has described the play in association with urban commerce, stating, that from the very start Cocledemoy's mock-encomium on the benefit of brothels "illustrates the commercialization of sexual activity that we readily associate with city comedy: virginity and modesty are reified as 'rare gems' and are thus commodities; the brothel is metaphorized [sic.] as a shop".<sup>770</sup>

Cocledemoy's rhetorical arrangement and invention differs from the forensic argument that Freevill makes. However, it functions to support the 'logic' of Freevill's argument in copious eloquence. His lengthy oration praises the profession of a bawd as one who sells the finest commodities and makes her money through great men's pleasure. He states,

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<sup>769</sup> Laura Gowing, *Common Bodies: Women, Touch and Power in Seventeenth-century England*, (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2003), p. 13. Also, Ian w. Archer notes in *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), p. 231, that there was a multitude of reasons why prostitution was pardoned at times, and how this initiative was not as successful as was hoped.

<sup>770</sup> Garrett A. Sullivan, Jr., "'All Things Come into Commerce': Women, Household Labor, and the Spaces of Marston's *The Dutch Courtesan*", *Renaissance Drama*, New Series, vol. 27, ed. Mary Beth Rose, (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1998), p. 20.

List then; a bawd: first for her profession or vocation, it is most worshipful of all the twelve companies; for as that trade is most honourable that sells the best commodities—as the draper is more worshipful than the pointmaker, the silkman more worshipful than the draper, and the goldsmith more honourable than both, little Mary—so the bawd above all. Her shop has the best ware, for where these sell but cloth, satins, and jewels, she sells divine virtues, as virginity, modesty, and such rare gems, and those not like a petty chapman, by retail but like a great merchant, by wholesale. Wa, ha, ho! And who are her customers? Not base corn-cutters or sow-gelders but most rare wealthy knights and most rare bountiful lords are her customers. Again, whereas no trade or vocation profiteth but by the loss and displeasure of another—as the merchant thrives not but by the licentiousness of giddy l and unsettled youth; the lawyer but by the vexation of his client, the physician but by the maladies of his patient—only my smooth-gummed bawd lives by others' pleasure, and only grows rich by others' rising. (I.ii.30-50)

Cocledemoy's commodification of prostitutes connects to Freevill's argument that there is no better commodity than women for the young gentlemen of the city, "...wherein should they bestow their money better? In land, the title may be cracked; in houses, they may be burnt; in apparel, 'twill wear' in wine, alas for pity but short". (I.i.114-117). Though he goes on to pun that they will give you something that shall 'stick with you as long as you live' (i.e., 'the French pox'), his initial commodification of courtesans focuses on the same 'rare jewels' that they become. The commodification of women's bodies is material connection that further supports Freevill's argument in addition to using of the same kind of rhetorical amplification. To complete the mirrored oration, Cocledemoy ends with a classical flourish (like Freevill's 'give me my [lawyer's] fee'). He ends with the classical (Roman) 'I have spoken', that is, "*Dixi, Mary*". (I.ii.56)

Learning and vice, as in the pamphlets of Robert Greene, are deeply connected in Marston's work. Wit in the reconfiguration of ideas to fit his contemporary circumstances not only links him to the (presumed) educated audience members at Blackfriars who may take part in the more unsavoury entertainments that the city offers but also structures his arguments in a recognisable manner, presenting a moot and a mock-encomium. Within these structures, the arguments presented to the audience are not only recognisable, they can be understood as a manipulation of rhetorical forms for the promotion and justification of vice. Freevill and Cocledemoy's persuasiveness within the play depicts the use of argument structure and case construction that are part of the educational processes at the Inns but for decidedly different ends. Eric Collum claims that "Legal language was essentially a dead language spoken only by professional class whose members were often portrayed in Jacobean drama as vomiting forth a flood of indecipherable legal terminology, so that legal language seems more obscurantism and cant—at times rather more like alchemical jargon than serious professional discourse".<sup>771</sup> However, bound up with this exclusionary language in Marston's works is the idea that forensic and epideictic rhetoric can provide equally problematic use of education for the support of clearly unethical (in the case of Freevill) and illegal (in the case of Cocledemoy) practices. Cocledemoy not only uses disguise to pilfer from and downright trick Mulligrub, he also proves to be a chameleon in use of linguistic forms. This ability to alter one's language to fit the circumstances presented is at the heart of the pedagogical exercises stemming from grammar school and carried through higher education. Though he presents a character form (the deceptive 'city jester'—not unlike the wily servant) in this comedy, his mirrored language also indicates Marston's abilities to focus on the ethical problems of persuasion—when he gives up the 'jest', Mulligrub is facing the most severe form of legal retribution. He is not merely made aware of his follies but faces a terrifying

