HOLLOW WOMEN:
RAPE AND SODOMITICAL DESIRE IN EARLY MODERN DRAMA

by

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Abstract

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by

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My dissertation explores the limits of the terms “homoerotic desire” and “heteroerotic desire” as they are used to describe erotic relations in early modern drama. In particular, I focus on sodomitical desire, a variety of male homoerotic desire understood in relation to sodomy, and therefore associated with a frightening level of social disorder. Sodomitical desire appeared in drama through rape, a crime virtually always conceived in relation to women. Rape functioned as a discursive mechanism that made sodomitical desire thinkable. In appearing through the staging of unambiguously female characters, sodomitical desire complicates critical taxonomies of desire that depend solely on the apparent sex of the subjects and objects involved.

Close readings of a variety of early modern texts show how different discursively constructed identities enable, defuse or deny sodomitical desire. In Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, the Goths’ motiveless malignity leads equally to a subversion of the state and the rape of Lavinia. The latter appears as a cathartic spectacle enabling an exploration of sodomitical desire. In Shakespeare's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the prescriptive ideals of early modern friendship are defined

against sodomitical desire, manifested in the drama through the attempted rape of Silvia. Sodomitical desire is defused when rape is averted and friendship restored. In Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster*, idealized patronage relations are threatened by a discourse capable of "recognizing" those relations in terms of disorderly sexuality. The threat is dispelled through a denial of transgressive desire, staged through the erasure of the possibility of rape. Together, these texts outline a historical trajectory in which the fractured discourses of homoerotic desire are gradually consolidated around the notion of sodomy, pointing towards modern homophobia.

Tracing out sodomitical desire through female characters has implications for the construction of early modern sexed subjects. If desire is not directed *to* female characters but instead passes *through* them, can they be imagined to orchestrate the same dense fiction of interiority that the drama at times bestows on their male counterparts? Might they instead stage femininity itself as a kind of hollowness? How might that hollowness impact those who would identify with female characters?

For my loving partner, who did what my hands couldn’t.

Contents:

Chapter I: Introduction

Svedka_grl

In an advertisement for Svedka Vodka, a figure with a woman's face, exposed buttocks and breasts, and an apparently hydraulic waist, arms and legs looks out, over its shoulder, at the viewer: “I'm a gay man trapped in the body of a fembot,” it declares. The statement is credited to “Svedka_grl.” Several aspects of the ad are worth pointing out: the figure is clearly female; it is manifestly constructed; despite its femininity, it offers access to a man; and access to that man will be granted without securing his consent: though the “fembot” is willing, the man is “trapped.” Despite the technological flourishes that position this ad in an oddly nostalgic “future”— a “future” in which the pursuit of a gay man is seen as sexually adventurous— Svedka_grl embodies a particular construction of desire found in the

discursive strategies of the past. In early modern drama, female characters, like Svedka_grl, complete an erotic circuit that begins and ends with men: in both cases, representations of women allow the discourse of rape to be brought to bear on male bodies. These representations, built from the materials of cultural signification *without* reliance on the seemingly foundational, natural female body, foreground the mobility of gendered desire as separate from the gendering of bodies. In early modern drama, the constellation of gendered referents visible in Svedka_grl permits an erotics of rape to include male victims even as it reinscribes the normative definitional boundaries of "woman."

Though Svedka_grl suggests a certain historical continuity in the constellation of gendered referents and the vectors of desire they produce or enable, it also, perhaps more subtly, testifies to profound changes in the embodiment of desire. Early modern female characters invoke women of unspecifiable depth: they reference the female body, but also gesture, to varying degrees, towards an interiority that extends without rupture "inwards." In contrast, the femininity of Svedka_grl is confined to an object, the body: femininity, purged of interiority, is located in the artifact, the mechanized flesh. As femininity is confined to the corporeal, masculinity is drained of substance: the body of the man to whom desire is ultimately directed is nowhere to be found. While in early modern drama, female characters mediate desire between two fully embodied male characters, the man in the Svedka ad, "trapped" in the artifice of femininity, has become the ghost in the machine. Svedka_grl, of course, is the product of a modern heteronormative régime that, by most accounts, was consolidated during the Restoration. If we attribute the absence of the male body in

this distinctly homoerotic fantasy to the homophobia that distinguishes our age, then, by moving back in time, we might expect to recover that lost body. The fantasy offered by Svedka_grl suggests that the instantiation of compulsory heterosexuality might be read not as a redirection of homoerotic desire into heteroerotic channels, but rather, more precisely, as the *preservation* of homoerotic desire within the current (hetero)normative régime through a sacrifice, of sorts—the expulsion of the body of the beloved man.

Svedka_grl in the World

The image of Svedka_grl—the female body inhabited by a male subject—appeared in 2007 as part of an ad campaign labeling itself as politically progressive, a claim that, if successful, would jettison representations of women from the sphere of political relevance.[1] However politically reactionary that claim may have been, however misogynist in positioning a female body as the vehicle of a pleasure contingent on the purchase of vodka, Svedka_grl's image nevertheless reiterates another image of femininity, one propelled into critical view 30 years earlier and engaged in progressive, explicitly feminist politics. In the 1977 text *The Resisting Reader*, Judith Fetterley lays out her call to action in the following terms: "the first act of the feminist critic must be to become a resisting rather than an assenting reader and... to begin the process of exorcising the male mind that has been implanted in us."[2] It is striking that, despite diametrically opposed political positions and ethical valuations, Fetterley imagines femininity as constructed in substantially the same terms as the advertisers of Svedka Vodka. While Fetterley critiques this construction

of femininity as a cultural mechanism that secures the reproduction of male dominance, the advertisers imagine it as a space of (homo)erotic play for the male viewer. Svedka_grl suggests that Fetterley's critique could be extended to include a critique of circulations of desire: in what manner might the circulation of male homoerotic desire *through* female bodies participate to the reproduction of patriarchal structures?

Fetterley, writing well before the advent of queer theory and the concomitant opening of feminist criticism to nonnormative gender identities, characterizes the inhabitation of a female body by a masculine "mind" as monstrous.[3] Yet at least one feminist philosopher, writing during the next decade, points toward the potential for monstrousness in the perfect alignment of gendered traits. Denise Riley writes:

> Can anyone fully inhabit a gender without a degree of horror? How could someone be a woman through and through, make a final home in that classification without suffering claustrophobia? To lead a life soaked in the passionate consciousness of one's gender at every single moment, to will to be a sex with a vengeance—these are impossibilities, and far from the aims of feminism....[4]

Riley reacts to the prospect of a thoroughly homogeneous femininity with, as she puts it, "a degree of horror." While she does not explicitly propose masculine interiority as an remedy,[5] her rejection of such thoroughgoing femininity as "far from the aims of feminism" suggests that these homogeneous constructs might themselves function as useful mechanisms in the reproduction of patriarchy. My point here is that the gendered construct so graphically illustrated in the Svedka ad, though the product of a

distinctly phallocentric culture, is not, in itself, a mechanism of women's oppression. Instead, Fetterley and Riley together suggest that this particular constellation of gendered referents, clearly widely appropriable and resonant in multiple contexts, might be integrated into a variety of discourses serving various ends, some constrictive, others more expansive.

The Problem and the Approach

In thinking about the way in which early modern drama was received and appreciated, the example of Svedka_grl is oddly resonant, since virtually all female characters were projected over the contours of male bodies. As a construction of gendered referents, Svedka_grl complicates the familiar critical concepts "homoeroticism" and "heteroeroticism," and in doing so, foregrounds some of the limitations of the ways we think about desire: in fact, Svedka_grl suggests that there may be something phantasmatic about heteroerotic desire in particular. In speaking about early modern drama, we generally recognize desire based on the gender of the characters involved, or, at the very least, by the gender of the referents attributed, at a particular place and time, to those characters. In the case of male homoerotic desire, male clothing, the performance of a masculine role such as page, wag or youth, or the boy actor's reference to his own male body beneath female attire have defined the group from which we have drawn examples. Studies of homoerotic desire have thus collapsed the category of desire into a determination of gender. Yet Svedka_grl neatly demonstrates the detachability of some constellations of male homoerotic desire from, really, *any* traits that are gendered male. She suggests that, under

sufficient pressure, the body will evaporate, leaving behind a desire that continues to bear the signs of male homoeroticism. Even in the absence of a male body, the power and pleasure offered through Svedka_grl are still gendered: an offer of anal sex, a fantasy of taking a gay man from behind, possibly against his will, remain, even as the absence of the body of the man himself insures that the viewer need not recognize himself as homosexual. Though Svedka_grl clearly enables a kind of swerve,[6] it is clear that she is not staging displacement in the psychoanalytic sense, for this is not a private substitution made under duress: the ad, after all, is intended to *appeal* to potential Svedka drinkers. It is at this juncture that the problem with homoeroticism and heteroeroticism becomes clear: these terms are definitionally dependent on the binary opposition of "woman" to "man;" that is, they appear to be two separate but equal forms of desire. Heteroerotic desire, however, as it appears here, is not juxtaposed to homoerotic desire: instead, it is a means through which homoerotic desire may be safely realized: the two are ontologically different desires. Instead, then, Svedka_grl is a mechanism designed to allow an audience to comfortably and profitably navigate an erotic space organized through a kind of cultural aporia, a fraught space located somewhere between homophobia and homoerotic desire.

If placed in the broad contextual framework outlined by Fetterley and Riley, Svedka_grl also complicates femininity as a gendered identity on which notions of heteroerotic desire are founded. Riley and Fetterley each suggest that the constellation of gendered referents embodied in Svedka_grl is not exceptional; it is typical: Svedka_grl, is, in a sense, a typical woman. For them, the hybrid is the norm. The hybrid woman is juxtaposed not, as the binary categories so useful to us might

suggest, to a hybrid man, but rather to something approaching an "actual" man, a man gazing into the frame of the ad or even, perhaps, "trapped" and trying to get out. Svedka_grl thus leads us to ask, "How viable is the pure category of 'woman' as an object of identification or a locus of identity?" What would it mean to identify, as a woman, with Svedka_grl? Would one identify as a body, bearing with it an alien repository of beliefs and behaviors coded as masculine? If one identified, instead, with the masculine "mind," would the female body be a comfortably habitable space, or would one feel "trapped?" We might then also ask, "What would it mean to desire Svedka_grl?" Given the parameters of the ad, it might be difficult to desire only what is feminine in Svedka_grl, to desire, that is, heterosexually, for Svedka_grl exists only as the thinnest surface, a lovely silver provocation. These questions, of course, are far beyond the scope of my present project. I ask them here only in order to suggest the extremely constricted range of "the female." Given the thinness of the space occupied by femininity in the Svedka ad, and given the role femininity plays there as a mechanism mediating desire between men, it seems essential to decenter gender as a binary construct undergirding the definition of desire. Critical explorations that depend on this naturalized binary will produce occlusions in mapping out the circulation of desire and consequently in following the disbursement of personal and political power in early modern culture.

In order to avoid reproducing these occlusions, I treat femininity not as a gender, but as a sign, circulating within economies driven by identification and desire, but *not necessarily* serving to anchor those processes. A consideration of early modern circulations of desire through this lens may be most easily facilitated

within a loosely constructionist framework, one which assumes that we can productively speak about early modern culture in terms of a network of conflicting, colluding and potentially converging discourses that enable—and disable—desire. The idea of discourse, within the context of my efforts here, is broad: it includes widely recognized conventions like idealized male friendship and Petrarchan love, but also includes the clusters of associations that tend to appear around representations of rape, idealized relations of patronage, or sodomy. The proposition that we view discourse as the most basic unit of knowledge, that discourse take precedence over familiar organizational schemas structured through concepts like the author or his oeuvre, the book, a given scientific or humanistic discipline, or the notion of tradition or influence was, of course, first elaborated in Michel Foucault's *The Archaeology of Knowledge*.[7] Later, in *The History of Sexuality, vol. 1*, Foucault applies this conviction to the construction of the desiring subject, displacing the subject from its foundational position in structures of knowledge.[8] It is by placing discourse squarely in the center of our considerations that we can detach the gendered body from gendered desire, for the body and desire now appear as different discursive manifestations, circulating together, intersecting, reinforcing one another, but also, under certain conditions, diverging. It is from this position that we can imagine masculinity and femininity to occupy distinctly different ontological spheres, differently capable of grounding identification and desire. It is also from this perspective that aporia appears as a distinctly discursive social phenomenon rather than a psychological one.

Alan Bray, in his extremely influential historical account, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England,* demonstrates the importance of seeing sodomy as a discourse rather than as the neutral signifier of a particular act. He shows that sodomy, while seeming to refer simply to sex between men, in fact circulated in early modern culture as a cluster of monstrous crimes that included treason, heresy, witchcraft and papism.[9] The distinction is essential to understanding the circulation of "sodomy" *as distinct from* homoerotic desire: because sodomy bore an unarticulated burden of associations, men, he argues, did not see themselves as sodomites whether or not they had sex with men. Bray, following Foucault, traces out a history of the idea of sodomy, showing that it did not define persons, that is, that it did not condition conceptions of identity, until after the Restoration. In doing so, Bray effectively historicizes sodomy, tracing its transformation over time in relation to the subject.

In the incisive work *The Gendering of Men, 1600-1750: The English Phallus*, Thomas A. King extends Bray's arguments in two important directions: first, he connects shifts in discursive strategies to profound changes in the organization of social and political power as it was manifested most spectacularly in revolution; that is, he reads discursive shifts as reflecting class consolidation, "a codifying of the norms and regulating of the practices whereby the English bourgeoisie... negotiate[d] an historic alliance with its social superiors."[10] Second, he traces out *how* these shifts impacted the twinned categories of desire and the subject: in particular he traces out the process by which "residual pederasty," a term chosen in order to signal "the bodily enactment and reproduction of early modern subjection and thus the discontinuity of pederasty from a modern economy of heterosexual, homosexual, and

bisexual subjectivities," was supplanted by the heterosexual unit as the foundation on which claims to personal and political power were grounded.[11] This latter economy, then, exchanged a currency of spectacularity for a currency of privacy: a display of the body and of signs of favoritism were supplanted by a concept of private domestic space that framed and supported the newly minted heterosexual subject.[12]

This history suggests a means of accounting for the disappearance of the male body as an object of desire in modern heteronormative culture, a disappearance literally embodied in Svedka_grl. As I have argued, Svedka_grl shares a set of gendered referents with a particular constellation of male homoerotic desire appearing in early modern drama and staged around the figure of the woman threatened by rape. In early modern drama, however, this constellation of gendered referents ultimately points toward the physical body of a desired boy or man, while with Svedka_grl, that man, though present, is wholly incorporeal. I argue, in the course of this book, that the spectacular male body was not abandoned; rather it was privatized, brought into the newly formed domestic space of the heterosexual unit. The boy or man who was loved or desired remained, "dead" but not gone, preserved in the period's newly created gendered interiorities. In Freud's exploration of loss, he offers imperfectly distinguished models of mourning and melancholia that outline a process through which the living beloved becomes a ghost, haunting the flesh of the lover, hovering between self and other.[13] The preservation of that desired man within the private enclave of heterosexuality may ultimately have impacted the gendered interiority of both men and women, pointing forward in time toward the absent male body figured

in Svedka_grl, as well as toward the queer masculinity Riley and Fetterley attribute to female interiority.

Sodomitical Desire

Earlier, I suggested that Svedka_grl was a mechanism designed to allow an audience to navigate an erotic space organized through a kind of cultural aporia, a fraught space located somewhere between homophobia and homoerotic desire. In the chapters that follow, I am concerned with a similar cultural aporia as it appears in the early modern period. The parameters of this aporia, however, are rather different: one might locate it between what Mario DiGangi has called "sodomophobia" and homoerotic desire.[14] The former term, coined in explicit contradistinction to homophobia, points up one of the essential differences between the erotic landscape of early modern England and our own: in our own time, homophobia has been nearly ubiquitous, intensively conditioning the erotic possibilities available to every subject. In the early modern period, in contrast, homoerotic relations were recognized according to different degrees of orderliness ranging from the valorized to the condemned. Sodomy appeared in the latter category as the most extreme form of disorderliness. In practice, this meant that a phobic response to homoerotic relations appeared in relation to a more specific and substantially more circumscribed form of desire. And though male homoerotic desire *could* be understood in terms of sodomy, in fact, as Alan Bray, Greg Bredbeck, Jeffrey Masten, Mario DiGangi and many others have shown, often it was not.[15] The consolidation of homophobia, then, fell to a later era, though it began to take form prior to the closure of the early modern

period. My concern, then, has to do specifically with forms of desire associated with sodomy. I therefore speak of sodomitical desire in order to make clear the distinction between the broad category of male homoerotic desire and the particular desire able to incite a phobic response in the early modern period.

As I suggested earlier, sodomy was understood as "a monstrous sin of cosmic proportions;"[16] it was indissociably linked with crimes against God and the state. As such, it was almost unthinkable within the everyday sphere of mundane existence. I suggest, however, that sodomy, apprehended in such paradigmatically transgressive terms, became in turn, a means of thinking about and staging transgression. Sodomitical desire, then, as I see it, describes desire understood in terms of social, state or divine transgression. Sodomitical desire is distinct from sodomy: sodomy is an act; sodomitical desire is any desire that takes its bearings from a conception of the act. Thus, in Chapter II, a successful subversion of the state is the context within which sodomitical desire is realized. In Chapter III, sodomitical desire marks the boundaries of the socially valorized relations of male friendship. When friendship is reestablished, sodomitical desire is dispelled. In Chapter IV, sodomitical desire provides the oppositional pole through which to establish relations of patronage understood as paradigmatically orderly. Sodomy, I contend, exerted a powerful influence on early modern conceptions of relations between men, whether or not those relations were perceived to be orderly. Because the figure of the sodomite could be associated with ruin on a cosmic scale, he became attractive, I would suggest, to a dramatic tradition that thematized disasters of the state, sometimes explicitly associating such disasters with cosmic disorder. But the sodomite also appealed on a

more intimate level: though men did not identify with the figure of the sodomite, they were always, in a sense, vulnerable to being identified in that manner: sodomy was, as Alan Bray has convincingly shown, a sin of which all men were theoretically capable.[17] Sodomy, that monstrous crime, was then also always just around the corner, an intimate threat that condemnations aimed at distant targets, at traitors, papists, and heretics simply could not reach. That frightening proximity combined with its ability to invoke disorder on a cosmic scale, made sodomy—its continuities and discontinuities with mundane experience—a compelling dramatic theme.

Critical Models

I would like, briefly, to review some of the critical works on which my conceptual model depends and outline the ways in which I hope my work contributes to the knowledge and insight these texts have made available to early modern studies. The structure of social relations outlined by Claude Levi-Strauss, Gayle Rubin and Eve Sedgwick have provided a critical counterweight to models of social and erotic relations in which the basic functional relational unit consists of two persons. Levi-Strauss through Rubin, and later Sedgwick, intimate that relations traced out between two persons, beyond being simply inaccurate, can serve to occlude structural, and therefore naturalized forms of exploitation. Underlying the notion that *qualitatively* different vectors of power connect men and women in a single social constellation is of course Rubin's seminal essay, “The Traffic in Women: Notes on the ‘Political Economy’ of Sex.” Rubin engages Levi-Strauss, who writes: “The total relationship of exchange which constitutes marriage is not established between a man and a

woman, but between two groups of men, and the woman figures only as one of the objects in the exchange, not as one of the partners...."[18] Rubin fundamentally concurs with Levi-Strauss, but repudiates the celebratory attitude he adopts in reflecting on the relevance of this structure to Western society: "Why is he not, at this point, denouncing what kinship systems do to women, instead of presenting one of the greatest rip-offs of all-time as the root of romance?"[19] While Rubin describes patriarchal heterosexuality in terms of the traffic in women, Sedgwick demonstrates the relevance of this social formation to relations in early modern England, relations that by no means reproduce the popularly conceived definition of heterosexuality employed, in this instance, by Rubin. Sedgwick describes Shakespeare's sonnets addressed to the fair youth as "heterosexual," despite her recognition of the "love between men" in these sonnets and "the intense and often genitally oriented language that describes that love," because that love is embedded in a structure of institutionalized social relations that depend on the youth's making a particular use of women.[20] Sedgwick thus foregrounds the coexistence of an explicitly sexual traffic in women *not*, as Rubin does, with male homosociality, but with male homoeroticism.

Despite the eroticism of the sonnets addressed to the fair youth, it is no coincidence that Sedgwick chooses the term "heterosexuality" to describe them. *Within* the parameters of the traffic in women, eroticism in general and sex in particular is heterosexual. Love between men and the "genitally oriented language" that describes that love may lead the speaker to urge the fair youth to participate in the traffic in women but does not itself utilize that traffic; that is, the traffic in women is not a mechanism through which to pursue the *erotic* portion of the continuum of

male-male relations Sedgwick calls “male homosocial desire.”[21] This distinction becomes clear in Sedgwick's definition of “male heterosexual desire” as it pertains to the Sonnets: it is “the form of a desire to consolidate partnership with authoritative males in and through the bodies of females.”[22] In Sedgwick's reading of the sonnets, then, the traffic in women is not, in itself, a conduit through which desire between men is explored or realized. While Sedgwick's brilliant application of the work of Rubin and Levi-Strauss to a reading of the Sonnets opened broad avenues of interpretative possibility, it did not, I believe, exhaust the relevance of the traffic in women to early modern constellations of male homoerotic desire.

This is due in part to Sedgwick's focus on “male homosocial desire,” a continuum spanning a range of relations between men, and marked at one extreme by the notion of homosocial bonds and at the other, by homosexuality. Sedgwick, in attempting to account for the decisive interruption of this continuum in modern Western culture, turns to the early modern period as a point prior to the development of that rupture. She is not, then, primarily concerned with the continuum of male homosocial and homoerotic relations as that continuum is traced out in terms of social orderliness; for the most part, she assumes orderliness. Female characters who served as a means of navigating the most extreme form of disorderly homoerotic desire, then, fell outside the range of her concerns. In *The Homoerotics of Early Modern Drama*, Mario DiGangi does address this continuum, laying out a variety of homoerotic possibilities in terms sensitive to their social reception. Because previous critics had focused on sodomy and its catastrophically disorderly associations, DiGangi places special emphasis on homoerotic desire as it was perceived to be

integrated, to greater and lesser degrees, into the social order.[23] He does so by tracing out the existence of specific constructions of homoerotic desire as they are made manifest in four distinct dramatic modes. By matching particular genres to distinct social structures supportive of homoerotic desire, DiGangi's work contributes to a constructionist perspective in which discourses direct the formation, articulation and experience of desire, a perspective particularly relevant to DiGangi's focus on public and private performance.

DiGangi avoids the notion that sodomy bears within it features which distinguish it from other forms of homoerotic desire as they appear in early modern England, in part by locating homoerotic desire using two separate sets of coordinates: the first reflects the kind of discourse in which a given example of homoerotic desire is embedded, a location that conditions the articulation, and presumably, the experience of that desire. He traces out, for example, the homoerotics of mastery in satiric comedy and the homoerotics of favoritism in tragedy. The second set of coordinates concerns social reception: it indicates the point along a continuum of social orderliness upon which a given relation falls. This set of coordinates is determined, as DiGangi explains, not by any intrinsic feature of an act or a desire, but rather by the degree to which those involved have successfully negotiated for recognition as orderly subjects: "the definitional boundaries of orderly and disorderly homoeroticism were open to negotiation, manipulation, and contestation—in short, to local struggles for social and ideological power."[24] Within this schema, the homoerotics of mastery or of favoritism could conceivably be perceived as either orderly or disorderly, a designation determined by factors ultimately extrinsic to

desire itself or the form through which it was realized. The mapping of homoerotic desire through these two independently determined sets of coordinates suggests that sodomy, that most extreme form of disorderly desire, could appear within *any* of the genres DiGangi addresses; that is, sodomy was not traceable as the homoeroticism articulated within a particular genre, but rather marked a catastrophic loss of control over the terms used to describe one's desire. This does not preclude, however, sodomy from appearing—and being understood—as a distinct, and distinctly transgressive, form of desire, for the very reason that it *has* been subject to discursive "negotiation, manipulation, and contestation," in short, to discursive positioning as a specific, recognizable form of transgression. Within this context, the sodomite, the man imagined to transgress, becomes available for both identification and disidentification, impacting the range of possible articulations of desire.

DiGangi argues, following Bray, that the figure of the sodomite did not offer real purchase to those who would identify with him: "in the Renaissance," he writes, "sodomy was an offense ascribed to someone else, not a position one adopted for oneself."[25] Here, DiGangi equates sodomy with abjection: within the schema outlined above, sodomy is not distinguishable from other forms of homoeroticism except in the attribution of a frightening level of disorderliness. If, however, as I have suggested, sodomy came to be associated with sexual transgression, then the figure of the sodomite, though still terrifying, could also be appealing on other grounds, as a figure, for example, wholly unrestrained by the law. Because this figure was understood as antithetical to orderly society, to state and to church, he could not ultimately be reconciled with everyday existence, and could not, therefore, sustain

prolonged identification. This, however, is quite different from claiming that audiences could not covertly identify with him: though no audience member might be expected to make a sustained identification with Shakespeare's Richard III, for example, no one, I think, would argue that audiences could not vicariously enjoy his power over Anne in Act I's infamous seduction scene. To engage and disengage, to venture into the proscribed and return safely back, to identify but not to acknowledge that identification, is clearly part of the appeal of drama. In the plays I discuss, sodomitical desire is made available to audiences through the staging of rape, another paradigmatically transgressive act. Sodomitical desire, desire understood through the image of the sodomite, though unthinkable in its own right, thus appeared through a particular kind of traffic in women. As Cynthia Marshall has said in relation to a particular staging of rape, "the model so strikingly played out... is the traditional one of woman as victim whose suffering is taken up and used by men to their particular purposes."[26] I do not mean to suggest that playwrights intentionally veiled the sodomite behind the figure of a rapist: I argue instead that rape made sodomy thinkable; it opened a rich landscape of association already in circulation around the figure of the violated woman and her violator. It offered, in essence, a means of exploring sodomy as an intimate transgression, one occurring at the level of the individual, not simply at the level of the state.