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<sup>771</sup> Eric Collum, "'Sinister Shifts' and 'Secret Exceptions': Early Modern Legal Hermeneutics and John Day's *Law-Tricks*", *EIRC*, 28.2 (Winter, 2002) p. 289.

outcome bordering on a ‘tragic’ end to the play. The anxiety about rhetorical and logical argumentation, as well as a manipulation of circumstances, is that those utilising these skills for vicious behaviours could also use them for evil. Though I still assert that Freevill is not a Vice character within the play, his actions and use of linguistic manipulation are (equal to those of Cocledemoy) perilously close.

Though Cocledemoy acts alone in his vicious ‘jests’, he provides a link between the networks of gentleman knaves in the city and the fellowships forged in London underworld. The mirrored language between Freevill and this ‘witty city companion’ makes clear that rhetorical prowess allows for both the manipulation of others and the ability to police situations.

Also mirrored within the play is the concept of policing those who can be manipulated. As Trysefew explains the outcome of Malheureux trial, and his inability to provide evidence for his case, he also recounts the verdict for Mulligrub’s case. In both, the ‘facts’ of the situations are not fully known, but the inability to successfully argue their cases (with the addition of inept jurors and justice) is a testament to how effectively they have been manipulated. Trysefew states that it was ‘suspicion’ that brought Mulligrub to trial,

A cloak was stolen; that cloak he had; he had it,  
Himself confessed be force. The rest of his defence  
The choler of a justice wronged in wine—  
Joined with malignance of some hasty jurors,  
Whose wit was lighted by the justice’ nose,  
The knave was cast.  
But, Lord, to hear his moan, his prayers, his wishes,  
His *zeal ill-timed*, and his *words unpitied*,  
Would make a dead man rise and smile,

Whilst he observed how fear can make men vile. (V.ii.116-124)

Mulligrub's protestations are ineffectual; his words are 'unpitied' because he cannot convey his case with any element of forensic rhetoric, and only with 'ill-timed' attempts at evoking *pathos*. Here, not only is his sentence severe but the legitimacy of the court jurors is sharply called into question. It seems that in this play, Marston emphasises that the 'right' judges should be individuals with an abundance of wit and persuasive skill (i.e., Freevill and Cocledemoy). They are able to police their friend and fellow respectively, they come to a more 'just' punishment for both, as their own transgressive behaviours are not punished but rather, rewarded.

In addition, Freevill's moot and Cocledemoy's mock-encomium mediate the perceived distance between university pedagogy and legal training and London's underground. Marston is astutely aware of the perception and inferences that can be drawn by his audience. Gentlemen audience members could recognise and interpret the use of these skills for alternative purposes, to justify vicious behaviours and manipulate legal outcomes, and their own power through education, social standing, and network formation. This is not to say that Marston condones the use of different forms of persuasion to enact or support vicious behaviours but the ends of the play. The ends are, of course, the last-minute salvation of Malheureux and Mulligrub, the severe punishment of Franceschina, and the happy marriage of Freevill to the perfect Beatrice. These outcomes support the power of wit and argumentation over those unable to match these skills in networks of men.