Hollow Women

While the plays and poems with which I engage are an eclectic selection, all of them share three features that allow me to outline my own major arguments, and in

their very eclecticism, suggest that the discursive associations they foreground are commonly shared cultural features, not attributable to the eccentricities of any given author. First, all of the major texts I have included produce a level of psychological depth, not embedded in the body of a single protagonist, but netted together over the surface of the play through characters and monumental features. One of the effects of this topography of interiority is that interiority appears, not as the privacy of an individual revealed to the penetrative gaze, but rather as a choreography of social interaction. This structure reminds us that private space and the kinds of interiority private space enables were yet to become normative in the early modern period. Compare, for example, Richard Rambuss's exploration of the prayer closet as constructing a self capable of surveying and manipulating its own interior landscape and the forest as it appears in drama, where what we would recognize as a character's interior erotic landscape appears projected out onto a particular geographical place.[27] In the latter example, interiority is negotiated, as it were, outside the self. As one kind of dramatic structure among many, this projection of interiority out over characters, their interactions, and the spaces they inhabit offers a point of focus midway between individual interiority and the exterior world, a perspective that is useful in thinking about circulations of discourse as they traverse sociological and psychological spheres.

Second, all of the works I have chosen are profoundly influenced by the discourse of rape. Like sodomy, rape is not an idea but an elision, a cluster of ideas traveling beneath a single term. The ideological value in this construction lies in its ability to limit the circulation of “sodomy” or “rape” to contexts that reinforce

existing power structures. For example, in the early modern period, rape did not simply invoke nonconsensual intercourse with a woman. Instead, it tended to mean nonconsensual intercourse with a young, wellborn, attractive, chaste, childless woman. It seems likely that women who did not fit this description were simply less plausible as victims of rape: in Middleton's *The Spanish Gypsy*, for example, the only thing that makes young Roderigo pause before abducting and raping Clara is the suspicion that her father is noble.[28] The possibility that she is noble makes rape meaningful; it suggests that the idea of rape would not be compatible with Clara, were she, for example, Middleton's "Country Wench."[29]

The construction of rape as a discourse also reinforces existing power disparities more subtly: shame, violation, and victimization travel as naturalized referents beneath "rape," though the physical act of nonconsensual intercourse need not imply shame, violation or victimization. Bev Jafek makes the point blazingly clear in the short story, "An Unsatisfactory Rape." After having refused to wake up when an intruder enters her apartment, the protagonist of Jafek's story slides to the floor and does not get up:

> she screwed and squelched her face, puckered and displaced all, yet puffed her lips. O, the troll confounds! Thus reddened, thus grotesque, she hooted one long over-ripe indecent howl like nothing ever heard before. His flag went down. Good, good. She said, You're at half-mast, Prick.[30]

The story continues, through a description of anal intercourse ending in Prick's agonized screams to his triumphant expulsion from the protagonist's apartment.

Jafek's point, I think, is not to insert one monolithic narrative of rape for another; rather, it is to expose the discursive structure underlying the naturalization of rape as inseparable from shame, violation, and victimization. Jafek makes apparent that the normative construction of rape serves particular ends, reinforcing a brutally sharp power differential between men and women. The point, within the broader context of this study, is to demonstrate that the cluster of signs traveling beneath the rubric of rape is separable from notions of nonconsensual intercourse with a woman. More important, the staging of rape *as the victimization of a woman* itself serves to reproduce patriarchal power structures by instructing audiences in how to understand rape: in the early modern period, as now, rape *means* a radical evacuation of a woman's social power.

Third, in each of the major works I discuss, rape points beyond itself; the female character and her victimization serve to stage another negotiation of power and a different, though related, set of erotic possibilities. The discourse of rape enables an exploration of sodomitical desire, a desire associated with sodomy, "the crime not to be named among Christians."[31] I want to suggest that the prohibition attached to *speaking* of sodomy was reflected in a dramatic discourse that expressed sodomy by other means: if sodomy was defined as unspeakable, if it signified a transgression able to contaminate one by its mere articulation, then rape, a transgression fully amenable to speech, might serve as a useful substitute. Rape was already associated with sodomy: Coke defined "buggery" as a species of rape,[32] and in the famous Earl of Castlehaven trials, the earliest successful prosecution for sodomy involving adults, Castlehaven was charged not only with sodomy but with

"Abetting a rape on his Countess...."[33] B. R. Berg, among others, argues that the case would never have come to court had rape and other disorderly behavior not first rendered it visible within the judicial system. Rape, then, made sodomy visible. I argue that the discursive prohibition against the articulation of sodomy made rape a useful dramatic vehicle through which to explore sodomitical desire.

In Chapter II, I explore the basic mechanisms through which the staging of a woman's rape comes to signify on the body of a man. My close readings of Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, Middleton and Rowley's *The Changeling* and Marston's *The Tragedy of Sophonisba* are, in part, intended to broaden the parameters of the work of Bruce R. Smith. Smith sees male rape as staged through stabbing or dismemberment—that is, as violence *between male characters*.[34] Though he recognizes the importance of cross-dressed characters in the staging of homoerotic desire,[35] he depends upon a definition of gendered desire determined by gendered referents, a conception that prevents him from exploring the ways in which male rape may have been staged through female characters of unambiguous gender. While my own work confirms the essential role that violence played in negotiating fantasies of a profoundly frightening act, it also suggests that sodomitical desire, a desire understood in paradigmatically transgressive terms, often appeared through reference to literal rape. Women's bodies, as well as differently raced bodies, provided a framework through which audience members could explore and participate vicariously in a desire that was simultaneously viewed as diabolical and recognized as a sin to which "anyone," theoretically, could succumb.[36] I also explore the ways in which male rape maps onto female rape: when a narrative of rape is translated onto

the body of a man, the brutality, the physical domination, and the abjection of the victim remain substantially the same. The question of whether those involved have consented, however, becomes more complicated: while the woman's rapists freely choose to commit the crime, the men who commit a parallel crime on the body of a man do not always have a choice in the matter. At moments when the narrative of rape serves to mediate culpability in a crime of monstrous proportions, sodomitical desire diverges from normative definitions of rape.

Though my study of early modern texts is not extensive enough to make claims about the relevance of this staging of rape to the historical construction of the desiring subject, I would like, nevertheless, to outline a trajectory of change suggested by the works I have considered. *Titus* is the earliest play I address and by far the most spectacular. The excruciating, exceedingly bloody appearance of Lavinia after her rape offers her mutilated body as an object of desire. It also, as I argue, is not separable from Bassianus's hidden, but still strikingly corporeal body, tied to Lavinia's by marriage, metaphor, narrative parallel, and physical location, and described in gruesome detail by Quintus and Martius as they fall upon it. This spectacle of physical torture invokes the scene of torture that opens Michel Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*, a text that traces the disappearance of the physical body as the site of punishment: Foucault writes, "the disappearance of public executions marks...the decline of the spectacle; but it also marks a slackening of the hold on the body."[37] The "hold" on the body, according to Foucault, is interiorized, contributing to the creation of the modern subject. In *The Friend*, Alan Bray extends Foucault's insight from relations of discipline to relations of desire: he elaborates the importance

of the physical display of the body of the friend in the construction and maintenance of orderly homoerotic relations.[38] King also notes this correspondence, arguing that pederasty, the organization of pleasure within the fading structure of alliance, "depends on an economy of spectacularity, a display of the body and of signs of favoritism."[39] According to Bray and King, a public spectacularity, rather than a private interiority, was the *medium* through which social and erotic relations were negotiated. I suggest that *Titus* reflects this earlier economy of alliance: desire is written on the body both of Lavinia and of Bassianus in spectacular, supercorporeal terms. As Foucault, Bray and King suggest, however, that body is destined to disappear as a site of punishment and a sign of desire. I would suggest, however, as *Titus* itself suggests, that male and female bodies did not follow the same trajectory into obscurity. The female body retained a certain spectacularity, a glinting surface reflecting the intersection of discipline and desire.

Chapter III explores the way in which sodomitical desire appears on the margins of male friendship, that most valorized of early modern relations. Shakespeare's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* is deeply influenced by early modern ideals of male friendship: the central plot is organized around a threat to the friendship of Valentine and Proteus. Just outside of that friendship, however, and just beyond the margins of the play, Marlowe's "Hero and Leander" introduces the possibility of male rape. It is significant that this epyllion, though invoked through a number of allusions, is manifested in the *plot* through the attempted rape of Silvia: Proteus's desire for Valentine, understood as transgressive because it is not returned, is displaced onto Silvia, the target of sexual overtures that are not returned. The

ideals of early modern friendship that prove so central to the play's texture and trajectory shift our focus from the corporeality of Lavinia and Bassianus to the kind of interiority constructed through the expectations and ideals of friendship. The rhetoric of friendship evocatively projected the subject out over the bodies of both friends, so that the negotiation of friendship became a negotiation of interiority: Michel de Montaigne, for example, famously asserted, "The secret I have sworn to reveal to no other man, I can impart without perjury to the one who is not another man: he is myself."[40] *Two Gentlemen* stages a negotiation of friendship that is simultaneously a negotiation of self, wherein identification and desire mediate both relations. Janet Adelman recognizes the porous boundaries between friends established in this mediation, but associates both this lack of individuation and a concomitant homoeroticism with immaturity, something that is cast aside upon reaching adulthood.[41] I argue, in contrast, that Proteus's continued investment in Valentine's body, his refusal of the standards of adulthood espoused by Adelman, prevents the play from ending in tragedy. Adelman and others are correct in seeing a conflict between friendship and heteroerotic imperatives in *Two Gentlemen*.[42] Because friendship, that most celebrated of relations, is defined in opposition to sodomitical desire, however, the successful instantiation of heterosexuality at the expense of friendship would, I argue, have guaranteed the return of sodomitical desire through the successful staging of rape.

Two Gentlemen speaks from a historical perspective in which the residual pederasty outlined by King coexists with the beginning of the modern heterosexual régime and its gendering of the new private subject, a subject incompatible with early

modern ideals of friendship. As Jeffrey Masten has pointed out, early modern friendship ideals are in decline at this time: Brathwait's *English Gentleman*, published in 1630, "comes comparatively late in the history of Renaissance friendship, arriving as it does at the cusp of a companionate ideal of marriage that was radically to alter the sex/gender system."[43] Straddling the two eras, it is striking that the play is preoccupied with loss and recovery: in the opening scene, Valentine, a character whose name is synonymous with love, leaves Proteus behind in Verona. In the final lines of the play, Proteus regains Valentine, body and soul: Valentine declares, "Our day of marriage shall be yours, / One feast, one house, one mutual happiness" (5.4.172-173). There is something deeply nostalgic about this recovery, wherein Proteus regains the living body of his friend beneath the terms and conditions of friendship—that is, beneath the auspices of a social order rapidly losing its power to define events and mediate social relations. If, as Foucault and King suggest, the impending régime of normative heterosexuality will suppress the body of the beloved man, then the nostalgia that haunts *Two Gentlemen* may be for that body, returned within the plot to complete a comic trajectory, but lost outside of the miraculous world of comedy.[44]

Chapter IV explores the relation between rape and sodomitical desire within a drama that reflects a moment of profound historical change, a moment in which "the heterosexual" and "the homosexual" begin to emerge as identity positions. Nicolas Radel argues that Beaumont and Fletcher's *Philaster, or Love Lies a Bleeding* prefigures the instantiation of the modern heteronormative régime.[45] I argue that this shift towards a modern sexual economy is reflected in a discursive struggle over how

to perceive homoerotic desire. In *Philaster*, the eponymous protagonist embodies an idealized discourse that expresses orderly relations of patronage. The discourse he animates is central to King's older economy of alliance, an economy in which sexuality is seamlessly enfolded into relations of superordination and subordination among men, women and children.[46] In the course of the drama, the ability of the discourse animating Philaster to define relations between himself and Bellario in orderly homoerotic terms is undermined. An emergent discourse associated with London's merchant class instead casts their relations as disorderly. Philaster responds with a paranoia aimed at *Arethusa's* sexuality, a paranoia that is virtually ubiquitous in early modern drama as the fear of cuckoldry. One implication of this paranoia is that it devalidates claims of rape: women, the logic goes, cannot be raped, because if they are pressed far enough, they will always give in.[47] This same logic, translated onto male bodies in *Philaster*, articulates the paranoia central to the ability of modern homophobia to assert control over men identified as *heterosexual*: Sedgwick writes that, in order for homophobia to exert the sweeping regulatory influence it does, "no man must be able to ascertain that he is not (that his bonds are not) homosexual."[48] Philaster's inability to imagine that Arethusa is chaste speaks to the eroding possibilities of establishing Philaster's own chastity. While Nicholas Radel has identified the nascence of modern homophobia in *Philaster*, I argue that the paranoid discourse showcased in *Philaster*, a discourse able to erase rape, is newly requisitioned in the service of that emergent homophobia.

Chapter IV, like Chapters II and III, follows the trajectory of the physical body of the man who is desired. In the poems and plays that I discuss in previous

chapters, homoerotic desire, though articulated through reference to a woman's body, is always anchored in the body of another male character. *Philaster* is different. The male character in whom homoerotic desire is anchored is made to evaporate in the final moments of the play, as Bellario reveals, under threat of torture, that he is in fact Euphrasia. Nicholas Radel has pointed out that Euphrasia, unlike many of the cross-dressed heroines who have come before her, is not revealed to be a woman until the final moments of the play.[49] Radel therefore argues that *Philaster*, unlike previous plays, prefigures the modern heteronormative régime in that it reflects a polarization of desire into recognizably homoerotic and heteroerotic forms, a polarization that ultimately enables the expulsion of the former in favor of the latter.[50] I take Radel's argument one step farther, noting that it is the body of the boy expelled from the drama, *not* the desire. Euphrasia continues to confess undying devotion, a devotion indistinguishable from what "she" felt moments before, and Philaster continues to call her by name, *her* name: Bellario. *Philaster*, I suggest, looks forward toward an era inhabited by "Svedka_grl," wherein homoerotic desire survives the bodies that gave it definition.

Chapter II: "What is thy body but a swallowing grave…?"[1]: Male Rape in *Titus Andronicus*

How might the rape of a man have been staged in early modern England? In "Rape, Rap, Rupture, Rapture: R-Rated Futures on the Global Market," Bruce Smith tells us what to look for: "death by penetration is one mode of male rape on the stage," he writes, "death by dismemberment is the other, as witness Shakespeare's *Coriolanus* and Jonson's *Sejanus*."[2] Smith goes on to suggest that rape is little more than another form of violence, which, he explains, is "a near-universal mode of male behavior."[3] Smith's strategic conflation of literal and metaphoric rape encourages us to consider the possibilities for eroticism in the period's stagings of stabbing and dismemberment. In limiting the representation of male rape to scenes of violence between men, however, Smith neglects the possibility that the metaphoric rape of men might be discursively dependent on the literal rape of women. "Male rape," the phrase which Smith chooses to describe violent nonconsensual eroticism between men, itself depends on the understanding that "rape," without the masculine modifier, always refers to a crime committed against women. Can Smith's "rape" still mean "rape" if women are definitionally absent? The effects of that exclusion are compounded by Smith's collapse of rape into a category of "near-universal" male behavior: both shield rape from being implicated in the social construction of a specifically female vulnerability. Rape becomes just another form of aggression, an instance or affirmation of the hierarchical order of human relations, rather than a crucial manufacturer of what is, in fact, a rigidly gendered order. Though Smith's conflation of metaphoric sex and literal violence succeeds in bringing the homoerotic

possibilities in scenes involving stabbing and dismemberment to the fore, his conflation also radically redefines "rape" through a suppression of that term's profound dependence on the idea of the victimized woman.

In this chapter, I would like to address Smith's oversight by considering male rape in early modern drama as it appears indirectly, through narratives of rape involving women. Like *Sejanus* and *Coriolanus*, Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus* also stages the rape of a man, though this staging differs markedly from the way rape is described by Smith: though rape becomes visible through both stabbing and dismemberment, the person dismembered, in this case, is a woman. In a series of scenes which take place around a pit, the metaphoric rape of Bassianus is staged through the literal rape of Lavinia, his wife. In the first of these scenes, Chiron and Demetrius, Tamora's sons, stab Bassianus as Lavinia watches, and dump his body into the pit. The brothers drag Lavinia offstage, promising to rape and kill her, and the next scene opens, depicting another set of brothers, Titus' sons, racked by an uncanny anxiety around and within the hole into which Bassianus' body has been dumped. Both brothers tumble into the pit, and Lavinia returns to the stage in the final scene, already raped, mutilated, and spectacularly silent, accompanied by the first set of brothers. At the climactic moment, the time in which we are told Lavinia's rape occurs, we see not two brothers around the body of a woman, but instead two brothers in and around a hole Quintus calls "poor Bassianus' grave" (2.2.240). In "Is the Fundament a Grave?" Jeffrey Masten makes clear that the early modern period afforded a powerful association between the rectum, or "fundament," and the grave: "A reading of the conjunction of fundament and grave in early modern England is

persuasive," he writes, "not least for the ways in which the death penalty for sodomy under the laws of the Tudors and Stuarts, itself a version of the conjunction of sodomy and death in Leviticus 20:13, might thus become a default cultural equation...."[4] The scene which unfolds around the pit, then, both represents Lavinia's rape and intervenes in its narration, rearticulating that rape as a crime perpetrated on a man's body.

Despite the suggestive organization of these three scenes, readings of *Titus* have not addressed the possibility that Bassianus is raped at all. Some critics discuss only one or two of the relevant scenes around the hole, presumably because they read them as parts of two separate plots. From this perspective, the scene with Quintus, Martius and the invisible Bassianus is located at the moment of rape mainly to prevent the play from being censored for indecency, while allowing tension to build in preparation for Lavinia's return. Many critics, however, do read the central scene around the pit as a metaphor for rape. These critics focus on the hole as a larger-than-life version of female genitalia, a reading which is strongly supported by images like that of the "swallowing womb" which the brothers use to describe the hole.[5] Critics who read the pit scene as exclusively representative of Lavinia's rape, however, miss the way in which Chiron and Demetrius' figurative fall upon Lavinia is carefully supplanted by their counterparts' literal fall upon her husband.[6]

The abrupt substitution of Bassianus for Lavinia in the play's structural organization should not be viewed as a coincidence, the bizarre result of a playwright's attempt to bring two independent plots together in the same moment of dramatic climax, since the same kind of substitution appears again in Chiron's speech

at the edge of the pit. There, a temporary, but striking collapse occurs between imagined versions of Lavinia and Bassianus. After Bassianus is stabbed, Lavinia pleads with Tamora to spare her. Tamora refuses, and instead makes ready to kill her. Demetrius stops Tamora, claiming that he will rape Lavinia first, as a means of robbing her of the chastity she has flaunted. Chiron, as if elaborating on this plan, suggests that he and his brother "drag hence her husband to some secret hole / And make his dead trunk pillow to our lust" (2.2.129-30). The ease with which Chiron's proposal may be read as an invitation to necrophiliac anal rape is startling, though Chiron's lines may also be read as a perverse, but clearly heteroerotic fantasy in which both brothers rape Lavinia on top of the corpse of her husband. The problem, of course, with a strictly heteroerotic interpretation lies in the incorporation of Bassianus' body itself into the fantasy.

In *Sexual Violence on the Jacobean Stage*, Karen Bamford maps out the role of rape in early modern culture in illuminating and largely persuasive terms. Bamford's account offers an explanation for the inclusion of Bassianus by proposing a model of social interaction indebted to Gayle Rubin's profoundly influential essay, "The Traffic in Women." Bamford writes, "Rape, on this level, is something men do to *other men's* property….Assault thus functions as a sign of the woman's extraordinary value in an economy of competitive male desire: It marks her as a prize....as in the model of mimetic desire first theorized by René Girard, the female object is less important than the antagonistic relationship between the male rivals."[7] Bamford's model of rape appears to offer a heteroerotic explanation for Bassianus' presence in Chiron's fantasy by suggesting that the primary bond between men in this

triangulation is one of aggression. Bamford's model, however, though nicely accounting for Bassianus' presence, cannot really account for his *proximity*. Rape, for the man underneath, is not merely an economic exchange: it is a *bodily* experience.

In his gloss of the same lines in *Titus*, Gordon Williams draws attention to two other contemporary narratives in which a woman and a man engage in sex on top of the woman's husband. In *Westminster Wedding*, the husband is trapped in a chest upon which the couple have sex.[8] While the husband's entrapment *beneath* his wife and her lover unquestionably reflects his position as loser in a competition, that loss is *expressed* in explicitly sexual terms. The husband is forced to play the role of "bottom" in an unabashedly sexual act.[9] This arrangement, which ensures the husband's physical intimacy in the violation of his own marital rights, undermines explanations which attempt to contain desire within a heterosexual frame, and suggests that a heteroerotic interpretation of Chiron's lines, "Drag hence her husband to some secret hole / And make his dead trunk pillow to our lust" cannot account for Bassianus' inclusion in Chiron's proposed rape.

The other contemporary narrative to which Williams draws our attention suggests that early modern readers or viewers were cognizant of the specifically sodomitical overtones of this configuration of bodies: in Thomas Nashe's *Unfortunate Traveler*, printed in 1594, a woman is raped on top of her husband, a man whom we are led to believe is dead. Nashe writes, "Her husbands dead bodie he made a pillow to his abhomination."[10] Nashe's line closely echoes the line in *Titus*, the most noticeable difference being the insertion of "abhomination" for "lust." It

seems likely that the early modern period associated the word “abomination” with sodomy, not rape: though the term appears fairly frequently in the Geneva Bible in a variety of contexts, it is never applied to rape.[11] It is, however, used to condemn sexual relations between men: the Geneva Bible of 1560 renders Leviticus 18:22, “Thou shalt not lie with the male as one lieth with a woman: *for* it is abominacion.”[12] Nashe's characterization underscores the unwilling role of the “dead” man as himself a victim of sexual assault, and suggests that even an ostensibly heteroerotic interpretation of Chiron’s lines tends towards an image of Bassianus’ “dead trunk” as the object of rape.

Whether we read Chiron’s lines as proposing a direct violation of Bassianus’ body or a violation of that body through the rape of Lavinia, the dramatic scaffolding of the rape narrative around Lavinia allows *Titus* to avoid any direct acknowledgment of male rape. Indeed, as in the example of two lovers who have sex on a chest, the body of a woman functions as a buffer both between male bodies and between the viewer and her or his recognition that a man’s body has become vulnerable to rape. The recurrence of this image, and the authorial borrowing which is implicit in its recurrence, suggest that we understand the censorship at the heart of the image as a cultural, rather than a private phenomenon, an opacity which takes part in the formation of subjects, but which circulates as a feature of early modern society.

Because of the close resemblance Chiron’s proposal bears to the description of rape in the *Unfortunate Traveler*, and because that proposal is neither rejected nor put into action in any immediate or direct sense, some critics have read Chiron’s lines as a last-minute addition.[13] The implication behind this suggestion is that the lines

may be dismissed as extraneous to the play's broader concerns. The irrelevance of the lines, however, is belied by the way in which they reflect the narrative structure of the rape scenes, prefiguring events to come: Chiron's proposal *is* carried out. Bassianus' body is dumped into "some secret hole" and Lavinia's rape, though literally removed from the stage, is nevertheless acted out upon that dead body. Chiron's proposal, then, should not be read as an event defined by its position in *Titus'* chronological development, but should rather be seen as a sign of the play's ongoing preoccupation with discursive opportunities for the inclusion of a man's body in a narrative of rape. From that perspective, we would be best served not by attempting to determine which body is "actually" raped, but rather by seeing each possibility as sharing homoerotic resonances drawn from the same psychic landscape.

Critics of early modern drama have used a variety of approaches to map out the social and psychological landscapes revealed in such multivocal expressions. Though Valerie Traub and Cynthia Marshall mark the boundaries of that terrain differently, each of their mappings helps to situate the landscape glimpsed in *Titus* within a broader cultural context. In *Desire and Anxiety: Circulations of sexuality in Shakespearean drama*, Traub describes one such landscape as it becomes visible *within* the boundaries of a cluster of plays: she explains that her own readings attempt to "resist fixing erotic identity onto specific characters" because "the texts themselves display a homoerotic circulation of desire."[14] In reflecting on her own work, Traub seems to view desire as a potent organizing principle, one which is capable of trumping both the stability of "specific characters" and the coherence of the plot itself, as it circulates—apparently without serious hindrance—through a given play.

Cynthia Marshall traces out a similar circulation of identification as it escapes "the texts themselves" and comes to include the viewer: she draws attention to the psychological advantages of what she calls "a shifting dynamic of sympathetic identification," a process in which audiences identify with various characters and their desires, but also withdraw themselves from characters with whom they had previously identified, as a way of disowning inappropriate desires they may have experienced through those identifications.[15] Marshall's characterization of identification resembles Traub's description of desire: both identification and desire, traditionally understood to lodge in a given character, instead circulate *through* characters, proving, at times, more important—that is, more durable—than the coherence of the characters themselves. The psychological expedience towards which Marshall gestures might be viewed as an enabling factor in Traub's textual circulation of homoerotic desire: an audience's ability to engage and withdraw from characters as it becomes useful to do so may be precisely the mechanism which allows desire to "circulate" in texts. Certainly this composite model helps to explicate *Titus*, where patterns of identification support the circulation of homoerotic desire, and where both identification and desire prove more durable than individual characters.

The dramatic structures which route the circulation of homoerotic desire through a woman's body in *Titus'* pit scene appear in other early modern dramas as well. While the abrupt, but resonant conjunction of rape and sodomy in the *Unfortunate Traveler* recalls the sudden surfacing of male rape in Chiron's proposal, the ordering of events in the third act of John Marston's *The Wonder of Women or, the*

Tragedy of Sophonisba mirrors the order of events in *Titus'* depiction of rape. In *Sophonisba,* Syphax, a prince of Libya and Sophonisba's rejected suitor, abducts Sophonisba and makes clear his intentions to rape her: "Look, I'll tack thy head / To the low earth, whilst strength of two black knaves / Thy limbs all wide shall strain."[16] Sophonisba sues for an hour's reprieve in order to sacrifice to her dead husband, and in that time, she drugs Vangue, the black slave who has been posted to guard her. With her maid's help, she dumps him into bed, saying "There lie Syphax' bride; a naked man is soon undress'd; / There bide dishonoured passion,"[17] as if "dishonored passion" might miraculously produce or bring into being just such lovers. Sophonisba flees, and when Syphax returns, he luxuriates in the prospect of enjoying her:

> stay, take thy delight in steps,
> Think of thy joys, and make long thy pleasures.
> O silence, thou dost swallow pleasure right;
> Words take away some sense from our delight.
> Music!
> Be proud my Venus; Mercury, thy tongue;
> Cupid, thy flame; 'bove all, O Hercules,
> Let not thy back be wanting; for now I leap
> To catch the fruit none but the gods should reap.
> Hah! Can any woman turn to such a devil?
> Or—or—Vangue, Vangue—.[18]

Notable here is the way in which Syphax lingers before the bed, both rehearsing the sexual encounter he believes awaits him, and reconstructing it in terms which evoke oral and anal sex at least as much as they do vaginal sex. Syphax' address to the silence that "dost swallow pleasure right," his reference to the pleasure "none but the gods should reap," and his final prayer for strength, embodied in the Herculean back, certainly evokes Vangue as Syphax' partner in pleasure at least as much as it does Sophonisba.[19] Because the audience knows who awaits Syphax, Syphax' salacious musing clearly enables two different, but overlapping fantasies: one around Sophonisba and the other around Vangue. The deliberate substitution of Vangue for Sophonisba in a rape narrative structured around her, and the fantasies that substitution enables, suggests that Bassianus' similar, though seemingly coincidental presence at the moment of Lavinia's rape might enable parallel fantasies.

Syphax' belief that it is Sophonisba who lies waiting for him is not immediately dispelled upon viewing Vangue; incredibly, that belief lasts a few seconds more before Syphax "realizes" the truth. When Syphax first sees the naked Vangue, he believes he is viewing a female body, nightmarishly transformed: "Hah!" he says, "Can any woman turn to such a devil?" In *The Tragedy of Valentinian*, beautiful young women are transformed into "mortal devils" merely by the passage of time, and, as the play implies, by their own "dishonored passion," since the women thus described are bawds.[20] The transformation of the women in *Valentinian* suggests that Syphax at first perceives Vangue as the product of a metamorphosis from beauty to ugliness, rather than as the effect of a shift from female to male. Early modern culture often characterized beauty as an externalization of virtue, and the virtue of a

woman, as Judith Haber reminds us, was not perceived as fully compatible with consent, because of the desire understood to motivate it.[21] To the early modern imagination, then, women who consented were liable to be discovered to be witches, a fear perfectly realized later in the play in Erictho, the hideous sorceress who is found in Syphax' bed the morning after he believes he has slept with Sophonisba. Sophonisba's impossible transformation into a witch, then, becomes momentarily plausible to Syphax because she appears to have consented to his desires. When Syphax later discovers Erictho in his bed, he finds, in effect, what he has expected all along.

Yet how is it that the witch Syphax fears to find looks, in these moments, exactly like Vangue? The word "devil," which Syphax uses to describe the body in his bed, is the linguistic center of this conceit, encapsulating the slippage between Vangue and Sophonisba which enables Syphax' misapprehension. The word was used by early modern writers to describe both immoral women and black men, as Shakespeare does in Othello.[22] This pattern of usage has the bizarre effect of characterizing black men and immoral women as related—as similar in some undefined sense. Here, that similarity emerges as *visual* similarity, a conceit made virtually inevitable given the frequent use of "blackness" and "ugliness" as synonymous in descriptions of women in early modern works. Vangue's blackness, then, like his unwilling replacement of Sophonisba in Syphax' bed, allows him to temporarily displace Sophonisba in the rape narrative originally constructed around her. That displacement reinforces the anxious sense that male and female objects of

desire are interchangeable, since, in the heat of passion, it can be impossible to tell them apart.

After Syphax realizes it is Vangue, he stabs Vangue where he lies, literally bringing the metaphor of stabbing as sex into bed. Though clearly a consummation of sorts, the stabbing in fact asserts the distinction between literal and metaphoric sex provocatively dismissed by Bruce Smith. In his reading of *Coriolanus,* Smith had collapsed metaphor into literality by reading stabbing *as* rape. Here, however, a conflation of literal and metaphoric rape makes it impossible to account for Syphax' dramatic change in behavior. After realizing that it is Vangue who occupies his bed, Syphax is forced to redirect his violent sexual desires into sexualized violence. This spectacular performance serves to reestablish Vangue's sexual unavailability, dangerously eroded by Syphax' earlier epithalamian fantasy and his subsequent confusion of Vangue and Sophonisba, at the expense of Vangue's life. The time which elapses before Vangue's identity is revealed to Syphax suggests, however, that sexually freighted violence may not be a wholly satisfying substitute for sex, and that the final usurpation of sex by its metaphoric equivalent may itself be a kind of dramatic violence. The abrupt shift in Syphax' behavior draws attention to the importance of making a distinction between literal and metaphoric sex: here, and, as we shall see, in *Titus*, metaphoric sex literally leaves something to be desired.

The hidden body of the unconscious Vangue resonates not only with the threatened bodies of Sophonisba and Lavinia, but also, more closely, with the helpless body of the invisible Bassianus. Both the bed in which Vangue lies and the pit which holds Bassianus are called their graves,[23] recalling Jeffrey Masten's

reflection on the grave as a prominent feature of an erotic landscape mapped out through the conjunction of sodomy and death. The erotic imaginary evoked through images of the grave, however, is not identical to an early modern homoerotic imaginary. Images of the dead and buried body figure in a variety of heteroerotic fantasies as well. Andrew Marvell's "To His coy Mistress" and Act IV of *Sophonisba* each evoke the grave in a context which is at least nominally heteroerotic, and which depict a defenseless but still somehow living body caught up in a narrative of rape. A consideration of these works might help us to see how the recurrent image of the grave in *Titus* supports a specific form of homoeroticism organized around the fantasy of a living, but defenseless male body.

Perhaps because the erotic relations in Marvell's "To His coy Mistress" are more conventionally gendered than those in *Titus*, the poem offers a less anxious—and therefore more transparent—vision of desire as it relates to the buried body. A turn to the beloved's corpse allows Marvell's poem to introduce a state of intense vulnerability akin to that made available through the image of Bassianus' pierced and buried body. "To His coy Mistress" posits two possible futures for the speaker and the beloved. The future the speaker advocates is, of course, one where the beloved agrees to have sex with him. Oddly enough, the second option, the one the speaker suggests should be avoided, also includes sex with the beloved,[24] but this time through worms, the speaker's tiny proxies:

> Thy beauty shall no more be found;
> Nor, in thy marble vault, shall sound
> My echoing song: then worms shall try

That long-preserved virginity….[25]

While this scene is intended to evoke disgust in the speaker's beloved in order to make its alternative more welcome, it also enables a morbid sensuality. The image Marvell constructs, of "worms [which] shall try / That long preserved virginity," is of a body breached through an orifice, a place of no particular interest to worms, but of enormous import to human beings. The worms' activity in this fantasy is one of creeping but inexorable rape, since the potency of Marvell's image relies on a projection of life, or at least physical awareness, onto the dead body. The choices Marvell offers are then, bluntly, consensual sex in life or forcible sex after death. The poem implies that the mistress' abject exposure is a form of punishment, her reward for flouting the speaker's wishes. In "To His coy Mistress," and, as I am suggesting, in *Titus*, the grave is a means of imagining perfect helplessness, a fantasy which may act as the cornerstone in a variety of constructions of desire.

The fourth act of *Sophonisba* also includes a fantasy of rape where some victims are dead and others are merely buried. While in "To His coy Mistress" the image of the dead body appears only briefly and is situated primarily to buttress the speaker's main argument, in *Sophonisba*, gory details are offered with an unselfconscious relish, encouraging the audience to take pleasure in what might also horrify. In Scene I, Erictho, the diabolical sorceress, is the rapist, while the victims include both corpses and buried men who are not quite dead. Just prior to Erictho's arrival on stage, Syphax tells us about her amazing habits:

when she finds a corpse

But newly graved, whose entrails are not turn'd

To slimy filth, with greedy havock then
She makes fierce spoil, and swells with a wicked triumph
To bury her lean knuckles in his eyes;
Then doth she gnaw the pale and o'ergrown nails
From his dry hand; but if she find some life
Yet lurking close, she bites his gelid lips,
And, sticking her black tongue in his dry throat,
She breathes dire murmurs, which enforce him bear
Her baneful secrets to the spirits of horror.[26]

Syphax' sexually suggestive language culminates in an extraordinary image of forced penetration, where Erictho's "black tongue" recalls the blackness of both Vangue and the imagined Sophonisba from the previous act. That penetration is framed as a kind of rape: like the beloved in "To His coy Mistress," Erictho's final victim is buried but still sensate, and thus present to his own violation. Though Erictho's victim is male, it is striking how the language of rape still evokes the particular vulnerabilities of the female body: the image of Erictho's black tongue in the victim's dry throat leads to images of impregnation, where Erictho's murmurs "enforce" the dying man to "bear" her baneful secrets. Rape, here, as in *Titus*, is not neatly separable from femininity; in this case, when rape is transferred to a man's body, the threat of pregnancy accompanies it.

The improbable hold on life discovered in Erictho's final victim, like the awareness remaining in Marvell's beloved, reinforces the idea that the necrophiliac appeal of these images might have less to do with the dead body per se, and rather

more to do with the possibilities for identification and desire that come into being around the promise of utter defenselessness. The dramatic portrayal of defenselessness in Marston, as in Marvell, certainly seems to enable both sadistic and masochistic fantasies, but might also work to construct a fantasy of innocence. Because one of the most reliable guarantors of rape—that is, of the victim's *unwilling* involvement in a sexual act—in early modern poetry and drama is the woman's subsequent commission of suicide, death might work to shield the penetrated body from the charge of "dishonored passion." Certainly it does so in *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, where The Lady preserves her own honor by committing suicide and then returns as a ghost, reporting that The Tyrant has absconded with her body, and "often sets / a sinful kiss upon my senseless lip…."[27] Though The Lady's body is involved in an illicit erotic encounter, The Lady herself remains wholly innocent, an innocence guaranteed by her physical inability to take pleasure in The Tyrant's kisses. The fantasy of the dead body as victim of rape may appeal, then, because it offers the promise of absolute innocence, both to those identifying with the victim and to those identifying with the aggressor, where it contributes to a perception of perfect or untarnished virtue to the object of desire.

The appeal of arrangements like those in "To His coy Mistress," which permit penetration without blame, or, like those appearing in *Sophonisba*, which shield the penetrated from blame, extends to *Titus*, where innocence characterizes not merely the victims of rape but also the brothers who are made to play the role of rapists. When Quintus and Martius, Titus' noble sons, replace Chiron and Demetrius, Tamora's lustful offspring, at the mouth of the pit, the structural core of the preceding

scene—the triangular relation between two brothers and the object to which they are attracted—is retained, and this retention is part of what forms a continuity that allows us to read the pit scene as a development of the previous one. However, when a living female body is replaced by a dead male one, the exchange of "bad" brothers for "innocent" ones throws the culpability of the "rapists" themselves into temporary though breathtaking doubt. This recasting of actors in the staging of rape works to renegotiate the assignment of the roles of victim and victimizer: while rape is initially portrayed as something lawless men do to helpless young women, it suddenly becomes something virtuous men cannot prevent themselves from doing to helpless young princes. Between one moment and the next, a crime with clearly indicated perpetrators and victims becomes a crime where the perpetrators are *also* victims. Bassianus is as innocent as Erictho's unlucky victims, but Quintus and Martius are also as blameless as Marvell's lover. Though the appearance of Quintus and Martius presses towards a reconstruction of rape as guiltless transgression, it is ultimately only partially successful. Quintus and Martius are executed in a manner reminiscent of that suffered later by the set of brothers "actually" guilty of rape,[28] suggesting that even the "good" brothers are tainted with the guilt of that crime.

When a set of innocent brothers replaces a set of guilty ones around a helpless body, an almost mechanical centrifugal attraction continues to draw the brothers towards that body, though the explanation offered for that behavior is, at best, unconvincing. While desire motivates Chiron and Demetrius' attack on Lavinia, Quintus and Martius are both doomed to join Bassianus by their anxiety—an anxiety for which the plot cannot account. After Martius has fallen into the pit, he asks

Quintus why he does not help him get out, and Quintus responds, "I am surprised with an uncouth fear; / A chilling sweat o'erruns my trembling joints; / My heart suspects more than mine eye can see" (2.2.211-13). Quintus' response offers a rebuttal to readings of characters in *Titus* as if they were possessed of some stable interiority: the lines above are spoken by the same character, who, on the previous day, helped his brothers to kill a man in cold blood, dismember him, and burn the pieces.

Quintus' unaccountable anxiety infects Martius, who begs Quintus to help him out of the hole, saying

> O brother, help me with thy fainting hand—
> If fear hath made thee faint, as me it hath—
> Out of this fell devouring receptacle,
> As hateful as Cocytus' misty mouth (2.2.233-36).

Quintus attempts to pull Martius out of the hole and fails: "I have no strength to pluck thee to the brink," he says (2.2.241). He tries again, but instead he too is pulled bodily into the pit. Though Quintus and Martius have no idea that their sister is being raped elsewhere, anxiety permeates their actions, rendering Quintus incapable of drawing his brother out of the pit, and then damning him to topple in as well. The brothers' fatal attraction metaphorically buries them and ultimately leads to their literal deaths, since their presence in the pit allows them to be framed for Bassianus' murder and then executed, a punishment recalling the period's legal penalty for sodomy.

The appearance of an anxiety which cannot be explained through recourse to the plot surely encourages us to seek its source outside of the narrative logic of the play. In doing so, we find that what is inexplicable in narrative terms in fact contributes to the play's emotional continuity: anxiety acts as if it were a continuation of the desire motivating the first set of brothers. Indeed, critics who argue that the scene around the pit represents rape have already suggested, in doing so, that the scene stages desire *through* a staging of anxiety. An emotion which looks like anxiety and works like desire recalls Valerie Traub's claim that desire and anxiety are "two sides of the same coin," two manifestations of a single impulse.[29] What was desire for Lavinia manifests itself as anxiety when Bassianus takes her place.

Anxiety, as it affects Quintus and Martius, recalls the claustrophobic atmosphere evoked in the grave scenes in Marston and Marvell, though here claustrophobia is structured not as a fear of places one cannot escape so much as a fear of places one cannot avoid. The brothers cannot resist the pit, into which narrative momentum, in the form of anxiety, destines them to fall: "Thy hand once more; I will not loose again / Till thou art here aloft or I below," Quintus says, just prior to his own fall into the pit (2.2.243-44). Martius too seems to have been fated to fall from the moment he returns to the stage: "My sight is very dull, whate'er it bodes," says Quintus, and Martius responds, "And mine, I promise you…" (2.2.195-196). As Quintus and Martius are irresistibly drawn towards their doom, the hole which awaits them becomes not Lavinia's body, but the wound in Bassianus': Martius tells Quintus that the light from Bassianus' ring "shows the ragged entrails of this pit," projecting the wound in Bassianus onto the inside of the hole itself

(2.2.230). Martius has then tumbled into a hole with a dead man and found himself in that man's hole, trapped with him and in him. Quintus and Martius' compulsion, placed chronologically at the moment when we imagine their doubles, Chiron and Demetrius, are raping Lavinia offstage, portrays male rape as a terrible and frightening act which is, somehow, inevitable.

An exploration of the intersection between profound anxiety and homoerotic desire might be read as invoking a familiar critical trend which has tended to view all desire between men as sodomitical, that is, as antithetical to social order, and thus as leading "naturally" to violence, tragedy, or both.[30] My readings of early modern drama do not make this assumption, though an overlap in theme suggests that it would be useful to situate my discussion of desire directly in current debate on homoerotic desire as it appeared in early modern England. I call the desire which emerges in the rape scene in both *Titus* and *Sophonisba* "sodomitical" partly in response to Masten's observation that the rectum is associated with the grave through the early modern period's legal discourse on sodomy, but also in order to distinguish it from other articulations of homoerotic desire current in the period. Because sodomitical desire is perceived as both socially and sexually *dis*orderly, it might be most useful to approach a discussion of it by distinguishing it from socially and sexually *orderly* manifestations of homoerotic desire, as they have been discussed in other critical literature.

In calling the climactic scenes of stabbing or dismemberment in *Sejanus* and *Coriolanus* "male rape," Bruce Smith seems to indicate the sexually disorderly nature of the acts he describes. In both cases, however, acts of stabbing or dismemberment

respond to disorderly behavior in the protagonists, and are thereby situated in the course of each play as reassertions of social order. Because their brutal sexuality is contained in metaphor and channeled into the reestablishment of social order, these instances of stabbing and dismemberment are defined in the play as social rather than sexual acts, and *within* that category, as orderly rather than disorderly behavior.[31] The word "rape" then, as Smith uses it, indicates a violation of individual consent without in any way invoking a parallel disruption in the social order of things. Because it is perceived as contributing to social order rather than undermining it, "rape" in *Sejanus* and *Coriolanus* is situated as a form of socially orderly desire.

Like the scenes discussed by Smith, the stabbing of Vangue in *Sophonisba* might also be described as a socially orderly form of male "rape." The play suggests that Vangue may become socially disruptive, a suggestion which associates him with the disruptive Sejanus and Coriolanus: in waking from a drugged slumber, Vangue wonders aloud whether he has replaced Syphax as king and exclaims "how pleasant is it but to sleep / In a king's bed!"[32] The lines suggest that Vangue may now be tempted to displace his master, though there have been no previous indicators that he is disloyal. Though the "rape" of Vangue, like the murders of Sejanus and Coriolanus, may be perceived as a reassertion of the social order threatened by his musings, Vangue's stabbing is subsumed in the grander narrative arc of Sophonisba's rape and the disorderly desire expressed through it. Vangue's murder works to reposition the disorderly desire expressed in Syphax' fantasy within a sexually orderly frame, but does not render the larger rape narrative orderly. Though Vangue's stabbing may gesture towards a sense of social orderliness, the larger

trajectory of *Sophonisba*, like that of *Titus*, is preoccupied with desire marked as socially disorderly. That preoccupation is made visible in precisely the imbrication of Vangue's stabbing in the narrative of Sophonisba's rape.

A more significant distinction might be made between sodomitical desire and homoerotic desire perceived as sexually, rather than socially orderly. Orderly homoerotic desire, though recognized as desire, was not associated with sodomy, as Mario DiGangi has convincingly argued. Such desire had successfully negotiated for recognition as part of orderly society. DiGangi writes: "because the political significance of male relations…depended on the contingencies of interpretation, the definitional boundaries of 'orderly' and 'disorderly' homoeroticism were open to negotiation, manipulation and contestation—in short, to local struggles for social and ideological power."[33] DiGangi's definition maps out a social space in which individuals and factions attempt to draw or redraw the boundaries distinguishing orderly homoerotic desire from its disorderly cousin, sodomy. Mapping out desire in this fashion is perhaps most valuable in its delineation of a cultural space for male homoerotic desire in the early modern period apart from sodomitical associations. Certainly, the successfully integrated desire DiGangi alludes to has little to do with the troubled relations I trace out in *Titus* and *Sophonisba*.

It is tempting, then, to define sodomitical desire by juxtaposing it to orderly desire, since sodomitical desire is, of course, perceived as sexually disorderly. The problem, however, with defining sodomitical desire strictly in opposition to orderly desire lies in the definition of desire upon which DiGangi's mapping rests. According to DiGangi, agents involved in this struggle for social and ideological

power uniformly attempt to shift boundaries in such a manner that they end up on the "right" side—the side unaffiliated with sodomy. Social and ideological power are thus consistently opposed to sodomy, an opposition which leads DiGangi to assert the definitional impossibility of identifying oneself with the sodomitical: "in the Renaissance," DiGangi writes, "effeminacy, like sodomy, was an offence ascribed to someone else, not a position one adopted for oneself."[34] Effeminacy, like sodomy, does lay claim to descriptive power not through the possession of unique or definable intrinsic qualities, but rather through an ability to mark individuals or groups as abject. Neither effeminacy nor sodomy, however, are reducible to abjection. That is, identifying with the sodomitical need not equate to positioning oneself as abject. Direct attributions of sodomy were certainly socially destructive and direct identifications with sodomites—the attribution of sodomy to the self—must have been correspondingly perilous, but less direct appropriations of the sodomitical may nevertheless have wielded an attractive power. If, as Alan Bray has suggested, sodomy was virtually synonymous with transgression,[35] then sodomy may have provided individuals with an identification which empowered them to make socially transgressive decisions. Unarticulated associations with the sodomite may also have lent individuals a certain social leverage by bestowing upon them a kind of frightening appeal, a sense that they were capable of transgressive behavior. The agency ultimately gained or lost through an appropriation of the position of the sodomite should not then be reduced to the public opprobrium heaped upon that figure, but should rather be seen to depend on the *form* of that appropriation and its positioning within a larger social landscape.

Apart from questions of social agency, however, sodomy, as I've tried to suggest, was a feature of a distinctive erotic terrain, offering forms of pleasure and terror amplified by their imbrication in an environment of cultural condemnation. The sheer power of sodomy to elicit explosive response, its electric valences within a sexual context, makes it seem unlikely that sodomy would have been uniformly expelled from private elaborations of desire. If we, like Valerie Traub, accept "the constitutive import of complex and often *contradictory* discursive practices and social investments,"[36] then we might imagine covert identifications with the sodomite to be a means of resolving the implicit contradiction between two separate discursive practices: the insistence that sodomy be condemned and the celebration of the male body as the most perfect, and therefore most desirable, of all human forms.

In positing a social landscape in which desire must navigate contradictory discursive practices, we might well ask how those contradictions are resolved in the individual: how might a desire which is both incited and proscribed become manifest? What, in short, might covert identification with the sodomite *mean*? An essay by Susan Snyder on *All's Well That Ends Well* suggests that covert identifications might be usefully imagined in terms of displacement, that is, as the recognition, on different levels, of one who both *is* and *is not* "me." Snyder has shown that the Clown's seemingly contradictory statements of desire and disgust make more sense if they are seen as belonging instead to Helena and Bertram: "Only the Clown," Snyder writes, "has license to talk of the body's compelling needs."[37] Snyder claims that the transfer of emotion from Helena and Bertram to the Clown is typical of displacement: "A shift from the consequent to the inconsequent that allows the unsayable to be said, in some

distorted form, is the very basis of the displacement process as expounded by Freud,"[38] she writes. While Snyder actually sees the Clown's marginality as the feature which allows him to become a mouthpiece for the indecorous desires of others, we might more simply attribute that ability to his low social status. Shakespeare often tempers more elevated expressions of desire by juxtaposing them with the speech of lower class characters, who remind us that disinterest follows desire and marriage leads to cuckoldry.[39] The Clown then may become the figure onto which disgust and desire are displaced because he is situated as a socially *appropriate* vessel for the direct expression of bodily sensations.

The Clown's socially sanctioned access—his *appropriateness* for the expression of bodily response—illuminates the role Lavinia and Sophonisba play in bringing sodomitical desire to the stage. Though they are neither a trivial part of each dramatic narrative nor marginal to the network of erotic possibilities the plays offer, they nevertheless function, in Snyder's phrase, as "the inconsequent that allows the unsayable to be said." As young, well-born women, Lavinia and Sophonisba are wholly unremarkable victims of rape. Though rape may be consequential, the organization of rape around Lavinia and Sophonisba, in conforming to dramatic conventions of rape, is not. Each female protagonist offers a culturally appropriate and conventionally sanctioned means of bringing fantasies of violent desire to the stage through her ability to evoke and mobilize a narrative of rape—a narrative wholly unavailable to male protagonists. Organizing the expression of homoerotic desire around a female protagonist, though clearly a swerve away from direct forms

of expression,[40] might nevertheless grant the desiring subject covert access to the rich trove of fears and desires most readily accessed through narratives of rape.

Because Lavinia and Sophonisba are integral to the rape narrative from the beginning of each play, the displacement to which they attest cannot be seen as contained within the play, as a process traceable in the play's narrative structure, as it is in *All's Well That Ends Well*. That displacement must instead be seen to occur in the earliest moments of each play's genesis, as the product of a particular cultural construction which binds the concept of rape to the idea of "woman." *Titus*, however, makes clear that, as Snyder suggests, this displacement is only "more or less inadequate."[41] Though the rape narrative is constantly being constructed in reference to Lavinia, rape itself slips away from her body. Even before the moment in which Bassianus's body physically replaces Lavinia onstage, the threat of rape is extended to include him through a cluster of narrative parallels which associate him with Lavinia. Both characters, for example, are situated as victims who excite audience interest through their visual inaccessibility. Bassianus, however, crucially remains on stage and at the center of the brothers' attention while Lavinia is hustled off, a switch which redirects some of the audience's fascination with the threatened Lavinia towards Bassianus.

The moments just prior to Lavinia's exit also prepare Bassianus to take part in the play's rape narrative by associating his bodily destiny with that of Lavinia. The scene begins with Bassianus and Lavinia coming upon Tamora in the woods. They taunt her, Chiron and Demetrius appear, and Tamora charges them to revenge her. This, the brothers carry out promptly. Both stab Bassianus, though the second

wound, as far as the audience can tell, is entirely gratuitous; in stabbing Bassianus for the second time, Chiron says, “And this for me, struck home to shew my strength” (2.2.117). The audience has been informed by this time that the Goths are determined to rape Lavinia and murder Bassianus, but Chiron’s second thrust exceeds these expectations: as Chiron's bizarre explanation for his own behavior suggests, Bassianus is a dead man before he is stabbed a second time. Chiron is merely demonstrating that he too is capable of driving his sword home. The double stabbing of Bassianus establishes a powerful structural similarity between what Chiron and Demetrius do to Bassianus and what we have been told they will now do to Lavinia, since perhaps the most remarkable aspect of the proposed rape is that it will be jointly undertaken. The sibling rivalry which seems to motivate Chiron to stab Bassianus after his brother has already done so further links the double stabbing with the rape, since that rape is also proposed in response to the brothers’ escalating rivalry over Lavinia.

If we follow Bruce Smith’s equation of stabbing with male rape, we might be led to read this structural similarity as equating Bassianus’ stabbing with rape. The events, however, which contextualize Bassianus’ stabbing militate against that interpretation. The murders discussed by Smith are climactic, high-energy scenes which culminate in acts of stabbing or dismemberment, while Bassianus’ stabbing, in the midst of the gradual unfolding of Lavinia’s rape, is hardly a blip on the hypothetical graph of passion. Bassianus is killed by surprise: he is given neither time to struggle nor to deliver a parting speech. Just prior to his death, attention falls primarily on Tamora, who has been telling an elaborate lie about the threat he and

Lavinia have posed to her. Tension does not subside after his murder, for Lavinia is still standing aghast in front of the audience. Because she draws the audience's attention as she briefly responds to the murder and then begins a lengthy plea for mercy, there is no period of relative calm within which the physical act of stabbing might gesture towards its metaphoric potential. Though individual directors may choose to include an element of eroticism in the stabbing,[42] that element is limited by its textual positioning; at most, it is a brief departure from the torment of Lavinia, which is more elaborately planned, initiated in high dramatic conflict, and memorably attested to by Lavinia's bloody return. Placed in the midst of this gradually unfolding tragedy, Bassianus' stabbing looks toward the rape to come, but it is not an enactment of rape, not even a metaphoric one.