Jessica Winston argues that "... the literary culture of the Inns was bound up with, energized by, and responsive to transformations in early modern political and legal culture, especially changes in the legal profession and related transformations in the professional and career opportunities of members. In other words, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries,

literature served as an extracurricular activity, an escape”.<sup>772</sup> Though literary production may be an ‘escape’, it was also fundamental in the creation of rhetorical arguments in support of the pedagogical exercises at the Inns. It is not possible to separate Humanist learning from the legal profession, just as, the works of Marston and his legally educated contemporaries incorporate aspects of their law training into their dramatic productions. From the Prologue, Marston sets out his real argument. It is not about ethical repentance or even the difference between a courtesan and a wife; rather it is about making judgements and speaking with sound reason and persuasive wit. He beseeches the audience, “Think, and then speak: ’tis rashness, and not wit, / To speak what is in passion, and not judgment, fit”. (13-14) Marston wants the audience to judge the play in the same way that Malheureux should judge the arguments that are presented to him. He argues without wit; he is rash to cite mere aphorisms and rash to act against these same precepts when faced with his own lusty passion. This is his downfall, and the audience should not display this same folly.

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<sup>772</sup> Winston, *Lawyers a Play*, (2016), p. 3

## CONCLUSION

### Hermeneutics and Textual Friendship

In the Proheme to *The booke Named the Gouvernour*, Elyot states that his work is the “[r]esidue of my studye and labours” (Chapter XI, ii).<sup>773</sup> In the same way, Jonson in his *Discoveries*, speaks of his ideas as “arising from his own reading”. He self-consciously transforms the ideas in this commonplace collection, imbuing them with his style and wit. Interestingly, some authors choose to obfuscate their reliance on sources and their reconfiguration. Montaigne, for instance, writes in the dedication to the reader of his *Essais*, “Here I want to be seen in my simple, natural, everyday fashion, without striving or artifice”.<sup>774</sup> However, it is clear that his work springs, again, from the internalisation of concepts found through his reading.

This idea of the “residue” of learning can be applied to the compositional practices of graduates of Tudor grammar schools, the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and the Inns of Court men of the time. It speaks to a concept of internalisation of not only pedagogical practices but the content of classical texts. Though I have not worked on the playwrights’ classical and neo-classical sources for plot and characterisation, active *imitatio* and *inventio* of literary sources (as well as the rhetorical techniques) constitute the manner by which men reconfigured and adapted works. Their foundational learning is present not only in pedagogical treatises (and other types of instructional materials) but is also extant in the dramatic and poetic productions between 1590 and 1610. Indeed, it is not merely ‘residue’ but the constant re-working and re-thinking of what has been read, translated, and learned through the course of education. This, of course, informs all types of creative writing in the

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<sup>773</sup> Elyot, *Gouvernour*, A2<sup>r</sup>.

<sup>774</sup> Montaigne, *The Essays*, p. 1.



period—but the way by which compositional and discursive action functions in representations of male friendship illuminates the textuality and exclusivity of these learned relationships.

It would be difficult, if not inaccurate, to conclude that all youthful homosocial networks function in the manner I outlined above: that all contain serious moral issues concerning power structures, privilege, and the marginalisation of others. I do not make this claim. However, the four case studies of male friendship representations in the drama that I point to do open up a new dimension for understanding these friendship networks and the anxious if not transgressive behaviours that they often contain or support. Male intimacy and exchange is not only dangerous territory for the friends themselves, like the precarious political alliances proving or inferring conspiracies, as Tosh points out in the Essex circle, for instance; and homoeroticism proving or inferring sodomy as Stewart and Bray investigate.<sup>776</sup> It also opens up debates about the exoneration of young male coteries' transgressive social behaviours, the fictional assertion that learned men are necessarily "just", and their treatment of marginalised individuals.