There is another way to read the double stabbing of Bassianus as it takes part in the erosion of the play's founding displacement. Instead of reading Bassianus' stabbed body as raped, we might, instead, read that body as *feminized*. Coppelia Kahn has argued that "wounds mark a kind of vulnerability easily associated with women: they show the flesh to be penetrable, they show that it can bleed, they make apertures in the body."[43] While Kahn suggests that it is vulnerability which brings about an association with women, in the case of *Titus*, it is, in a sense, the association with Lavinia which renders Bassianus sexually vulnerable. If, as I have suggested, rape is a concept which is fundamentally dependent on the cultural construction of femininity, then the association of Bassianus with a woman is another means of bringing the idea of rape to bear on his body. I suggest then, that Bassianus' stabbing does not represent nonconsensual sexual intercourse so much as it marks his body as

sexually penetrable, by associating it with the body of a woman whose rape is imminent. As such, Bassianus' double stabbing is a brutal, almost parodic iteration of the idea that as a newly married couple, Lavinia and Bassianus are "one flesh."

The originating displacement of *Titus'* rape narrative, which positions Lavinia as the magnetic center of the play's destructive desire, continues to erode as the narrative unfolds; Bassianus emerges as the body directly threatened by rape while Lavinia's body recedes. After Lavinia is dragged from the stage, her body is abstracted, returning bizarrely projected onto the features of the hole into which Bassianus has been dumped. Coppelia Kahn discusses the deliberate manner in which the hole is aligned with female genitalia: she draws attention to Quintus' reference to "the swallowing womb" and points out that his description of the hole, as "covered with rude-growing briers / Upon whose leaves are drops of new-shed blood / As fresh as morning dew distilled on flowers…" casts the hole specifically in terms of the rape of a virgin, through imagery which suggests violent defloration (2.2.199-201).[44] This redistribution of focus causes the human, familiar version of Lavinia's body to disappear; instead of an object of desire she becomes a terrifying place, a space, an absence; her body is both a trap[45] and a passage through which the brothers fall in order to encounter Bassianus. In a queer way, this physical arrangement mimics the formal structure of the play itself: Bassianus is embedded—or entombed—both in Lavinia's abstracted body and in the narrative of rape constructed around her.

A representation of a woman's body as a place in which men meet also appears in Shakespeare's Sonnet 136: "Will will fulfil the treasure of thy love, / Ay,

fill it full with wills, and my will one…" (136.5-6). Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick describes the pleasure imagined here as, "in general, the pleasure of amalgamation, not in the first place with the receptive woman but with the other men received…."[46] The most jarring differences between the fantasy evoked in Sonnet 136 and that characterizing the narrative structure of *Titus* are not ones of bodily constellation, but rather differences in sexual explicitness and emotional pitch. Though each text situates the meeting of men within the abstracted bodies of women, Sonnet 136 seems assertive and playful, while the scenes in *Titus* are traumatic. Perhaps more important, the Sonnet's fantasy seems to colonize women's bodies through an act of penetration, while the relations between the homunculi "wills" are not really penetrative at all. The traumatic atmosphere of *Titus*, on the other hand, is marked by graphic allusions to the penetration of male bodies, allusions which profoundly destabilize the autonomy of the bodies involved.

The penetration of a man's body within the abstracted space of a woman is also visible in Thomas Middleton's *The Changeling*. *The Changeling* constructs a narrative of rape around a female character and then moves the actual moment of rape "off stage," organizing a more abstract version of that rape onstage around a man's body. Rape is framed by De Flores' unrelenting pursuit of Beatrice-Joanna, but staged as the stabbing of her betrothed, Alonzo de Piracquo. Beatrice-Joanna desires to break her engagement in order to marry Alsemero, but her father is adamant that she marry Alonzo. In order to free herself from that engagement, she convinces De Flores, a servant of her father, to kill Alonzo. De Flores offers to give Alonzo a private tour of the castle's fortifications, a matter of some pride for Beatrice-Joanna's

father and persistently associated with the body of Beatrice-Joanna herself.[47] At the appointed time, De Flores assures Alonzo that he has acquired the key to the "postern" door and disarms Alonzo, claiming that the "descent / Is somewhat narrow, we shall never pass / Well with our weapons.…"[48] As Alonzo peers out through a window, De Flores stabs him repeatedly from behind. If the association between the castle and Beatrice-Joanna's body established earlier in the play is active in this scene, we must read her body as the space *within which* Alonso is stabbed, recalling *Titus'* ghastly hole and its overt marking as female space.

The Changeling itself seems to align the moment of Alonzo's stabbing with the rape of Beatrice-Joanna: at the end of the play, Alsemero conflates Alonzo's stabbing with Beatrice-Joanna's first sexual act. When Alsemero discovers that Beatrice-Joanna has slept with De Flores *after* he learns that she had incited Alonso's murder, he reflects, "I[t] could not choose but follow."[49] In characterizing Beatrice-Joanna's adultery as inevitable after her advocation of Alonso's murder, Alsemero effectively locates the breach in Beatrice-Joanna's sexual defenses at the moment in which Alonso is stabbed. Alonso's stabbing becomes, in effect, Beatrice-Joanna's first sexual encounter, an encounter Judith Haber has convincingly argued should be recognized as a rape. [50]

Alsemero's conflation resonates with early modern narrative tendencies: rape and murder could play similarly damning roles in narratives of women's lives. Rape was often characterized as initiating a victim's slide into moral depravity—as it is in *Women Beware Women*.[51] The stabbing incited by Beatrice-Joanna then, her first unredeemable step towards moral corruption, may have resonated with rape for early

modern audiences on narrative grounds. Though the plot of *The Changeling* locates Beatrice-Joanna's rape offstage, just after De Flores returns to her with the news of Alonso's murder, I want to suggest that the play, like *Titus*, also offers an onstage version of that rape, one which revolves around a male victim. Embedded in a narrative framework of rape, Alonso's murder, like that of Bassianus and Vangue, comes to share that framework's allusive burden.

Though the sexual compass from which *The Changeling* takes its bearings is substantially different from that guiding *Titus* or *Sophonisba*, the play nevertheless shares a particular kind of erotic slippage with Shakespeare's and Marston's plays. In its turn towards Alonso's body, *The Changeling* traces a passage from rape narrative to male body that recalls the narrative developments of *Titus* and *Sophonisba*. *Titus*, though, originates in a profound displacement which erodes in the course of the play, revealing the male body buried in the narrative of rape, while *The Changeling* does not bear the mark of such wrenching redirection. The male character embedded in *The Changeling's* rape narrative is but one cathected site out of many, one point of direction on a wide-ranging erotic compass devoted primarily to Beatrice-Joanna. Within the fundamentally similar structural organization of the play, then, *The Changeling* contrasts with *Titus* in illuminating ways, offering us an opportunity to sharpen and delimit our understanding of the circulation of desire in each play.

In suggesting that the movement of desire across genders might be more likely, and more productive, for desires which include a strong anal component, Jonathan Goldberg has provided a critical lens which suits *The Changeling*. In the essay "Romeo and Juliet's Open Rs," Goldberg is concerned to show that the

coupling of Romeo and Juliet is neither wholly unique within the world of the play nor circumscribed by heterosexual directives; desire which circulates and returns to the anus plays over the surface of the text, allowing Romeo and Juliet to take part in a fantastic series of possible lovers, where other characters are situated as, or imagine themselves to be, substitutes for either Romeo or Juliet. The substitutions alive in the play and explored by Goldberg do not always recreate the play's central heterosexual pairing. Reflecting on the circulation of that desire across genders, Goldberg writes that "the locus of anal penetration, of course, is available on any body, male or female."[52] In *The Changeling*, the strong anal component of an already well-developed eroticism devoted to Beatrice-Joanna may be the bridge which enables that eroticism to extend to Alonso, where it orchestrates the terms of his murder.

Certainly the desire primarily constructed and showcased around Beatrice-Joanna ranges over a wide array of bodily orifices, but that range is narrowed to the backside when Alonzo supplements Beatrice-Joanna as the object of De Flores' erotic attentions. In the first scene in which Beatrice-Joanna and De Flores appear together, Beatrice-Joanna drops a glove, and her father urges De Flores to retrieve it for her. Beatrice-Joanna loathes De Flores, and instead of accepting the glove which has fallen, she draws off the other and throws it down as well. De Flores slips the gloves onto his own hands, saying

> Now I know
>
> She had rather wear my pelt tanned in a pair
>
> Of dancing pumps, than I should thrust my fingers
>
> Into her sockets here; I know she hates me

> Yet cannot choose but love her;
> No matter; if but to vex her, I'll haunt her still,
> Though I get nothing else, I'll have my will.[53]

De Flores responds to Beatrice-Joanna's rejection through a peculiarly aggressive appropriation of her attire, where her clothes become her skin—an association established by De Flores' conflation of skin and leather. In doing so, De Flores positions himself *as* Beatrice-Joanna, even as he figuratively possesses her, by thrusting his fingers into her "sockets." The queer overlap of the possession of Beatrice-Joanna's body through intercourse and the possession of it through an aggressive identification temporarily collapses distinctions between self and partner-directed eroticism and between homo- and heteroerotism. This unusually multidirectional expression of desire is reinforced by De Flores' use of the plural form of the word "sockets," which suggests that De Flores' desire extends beyond an interest in vaginal penetration. Sexual connotations accrue to the idea of sockets in *Sophonisba*[54] as well, in a manner which foregrounds the sexual interchangeability of orifices: Syphax tells us that Erictho delights "to bury her in knuckles in [corpse's] eyes" just prior to a more explicitly suggestive description of her penetration of a victim's mouth and throat,[55] underscoring the potential slippage between eye sockets and other bodily orifices. For both Erictho and De Flores, then, "sockets" are charged with a multifocal sexual possibility.

De Flores' flexible preferences are elaborated in the next encounter between himself and Beatrice-Joanna. By "haunting" her, De Flores intentionally situates himself as the recipient of her execration:

BEATRICE [aside]: Again!

This ominous ill-faced fellow more disturbs me

Than all my other passions.

DE FLORES [aside]: Now't begins again;

I'll stand this storm of hail though the stones pelt me.

BEATRICE: Thy business? What's thy business?

DE FLORES [aside]: Soft and fair,

I cannot part so soon now.

BEATRICE [aside]: The villain's fixed—

[To DE FLORES] Thou standing toad-pool!

DE FLORES [aside]: The shower falls amain now.

BEATRICE: Who sent thee? What's thy errand? Leave my sight.

DE FLORES My lord your father charged me to deliver

A message to you.

BEATRICE: What, another since?

Do't and be hanged then, let me be rid of thee.[56]

This passage recalls De Flores' earlier claim that merely by "haunting" Beatrice-Joanna, he will have his "will:" his persistent presence in Beatrice-Joanna's company, and the "shower" of abuse that unwanted presence calls forth, affords De Flores great satisfaction. The excretory suggestiveness of that shower, with its "storm of hail" and "stones" that "pelt," encourages us to see "mouth," the source of abuse, as itself associated with the anus for De Flores. In a related passage, De Flores reflects on his prospects of winning Beatrice-Joanna, noting that "some women are odd feeders."[57]

The line might simply collapse "mouth" into "vagina," but the "oddness" of the feeding in De Flores' image suggests that mouth might as easily be read as "anus," or even simply as "mouth." Though Beatrice-Joanna's body grounds De Flores' eroticism, his focus is remarkably mobile, and, one suspects, opportunistic.

As the glove scene suggests, De Flores' steady fascination with Beatrice-Joanna also clearly places him both inside and outside her skin: he desires to possess Beatrice-Joanna's body while desiring to *be* that young, beautiful and aristocratic being. This fusion of identification with Beatrice-Joanna and desire for her hints at an eroticism already capable of traversing gender boundaries, though not necessarily of moving between differently gendered *objects*. At the end of the play, the roles of penetrator and penetrated converge on De Flores, though it is impossible to tell if that convergence is a product of De Flores identifications or of his desires. In the final act, the affair of Beatrice-Joanna and De Flores is discovered. Alsemero, Beatrice-Joanna's husband, sends them both to his "closet," declaring,

> I'll be your pander now; rehearse again
> Your scene of lust, that you may be perfect
> When you shall come to act it to the black audience
> Where howls and gnashings shall be music to you.[58]

De Flores proceeds to stab Beatrice-Joanna as if he were fulfilling Alsemero's command; then, he stabs himself. In satisfying Alsemero's command to "rehearse" their "scene of lust" by stabbing Beatrice-Joanna, De Flores brings the always present, but not always active association between sex and stabbing to the fore. Anthony B. Dawson underscores the collapse here of sex and stabbing: "The slide

between murder and love [sic] ends with his [De Flores'] own self-violation…."[59] In this context, where murder is deliberately staged as sex, De Flores' suicide also becomes a sexual act. It is unclear, however, whether De Flores identifies himself primarily with the knife or with the flesh: is the stabbing participating in an ongoing identification with Beatrice-Joanna or is it a version of the desire expressed through her stabbing, turned upon himself?

De Flores' single erotic excursion outside of the insular circuit of identification with and desire for Beatrice-Joanna, his murder of Alonzo, is pursued at Beatrice-Joanna's behest, as if De Flores were the literal (male) extension of her body. In musing on her desire to be free of Alonzo, Beatrice-Joanna exclaims, "Would creation…Had formed me man." De Flores responds, "Without change to your sex, you have your wishes. / Claim so much man in me."[60] De Flores' offer leads directly to Alonzo's murder, an act which is richly suggestive: when Alonzo is stabbed from behind, he cries out, "oh, oh, oh," a sound which may have been associated with depictions of sex as well as death for early modern audiences.[61] When De Flores pursues a male body outside of his identification with Beatrice-Joanna, that pursuit is characterized by an eroticism focused on the backside, as if the well-established anal component of De Flores' desire for Beatrice-Joanna had led him to discover, in Alonzo, another object of attraction, recalling Goldberg's reflection that the anus is "available on any body, male or female." For De Flores though, pursuing Alonzo is an essential part of pursuing Beatrice-Joanna, and ultimately inseparable from her body: though it is Alonso who is stabbed from behind, the "postern" passage belongs not to Alonzo but to Beatrice-Joanna, since it is her body

which is associated with the castle. It is through that passage that De Flores gains access to Alonzo, suggesting that the homoeroticism we find there is a subordinate part of a larger, at least physically heteroerotic elaboration.

Titus' pit scene mobilizes an anality around Bassianus which resonates with the anal suggestiveness of Alonso's stabbing in the claustrophobically small passage beyond the postern door. There is, however, a crucial difference between the ways in which anality surfaces in each narrative. In *The Changeling*, a wide variety of erotic investments in a woman's body are unproblematically *extended* to include a man's body, but in *Titus*, investments in a man's body must emerge *through* a vaginally oriented rape narrative constructed around a woman. The pit scene is blanketed by references to violent female defloration, but the sexual allusiveness of the scene escapes this heteroerotic designation, sliding instead towards images of helpless male bodies. Coppelia Kahn offers a thoughtful reading of the heterosexual imagery the pit mobilizes, but does not explore the ways in which that imagery collapses into something more haphazard—and more narratively vertiginous—than heterosexual rape. Martius, from the vantage of the hole, reports:

> Upon his [Bassianus'] bloody finger he doth wear
> A precious ring that lightens all this hole,
> Which like a taper in some monument
> Doth shine upon the dead man's earthy cheeks…(2.2.226-229).

Kahn reads these lines as a continuation of the imagery of heterosexual rape. She believes that they mock Bassianus' sexual guardianship of his wife, through the image of the bloody finger in the ring which corresponds to the candle in the

monument, writing that the image "connects and contrasts Lavinia's 'treasury,' her precious but violated womb, with the monument of the Andronici…."[62] Though Kahn's reading is based on a common early modern association which links rings and their possessors to women and their lovers, it nevertheless enacts a slippage quite in keeping with the play's own conflicted efforts to represent rape as heteroerotic: Kahn's logic relates finger to ring as taper to monument, where heterosexual intercourse is the referent which grounds both images. This passage, however, complicates the reduction of both sets of images to one sexual referent, since it explicitly compares not a finger but "a precious ring" to "a taper." The simile which connects one image of sexual penetration with the next rejects a taxonomy based on the distinction between hollow spaces and protuberant objects, linking the two instead. Acknowledging this link, however, generates a chaos of conventionally gendered allusion: if we insist on the masculinity of tapers and the femininity of rings, then the passage can be read to suggest that masculinity and femininity are somehow "like." The link between the masculine taper and the ring may instead masculinize the ring, locating Bassianus, like De Flores, as both penetrator and penetrated. Both readings undermine the gender oppositions which normally organize our readings of sexual allusion.

The latter interpretation, which locates both the ring and the taper on a masculine body, resonates oddly and evocatively in the line which follows. The ring, in its role as taper, "doth shine upon the dead man's earthy cheeks." Does this scene imagine the anus in its wonted location between "the dead man's earthy cheeks?" In Latin, "anus" means "ring."[63] Does it instead place the image of the taper there, "as

in some monument?" It is Bassianus' ring, and his taper. The taper lights some monument, recalling the vagina of Sonnet 136, in which men meet, but also illuminates the walls of Bassianus' hole. The taper is in the hole, but so is Martius. Who is in whom here? This question is not meant to be gratuitously obscene. The invisible bodies involved in this anxious fantasy have abruptly destabilized, making it impossible to quarantine penetrator from penetrated. This collapse of bodily boundaries defuses agency, a process which reiterates the effect of *Titus'* earlier substitution of Quintus and Martius for Chiron and Demetrius.

The anxious appeal in a loss of agency might be attributed to the promise of escaping blame—here, specifically, the blame attached to sodomitical desire. Leo Bersani, however, suggests that the promise of such a loss might involve more than the simple evasion of blame. In "Is the Rectum a Grave?" Bersani describes the experience of anal penetration as a form of masochism characterized by the "death" of self or subjectivity. He writes that anal penetration has the rare power to utterly (though temporarily) disperse the self, a cathartic experience he somewhat surprisingly opposes to the vaunting of a dangerous subjectivity: "if the rectum is the grave in which the masculine ideal (an ideal shared—differently—by men *and* women) of proud subjectivity is buried, then it should be celebrated for its very potential for death."[64] Bersani defends anal intercourse because in it, he imagines a means of escaping "proud subjectivity," a thing he sees as "a practical convenience" which, if "promoted to the status of an ethical ideal…is a sanction for violence."[65] Bersani's description suggests that the masculine ideal he has in mind involves an understanding of the self as a tightly closed and fully autonomous being, a tenuous

fantasy which incites violent protection, and which should, therefore, be overthrown. The powerful metaphoric correspondence between body and self suggested in Freud's claim that the ego is foremost a bodily ego allows us to read the unpierced and unburied bodies of characters in *Titus* as echoes of Bersani's uncompromised ideal. The subsequent piercing and burial of those bodies and the temporary disintegration of selves which follows, suggests that the pit scene might likewise aim towards a cathartic release from an empowering, but tyrannical subjectivity. The escape from blame is figured as an escape from self.

Though "death" is a matter of the failure of subjectivity for Bersani, his description of that failure suggests that within the subjected self, consciousness remains, as that thing which is aware of the "death" of subjectivity. Bersani's use of death to speak about the splitting of the self repeats a trope visible in some of the early modern texts discussed here. Bersani's lingering awareness recalls Marvell's beloved and Erictho's final victim who, though "dead," remain eerily aware. Quintus and Martius are also, in a sense, dead but aware: doomed to execution by the exigencies of the plot, they are already utterly helpless and claustrophobically entombed. The severing of agency from awareness made possible in these tropes of death suggests that unavowable desire might find particular expression in representations of split subjects. Unavowable desire between men might then appear, as in *Titus'* pit scene, through a conjunction of male bodies and a fracturing of male selves.

The language of *death* through which Bersani's claims about *sex* come into being also offers a transposition of sorts to the grave scenes in Marvell, Marston and

Shakespeare, where the horror of death is communicated in explicitly sexual language. The crisscrossing visible here between sex and death, where the language of each comes to describe the other, suggests that we should be careful not to distinguish the literal from the metaphoric too hastily; though it is easy to imagine death simply as a vehicle through which to convey desire in Marston and Marvell, for example, the relegation of death to metaphor is complicated by the threat of literal death attached to sodomy. Death likewise functions primarily as a metaphor which describes a particular psychological experience in Bersani, though the threat of literal death still haunts Bersani's formulation in the form of AIDS.[66] In both the theoretical and dramatic constellations of death, the tissue binding the literal to the figurative acts as if it were elastic: literal death, in the case of Bersani, though seemingly absent—fully supplanted by its figurative counterpart—abruptly returns. Literal sex, in the case of Marston, Middleton and Shakespeare, likewise returns to the pit, the bed and the closet. Bersani's celebration of figurative death recalls the grim conditions of the early modern period's fantasized bargain of agency for innocence, and suggests that sodomitical desire might be experienced as some dynamic mixture of fear and mortal desire.

The collapse of bodily distinctions and the corresponding loss of agency we see in *Titus* results in a staging of bodies marked by their complete relinquishment of erotic agency. A reallocation of bodily boundaries, however, need not stage the loss of erotic autonomy. In *Sophonisba*, for example, the loss of distinctions between individuals seems to effect a consolidation of multiple desires to one subject, expressed in a single, fully decisive—indeed martial—character. Such consolidation

recalls Goldberg's tracery of desire as it circulates through a series of fantasized lovers in *Romeo and Juliet*. In Goldberg's description, desire is consolidated within the empty form of the pair; two bodies lie open to an infinite series of erotic occupations. In S*ophonisba*, however, the erotic structure of the pair collapses, consolidating various desires onto a single body. The second scene of the first act opens prior to the consummation of Sophonisba's marriage to Massissina. An elaborate ceremony is underway around the marriage bed; Massinissa has already removed Sophonisba's "maiden-girdle" when Carthalon, a senator and soldier, bursts onto the stage with "his sword drawn, his body wounded, and his shield struck full of darts; MASSINISSA being ready for bed."[67] Carthalon has arrived in order to announce that Carthage is under attack. The violent exchanges to which Carthalon's body bears witness do not *represent* the sexual consummation of Sophonisba's and Massinissa's marriage, since that marriage is never consummated. Rather, his appearance marks the displacement of consummation into battle, as Judith Haber notes. She describes Carthalon's body as both "about to penetrate and frighteningly penetrated,"[68] though she does not comment on the homoerotic resonance of this particular version of the familiar association between love and war. Carthalon's peculiar appearance in this scene of marital consummation enables a fantasy in which the same body penetrates and is penetrated, recalling De Flores' climactic stabbing of Beatrice-Joanna and then himself at the end of *The Changeling*. A renegotiation of bodily boundaries, then, can tend toward a diffusion of erotic autonomy as in *Titus*, or a consolidation of it, as Carthalon and De Flores demonstrate. If, as I suggested earlier, Bassianus' dead and invisible body nevertheless exerts a gravitational pull on the incoherent fragments of

sexual imagery in the pit scene, we might now speak of that "pull" as a movement toward the consolidation of erotic autonomy onto Bassianus, who is momentarily both penetrator at penetrated, object of both identification and desire.

Titus' pit scene, however, is caught between consolidation and dissolution: the scene cannot coherently articulate Bassianus' double role; neither do distinctions between bodies fully dissolve, preventing the cathartic potential of that dissolution from being realized. These claustrophobic moments of entrapment instead yield to the excruciating scene of Lavinia's return. A brief appearance by Saturninus and Tamora intervenes; Quintus and Martius are pulled from the hole and hustled off stage. The cathartic potential of Bersani's "death" is partially defused by the sudden crowd onstage and then redirected towards Lavinia as her silent, bleeding body becomes the prolonged center of attention. At this juncture, it might benefit us to return to Susan Snyder's discussion of displacement, as a way of thinking about Lavinia's sudden spectacular return. As I argued earlier, Snyder's characterization of displacement suggests that Lavinia initially plays the role of rape victim because she offers a socially appropriate means through which to express violent desire. Snyder also, however, writes that shifts from the consequent to the inconsequent which characterize displacement "evade or placate the social *or internalized* censors by this…process of deviation and substitution."[69] In describing censorship in this manner, Snyder suggests that we read social and psychological censorship as part of one continuum. Within that context, Lavinia's initial appearance as a conventional victim of rape appears as the product of an earlier, specifically *social* form of censorship, one which mechanically associates women with rape. The gap between

sodomitical desire and its imperfect expression in Lavinia demarcates a lack that is attributable to the strictures of social convention, and into which Bassianus slips. Bassianus' appearance, then, marks the moment in which conventional modes of expression are exceeded, activating the censorship that conformance to convention generally allows us to avoid. It may be this volatile moment and its repression which marks the juncture between social and more "internalized" forms of the same censorship. That "internalization," a reassertion of the play's original socially mandated displacement, may be expressed through the prolonged spectacle of Lavinia's sexualized mutilation.

Rape is returned to Lavinia's body in part through the authoritative intervention of Saturninus and Tamora, who appear after Quintus joins his brother in the pit.[70] Though the image of Bassianus in a pit marked as masculine space continues to circulate in the play's dialogue, Saturninus and Tamora reinterpret that image in terms of murder, not rape. Tamora asks, "Where is thy brother Bassianus?" and Saturninus replies, "Now to the bottom dost thou search my wound: / Poor Bassianus here lies murdered" (2.2.261-63). The line recalls the "ragged entrails" of the pit in which Bassianus actually lies, but insists that his presence there is a clear testament to murder. Tamora also exclaims, "How easily murder is discovered!" a statement which, though obviously deceitful, locates that deceit in the false accusation of Quintus and Martius, rather than in the nature of the event itself (2.2.287). Though neither Tamora nor Aaron may be called a reliable witness, the narrative itself supports their claims of murder, allowing murder to be consolidated

on Bassianus' body, while withholding the *recognition* of rape for the return of Lavinia.

Lavinia's return to the stage after Bassianus' removal, with "her hands cut off, and her tongue cut out, and ravished," offers the audience a spectacular object upon which to fix the uneasy desire both incited and frustrated in the previous scenes (2.3.1sd). Cynthia Marshall explores Lavinia's status as an erotic object, foregrounding the similarities between the image created by Lavinia's return and contemporaneous illustrations of saints and martyrs which routinely conflated sensuality and suffering. [71] Marshall points out that though Marcus' description of Lavinia in this scene lingers on her wounds, it nevertheless partakes of absolutely conventional erotic imagery [72]:

> Alas, a crimson river of warm blood,
> Like to a bubbling fountain stirred with wind,
> Doth rise and fall between thy rosed lips,
> Coming and going with thy honey breath…(2.3.22-25).

Marshall argues that Lavinia's mutilated body becomes a site which initially enables audiences to take masochistic pleasure, [73] though her image also incites a sadistic response: she writes, "The masochistic position is dangled before viewers but suppressed by the overwhelming costs of identifying with the brutalized Lavinia. [74] In arguing that the scene first solicits and then forecloses a masochistic response similar to the one Bersani describes, Marshall suggests that Lavinia's reappearance redirects, and in so doing, redefines, the masochistic desire present in the pit scene. Her reading of Lavinia's bleeding and mutilated body as the dramatically

materialized site of sadistic desire suggests that Lavinia's return, and the shift towards sadism it enables, allows for a kind of cathartic climax withheld from the previous scene.

The claim that desire is displaced from Bassianus onto Lavinia is not to suggest that the play disallows genuine pleasure in and desire for Lavinia, but rather to insist on the conditioning of that desire by the political, social and erotic relations between the men who surround Lavinia, and with which *Titus* is deeply preoccupied. Such conditioning is coterminous with desire itself. Of Lavinia, Marshall writes, "The model so strikingly played out in *Titus Andronicus* is the traditional one of woman as victim whose suffering is taken up and used by men to their particular purposes."[75] While Marshall is referring to Lavinia's political status as the Andronici's cause celebre, this characterization extends to Lavinia's erotic role in a dramatic strategy for staging politically imbricated homoerotic desire through a narrative of female rape. The horrific spectacularity of Lavinia's return overwrites the audience's erotic investments in Bassianus' body, even as it offers to consummate those same investments in orgiastic spectacle.

The abrupt shift between the "discovery" of Bassianus and the revelation of Lavinia which follows is primarily a visual one. Bassianus is inert and spends most of the scene out of sight. Lavinia's reappearance forms a jarring contrast to Bassianus' conventionally tragic state. Though disfigured far more obviously than Bassianus, Lavinia stands, she moves, she demands attention: living, she appalls. While Bassianus is seldom mentioned after his death, Lavinia's injuries are frequently cataloged and she herself becomes a visual reminder of them. The dramatic shift of

attention away from Bassianus and towards Lavinia suggests a change in the play's relation to the sodomitical desire both characters have helped to stage. If the "discovery" of Bassianus at the heart of the play's rape narrative must be suppressed, then Lavinia's spectacular victimization, and the references to it which follow, may be read as the drama's obsessive "remembering" of the "proper" placement of violent desire.

Marshall attributes the cathartic potential of Lavinia's return, in part, to the spectacular nature of her reappearance: she draws attention to the way in which Marcus mediates the audience's response to Lavinia, framing her as an image upon which the audience should gaze. According to Marshall, Marcus' "lengthy apostrophe arrests the temporal movement of the plot as he trains all eyes on her. The effect is that of a photograph or a freeze-frame in cinema."[76] The appearance of Lavinia forcefully consolidates the status of victim in a single body, reestablishing clear boundaries between the victim and the perpetrators of the crime. It is, in part, the clarity of the image of suffering achieved through Lavinia which permits the cathartic response withheld from the anxious staging of Bassianus' rape.

Marshall's description of this spectacle is clearly not gender-neutral. The manner in which the play objectifies Lavinia's mute body through a sudden halt in narrative progress, and the way in which that halt intensifies a sense of her body's visual availability, reminds us that stillness and exposure to the gaze have typically framed constructions of the feminine. The correspondence between Lavinia's image and familiar characterizations of the feminine suggests that the feminine itself has been designated as the means of making sexualized helplessness visible. Because

male rape, as Smith has identified it in early modern drama, is largely dissociated from literal rape, and literal rape is virtually always depicted on early modern stages through reference to a female character, the dramatic conventions activated around the staging of transgressive desire may then have dictated that a female character display the more overtly sexual elements of that fantasy. Though many critics have read the scene of Bassianus in the pit as a metaphor for Lavinia's rape, this cultural construction suggests that Lavinia's rape may instead illuminate—and enable—the rape of Bassianus.

Though visual and verbal modes of dramatic communication are often treated as coming together seamlessly in one narrative, Lavinia's silenced spectacularity rather suggests that visibility itself—operating separately from speech—can be deployed to displace transgressive desire onto othered bodies. In the course of an essay which is concerned with the potential conjunctions between the author's own private and authorial desires, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick offers a conceptual model which illuminates the potential gap between women's bodies and their voices in early modern drama. In "A Poem is Being Written," Sedgwick describes one poem's preoccupation with the "wracking and politically expensive divorce of the tightly zoned and abjected female body from the enfranchised female voice."[77] The gap Sedgwick indicates between the social position, value and capacity of the female body and that of the female voice suggests that the staging of women's bodies and the staging of their voices might also be subject to different privileges and constraints.

Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass hint at just such a discrepancy in early modern drama, noting "systemic dislocations between visual and linguistic

systems of representation in the Renaissance," which they believe were exploited to erotic effect.[78] They argue that plays often drew attention to qualities, such as breasts, which boy actors conspicuously lacked, in order to create a pleasurable frisson of contrasting bodily fantasies. Of Desdemona's famously erotic line, "Unpin me," they propose that "the fixations of spectators were drawn back and forth between clothes which embodied and determined a particular sexual identity and contradictory fantasies [evoked through language] of the body beneath—the body of a woman, the body of a boy….we teeter on the brink of seeing the boy's breastless but pinned body revealed."[79] The paradigm which underlies Jones and Stallybrass' consideration of Desdemona's erotic appeal is sensitive to the ways in which the visual and verbal elements of Desdemona's presentation are differently gendered. In attributing the densest performance of femininity to clothes or appearances in contrast to dramatic language, Jones and Stallybrass suggest that femininity itself can be experienced by the audience as fundamentally superficial; femininity becomes something one wears or performs, not something one *is*. In Jones and Stallybrass' reading of Desdemona, the voice, in contrast to the costume, draws attention to a hidden interior, which, when juxtaposed with a clearly "false" exterior, becomes a sign of the "true" self; the "truth" the voice may lay claim to enables the staging of an interiority of sorts, an interiority which has a distinctly masculine hue. When Jones and Stallybrass speak of the work done by both vision and voice in terms of "fantasies of the body," they collapse the ontological distinction between fantasies rendered through a presentation of surface and fantasies rendered through a claim to being. I want to recuperate that distinction in the service of *Titus*.

When Lavinia loses her voice, she also loses a certain ability to demonstrate an interiority. As far as the audience is concerned, Lavinia has become surface; "her" voice, significantly, is transferred to Titus.[80] The loss of her voice, and a consequent loss of the ability to invoke or stage interiority, contributes, I think, to the foreclosure of audience identification with Lavinia discussed by Marshall. What interests me here specifically is the relationship between the way Lavinia is staged and an audience's perception of her gender. In becoming all surface, Lavinia, becomes, in an odd way, all woman. The peculiarly masculine self which might at any time be revealed in Desdemona's speech is permanently banished from Lavinia. That is, when Lavinia displaces Bassianus as the object of rape, a move which insists that rape be expressed through reference to a woman, that gendered rift extends into Lavinia herself, separating "her" from both masculinity and from staged interiority. In this separation, she becomes simultaneously both more feminine and more of an object. In her foundational text on the role of women in society, Simone de Beauvoir has written, "humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him….He is the Subject, he is the Absolute—she is the Other."[81] In Beauvoir's terms, the "othering" of Lavinia moves her away from a conception of the human as it moves her towards a conception of the feminine, rendering her uniquely suited to becoming the object of a notoriously destructive desire.

This essay has attempted to suggest that otherness, as it is manifested in representations of female bodies, comes to play a role in the displacement of dangerous desire precisely *because* it denotes contingency; it is that thing literally staged as outside the self, and therefore comparatively inconsequential. As in

Othello, femininity in *Titus* is concentrated in appearance, costume, or cover; it is uniquely spectacular, but not wholly human. Lavinia, however, is not the most prominent other in the play. It is Aaron, in fact, who embodies the more spectacular form of difference. The brilliantly black body of the Moor[82] works in tandem with Lavinia to stage a desire which cannot be directly expressed through white male characters. While *Titus* situates Lavinia as the object of displaced desire, it locates Aaron as the agent of it. Though issues of race in the early modern period are far more complicated than I can address here, I would like briefly to examine the ways in which Aaron's blackness forms a powerful complement to the mute femininity embodied in Lavinia: through Lavinia and Aaron, sodomitical desire is expressed, in part, in terms of violent miscegenation.

The most spectacular confession in the play—a confession, incidentally, which includes rape—is made by Aaron, the only black character to play an active role in *Titus*. This confession allows some of the blame for Lavinia's rape to be transferred to Aaron, in part through a spectacularity similar to Lavinia's own. If, as the aphorism goes, seeing is believing, then the spectacle of the utterly black body, like that of the raped and dismembered body, might be the most compelling way of recognizing sodomitical desire as something other than the thing it is. Prior to his confession, Aaron is made to ascend a ladder from which he conducts a lengthy negotiation with Lucius. He then spends nearly fifty lines on unrepentant confession. The ladder places his body in a visually imposing position and reinforces the demands already made on audience attention by his singular color, a color which itself lends credence to his somewhat dubious confession: Francesca T. Royster

writes that Aaron's color alone could mobilize myths of black rape current at the time.[83] The substantial number of lines given Aaron in these moments forms a powerful contrast to the lines given Chiron and Demetrius in the whole last act of the play, which together total six. Such visual and verbal centrality combines with Aaron's boasting confession to situate him *against* the logic of the narrative as the play's diabolical villain, responsible not only for his own crimes, but for those of others. Though the brothers, for example, play the roles of Rape and Murder while their mother impersonates Revenge, those roles are curiously passive: Rape and Murder are nearly silent figures, doing what they are told to do. Aaron, in contrast, is vibrant; gaining the volition the brothers lose, this spectacularly unrepentant figure eclipses both the brothers and their culpability. Though Chiron and Demetrius are not completely divested of guilt, the compelling spectacle of Aaron's villainy does facilitate a disavowel of complicity in the rape, by shifting the blame for it *towards* Aaron and *away* from the guilty characters with whom audiences may have identified during the commission of the crime or its anxious representation.

Titus, then, enacts a double displacement: the visual spectacularity of Lavinia's bloody mutilation and the striking blackness of Aaron's foreign body are, in part, what make these characters available as stand-ins in the expression of sodomitical desire. Such desire manifests itself through white male characters only with the greatest of difficulty, although, of course, the same cannot be said for white male bodies. Dympna Callaghan has written about the ways in which blackness and femininity, though marked as other, come to represent white male selves. Recalling the arguments made by Jones and Stallybrass, Callaghan argues that, in part because

of the regular use of blackface and whiteface to represent blacks and women on the early modern stage, both femininity and blackness in *Othello* were actually perceived as superficial: "Shakespeare's audience would have witnessed in Othello and Desdemona the spectacle of two men, one young with his face whitened and one older with his face blackened," she writes.[84] Callaghan's insistence that blackness and femininity can be experienced as *essentially* superficial helps to explain why blackness and femininity are called into the service of staging sodomitical desire in *Titus*: such staging would in itself include audience sensitivity to the whiteness and maleness of actors, while telling stories about "others."

Titus stages a spectacular production of racial demonization and feminine vulnerability in response to cultural injunctions barring the expression of sodomitical desire. When anxious intimations of male rape explode into spectacular images of black villains and female victims, the arc of the play's displacements is illuminated. Those displacements both utilize and reinforce conventional interpretations of black male bodies as always already sexually transgressive and white female bodies as always potentially transgressed. The slippage between sodomitical desire and violent miscegenation staged in *Titus* suggests that we consider wider mappings of raced and gendered desire as it appears in early modern drama, focusing particularly on its circulation outside of the explicit staging of raced and gendered bodies.

Chapter III: Identity Theft in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*

Just after her death, Douglas Hofstadter imagined that his wife was like a language: he writes, "a person is a *point of view*—not only a *physical* point of view... but more importantly a psyche's point of view….the latter can be absorbed, more and more over time, by someone else….. it's like acquiring a foreign language…."[1] Hofstadter imagines retrieving his wife from death in part by "speaking" the language that she is—a language comprised of the memories, investments, pleasures and responses that were part of her identity. But in identifying with his wife, Hofstadter does not simply imagine that he has made a copy of her; instead, he calls on a notion of self that escapes the body, one he calls "the noncentralizedness of consciousness."[2] The very physicality of the brain and body within which memories are stored makes it seem plausible to Hofstadter, a physicist by training, that the self may be lodged not only in brain and body, but in other objects, and, in other people. I am not in a position to evaluate the scientific or philosophical merit of Hofstadter's analogy; instead, I want to foreground the way in which it brings into focus a particular fantasy of loss and recovery, one that, I contend, informs the friendship of Valentine and Proteus, the eponymous gentlemen of Shakespeare's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. In expanding the subject beyond the boundaries of the body, Hofstadter's claim imbues the discourse of early modern friendship, in which friends are "one soul in two bodies," with an uncanny literality.[3] I argue that *Two Gentlemen*, so clearly indebted to the friendship tradition, itself depicts shifts in the physical boundaries of its subjects; Proteus's identification with Valentine, in particular, includes not only

the sharing of memories, investments and pleasures, but extends to the body of his friend itself.

Freud, of course, understood identification as a means of coping with the loss of an object one has loved through its reconstitution within the self. *Two Gentlemen*, though a comedy, in fact begins by staging the loss of just such an object: "Cease to persuade, my loving Proteus," Valentine says as he is about to depart for Milan, suggesting that in the moments before this opening line, Proteus has been urging Valentine to stay (1.1.1). As he watches his friend depart, Proteus muses, "I leave myself…," locating himself not only in his own body, but in the body of the friend who is leaving (1.1.65). Though Proteus attributes this splitting of himself to his love for Julia, his utterance is, of course, precipitated by Valentine's departure.[4] It hardly seems coincidental, then, that the gentleman who is leaving is the one Shakespeare names Valentine. It is Valentine's departure that, for Proteus, writes love as loss. Derrida has suggested that the great meditations on friendship are meditations on loss, allowing us to read *Two Gentlemen* as itself engaged in mourning, and therefore as deeply involved in processes of identification and constructions of identity.[5] In the final, climactic scene, Proteus attempts to rape Silvia, a woman who is betrothed to Valentine. Though Proteus's infamous behavior is usually understood in terms of excessive desire (for Silvia), I contend that it may instead be read in terms of excessive identification (with Valentine), as part of an attempt to regain the beloved object Proteus has lost.

As the opening lines of *Two Gentlemen* suggest, identification and desire often appear in the same narrative breath, troubling conventional psychoanalytic

assumptions about the mutual exclusivity of desire and identification.[6] If, as I will argue, both identification and desire are incited through the language and practice of early modern friendship, then we might expect desire for Valentine as well as identification with Valentine to play a role in Proteus's attempt to rape Silvia. Desire, problematically nominated as *the* motive for rape, is generally seen, in *Two Gentlemen,* as directed towards Silvia: it is, in other words, presumed to be heteroerotic. If, however, we read the desire that binds Proteus to Valentine in the opening lines as bearing narrative weight, and therefore, in some manner, as prescient of events to come, then we should ask what role Proteus's desire for Valentine might play in his attack on Silvia. I argue in the course of this chapter that by inciting both identification and desire, early modern friendship discourse constructs and maintains subjects that exceed the boundaries of their bodies. Friendship fails when subjects collapse back into "their" bodies; in *Two Gentlemen,* the withdrawal of identification from the body of the friend and the displacement of desire for the friend's body lead to the attempted rape of Silvia. The restoration of the friend's body, I contend, is ultimately what permits *Two Gentlemen's* "happy" ending, an ending realized in the play's final instantiation of normative sexual relations.

In focusing on the role of desire and identification in the construction of subjects, my work engages critical discourse in three distinct ways: first, it contests the claims of critics like Janet Adelman, who, in applying a conventional psychoanalytic narrative of development to *Two Gentlemen*, cast the homoerotic desire that appears there as a sign of immaturity, something that must be given up in order for Valentine and Proteus to reach normal heterosexual adulthood.[7] I argue, in

contrast, that it is Proteus's retention of desire for Valentine, a desire incited through the language and practice of early modern friendship, that prevents the play from ending in disaster and ultimately allows both Proteus and Valentine to be successfully integrated into the adult world. Second, by discussing identification and desire at the level of the subject, I hope to complement the work of Jeff Masten, who has argued that Petrarchan love and male friendship are interdependent rather than opposed.[8] Masten is concerned primarily with interpersonal relations. By focusing on *intra*personal relations, I hope to cast light on how what Masten calls "sanctioned homoeroticism" participates in the construction of gentlemanly subjects and the (hetero)erotic relations those subjects eventually pursue.[9] Finally, by foregrounding the impact of homoerotic desire on the course of the plot in *Two Gentlemen*, I want to offer a corrective to commentary accompanying the most recent fully revised scholarly edition of *Two Gentlemen,* published in 2004 by Arden. William C. Carroll, the editor of that edition, acknowledges homoeroticism as an aspect of early modern friendship;[10] by distancing friendship ideals from *Two Gentlemen's* plot trajectory, however, Carroll effectively dismisses the influence of homoerotic desire on the narrative.[11] That exclusion, in the face of an earlier edition that acknowledges the influence of homoeroticism *through* the circulation of friendship ideals,[12] amounts to a regression to an earlier critical tradition, one that habitually dismissed homoerotic desire as outside the purview of critical responses to Shakespeare.[13]

I'd like to begin by reviewing Carroll's introduction to the Arden edition. Though his work on *Two Gentlemen* is thoughtful and wide-ranging, it also exposes the intellectual cost of suppressing the narrative relevance of desire between friends:

near the end of his review of *Two Gentlemen's* performance history, Carroll notes that Proteus's attempt to rape Silvia and Valentine's offer of Silvia to Proteus just after that attempt has been interrupted are bound by "a profound, and profoundly disturbing connection,"[14] a connection that recent performances have attempted to suppress or diminish. Carroll sees that connection in terms of the traffic in women.[15] At this point, however, Carroll's analysis comes to an abrupt halt; after having asserted the sovereign power of "romantic desire," he is unable to acknowledge that the culturally constructed bonds regulating this "traffic" must be traced out between men.[16]

In what would seem to be a propitious sign, the first topic to be discussed in the introduction to the Arden edition is "The Early Modern Discourse of Male Friendship." Near the end of that section, Carroll sums up what he sees as Shakespeare's critical engagement with the discourse: "*Two Noble Kinsmen* deploys, at some points, a comparable ambivalence about the friendship tradition, and suggests, as *Two Gentlemen* does, that romantic desire is a vastly stronger power than male-male friendship."[17] Carroll's conclusion, drawn in response to a play notorious for ending with Valentine offering his betrothed to Proteus as a sign of forgiveness just after he has tried to rape her, is a striking dismissal of the power and influence of friendship on the behavior of these two friends. Though Carroll invokes Masten's claim that Petrarchan love and male friendship are interdependent rather than opposed,[18] his conclusion in fact characterizes the forces of "romantic desire" as easily overpowering the opposing demands of male friendship.

The prominent position Carroll gives to his discussion of male friendship comes to form a striking contrast with the minor role to which he eventually relegates

it in *Two Gentlemen*. He negotiates this traversal by focusing on the ways in which the play diverges from the standard tropes of idealized friendship, divergences that allow him to build a case for Shakespeare's critical stance in relation to that ideal. Though a consideration of these differences and their implications is certainly worthwhile, Carroll's repositioning of the discourse of male friendship as angled against the main thrust of the play has a disconcerting effect: it works to legitimize his decision not to address the role of homoeroticism in the plot. While Carroll recognizes that idealized male friendship is "to some extent erotic,"[19] he at no point discusses the ways in which that eroticism might impact the behavior of Valentine and Proteus or otherwise figure in the narrative. As Carroll recognizes, homoeroticism has been shown over the past 25 years of critical scholarship to share a language with early modern friendship.[20] Alan Bray's groundbreaking study *Homosexuality in Renaissance England*, published in 1982, and the essay that followed, "Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship in Elizabethan England," both ubiquitously cited,[21] demonstrate "an affinity and a symmetry between representations of universally admired masculine friendship and officially condemned sodomy."[22] It is by distancing Shakespeare from the early modern discourse of male friendship that Carroll dispenses with the need to address the role of homoerotic desire in *Two Gentlemen*, effectively reconciling Shakespeare with modern heteronormativity.

There are many reasons to call Carroll's heteronormative reading into question: perhaps most vividly, the love letters embedded in *Two Gentlemen* consistently imagine another man within the purportedly heteroerotic pairings that

motivate the production and circulation of those letters. Love letters, intensively socialized expressions understood to reflect a subject's interior terrain, or, as Proteus calls them, "agents of the heart," will point, I think, towards a correction of representations of the play that marginalize the role of homoerotic desire, and will also, I hope, extend Masten's insight on the role of homoeroticism in the construction of sanctioned (hetero)erotic relations.[23] As I will show, the letters, paired with the play's references to Marlowe's apparently unfinished epyllion "Hero and Leander," suggest that the attempted rape, that seemingly quintessential heteroerotic event, is profoundly concerned with the loves and losses of men. In a play that begins with Valentine's dismissal of Proteus, Carroll tries to answer the question, "Why does Proteus attempt to rape Sylvia?" I suggest we might better ask, "Why *doesn't* Proteus attempt to rape Valentine?"

Many of the love letters in *Two Gentlemen*, beyond representing a male-female pair, conjure another man into existence within that pairing, a man whose presence immediately complicates the boundaries of the masculine subject represented there. The first letter that appears is written by Proteus to Julia. Julia, tormented by indecision over whether or not to accept Proteus, rips it to pieces, but then begins retrieving the scattered scraps. She says:

> Lo, here in one line is his name twice writ,
> *Poor forlorn Proteus, passionate Proteus,*
> *To the sweet Julia*—that I'll tear away;
> And yet I will not, sith so prettily
> He couples it to his complaining names.

> Thus will I fold them, one upon another;
>
> Now kiss, embrace, contend, do what you will (1.2.123-29).

By bestowing bodies able to "kiss, embrace," and "contend" upon names written on a scrap of paper, Julia imagines Proteus as *two* men; she enables a fantasy of menage-a-trois, where two Proteuses and one sweet Julia are folded "one upon another."[24] The bodies she conjures into existence also support fantasies in which two Proteuses "do what [they] will." This extraordinary constellation of characters counterintuitively lodges one subject in two separate bodies, a distribution that follows Hofstadter as he imagines that his wife's identity might be lodged in his body as well as in her own.

Such a distribution of self casts desire between these two bodies as involving only one man,[25] recalling the psychoanalytic description of narcissism, a relation Freud characterized as neurotic specifically when it occurred between two bodies, as it does here.[26] *Two Gentlemen's* allocation of self also, however, recalls the organization of the subject after successful identification, a relation Freud characterized as healthy. After successful identification, the id comes to desire the ego after it has remade itself in the image of a lost object of desire.[27] At this moment in Freud's description, there is very little difference between anaclytic and narcissistic desire, that is, between the (healthy) desire for an object and the (healthy) desire for the self that appears in the guise of that object. For Freud, the difference seems determined not by any intrinsic distinction between anaclytic and narcissistic desire, but by the physical boundaries of the body. It is therefore by including the body of the other in processes of identification that Hofstadter implicitly undermines the distinction between anaclytic and narcissistic desire, extending the narcissistic

relation Freud confined to a single body to two. In doing so, Hofstadter expands the *healthy* narcissistic relations Freud imagined to follow from identification to include narcissistic relations Freud considered neurotic, foregrounding the untenability, in this instance, of the distinction between healthy and unhealthy desires.[28] Hofstadter's notion of noncentralized consciousness is therefore an implicit advocation for the recuperation of narcissism involving *two* bodies as a healthy response to loss. I suggest that Proteus, in presenting himself as "one soul in two bodies," appears engaged in just such a narcissistic relation, though without the neurosis imposed on that relation by Freud.

The counterintuitive distribution of bodies and subjects invoked here recalls the discourse of idealized male friendship, in which friends form a union between "myself" and "another myself."[29] The erotic encounter Julia imagines is thus legible within friendship discourse, suggesting that the friends themselves may be recognizable, within the imaginary economy of the play, as "poor forlorn Proteus" and "passionate Proteus." Dramatic slippage from the representation of two men to the representation of a single man who has been doubled is not as counterintuitive as it seems: Giorgio Melchiori has pointed out that different characters may be recognized as a single character when the same actor plays both roles: of Peter and Sampson in *Romeo and Juliet*, for example, Melchiori writes that "the audience was supposed to welcome the reappearance of the clown in a new impersonation."[30] In a sense, then, the *clown* is the character; Peter and Sampson are different embodiments of him. While Valentine and Proteus were not played by the same actor, they are certainly identifiable as a single character type: both are iterations of "the friend;"

both are recognizable as “the lover.” Their mobilization of these familiar types makes it difficult to know whether the differences between them represent differences distinguishing one person from another, or instead reflect the chameleon-like changes a single lover is said to undergo, changes that distance that man from “himself.”[31] It is at least clear, however, that early modern friendship and Petrarchan love, as it appears in Julia's letter, share a certain erotic terrain, one organized around the bodies of incompletely distinguished friends.

Despite this overlap in erotic terrain, it seems worth noting the way in which Julia's contribution distinguishes the language of the letter from the language of early modern friendship: it is she who introduces concrete, explicitly sexual language into the imagined encounter. Compare her fantasy with Montaigne's famous, and famously erotic passage describing his friendship with Etienne de La Boétie:

> It is not one special consideration, nor two, nor three, nor four, nor a thousand: it is I know not what quintessence of all this mixture, which, having seized my whole will, led it to plunge and lose itself in his; which, having seized his whole will, led it to plunge and lose itself in mine, with equal hunger, equal rivalry. I say lose, in truth, for neither of us reserved anything for himself, nor was anything either his or mine.[32]

Among passages describing idealized friendship in erotic terms, the graphic detail of Montaigne's description sets it apart. Though Montaigne invokes two seemingly solid bodies engaged in powerful, rhythmic activity, that activity is attributed not to bodies, but to wills.[33] Julia's description recognizes bodies where Montaigne's

description merely alludes to them: she mobilizes a language *marked* as sexual, a language that encompasses not only her relations with Proteus, but, as I have suggested, Proteus's relations with "himself."