This thesis began with the desire to investigate and possibly reconcile the dual nature of the problem of homosocial, textual relationships: dangers to men in affectionate, exclusionary and even homoerotic relationships or their dangers to women in negotiating marital contracts arising from the works of Hutson, Bray, and Stewart.<sup>777</sup> That is, I was curious about both dangers of affectionate displays and the danger to women. I started with the latter, thinking of both Eve Sedgwick's seminal work on the triangulation of desire and Gayle Rubin's equally ground-breaking work on the how men secure bonds with one another

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<sup>776</sup> See, again, Tosh, *Male Friendship*; Stewart, *Close Readers* and "Homosexuality", 2005; and Bray, "Homosexuality", 1990.

<sup>777</sup> Jeffrey Masten writes of the homoeroticism of textual production and discursive friendship (he uses Shakespeare's *Two Gentlemen of Verona* as a case study) and determines that "friendship is literally made corporeal in two bodies that are one" in the concept of "acquaintances". Jeffrey Masten, *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, authorship, and sexualities in Renaissance drama*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), p. 28.

through the exchange of women in marital contracts.<sup>778</sup> What I found, however, in looking at both canonical and more obscure drama (in which there were representations of masculine homosocial relationships) is that the possible dangers of affectionate and exclusionary relationships are not only limited to the dangers of charges of sodomy, nor the danger to women that young men so eagerly utilise as ‘gifts’ to one another. These two elements, of course, are still crucial to understanding masculine friendship. However, I think that the danger extends to other marginalised groups: from ‘false’ fellows (Rosencrantz and Guildenstern) to city ‘gulls’, especially the unlearned or those susceptible to their persuasive rhetorical prowess. Youthful masculine networks manage to break social taboos, orchestrate clandestine marriages, argue in favour of vicious or immoral behaviours and even exonerate bloodshed and political upheaval through mutual employment and understanding of rhetorical power. Male friends utilise their shared rhetorical mastery—gained in educational institutions—and their exclusionary understanding of such persuasive power to shift control in political, economic, and social spheres. Though these efforts are not always successful, as this thesis concedes, the use of exclusionary and textual friendships challenges sites of power. The representation of fictive homosocial friendships in drama opens up a multitude of ethical questions.

Rhetorical discursive practice is, intrinsically, formulated for reception, persuasion, and understanding. For educated men in the early modern period, discursive action is based on a mutual experience of education, mutual knowledge of the ‘minds’ of classical and early humanist authors. By considering four particular plays that deal with youthful homosocial friendships, I have aimed to show the convergence of textually emotive and affectionate relationships with methods of argumentation and discursive style that highlight the transgressive behaviours of homosocial elite coterie in the late 1590s and early 1600s. The

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<sup>778</sup> Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 1985 and Gayle Rubin, “The Traffic in Women: Notes on the ‘Political Economy’ of Sex”, *Towards an Anthropology of Women*, ed. Rayna E. Reiter, (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975). p. 27.

use of rhetorical techniques to manipulate others and obtain desires is a dangerous idea, to say the very least. For *Hamlet*, we see that one can be exonerated for slaughter through a friend's forensic argument based on the circumstances of the murder(s). In *The Parnassus Plays*, we see that self-advancement in economic and political spheres can create networks of frustrated young men, one step away from enacting violence on those deemed to be inferior. In *Every Man in His Humour* gentlemen friends play fast and loose with the honour of a young woman, something that could have devastating effects on her life and livelihood. Finally, in *The Dutch Courtesan*, young men are able to police their own homosocial groups (positioning themselves as powers beyond the law) and defend immoral behaviours. Additionally, throughout most of the plays, male protagonists use other characters not only as sites of jest but as gifts for one another, both asserting their own superiority and affection. These chapters show an ascending level of corrupt uses of rhetorical training—from relying on a friend's *honestas* to explicate the circumstances of revenge to subvert legal systems.

My study uncovers the darker side of male intimacy beyond the rivalry between men in literary coteries and the possible dangerous implications of masculine exchange. In opening up the manner by which men can control and manipulate others in dramatic works, I have outlined the dangers that these coteries pose to disenfranchised or marginalised characters. I uncover the subtle uses of affectionate exchange and rhetorical techniques to shift early modern power structures in favour of the youthful masculine elite—all under the auspices of amity.

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