Another love letter in *Two Gentlemen* reproduces this erotic constellation, conjuring a second man into existence in relations that purportedly involve one man and one woman. Here again, it is the woman who enables an erotic exchange between men: Silvia has asked Valentine to write to her "secret, nameless friend" as if he were her, a task Valentine grudgingly performs (2.1.105). In this scene, he offers the letter he has written to Silvia. She takes it, reads it, and then returns it to Valentine. Speed, his servant, explains the joke:

> For often have you writ to her; and she in modesty,
> Or else for want of idle time, could not again reply,
> Or fearing else some messenger, that might her mind discover,
> Herself hath taught her love himself to write unto her lover
> (2.1.152-55).

Valentine has, in effect, been two men: himself and Silvia's "secret, nameless friend."[34] We might imagine that in the writing of this love letter, Valentine has thought long and deeply about his rival, in effect bringing him into existence as another man, one he has been "taught" to love. The love and rivalry bound together in Valentine's response to Silvia's friend recalls Montaigne and Boétie's "equal hunger" paired with "equal rivalry." We are not privy, however, to the development of these emotions in *Two Gentlemen*: instead, Speed's revelation stages a moment of

convergence in which two rivals become one man, like the two bodies that, in Julia's letter, are already both somehow Proteus.

Silvia's clever manipulation of these relations foregrounds a problem built into early modern ideals of friendship and effects a fascinating solution. In early modern depictions of ideal friends, friends are often virtually identical, a similarity that extends to their desires. If their desires are the same, the logic goes, they are liable to fall in love with the same woman. Titus reminds his friend Gisippus of just this in Elyot's *The Boke Named the Gouernour*:

> Why wolde ye haue me see that, whiche you your selfe coulde nat beholde without ravysshynge of minde and carnall appetite? Alas, why forgate ye that our myndes & appetite were euer one? And that also what soo ye lyked was euer to me in lyke degree pleasaunte. [35]

Rivalry is made virtually inevitable by the "minde and carnall appetite" friends are understood to share, a rivalry that is, in fact, potentially deadly: after falling in love with Sophronia, Gisippus's beloved, Titus is struck by guilt and despair and becomes mortally ill. Likewise, in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, Palamon and Arcite become rivals for Emilia, a rivalry that is only resolved through Arcite's death. Silvia, then, stages a fantastic solution to the problem embedded in the ideal of similarity in friends: if one's friend becomes one's rival, one can resolve the rivalry and avoid the death of the friend—or oneself—by *becoming* him. Emilia in fact wishes that the conflict between Palamon and Arcite were resolved in precisely this manner: "Were they metamorphosed / Both into one!" (5.3.84-5). In *Two Gentlemen*, Silvia's solution, like Emilia's wishful fantasy, is to rewrite the narrative: under Silvia's

guidance, rivals merge into a single man. This merging of men offers itself, in fantasy, and perhaps in reality, as a way of resolving the potentially deadly division of friends.

Another letter in *Two Gentlemen*, like the two previously discussed, imagines a second man embedded in relations between two lovers. Like the previous two letters, this letter complicates the boundaries of the masculine subject represented through that lens. Unlike the previous letters however, this next letter does not imagine two separate bodies; instead, it imagines a second man *without* the addition of his body, a different, disembodied identity. In reflecting on a letter he has received from Julia, Proteus is startled into discovering Valentine:

> Sweet love, sweet lines, sweet life!
> Here is her hand, the agent of her heart;
> O, that our fathers would applaud our loves
> To seal our happiness with their consents.
> O heavenly Julia! (1.3.45-50)

This letter is probably the first Proteus has received from Julia and is clearly *the* letter in which she declares her love for him. At this point, Antonio, Proteus's father, asks, “How now? What letter are you reading there?” Proteus replies, “May't please your lordship, 'tis a word or two / Of commendations sent from Valentine...” (1.3.50-52). Of course, on one level, we may understand that Proteus is lying in order to prevent his father from discovering his courtship, and, perhaps, out of a desire to keep Julia's long-awaited and extremely personal news for himself. On another level, we may imagine that Proteus tells a kind of truth, revealing a desire for his friend. It seems to

me, however, that we must still account for the correspondence between Proteus's joy at receiving a letter—not from Valentine but from Julia—and his nomination of Valentine as the sender.

We might then propose that Proteus tells a different kind of truth: he has, after all, received a letter from his valentine and—almost—says as much. Valentine's name, synonymous with "beloved," and Proteus's startled employment of it here, suggests that Proteus might experience desire for Julia as a particular instance of what is, for him, a general desire, a desire modeled on, and anchored in, his friend. The process of identification, as Freud understood it, points the way towards positioning Valentine as the ultimate referent of Proteus's desire. Freud imagined that identification allowed a subject to cope with loss through a withdrawal of love—or libidinal energy—from the lost object, a withdrawal made possible through the reproduction of that object within the self.[36] The withdrawal of that energy permitted its redirection towards a new object. Identification, then, associated with Valentine since *Two Gentlemen's* opening lines, outlines a process by which love for Valentine may *become* love for Julia; it accounts for Proteus's rapture at having received her letter, though he later attributes it to Valentine. It is here, however, that *Two Gentlemen* diverges from the Freudian narrative, for desire is not simply deracinated and repurposed. Instead, desire seems to retain the imprint of the object, enabling the lost object to be "rediscovered" not only in the psyche of the lover, but outside of it, in new objects: in a similar manner, Sonnet 33 asserts, "Their images I loved I view in thee, / And thou, all they, hast all the all of me" (ll. 13-14). At the moment in

which Julia professes her love, Proteus *recognizes* his Valentine in her and so, I contend, calls her by his name.

As with the letters discussed earlier, identification and desire are thoroughly intertwined in Proteus's response to Julia's letter. Unlike these first letters, however, Valentine is present not as another body, but as an aspect of Proteus's identity. Instead of Proteus's expansion, his incorporation in two separate bodies, we have Proteus's diminishment; in a sense, his body plays host to Valentine, the director of his desire. In the previous two letters, homoerotic desire is intrasubjective—love between Proteus and Proteus, Valentine and Valentine. Here, despite the presence of a single male body, it appears as *inter*subjective, as desire between Proteus and Valentine. It is in this manner that the erotic and identitary relations reflected in this exchange complicate the boundaries of the masculine subject, redrawing "Proteus" well within the confines of his own body.

The next letter, this time a hypothetical one, resembles those that have been discussed before in that it conjures another man into relations explicitly involving a romantic couple. Unlike the letters discussed earlier however, homoerotic desire engages not only two subjects or two bodies but two men, that is, two characters in possession both of different bodies and different names. This letter appears after Valentine has been banished from Milan for attempting to elope with Silvia. Proteus seeks him out and attempts to console him, urging him to leave the city. He argues that if Valentine stays, he will not be able to see Silvia, but if he leaves, he will at least be able to write to her:

> Thy letters may be here, though thou art hence,

> Which, being writ to me, shall be delivered
>
> Even in the milk-white bosom of thy love (3.1.250-52).

In the scenario Proteus describes, he becomes an intermediary, receiving letters from Valentine on Silvia's behalf and, presumably, forwarding letters from Silvia to Valentine. We must, however, immediately suspect the sincerity of Proteus's offer: it is Proteus, after all, who is directly responsible for Valentine's banishment, having betrayed Valentine's plan to elope with Silvia in order to pursue her himself. We can be sure, at least, that Proteus does not intend to forward his friend's interests.

We might then ask what this fantasy entails for Proteus, the man who inserts himself between Silvia and Valentine. In the scenario he describes above, the person in possession of the "milk-white bosom" to which these letters will be delivered is left unspecified, an omission that permits an interpretation in which Proteus himself receives Valentine's letters. Though we associate such whiteness with feminine beauty, in fact the attribution is more general: one of the beautiful youths that comes to fight for Palamon near the end of *Two Noble Kinsmen* has a complexion in which "the livery of the warlike maid appears, / Pure red and white..." (4.2.106-07). Leander's neck "surpast / The white of *Pelops* shoulder."[37] Though readings that assign the "milk-white bosom" to Proteus may seem to run against the textual grain, here, I think, that evaluation is unwarranted: it is Proteus, after all, to whom the letters will be addressed: they will, he imagines, "[be] writ to me…." Proteus clearly hopes to position himself as the recipient of Valentine's erotic attentions; in terms of the play's erotic constellations, he becomes the "secret, nameless friend" to whom Valentine will unwillingly address his love letters.

The idea that Proteus might desire to receive these hypothetical love letters himself is supported by the way in which this scene "corrects" the scene of Valentine's first departure. When Valentine leaves Verona at the beginning of the play, he refuses Proteus's offer to accompany him to the edge of town: "My father at the road / Expects my coming, there to see me shipped," he says. Proteus insists, saying "and thither will I bring thee, Valentine," but Valentine replies

> Sweet Proteus, no; now let us take our leave.
>
> To Milan let me hear from thee by letters
>
> ….
>
> And I likewise will visit thee with mine (1.1.53-60).

Valentine's refusal cuts short their banter over Proteus's own romantic interests. It also ensures that he and Proteus part before Valentine's boarding of the ship can cast that separation as a physical necessity, underscoring the voluntarity of his choice to leave. Valentine's departure enforces the physical separation of the two friends, but also foregrounds Valentine's free will in the matter. He *wants* to leave Proteus, placing "the wonders of the world abroad" above Proteus's companionship (1.1.6). Valentine's leaving thus signals a double loss: both literal and figurative, the departure of a friend and the diminution of his love. When Proteus arrives in Milan, Valentine suggests he has not thought on (and thus not written to) Proteus because he has fallen in love with Silvia: "Forgive me, that I do not dream on thee / Because thou seest me dote upon my love" (2.4.172-73). Whether for the wonders of the world abroad or for Silvia, Valentine has indeed departed from Proteus.

In arranging Valentine's second, forced departure, Proteus attempts to undo Valentine's negligence: he says, "Come, I'll convey thee through the city-gate, / And ere I part with thee confer at large / Of all that may concern thy love affairs" (3.1.254-56). Proteus now plays the role of counselor in love, the authoritative role Valentine had originally played; it is he who will determine how long they will speak and when they will part; it is he who advises his friend to write. In engineering Valentine's banishment, Proteus manages to retell the story of his friend's first departure without himself being cast off. Socially and erotically, he has now taken the upper hand; it is from this new, powerful position that he attempts to recover the tokens of affection he has been promised—letters from Valentine.

Whether or not Proteus's bosom will receive Valentine's letters, we can be sure he does not intend to help Valentine retain access to Silvia. It may be possible, however, for Proteus to deliver Valentine's letters without succoring his friend's desires: Proteus might deliver copies of Valentine's letters while withholding the knowledge that they were originally written by Valentine. We have already seen that Valentine's letters are appropriable: he writes a letter for Silvia expecting that she take ownership of it and deliver it to her lover as if she herself had written it. When Silvia accepts that letter, she does in fact take its authorship upon herself, claiming the words as her own and *re*directing them to Valentine. Proteus too then might imagine receiving Valentine's letters and passing their contents on to Silvia as if he himself had written them.

The appropriation of love letters written by another for use in one's own courtship would probably have been a notion familiar to early modern audiences:

there is evidence to suggest that suitors consulted and even copied love letters in the writing of their own. The first letterwriting manual published in English first appeared in 1568; it included love letters.[38] When Proteus counsels Thurio to woo Silvia by "wailful sonnets," to "write until your ink be dry, and with your tears / Moist it again…" Thurio says " I have a sonnet that will serve the turn…" (3.1.69-92). Thurio accepts the general thrust of Proteus's advice while deflecting the suggestion that he should write to Silvia *himself* (or, perhaps, that he should write to her afresh). Alan Stewart and Heather Wolfe note that in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, Falstaff is badly embarrassed when he is caught having copied a love letter from a book. They further report that the Folger copy of Vincent de Voiture's *Letters of Affairs of Love and Courtship* (1657) was clearly read with an eye towards imitation: "it is underlined throughout and contains many manuscript notes."[39] Though Valentine's letters would be private rather than published, there is a sense in which his letters are generic—iterable and reiterated rather than singular, as his first letter, written for Silvia, and his second letter, written to Silvia, suggest. That letter, later revealed to the audience by the Duke, is witty but impersonal, ripe for imitation,[40] and, in fact, includes a sonnet.[41]

The Duke reveals Valentine's letter while it is still in his possession, a dramatic choice that emphasizes Valentine's role as messenger and underscores his association with letters: "a letter... is termed the messenger," Angel Day tells us in *The English Secretarie*, published in 1586.[42] The moment enacts a collapse of sorts of Valentine into his letter; in exposing the contents of the letter, Valentine himself is exposed. J. L. Simmons has noted that at this moment "signifier and signified are on

the point of becoming one."[43] There is a sense, then, in which Valentine *is* the love letter. Valentine's name itself, of course, means love letter, and he appears in a play that is unrivaled in its use of letters: there are either six or seven, depending on whether one letter appears once or twice, and all of them are valentines. It is Valentine who writes to Silvia, but Valentine also expresses Silvia's love for himself; he "writes" a letter in which Julia confesses her love for Proteus, and may, against his own will, become author of the epistles in which Proteus woos Silvia. Every valentine is not, as it were, delivered to Valentine's door; there is clearly, however, a durable and generative associative relation between Valentine and the play's love letters.[44]

Like the play's valentines, I would suggest, Valentine is an articulation of desire; like them, he is appropriable. When Proteus arrives in Milan and finds that in regaining access to Valentine's body, he has not recovered Valentine's devotion, he attempts to make good that far more significant loss. In attempting to regain control of Valentine's letters, he also, I suggest, attempts to regain control of Valentine, drawing Valentine into himself in the manner Freud imagined in describing identification. Both as a letter and as an internalized other, "Valentine" will come to speak as *Proteus's* desire. In the press towards interiorization, however, Proteus must redraw the boundaries of his own identity in a way that excludes Valentine's body, an aspect of Valentine clearly resistant to appropriation. The individuation this process implies, an individuation Freud associated with healthy adulthood, here leads Proteus towards tragedy. Before discussing Proteus's attempt to regain "Valentine" by assimilating him, I want to set the play aside long enough to lay out my engagement

with Freudian theory. Freud offered a means of mapping out navigations between subjects, bodies and men, a mapping that I believe is capable of contributing to a nonhomophobic reading of these relations in early modern friendship. It is, I contend, in the space between subjects, bodies and persons that the play's climactic conflict may be most clearly mapped out; it is through a renegotiation of relations within that space that a resolution of that conflict is ultimately achieved.

Freud, of course, first proposed distinctions between categories similar to those I have been using here; he also began to outline the dynamic relations between them. In doing so, he took care to ensure that subject and object, as he called them, remained distinct; from his perspective, the subject and body of one man maintained a surprisingly crisp independence from the subject and body of others.[45] Freud however, was not consistent: in elaborating the process he called identification, he left gaps that point towards an experience in which subjects recognize "themselves" in other bodies;[46] in reflecting on desire, he imagined moments in which subjects, from their own perspective at least, expanded to include their objects.[47] Despite a history of psychoanalytic practice that has assumed a "fundamentally antagonistic distinction between subject and object,"[48] Freudian thought allows for, and even occasionally posits, the collapse of that antagonism through normative processes of identification and desire.

Freud likewise theorized identification and desire as mutually exclusive states in healthy relations. Though he acknowledged the possibility that identification and desire might develop in relation to the same object, he associated that convergence with narcissism in general and homosexual object relations particularly, condemning

it as both neurotic and regressive.[49] Yet even when directly addressing the convergence of identification and desire, Freud was not consistent: in "The Ego and the Id," for example, he writes

> We must also take into consideration cases of simultaneous object-cathexis and identification—cases, that is, in which the alteration in character occurs before the object has been given up. In such cases the alteration in character has been able to survive the object-relation and in a certain sense to conserve it."[50]

In the above passage, Freud considers the possibility of simultaneous identification and desire without pathologizing it. Though at other points in his writing, Freud imagined identification to spring spontaneously into existence,[51] here he suggests that desire precedes identification; identification incorporates desire without displacing it. The passage may be reconciled with the familiar homophobic narrative; in fact, however, it resembles Freud's description of mourning, an endeavor Freud characterized as healthy,[52] more than his narrative of homosexual development: in the former, as in the excerpt above, identification follows desire; in the latter, desire follows identification.[53]

The claim that identification and desire are distinct in healthy relations serves to buttress the conviction that subject and object are distinct: identification maps onto the subject while desire, by definition, concerns the object. The collapse, then, of subjects and objects, even if only in limited or strategic ways, undermines the claim to the mutual exclusivity of identification and desire. As soon as "the self" expands to include the body of the object, identification and desire may both converge on that

exterior object. If the object is imported into the subject as part of identification, desire and identification again converge, this time within the body of the subject. The partial collapse of the distinction between one set of terms necessitates the partial collapse of the distinction between the other. By consistently linking the intersection of identification and desire with a partial collapse of the distinction between subject and object but *not* consistently condemning that intersection or that collapse, Freud opened the way for an antihomophobic appropriation of the nexus between identification, desire and subject-object indeterminacy.

Freud's adoption of the mirror as an emblem of the intersection of identification and desire through reference to the myth of Narcissus and his association of that intersection with the limited convergence of subject and object is of particular relevance here. Early modern references to mirrors reveal a fascination with the collapse of subject and object, while early modern friendship discourse depends precisely on a conception of that collapse. In friendship, we are told, two identical men are, in "truth," one; "one" friend is in fact made up of two. References to mirrors in the early modern period likewise consider the way in which mirrors make what seem to be two men into one, or the way in which they "explain" two identical men as one man and his reflection. In deconstructing the commonsense distinction between self and other, the mirror emblematizes a paradox at the heart of early modern friendship discourse. I want to establish the discursive parallels between mirrors and friendship before arguing that, as Freud suggested, the collapse of subject and object signals an intersection of identification and desire, an intersection squarely lodged in the body of the friend.

References to mirrors in the early modern period foreground not only a mirror's ability to make one man seem to be two, but also emphasize its power to "explain" two identical men as, "in fact," a single man: in Charles Fitzgeffery's *Notes from Black Fryers*, for example, the dandy carries a looking glass "that he may privately conferre with it."[54] In *Twelfth Night*, the Duke, in looking upon Sebastian and Viola, exclaims "One face, one voice, one habit, and two persons, / A natural perspective, that is and is not!" (5.1.216-17).[55] The Duke sees the presence of Sebastian and Viola as a paradox, a thing that both "is and is not," the simultaneous presence of "one" man and of "two."

The discourse of early modern friendship embodies the paradox the mirror emblematizes. Thomas Elyot cites one version of a common proverb: a friend, he tells us, is "the other I." Richard Taverner likewise writes that "A frend is, One soule... in two bodyes,"[56] reciting a version of Aristotle's widely circulated adage, "Friendship is one soul in two bodies." Taverner's version replaces "friendship" with the "frend," inadvertently collapsing the two friends further towards oneness than the original adage had.[57] Of his friendship with Etienne de La Boétie, Montaigne asserts, "The secret I have sworn to reveal to no other man, I can impart without perjury to the one who is not another man: he is myself."[58] Clearly, these descriptions of friendship each navigate a single paradox: how are two men one? How is one "frend" two?

Early modern descriptions of idealized friendship often offer an image of men who act as if they were mirroring one another, recalling the way in which the Duke

thinks of a mirror when he sees Sebastian and Viola. In *Euphues*, John Lyly introduces a series of images of friends who act in unison:

> after many embracings and protestations one to another, they walked to dinner, where they wanted neither meat, neither music, neither any other pastime; and having banqueted, to digest their sweet confections, they danced all that afternoon. They used not only one board but one bed, one book (if so be it they thought not one too many). Their friendship augmented every day, insomuch that the one could not refrain the company of the other one minute. All things went in common between them; which all men accounted commendable.[59]

Euphues and Philautus embrace one another, walk together, eat together, dance together, sleep together, and read together, actively mirroring one another in a manner that "all men accounted commendable." The woodcut accompanying Richard Brathwaite's gloss of "Acquaintance" portrays a pair of men who, like Euphues and Philautus, are either dancing or embracing.[60] In Brathwaite's illustration, the figures of Acquaintance are nearly identical, not merely in beard, mustache, and dress, but in posture and facial expression.

In *Euphues*, mirroring is bodily, external. In Montaigne, however, the mirror reflects a spiritual landscape, one in which souls are not only identical, but acting in concert. Montaigne writes:

> Our souls pulled together in such unison, they regarded each other with such ardent affection, and with a like affection revealed themselves to each other to the very depths of our hearts, that not only

> did I know his soul as well as mine, but I should certainly have trusted myself to him more readily than to myself.[61]

Here, Montaigne imagines himself and Boétie as yoked together, twin souls mutually locked in a gaze of ardent affection. The emblem of the mirror, rather than any real mirror, grounds Montaigne's description: the "souls" featured here are not simply duplicated—they gaze *at* one another as if in a mirror. Of course, Montaigne does not imagine himself and a simple reflection of himself: he imagines two men actualizing the fantasy of the mirror, a fantasy in which the man in the mirror is oneself, but *also* a separate, somehow identical man.

Early modern friendship discourse is clearly indebted to conceptions of the mirror in which one man is doubled, "becoming" two identical men; it is also, however, equally concerned with the "discovery" enabled through the mirror that what appear to be two men are in fact only one. At another point in the same essay, Montaigne describes himself and Boétie as precisely "*one* soul in two bodies."[62] A single soul, rather than the identical generosity of two souls, now signifies the unity that is friendship. Lyly, too, is clearly fascinated with singleness, unity, oneness: friends share *one* board, *one* bed, and *one* book. In dancing together, the two men move as one. In partaking of the same meal, their bodies become one body, ingesting and digesting the "same" food.[63] Lyly extends the paradox of the mirror to corporeality: friends are two identical men *and* a single, fully embodied man.

Corporeality, then, is not exempt from the rhetorical collapse of two into one: when Richard Brathwaite explains that "Acquaintance is in two bodies individually incorporated, and no lesse selfely than sociably united," "individually" means

"indivisibly:" Brathwaite imagines "Acquaintance" making two bodies into a single *corporeal* being.[64] In Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Faithful Friends,* Marius likewise imagines friendship in terms that collapse bodily difference: he says to his friend Young Tullius

> their stern hate
> that strived to contradict our plighted faiths
> which long ere this had *linked a brother,*
> I hope is reconciled...."[65]

Here, friends are not brothers—they are a *single* brother, a notion that reiterates the corporeal paradox articulated by Brathwaite. Beaumont and Fletcher invoke an ideal in which friends are so thoroughly united that they share a *single* body, though that body is divided into two parts.

The merging Marius invokes, like that described by Brathwaite, is a rhetorical conceit; it might also, however, incite readers to *understand* Acquaintance as transcending bodily distinction. Laurie Shannon has explicitly characterized friendship discourse as prescriptive, as a doctrine that "schools its pupil-subjects about themselves and the specific rules governing their engaged unity, their assembled condition as they become 'one.'"[66] John Aubrey's famous and (sometime) scandalous passage describing Beaumont and Fletcher allows us to imagine actual friends who embodied Marius's rhetorical conceit. Aubrey writes,

> There was a wonderfull consimility of phansey between [Francis Beaumont] and Mr. John Fletcher, which caused the dearnesse of friendship between them....They lived together on the Banke side, not

> far from the Play-house, both batchelors; they together... had one wench in the house between them, which they did so admire; the same cloathes and cloake, &c., between them.[67]

Aubrey's passage suggests, given early modern investment in clothes and women as markers of identity and the authors' purported penchant for sharing both, that Beaumont and Fletcher's sense of self extended to include the body of the other. [68] If house and "wench," clothes and cloak all mark the identification of two men as two parts of a single corporeal body, then bodies too may appear as a kind of property held in common. When the bodies of friends, those bearers of a singularly authoritative facticity, are not exempt from the rhetorical imperative to merge, it seems likely that friendship offered no *stable* sense of self as opposed to other.

The lack of a "stable" positioning in one body as opposed to another was, in fact, celebrated in the literature of idealized friendship: in describing the friends Titus and Gisippus, Elyot writes:

> The same nature wrought in theyr hartes suche a mutuall affection, that theyr wylles and appetites dayly more and more so confederated them selues, that it seemed none other, whan theyr names were declared, but that they had only chaunged theyr places, issuing (as I mought say) out of the one body, & entringe into the other.[69]

If, as Shannon has remarked, the "rhetorics of friendship likeness take up residence at the very heart of the interpellating structures of Tudor culture..."[70] we might expect friends to experience themselves as less sharply differentiated—in body as well as in mind—than our modern celebration of individuality would suggest.

Though friendship literature could celebrate merging, it clearly did not establish friends as uniformly "one:" even souls, though conveniently intangible—and therefore capable of being unified without much imaginative labor—were nevertheless sometimes doubled, as in Montaigne's "Of Friendship." These shifts between oneness and twoness in the rhetoric of friendship attest to the paradox, irresolvable and therefore perennially evocative, that holds definitional sway over friendship. That paradox ensures that the number of ways in which writers may "solve" the puzzle of simultaneous oneness and twoness is never settled. Writers allocate and reallocate the incorporeal—from will to mind to soul—as well as corporeality—from bed to board to body—between unity and doubleness. The emblem of the mirror encapsulates this paradox; in a single idea, it "explains" how friends may be both one man and two.

I would like to suggest that we follow Freud in reading this celebrated undecidability as reflective of a dynamic balance between identification and desire, a balance promoted through—and reflected in—the language of unity and doubleness in friendship discourse. Identification is clearly not mappable onto every image of unity, nor is desire always expressed through doubleness. Images of unity, are, however, a peculiarly apt vehicle for expressions of identification because *successful* identification connotes an absence of the perception of difference: it is "I" whom I desire; I already possess that object as part of myself. Desire, on the other hand, has a privileged relation to images of doubleness because it connotes a *recognition* of difference; it is always *for* the thing perceived as free, other, or unpossessed. Even in the myth of Narcissus, the self must be doubled before it can become an object of

desire. In "Of Friendship," the yoking of "souls [who] pulled together in such unison" and who "regarded each other with such ardent affection" would not be possible without a vision of the friends as two beings. Desire—and its discursive requirements—explains, in part, why friendship discourse returns to doubleness after unity has been asserted and even celebrated. Whereas Freud generally pathologized the mutual presence of identification and desire, I propose that the early modern period may have registered the *loss* of that balance in relations between friends as the problem, one signaling the end of friendship.

Freudian associations of the mirror with the intersection of identification and desire seem consistent with representations of the mirror as they appear in the early modern period. In *The Comedy of Errors*, Dromio of Ephesus gazes upon his twin brother as if he were looking in a mirror: "Methinks you are my glass, and not my brother: / I see by you I am a sweet-fac'd youth…" (5.1.418-19). Here the mirror blurs distinctions between self and other, as Dromio recognizes "himself" *in his brother*. Dromio's "glass" also, however, enables identification and desire to intersect, as he simultaneously recognizes himself and desires himself in that image.

Unlike Freud's view of narcissism, this associative nexus is not necessarily seen as the site of a circumscribed ability to desire. Though Dromio may desire himself, that "self" is lodged in the body of an other, his brother, irreducible to "himself." In a collection of fictional letters entitled *Cupid's Messenger*, published in 1638, a love letter imagines the mirror as explicitly enabling desire for the other rather than restricting it:

> *I onely deny those excellencies which you lay to my unguilty charge, it was the reflection of your owne worth (stricken from me) which hath* Narcissus *like so inamoured you, it was your owne image, showne in my eies, which hath thus captiuated you: which since you like in so dim and dull a mirror. I will cherish, and make much of it only for your sake, that you may the perfectlier see your selfe, and the more loue me....*[71]

Here, the speaker, like Dromio's twin, acts the part of the mirror. The effect, however, unlike the effect commonly attributed to those who spend excessive amounts of time gazing in mirrors, is not the beloved's reduced ability to love another, but rather her or his increased love for the speaker. The love the beloved feels for herself or himself is lodged unproblematically in the body of the admirer. Here, love of like and love of self are bound together are they are in Freud; unlike Freud, however, that love is imagined to fortify bonds across difference. Both here and, I would argue, in friendship, the convergence of identification and desire contributes to the generation of social bonds rather than undermining them, aiding in the construction of a relation that all men find commendable.

I have proposed a balance "between" identification and desire in the language and practice of friendship; I do not mean to suggest, however, that desire and identification are substantially opposed, that these impulses work "against" one another. In fact, as Freud would note, both work *towards* control, possession, or assimilation. Were desire and identification a hermetically sealed duality, no "balance" between them would be possible: because identification, in neutralizing

loss, rewrites all difference in terms of sameness, it is situated as the end point or final resting place of every object of desire. Difference, that necessary precondition of desire, is irrecoverably produced as sameness. In the face of this drive towards oneness, then, Freud imagined a countervailing force asserted through "all the evidence of [our] senses," the force, as he saw it, of real-world difference.[72] We might imagine that difference in terms of the intrusion of distance, sensory variance, interpellation as uniquely indebted to a particular family, the cultural imperatives of marriage—in short, a host of influences capable of asserting a friend's uniqueness in the world. From the perspective of the acquisitive subject, these forces act as agents of loss, for it is they that will bring loss to bear on a subject. From Freud's perspective, they form a formidable counterweight to the acquisitive impulses of both identification and desire.

As Freud's vision of otherness would suggest, the experience of loss has a privileged relation to the tangible, that which is susceptible to "all the evidence of our senses;" loss is made manifest as the loss of the *body*. Hence the fantasy expressed here by John Donne in "To the Lady Bedford" upon the death of her friend:

> For such a friendship who would not adore
> In you, who are all what both was before,
> Not all, as if some perished by this,
> But so, as all in you contracted is....[73]

Here, the thing absent, the thing that registers loss, is the body alone. The "rest" of the friend is assimilated into the surviving member. The "reality" of difference is understood as the loss of the body.

Valentine's abandonment of Proteus, I believe, participates in this "reality" of loss. The loss of Valentine presses Proteus to restructure his relation to Valentine in terms that exclude the body of his friend, and with it, bodily desire. The fantasy in which "poor forlorn Proteus" and "passionate Proteus" have "one wench in the house between them" must be reconceived in terms of a single body in which "friendship" is withdrawn into Proteus, who must become "all what both was before." The displacement of desire from Valentine's body—the part of his friend that is most resolutely other, unpossessed, "itself"—allows identification to press towards an assimilation of all that is incorporeal—Valentine's social role and its privileges, his identity as Silvia's lover. For Proteus, at this moment, identification, the need to control loss, overshadows desire.

Balance in friendship is lost, then, when identification *or* desire come to dominate that relation. The idea that extremes of desire might lead to violence is hardly new; in Carroll's account, it is simple desire that "overcomes" Proteus in his attempt to rape Sylvia.[74] Somewhat more novel, though at least equally plausible, is the idea that extremes of identification might likewise prove perilous. Luce Irigaray has reflected on the potential for violence in identification as it relates to mourning. In identifying with the one we have lost, we aggressively neutralize the other's difference, erasing otherness even as it escapes us. Irigaray therefore suggests we understand the importation of the friend as a form of cannibalism: in the ethically compromised relation she describes, the friend is appropriated, becoming "my property, my object," indistinguishable from myself.[75] Irigaray's critique is primarily concerned with an incorporeal violence. I want to suggest, however, that the body,

too, might become the victim of violent erasure: if, as I have suggested, the body comes to represent difference, if it is perceived as standing between ourselves and successful identification, then the body itself might become the object of our aggression. In *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, this aggression appears in the play's final climactic competition and Arcite's eventual death. In *Two Gentlemen*, it is Valentine's body that must be expelled in order to effect "his" consolidation in Proteus, an expulsion Proteus achieves by orchestrating Valentine's banishment.

Proteus's climactic renegotiation of the boundaries of "himself" begins after he arrives in Milan. There, he falls in love with Silvia, Valentine's betrothed, and arranges to have Valentine banished so that he himself can woo Silvia. These events are characterized by Carroll as a struggle between "romantic" love and male friendship.[76] Friendship, that "knot of love / Tied, weaved, and tangled, with so true, so long, / And with a finger of so deep a cunning, / [That it] may be outworn, never undone," does indeed come to be tested after Proteus joins his friend in Milan (TNK 1.3.41-44). Carroll has argued that the friendship between the two eponymous gentlemen fails the test, a failure demonstrated most palpably in Proteus's attempt to rape Silvia. Certainly Proteus's determination to supplant his friend as Silvia's lover and his eventual attempt to rape her is the strongest evidence Carroll can offer to support his claim that "romantic desire is a vastly stronger power than male-male friendship."[77] If, however, we set aside the idea of friendship operative in Carroll's formula in which two independent agents agree to protect each others' interests and instead imagine it to involve a literal interdependence of subjects, we will see Proteus's betrayal as an attempt to conserve that friendship rather than destroy it.

The scene opens with Valentine attempting to install Proteus in a position similar to his own. As Proteus arrives, Valentine asks Silvia to "entertain him / To be my fellow-servant to your ladyship" and again, after Silvia and Proteus exchange a few words, pleads, "Sweet lady, entertain him for your servant" (2.4.102-3,108). The signal mark of friendship is the attempt to create similarity, here in social position. In *The Faithful Friends,* for example, Marius exclaims,

> Now let me freely fold thee,
> noble lord, all bars that stood between us
> are removed, great Majesty's Frown, our father's enmity
> caused by the antipathy of honors stem
> … your deserts have leveled ….[78]

Marius suggests that the difference in social position between himself and Young Tullius has now been remedied by Young Tullius's "deserts," realized in his recent advancement to the position of general. Valentine's efforts to have Proteus recognized as equal to himself likewise invoke the homonormative aspect of friendship.

When Silvia is called away, Valentine's efforts to reconstruct Proteus in his own image become sharper: he reveals his devotion to Silvia and then asks,

> is she not a heavenly saint?
>
> Proteus: No, but she is an earthly paragon.
>
> Valentine: Call her divine.
>
> Proteus: I will not flatter her.
>
> Valentine: O, flatter me, for love delights in praises.

Proteus: When I was sick, you gave me bitter pills,
And I must minister the like to you.
Valentine: Then speak the truth by her; if not divine,
Yet let her be a principality,
Sovereign to all the creatures on the earth.
Proteus: Except my mistress.
Valentine: Sweet, except not any,
Except thou wilt except against my love (2.4.143-53).

Valentine's efforts to place Proteus in a position similar to his own seem here to condense into an effort to install Proteus in *precisely* his position: Proteus must not merely be treated by Silvia as Valentine's "fellow-servant," he must worship Silvia as Valentine does. Valentine's initially innocuous impulse to install Proteus in a position equal to his own is soon situated within a binary structure that renders it an aggressive act: he insists that Proteus place Silvia above Julia, Proteus's own beloved. Were Proteus to comply with Valentine's demand while retaining Julia, he would effectively be forced to become Valentine's servant, rather than his friend, a role suggested in Valentine's mock generous promise that Julia "shall be dignified with this high honor, / To bear my lady's train..." (2.4.156-57). What began as a egalitarian gesture and a sign of friendship has become, in a context dominated by the strictures of Petrarchan love, a divisive impulse, one that threatens to incite bitter competition. Valentine's final demand—that Proteus do as he does, feel as he feels—is surprisingly coercive: he reminds Proteus of his affection for him and insinuates that Proteus's behavior is imperiling that affection in a single sentence: "Sweet,

except not any, / Except thou wilt except against my love." Proteus must choose: either he can continue to love Julia or he can retain Valentine's love. The conflict initiated here, however, cannot be resolved through a weighing of relative loyalties: if Proteus chooses his friendship for Valentine over his love for Julia, he will still find that he has been positioned as Valentine's rival, not his friend. Valentine's demand is in fact a double bind, impossible to honor within the structure Valentine has introduced.

Proteus, left alone onstage, immediately expresses the turmoil Valentine has inculcated in him:

> Even as one heat another heat expels,
> Or as one nail by strength drives out another,
> So the remembrance of my former love
> Is by a newer object quite forgotten.
> [Is it] mine [eye], or Valentine's praise
> Her true perfection, or my false transgression,
> That makes me, reasonless, to reason thus? (2.4.192-98)[79]

Though Proteus initially casts the conflict in terms of the relative merits of Julia and Silvia, his representation of it soon drifts to a question of whether he or Valentine should be blamed. At this moment, he acknowledges that the conflict is not, at root, about Julia and Silvia. It is about whether the way he feels can be attributed to Valentine: does Valentine cause him to love Silvia? He finally imagines the turmoil he feels in terms of his conflicting attachments to Silvia and Valentine. In a sense then, the conflict Proteus experiences is not one involving Julia and Silvia: it is

instead a conflict between the desire for Silvia Valentine has recently required of him and the loyalty Valentine may expect as Proteus's friend—a conflict between Valentine and Valentine. Proteus experiences the quandary Valentine has placed him in, then, as precisely a question of how to resolve relations with his friend.

The double bind Valentine has imposed exerts an inordinate influence on Proteus's emotions, his thoughts and his acts. Certainly, Valentine's coercive and irrational insistence and Proteus's capitulation to it recalls Freud's description of the superego, that portion of the psyche that demands conformity to a behavioral ideal. We have suggested that Proteus experiences Valentine as a functional part of his own identity; if we imagine that Valentine plays a role in Proteus something like that of the superego, an aspect of self Freud imagined as a product of identification,[80] then the way Proteus responds to Valentine's capricious demand at their reunion makes more sense. Though it may seem odd to imagine Valentine both as an object Proteus recognizes as himself and as a reflection of his ideal, in fact the trope of the mirror as it circulated in the early modern period could intermingle these. George Gascoigne's invocation of the mirror, for example, directs both uses towards himself: "since I desire, to see my selfe indeed, / Not what I would, but what I am or should, / therefore I like this trustie glass of Steele."[81] Valentine, as Proteus's "other I," may be both "what I am" and "[what I] should:" he acts as the dictatorial standard from which Proteus cannot distinguish himself and to which he must submit. Early on, Valentine says to Proteus, "Love is your master, for he masters you" (1.1.39). When Proteus decides to abandon Julia and pursue Silvia, he too characterizes love as his master: "Love bade me swear, and Love bids me forswear" he says, though it is clearly

Valentine who has bidden him (2.6.6). It is not hard, then, to read Valentine himself at the moment of his imperious demand as Love, Proteus's introjected master.

Proteus resolves the double bind Valentine has placed him in by restructuring the ties that bind him to his friend, though not, as Carroll would have it, by choosing love over friendship. Instead, Proteus preserves that friendship *by* loving as he is bidden. He capitulates to Valentine's demands so completely, so thoroughly, that he in effect *becomes* Valentine.[82] Proteus's appropriation of "Valentine" circumvents the rivalry over Silvia that capitulation to his friend's demands would normally have instigated; like a realization of Emilia's fantasy that Palamon and Arcite be combined, it makes one man out of two. In internalizing Valentine's identity, Proteus attempts to sever his ties to Valentine's body; he is able in that manner to reject the rival while preserving the friendship as an interiorized relation between his ideal and "himself." For Proteus, Valentine becomes "a foreign language,"as Hofstadter would have it, [83] one he intends to "speak" better and better over time. The ruthlessness of Proteus's appropriation recalls Irigaray's description of identification as cannibalism: recognizing the friend only as himself, Proteus attempts to eject otherness from the relation.

Despite the abruptness of Proteus's capitulation to Valentine's contradictory demands, it takes some time for him to rationalize the unlikely solution he has already embraced. After Valentine departs, he struggles to reorganize relations between Silvia, Valentine and himself in his own mind before trying to bring them about in reality. He muses

> To leave my Julia shall I be forsworn;

To love fair Silvia shall I be forsworn;

To wrong my friend, I shall be much forsworn.

And e'en that power which gave me first my oath

Provokes me to this threefold perjury (2.6.1-5).

Proteus at first imagines his betrayal as a triple offense: against Julia, against Silvia and against Valentine. Soon, however, he reimagines that betrayal as a recasting of actors in the roles of lover and beloved, where he replaces Valentine and Silvia replaces Julia:

Julia I lose, and Valentine I lose;

If I keep them, I needs must lose myself.

If I lose them, thus find I by their loss,

For Valentine, myself, for Julia, Silvia (2.6.19-22).

Proteus's language shifts from that of betrayal to that of loss. This shift allows the betrayal of Silvia to evaporate from his considerations. Duplicity is expelled from his relationship with her: he and Silvia will be *just like* Valentine and Silvia. He imagines his actions in terms of substitution: in becoming Valentine's substitute, another Valentine, the legitimacy of Valentine's claim to Silvia is also bestowed on him. He and Silvia will simply make up for the “loss” of Julia and Valentine.

Of course, Proteus does not succeed in replacing Valentine. It is Silvia, the person whose betrayal Proteus had banished from his considerations, who prevents him from doing so. At one point Proteus complains

When I protest true loyalty to her,

She twits me with my falsehood to my friend;

> When to her beauty I commend my vows,
>
> She bids me think how I have been forsworn
>
> In breaching faith with Julia, whom I loved (4.2.7-12).

Silvia will not allow Proteus to forget what he has done, and, by extension, who he is. In fact, it is Silvia's testament to Proteus's previous identity that so enrages him when he discovers Silvia in the woods. She says

> Thou hast no faith left now, unless thou'dst two,
>
> And that's far worse than none; better have none
>
> Than plural faith, which is too much by one.
>
> Thou counterfeit to thy true friend! (5.4.50-3)

Silvia's final accusation foregrounds Proteus's duplicity with Valentine, but also casts Proteus as a second—false—Valentine. I would like to suggest that Proteus attempts to rape Silvia, an event that occurs within five lines of the passage above, as a direct response to her refusal to accept him as her Valentine.

When Carroll accounts for Proteus's behavior by writing, "sexual desire has completely overcome him" and claims that "romantic desire is a vastly stronger power than male-male friendship," [84] he places Valentine, Proteus and the friendship between them as united in opposition to "sexual desire," a desire that "overcomes" not only Proteus but friendship itself.[85] Like Carroll, I see Proteus's interests as aligned with friendship; friendship, however, is clearly not opposed to desire, a fact Carroll recognizes elsewhere."[86] Positioning the attempted rape of Silvia as counter to Proteus's interests has the unfortunate effect of shielding the perpetrator from blame by displacing responsibility for the attempt onto a reified desire. The effect is

to cast Proteus as *separate* from and therefore victim to his own desire. Neither Proteus's interests nor his friendship are opposed to sexual desire per se, whether manifested through violence or not. Instead, the attempted rape of Silvia serves the interests of friendship in the narrow sense in which Proteus reconceives of his friendship and, as such, is fully consonant with Proteus's vested interests. The act truly counter to Proteus's interests, the act Proteus does not choose, though it is present as an unarticulated option, is the attempted rape of Valentine.

At the moment when Proteus attempts to retract "himself" into himself, ascribing otherness to Valentine's intractable body, that body becomes, from Proteus's perspective, more like Silvia's body: like Silvia's body, it is "other," the thing *not* myself. At this moment, Valentine's body, like Silvia's, becomes vulnerable to sexual violence. Proteus "chooses" to attack Silvia rather than his friend, displacing his investment in Valentine's body in order to pursue Silvia's, not because desire for Silvia is "stronger" than desire for Valentine, but because Proteus does in fact act in accordance with his own best interests, interests that are aligned with the cultural institutions that serve to regulate the traffic in women. One of these, clearly, is early modern friendship.

Silvia's chastity proves to be an obstacle to Proteus's acquisition. "Chastity" here means two different things: Silvia is loyal to Valentine but her body is also "loyal" to Valentine: sex with Silvia is still within Valentine's control. The early modern slippage between these notions of chastity means that if Proteus gains control of the latter, he may claim control over the former—if he succeeds in raping Silvia, he will have succeeded in compromising her loyalty to Valentine. I suggested earlier

in reference to Beaumont and Fletcher that women could serve as markers of identity and pointed out that Silvia does just that this in characterizing Proteus as a "counterfeit" Valentine; if Silvia is indeed a significant marker of Valentine's identity, then gaining control of Silvia has specific identitary implications: her rape becomes a means of appropriating her lover's identity. Proteus's usurpation of Valentine's role, were he successful, would not be limited to the moment: rape would, in these narrow terms, signal a permanent victory. In early modern drama, women who are raped usually come to tragic ends. If, however, a play involving rape ends happily, happiness generally involves the union of the woman with her rapist—never the woman's recovery, for example, of her lover.[87]

I have argued that the attempted rape of Silvia is a final, desperate attempt on Proteus's part to usurp not merely the role, but the identity of Valentine. His single-minded efforts to appropriate the identity of his friend are accompanied by a suppression of his investment in Valentine's body, a suppression we see reflected in his orchestration of Valentine's banishment. This shift away from Valentine's body enables Proteus to incorporate Valentine's identity while getting rid of the troublesome body, a body likely to assert its exclusive right to that identity. Proteus doesn't, however, completely sever his ties to Valentine the man; he remains invested in the body of his friend. In discovering Valentine in Milan after he has been banished, Proteus tells him "thy staying will abridge thy life" (3.1.247). He then urges Valentine to have hope and accompanies him to the edge of the city where he will be safe from the Duke's wrath. Proteus's attempt to preserve Valentine's life shows, I think, that his "betrayal" of Valentine is not complete. His continued

investment in Valentine's body suggests that desire for that body has not been entirely converted, through identification, to desire for an internalized "Valentine." Instead, the mixture of identification and desire that characterizes friendship shifts to favor an interiorized form of identification without fully abandoning a desire for the body. The expression of that shift in Proteus's arrangement of Valentine's banishment suggests that were desire for Valentine fully internalized, *Two Gentlemen* would not be a comedy: instead of being banished, Valentine might be killed. Certainly dispatching Valentine would aid Proteus in achieving his stated desires, though it would prevent Proteus's redemption and the play's "happy" resolution.

Proteus of course, begins to pursue Silvia, a pursuit the play itself suggests we understand as the displacement of a previous desire. Indeed, Proteus himself has imagined his investment in Silvia and his investment in Valentine in terms of the same currency:

> Methinks, my zeal to Valentine is cold;
> And that I love him not, as I was wont:
> O! But I love his lady too-too much;
> And that's the reason I love him so little (2.4.203-06).

Here, Proteus imagines he has literally withdrawn his investment in Valentine in order to reinvest it in Silvia. Though structures of friendship and Petrarchan love channel "love" in very different ways, here Shakespeare, in a Freudian turn, insists that there is a single desire, playing its role in all manner of relationships. Such universal currency makes it seem likely that Proteus's *erotic* investment in Silvia is fueled by the suppression of a similar investment in Valentine—not in the "person,"

but in the body of his friend. The rape of Silvia, then, may not simply be a means of appropriating Valentine's sexual identity: to the degree that Silvia's attempted rape is motivated by desire, the rape presents itself as a socially legible way through which Proteus can realize his desire for the body of the friend who has neglected and abandoned him.

If we read the attempted rape of Silvia as an expression of male homoerotic desire, then we can see that Proteus's attempt is not narratively unanticipated: it hovers just outside of articulation from the beginning of the play. From the opening lines and at various times thereafter, the threat of explicitly nonconsensual sex between men appears through allusions to the myth of Hero and Leander.[88] The myth, as it is recorded by Ovid and Musaeus,[89] has little or nothing to do with the rape of a man.[90] On the other hand, Marlowe's unfinished epyllion, "Hero and Leander," has everything to do with it. Though male rape is situated just beyond the final lines of "Hero and Leander," it nevertheless becomes the means through which Marlowe's retelling retains the narrative trajectory of the original story. By situating male rape as unspoken but narratively inevitable, Marlowe's poem positions it as inarticulable even while locating it well within the range of the poem's imaginary, as I will show. Shakespeare's allusions to Marlowe's poem introduce male rape into the *play's* imaginary without ever granting it access to speech. By referencing this unspeakable means of regaining control of a lost object of desire, allusions to Marlowe's epyllion rehearse a rape that is ultimately made manifest only through Silvia.

There is no direct evidence proving that Shakespeare read Marlowe's poem prior to his writing of *Two Gentlemen*. "Hero and Leander" wasn't published until 1598, though it was entered into the Stationers' Register in 1593. *Two Gentlemen* is thought, on stylistic grounds, to have been written between 1592 and 1593, making it seem plausible that Shakespeare viewed a copy of "Hero and Leander."[91] Marlowe's death in 1593 increases the likelihood that the poem began to circulate prior to the writing of the play. In the realm of internal evidence, Shakespeare's naming of Proteus as one of two protagonists in a drama clearly inspired by the myth suggests that Shakespeare was familiar specifically with Marlowe's version. Though Proteus does not appear in Marlowe's epyllion except as a figure carved into the walls of Venus's temple, Neptune does appear, and the figures of Neptune and Proteus are closely allied: Proteus is himself a god of the ocean and Neptune's son. While in Ovid's *Heroides*, Hero prays to Neptune to think on his many conquests and spare Leander,[92] neither Ovid nor Musaeus, the two authors responsible for transmission of the myth to early modern times, actually depict Neptune. In contrast, Marlowe's version makes Neptune one of three major characters. Both Proteus and Neptune become sexual rivals, intervening in and disrupting a romantic narrative about the brash courage inspired by true love. Such parallels strongly suggest that Marlowe's version influenced Shakespeare, and authorizes our turning to Marlowe's version for insight into Shakespeare's more opaque text.

One of the things made explicit in Marlowe's version is the way in which homoerotic desire can interrupt heteroerotic pursuits. It is in the course of Leander's

famous journey towards Hero that Neptune intervenes. In Marlowe's version, Neptune becomes infatuated with Leander as he swims towards Hero's tower:

> He watcht his armes, and as they opend wide
> At every stroke betwixt them would he slide,
> And steale a kisse, and then run out and daunce,
> And as he turnd, cast many a lustfull glaunce,
> And threw him gawdie toies to please his eie,
> And dive into the water, and there prie
> Upon his brest, his thighs and everie lim,
> And up againe, and close behind him swim,
> And talke of love....[93]

In Musaeus' version, Leander survives many such crossings in order to reach Hero, until finally during one winter storm he is drowned. Marlowe's epyllion remains unfinished; Leander's succeeding attempts to cross the Hellespont are not described. Marlowe's description of Neptune's frightening advances during Leander's first crossing, however, and his rejection of those advances, strongly suggest that we understand Leander's future drowning as his failure to repulse Neptune upon some future crossing. Indeed, though Marlowe's poem conspicuously stops before describing this encounter, it nevertheless ensures that Neptune and Leander will meet again:

> The god seeing him [Leander] with pittie to be moved,
> Thereon concluded that he was beloved.
> (Love is too full of faith, to credulous,

With follie and false hope deluding us.)

Wherefore *Leanders* fancie to surprize,

To the rich *Ocean* for gifts he flies. [94]

These lines, written only about a hundred lines before the poem ends, project fairly clearly into that not-too-distant white space the return of Neptune and Leander's rejection of his advances (“With follie and false hope deluding us.”) Because the anger of Neptune is typically credited with storms at sea, Leander's drowning is cast into the future of the poem as a tragedy motivated by Neptune's anger at Leander's sexual rejection of him. Rape as drowning waits in the wings of Marlowe's poem, both narratively secure and perpetually unsaid.

Indeed, the poem has already conflated Neptune's attempt to rape Ganymede with (here, an accidental) drowning: when Neptune first sees Leander, he imagines

that Ganimed displeas’d,

Had left the heavens, therefore on him hee seaz’d.

Leander striv’d, th waves about him wound,

And puld him to the bottome, where the ground

Was strewd with pearle, and in low corrall groves,

Sweet singing Meremaids, sported with their loves

….

The lustie god imbrast him, cald him love,

And swore he never should returne to Jove.

But when he knew it was not Ganimed,

For under water he was almost dead,

He heav'd him up….[95]

It seems worth noting that this abduction is carried out, at least in part, not while Neptune is in the form of a man, but while he is the ocean itself: "Leander striv'd, th waves about him wound, / And puld him to the bottome…." In these lines, rape and drowning become utterly indistinguishable. If, as the myth demands, Leander will be drowned at some point in the future, Marlowe makes it impossible to ascertain that Neptune's lust is *not* to blame.

Neptune goes on to promise that "the sea should never doe [Leander] harme," a promise that, if kept, would entirely derail the traditional narrative. The idea that Marlowe, as iconoclast, intended to radically rewrite the myth of Hero and Leander is an appealing one, but the portion of Marlowe's poem we have does not support that interpretation: the desire the poem elaborates most fully—that motivating Leander to sleep with Hero—is one that, to my ear, clearly introduces an erotics almost indistinguishable from rape. Leander, we are told,

greedily assayd
To touch those dainties, she the Harpey playd,
And every lim did as a soldier stout,
Defend the fort, and keep the foe-man out.
…
Yet there with Sysiphus he toyld in vaine,
Till with gentle parlie did the truce obtaine.
….
[though] the truce was broke, and she alas,

(Poore sillie maiden) at his mercie was,

Love is not full of pittie (as men say)

But deaffe and cruell, where he means to pray.[96]

It seems likely, given the erotics of force the poem elaborates here, that Leander's destiny at Neptune's hands will follow the course laid out by Ovid and Musaeus; Leander too will find that his will is ultimately of small concern to one who desires to rape him and has the power to do so.

This unspoken future, a future virtually guaranteed by the deeply worn course of the ancient myth upon which Marlowe's poem is based, rehearses Proteus's response to Silvia's passionate refusal. Though the sexually motivated violence cast into the future of "Hero and Leander" is unspecified, the way in which the threat is actualized in *Two Gentlemen* suggests *we* understand it as rape: rape only becomes legible as such through Silvia's body. The expression of rape, however, is not quarantined in the assault on Silvia; in circulates as an unarticulated option in the play's other allusions to "Hero and Leander." As an indirect reference to an unarticulated event, male rape enters the play as the unspeakable option, one in which Proteus, the character designated to bear loss, might forcibly reclaim the one who is lost to him.

References to "Hero and Leander" first appear in the play's opening lines, interlaced with the play's staging of loss. As Valentine prepares to depart, Proteus tells him,

Upon some book I love, I'll pray for thee.

Valentine: That's on some shallow story of deep love—

How young Leander crossed the Hellespont.

Proteus: That's a deep story of a deeper love,

For he was more than over-shoes in love (1.1.20-24).

In these lines, Valentine suggests that the story of Hero and Leander is Proteus's bible, and goes on to wittily devalue it. Proteus corrects Valentine's estimation: "That's a *deep* story of a deeper love..." and then puns on his correction. Proteus is of course claiming that there is more to the story of Hero and Leander than Valentine thinks, an invitation, if ever there was one, to close reading. Though the tone is bantering, even playful, it is undercut by Proteus's reflections after Valentine is out of hearing: "I [leave] myself, my friends, and all, for love" he says, casting Valentine's departure as a significant loss to himself (1.1.65). Though Valentine is evidently comparing Proteus's love for Julia to Leander's love for Hero, the situation itself rather suggests that Valentine plays the role of Leander: it is he who is about to depart, by ship, for Milan. There Silvia, like Hero, awaits him; Proteus, like Neptune, attempts to prevent his going.

In these opening lines, the play does not make an absolute assignment of Leander's role; in a sense, the friends share it, invoking ideals of friendship in which friends are not fully distinguishable. The play, however, goes on to develop Valentine's association with Leander more fully than Proteus's, while Proteus begins to inhabit the role foreshadowed in his name. After Valentine has determined to elope with Silvia, the Duke leads him to incriminate himself by asking for advice in a fabricated situation he believes parallels Valentine's own. Valentine obliges, in the process giving away his own plot to steal Silvia away:

> Why, then, a ladder, quaintly made of cords
> To cast up, with a pair of anchoring hooks,
> Would serve to scale another Hero's tower,
> So bold Leander would adventure it (3.1.117-20).

Here Valentine explicitly casts himself as Leander while Proteus, in having just finished betraying Valentine's secret to the Duke, is cast as the Neptune figure who prevents “bold Leander” from reaching “another Hero's tower.” Proteus, like Neptune in Marlowe's version of the story of Hero and Leander, is drawn on by “love.”

In the scene just prior to the passage in which Valentine’s plans are revealed to the Duke, Julia explicitly links Proteus with the ocean, foregrounding the role he is about to play. Julia characterizes herself as a stream winding its way towards the ocean:

> The current that with gentle murmur glides,
> Thou know’st, being stopp’t, impatiently doth rage;
> But, when his fair course is not hindered,
> ….
> …by many winding nooks he strays,
> With willing sport, to the wild ocean.
> Then let me go, and hinder not my course:
> I'll be as patient as a gentle stream,
> And make a pastime of each weary step,
> Till the last step have brought me to my love... (2.7.25-36).

Interestingly, Julia's "stream" is a masculine one. Julia's gender is shed in favor of one that allows her extended metaphor to embody the anecdote "like seeks like," a change that seems noteworthy in a play that taps into a mythology in which streams are inhabited by nymphs who are invariably female. In a sense, then, Julia's journey retells the story of Proteus's pursuit of Valentine; when Julia, like Proteus, arrives in Milan, the man she seeks has ceased to dream on her, doting instead on another love.

Julia's analogy does not explicitly evoke the story of Hero and Leander, though it aligns Proteus with the ocean. In that association, it marks Proteus not simply as protean, or changeable, but as "wild." Julia's characterization of Proteus suggests that he is not only changeable but dangerous, a trait also implied in the name Shakespeare gives him, since the changing moods of the ocean are what *make* the ocean dangerous: "I need a brief space of calm until I cross to you; when I shall have touched your shore, let the storm rage on!" Leander writes to Hero, in Ovid's *Heroides*.[97] Julia's characterization foregrounds the allusive burden of Proteus's name, identifying him as dangerous both to Valentine and to Silvia, as the play is in the process of demonstrating even as Julia speaks.

The threat of rape that hangs so blazingly unsaid in Marlowe's epyllion is lodged far more subtly in *Two Gentlemen*, bursting into the plot only after Proteus's pursuit of Valentine has been routed through Silvia, and she has found herself alone, with Proteus, in the woods. The woods are commonly associated with sexual license in early modern drama;[98] it is interesting, then, that Silvia bears a name that allies her with the woods. Like Lavinia, who is associated with the hole in which men meet,[99] and Beatrice-Joanna, who is associated with the castle in which Alonzo is

suggestively stabbed,[100] Silvia here becomes a cipher, a placeholder and a place. She is not so much a substitute as a means. Silvia, like many other female characters appearing in early modern drama, embodies the possibility of rape, whether or not she is positioned at the center of the play's desire: she makes sexual violence representable. As *Two Gentlemen* demonstrates, however, the definitional convergence of women and rape governs what is articulable, not what may be imagined.

The play's "happy" ending dispels the threat of rape in two swift motions: Proteus begs forgiveness and Valentine grants it, renewing his love in Proteus, and, as a sign that his love is "plain and free," offers Silvia to him (5.4.82). When Valentine, the "rightful" possessor of Silvia, "gives" Silvia to Proteus, and when he blesses Proteus with the return of his full and perfect friendship, these acts are versions of the same thing: the "gift" is the guarantor of the return of friendship. In an emotional economy ultimately anchored in Proteus, each act also remedies the "same" loss. Silvia's refusal of Proteus and Valentine's neglect of Proteus are, from Proteus's perspective, almost the same thing: in disallowing Proteus's assumption of Valentine's identity, Silvia prevents Proteus from "preserving" a friendship Valentine has already once denied him. The "gift" of Sylvia, then, bestows the identity Proteus has sought upon him, an identity capable of "preserving" his friendship with Valentine, the "same" friendship Valentine returns to him in the flesh.

Though the events in the play unfold in linear time, the emotional trajectory of the play returns Proteus to a time before the play began. As we recall, the play opens with Proteus failing to prevent the loss of his friend: "Cease to persuade my loving

Proteus," Valentine remonstrates. The final lines of the play not only give Julia to Proteus along with the social and sexual possibilities that union enables, but also return Valentine to him, body and soul. The play thus recalls the way in which, according to Freud, mourning returns the friend to oneself, amending loss. In returning Valentine to Proteus *in the flesh*, however, *Two Gentlemen* rejects the psychoanalytic perception of identification as a purely internal relation; instead, the structures and expectations of friendship allow a fully corporeal Valentine to join Proteus in forming "one soul in two bodies," but also a single "Acquaintance," one "brother." Through the interpellative lens of early modern friendship, *Two Gentlemen* proposes a way in which two men may take their places as adults in the world without the individuation—and the isolation—often attributed to that state.

Like Hofstadter's noncentralized consciousness, the subject of early modern friendship extends to include the body of the friend; it also, however, recognizes the body of the friend as different, as other, and as an object of desire. The language and practice of friendship maintains this paradox, orienting and reorienting the friend within the privileged space between cannibalistic assimilation and potentially destructive desire. Had friendship failed in *Two Gentlemen* and Proteus succeeded in replacing his erotic investment in his friend with an interiorized identification, a relation no longer concerned with Valentine's body, that body might well have been permanently expelled from the drama, transforming the comic *Two Gentlemen* into a play more like *Titus Andronicus*, a tragedy in which the murder of a man precedes the rape of the female protagonist. Rape is averted in *Two Gentlemen* because Proteus refuses to relinquish his investment in Valentine's body; it is literally that body that

comes between Proteus and Silvia. The homoeroticism so integral to maintaining early modern male friendship, and so troubling to a variety of modern readers, here proves essential to the successful instantiation of normative sexual relations.

Chapter IV: *Philaster's* Chastity: Voicing Homophobia, Silencing Rape

> Doe's your Grace thinke, wee carry seconds with us, to search us, and see faire play: your Grace hath beene ill tutord in the businesse; but if you hope to trie her truly, and satisfie your selfe what frailtie is, give her the Test... put her too'it without hope or pittie, then yee shall see that goulden forme flie off, that all eyes wonder at for pure and fixt, and under it, base blushing copper....[1]

Such is the advice Gondarino offers the Duke in John Fletcher's *The Woman Hater*. The "Test" consists of abducting Oriana, the Duke's beloved, and locking her in a brothel. A courtier is then sent to tell her she has been condemned by the Duke, but can escape by sleeping with the courtier. The point, of course, is to "test" Oriana's chastity, her sexual loyalty to the Duke. The paranoid conviction Gondarino articulates is a familiar one, as evident in tragedies like *Othello* as in the comic universe of *The Woman Hater*. It insists that the promise of a woman's chastity, no matter how seemingly secure, will perpetually recede: because chastity is always subject to some further test, one more thoroughly purged of "hope or pittie," it will always ultimately be shown to be illusory.[2] Nicolas F. Radel has noted that Fletcher's *Philaster, or Love Lies a Bleeding*, is also driven by paranoia. For Radel, *Philaster's* paranoia is more akin to homophobia than to misogyny: through the character of Bellario, the lovely and desirable young page, *Philaster* introduces a distinct homoerotic possibility, one that is ultimately suppressed by Bellario's transformation into a young woman. In the transformation of Bellario to Euphrasia, Radel argues that *Philaster* stages a "paranoid retreat" from homoeroticism that

prefigures modern homophobia.[3] While *Philaster's* paranoia emerges in relation to Bellario, however, Philaster, the eponymous protagonist, does *not* target Bellario: like Oriana in *The Woman Hater*, the designated victim of Philaster's intense and protracted paranoia is the princess Arethusa. The protohomophobia Radel identifies in *Philaster* is thus voiced as a destructive obsession with Arethusa's chastity, suggesting that the paranoid vigilance so characteristic of homophobia may first have developed in relation to women's sexuality.

I contend that in *Philaster*, a newly emergent anxiety about the sexual behavior of men takes up a narrative of paranoia that is already well-established and ready-to-hand, one that is, crucially, also already delimited: the suspicions of both Gondarino and Othello are ultimately discredited, outlining a generic expectation which promises that the anxiety channeled into this narrative may also be assuaged. The "swerve" into a distinctly heteroerotic narrative,[4] I argue, is the result of a clash of conflicting sexual paradigms, one in which an older "pederastic" model associated with the aristocracy loses ground to an emergent, privatized, distinctly bourgeois model, one that stigmatizes the very mechanisms of service regulating the disbursement of power at court.[5] As one of a class of "mongrel" tragicomedies,[6] *Philaster* channels two distinct discourses, each of which voices one of these paradigms. *Philaster* thus brings opposing representations of male relations into conflict, representations that might otherwise have maintained an uneasy coexistence in the broader, more diverse arena of early modern discourse. In the comic resolution to the play, *Philaster* stages a tenuous settlement between discursive representations of male sexuality by harnessing the narrative expectations established around

paranoia and chastity: when Bellario is revealed to be a young woman, Arethusa, like Oriana and Desdemona, is vindicated. The spectacular demonstration of Arethusa's innocence simultaneously serves to defend Philaster from corrosive accusations of sexual licence, though only by erasing the very possibility of homoerotic desire Bellario has represented. In *Philaster*, then, a paranoid narrative mobilized around women's sexuality serves to articulate and ultimately to contain a growing anxiety about relations between men.

Philaster, I suggest, reflects a historic shift in the organization of sexuality first recognized by Michel Foucault, a shift both elaborated and nuanced by succeeding scholars.[7] According to Thomas A. King, early modern English history moves from a system of "alliance" to one of "sexuality." "Alliance" refers to a broad social organization primarily characterized by distinctions between degrees of superordination and subordination among men, women and boys, an organization within which sexuality is seamlessly enfolded. King refers to the pleasures corresponding to this traditional economy as "residual pederasty," by which he means to signal both "the bodily enactment and reproduction of early modern subjection" and "the discontinuity of pederasty from a modern economy of heterosexual, homosexual, and bisexual subjectivities."[8] The latter economy, the organization King terms "sexuality," grounds claims to personal and political power in the privacy of the complementary heterosexual domestic unit.[9] "Sexuality" gradually gains ascendancy in the early modern period, replacing status or "countenance" as the foundation of social and political entitlement, and in so doing, grounds modern gendered subjectivity. "Sexuality" thus appears as a codification of the norms and practices

"whereby the English bourgeoisie... negotiate[d] an historic alliance with its social superiors."[10]

King believes that the conflict between the aristocracy and the London merchant class was reflected, in part, in the struggle to define relations between men. In speaking of contemporary responses to King James's sexual practices, for example, King outlines "a confrontation of discourses:" "where a more elite humanist discourse might identify James's favorites as his Ganymedes and James himself as Jupiter, or ponder his preference for boys over women, a more popular and oppositional writer might focus on his neglect of women."[11] Bruce R. Smith has suggested that this confrontation comes into view in early modern drama around the figure of the maid-in-male-disguise: according to Smith, in dramas produced for The King's Men, using scripts by Shakespeare and later by Beaumont and Fletcher, the maid-in-male-disguise was generally an object of romantic fascination. Competing theaters, Smith suggests, primarily The Admiral's Company and the Red Bull Theatre, produced city comedies and satires in which the maid-in-male-disguise tended to be an object of derision.[12] Different playhouses thus offered competing perspectives on what King would term pederastic relations.

In this struggle over the representation of relations between men, men and "boys" were by no means equally targeted, as Smith has suggested through his own focus on the maid-in-male-disguise. In the discursive conflict over sexual relations, the subordinate figure or "boy" carried a disproportionate burden of signification: while "sodomy," for example, often signified as an act, something "anyone" might do, the "boy"— the ingle, catamite or ganymede—often figured as an identity.

Compare, for example, the definition of “Sodomite” to that of “Ingle” in Thomas Blount's *Glossographia*: an ingle, according to Blount, is “a boy kept for Sodomy.” A sodomite, on the other hand, is “an Ingler;” ingling is an *activity*.[13] Though the word “sodomite” actually predates “ingle,” the sodomite's identity is contingent on that of the ingle.[14] Nora Johnson argues that the tendency to locate sexual identity in the subordinate figure, still reflected in Blount’s 1656 text, is the rule rather than the exception in the first decades of the seventeenth century:[15]

> Representations of the subject who does the desiring, figured here as the courtly sodomite, do in fact imply that sodomy is clearly one in a range of sexual behaviors with no particular signifying force. If we shift our focus to the object of desire, however, it becomes clear that the signifying force of sexuality....registers instead in the body of the ganymede, the partner who, like a woman in a heterosexual coupling, might be said to lack power.[16]

Johnson believes that this unequal distribution of power enables a perception of the “boy” as “a physical embodiment of homoeroticism.”[17] This tendency to identify sexuality in the body of the subordinate partner impacts the kind of threat posed by discourses that target the *superordinate* partner: while some discourses do focus on the gallant's association with the stigmatized, subordinate “boy,” others simply attribute the identity of “boy” to the *gallant*. In societies ordered around alliance, the gallant was particularly vulnerable to being positioned in that role: as King asserts, “superordination in one domain was subordination in another.”[18]

Satiric discourse, then, while sometimes aimed at boys themselves, more often derided the courtier *as* a "boy." In the dedicatory epistle to Richard Brathwait's *A Strappado for the Divell*, Brathwait lists those persons to whom his satire is dedicated. He includes "Ladies, Monkies, Parachitoes, Mar- / mosites and Catamitoes…."[19] Though Brathwait lists "Catamitoes," he is not concerned with the boys or young men who, according to Blount, are "hired to be abused contrary to nature," any more than he is concerned with, say, monkeys. "Ladies, Monkies, Parachitoes, Marmosites and Catamitoes" are all parodies of overdressed, fawning, *male* courtiers. See, for example, Brathwait's reference to "Ladie-fied Monkies" in *Times Curtaine Drawne*.[20] Instead, then, Brathwait targets the appearance and behavior of courtiers who enact a subordination that, as part of a traditional system of alliance, is now coming under attack. The punitive identification of gallants, courtiers or strivers with this subordinate sexual position clearly had broad resonance in the early seventeenth century: in *The Homoerotics of Early Modern Drama*, Mario DiGangi outlines a class of satiric comedies in which "a clever 'wit' schemes to establish mastery over a foolish 'ass.'"[21] In these comedies, in Brathwait's satire, and, as I will argue, in *Philaster*, the most immediate threat posed by oppositional discourses does not lie in the claim that gentlemen or courtiers are having sex with their pages; rather it lies in the claim that courtiers *have become* their pages. The fear such attacks inspire—a fear we might misrecognize as homophobic—is fundamentally concerned not with sex but with subservience: sexual subservience is merely the most potent sign of a stigmatized, but increasingly powerful nomination.

That Philaster, *Philaster's* prince and its protagonist, may himself be identified as a "boy" is a threat articulated through the play's references to the mythological figure of Hylas, references embedded in a crude, knowing language used by "common" persons and clearly at odds with the elevated language Philaster, Arethusa and Bellario use to describe themselves and others. The play refers to Hylas twice, first in relation to Bellario and then in relation to Philaster. In the first instance, Megra compares Bellario to Hylas within a context that casts the page as sexually available to both Arethusa and Pharamond, the Spanish prince Arethusa's father desires that she marry:

Megra: Look you, my lord,
The princess has a Hylas, an Adonis.
Pharamond: His form is angel-like.
Megra: Why, this is he must, when you are wedded,
Sit by your pillow like young Apollo, with
His hand and voice binding your thoughts in sleep;
The Princess does provide him for you and for herself.
Pharamond: I find no music in these boys.
Megra: Nor I.
They can do little, and that small they do
They have not wit to hide (2.4.18-27).

Megra imagines Bellario as Adonis, Venus's beloved boy and as Hylas, Hercules's lover. Sexual subservience—rather than the gender of one's sexual partner—is clearly the organizing principle of Megra's associations, recalling King's description

of pederasty as structured through distinctions between degrees of super- and subordination among men, women and boys, rather than through modern gender binaries. In the play's final act, Hylas comes up again, this time in reference to Philaster. When the citizens revolt, demanding Philaster's freedom and safety, an old Captain, a leader of the rebellion, asks Philaster, "Art thou the dainty darling of the King? / Art thou the Hylas to our Hercules?" The Captain's reference to Hylas recalls Megra's characterization of Bellario, applying the image of the sexually subordinate boy Megra has introduced to Philaster. Though Philaster is a prince, he is not immune from being "recognized" as the King's "dainty darling," as a boy available to both men and women of superior rank. The full weight of that identification will fall on Philaster at the moment Arethusa demands his love for herself.

Radel has dismissed Megra's notorious claim as "malicious slander," slander he believes is aimed at *Philaster*: he writes, "she knows, after all, that Bellario is Philaster's 'boy.'"[22] Bellario, however, appears in *Arethusa's* entourage; since, as Philaster explains, Bellario is "a boy… Not yet seen in the Court," it seems unlikely that Megra should be thinking of Philaster at all as she contemplates the "boy" (1.2.111-13). As Johnson has argued, the focus is clearly on the sexuality of the subordinate. Megra, however, does not intend to slander Bellario either. As a character, Megra voices unbridled desire: upon seeing Pharamond, for example, she exclaims, "Oh these / strangers, I do affect them strangely; they do the rarest / home things, and please the fullest; as I live, I could love / all of the nation over and over for his sake" (1.1.284-88). Dion suggests that Megra's purpose at court is, in fact, precisely to "entertain" just such foreign guests (1.1.51-58). From the perspective of

a character like Megra, defined as she is, by desire and availability, dalliance is clearly Bellario's raison d'être. Instead of slandering Bellario, then, Megra simply "recognizes" him.

The Captain's reference to Hylas is much like Megra's: he has no intention of seriously disparaging Philaster's behavior or person. He is a comic figure, appearing in a comic scene: his jocund questions appear just after the Citizens make fun of the size of Pharamond's nose. As a clownlike character, he is granted a certain comic license. He also, however, risks his life in order to save Philaster from imprisonment or worse. He is clearly absolutely loyal to Philaster. These references to Hylas, then, unlike Brathwait's use of the term "catamite," are not intended to censure or abuse. In the mouths of Megra and the Captain, they are something potentially more alarming: they are descriptive. Though the image they impose on events may be inaccurate, Megra, Pharamond and the Captain's words are interpretations—not prevarications—and therefore cannot simply be dismissed as slanderous. They reflect a perception of the world in which sexual relations between prince and page are, if not morally commendable, nevertheless utterly mundane. Megra and the Captain mean no harm to Philaster: they do, however, voice a discourse that threatens the pederastic paradigm structuring the aristocratic world Philaster embodies: through Megra and the Captain, "sexuality," as King calls it, comes into view.

The mention of Hylas, of course, does not automatically signal the presence of disorderly sexuality, whether mundane or not. Hylas could also appear in exemplary narratives of love between men. DiGangi has shown that references to Hercules and Hylas were invoked in the early modern period in order to signify both "disorderly

male lust" and "orderly male love:" in *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser in fact does both.[23] The exemplary "love" in which Hylas figures, however, if seen through the lens of our modern sexual lexicon, includes, in addition to descriptive language, strategic gaps and silences—the exclusion of explicit references to sex. In the passage DiGangi cites, Spenser describes two groups of lovers, the second of which, "tyde / In bands of friendship," include Hercules and Hylas:

> far away from these, another sort
> Of lovers linked in true harts consent;
> Which loved not as these, for like intent,
> But on chast virtue grounded their desire....[24]

While DiGangi argues that chastity, here, refers to one's "devotion to a single sexual partner," it seems to me that "chast virtue" is as likely to point towards abstinence.[25] In fact, the word eludes any strict correspondence with a specific sexual act or its absence, an ambiguity that, I would argue, is essential, not coincidental.[26] "Chastity's" inspecificity here invokes what, in a different context, Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick has called "the quicksilver of sex," the notorious difficulty of pinning "sex" down.[27] Elsewhere, DiGangi has written, "The mere existence of a homoerotic discourse of friendship reveals nothing conclusive about actual male sexual activity in early modern England."[28] The idealized discourse appearing in *The Faerie Queene* and circulating around friendship shares a feature with another idealized discourse, one appearing in *Philaster* and articulating patronage relations—both "reveal nothing" about actual male sexual activity.

It is precisely the ability to reveal nothing that is threatened by Megra's—and the Captain's—blithe assumption that princes sleep with their pages, a belief that recalls Gondarino's assumption that a woman's chastity is always an illusion. The battle over male sexuality is ultimately fought not on the grounds of what men do, but on the grounds of what men *see*. DiGangi underscores the distinction: in response to those who would demand evidence of (homo)sexual *acts* in the early modern period, he asks, "What would this entail for nonprocreative sex?"[29] DiGangi reminds us that we never have access to non-procreative acts; we only have indications of whether, and how, they were perceived. We might extend this insight to most potentially *procreative* acts, as Othello and Gondarino so strikingly illustrate. In the case of Philaster and Bellario, what Megra and the Captain perceive, whether rightly or wrongly, is sex.

Megra and the Captain thus participate in King's "confrontation of discourses;" they voice a conceptual paradigm in which the sexual availability of the maid-in-male-disguise is foregrounded, a focus more likely to position the "maid" as a means of evoking derision than as "an object of romantic fascination."[30] Megra and the Captain do more, however, then speak the same sexual language: they do so as representatives of a particular kind of character, one associated with comedy and clearly juxtaposed to characters such as Philaster, Bellario and Arethusa: while Philaster, Bellario and Arethusa are noble, both Megra and the Captain are "common." Furthermore, the Captain in particular is associated with London's merchant class: the Citizens who rally around him are explicitly identified with London merchants: he shouts

> Come, my brave myrmidons, let's fall on... forget your mother gibberish of what-do-you-lack.... Let not your hasty silks or your branched cloth of bodkin or your tissues, dearly beloved of spiced cake and custards... tie your affections in darkness to your shops... let your uncut cholers make the King feel the measure of your mightiness. Philaster! Cry, my rose-nobles, cry! (5.4.1-16)

The growing influence of the class the Captain represents, the necessity of its support to the aristocratic class, may be reflected in the fact that the Captain's support for Philaster is narratively essential: the rebellion alone is able to restore Philaster to his rightful place as heir to the throne. If the growing power of London is reflected in the Captain's role, it may also be reflected in the increasing influence of the discourses associated with him to define relations between men. Mario DiGangi has noted that transformations in the institution of service from a patronage system that employed gentlemen retainers to a modern wage system employing nongentle servants was accompanied by an increase in representations of disorderly homoeroticism.[31] I would suggest that that transition was accompanied by an increase in representations of disorderly homoeroticism *because* these shifts in social structure were accompanied by changes in the discourses used to describe them: here, older discourses of male friendship and patronage that passed over sex in silence lost ground to a more worldly, knowing discourse, one much more apt to “see” disorderly sex between masters and servants, or princes and pages.

King has noted that pederastic subjection, a system through which discourses of male friendship and patronage circulated, operated alongside, and sometimes

figured as, the vulnerability of women.[32] The crisis of representation impacting pederastic subjection, seen above in the circulation of Hylas, becomes most spectacularly visible in *Philaster* through the vulnerability of women: desires and anxieties associated with pederastic subjection operate alongside *and* become visible through Arethusa, a character who shares a single erotic trajectory with Bellario through most of the play. The yoking of Bellario and Arethusa allows for a growing anxiety around the disorderly sexuality of the male subordinate to be articulated using the rich resources of a narrative concerning an obsession with female sexuality. It is not coincidental, I think, that in many of the cross-dressed plays from the time, including Shakespeare's *Cymbeline*, Bellario and Arethusa's counterparts are combined in a single character, for the fantasies they make available are virtually interchangeable.[33] In representing them as separate characters, however, *Philaster* gains the ability to suppress Bellario and the erotic relations he represents while advancing Arethusa and the desires and anxieties she has come to embody.

Though Arethusa and Bellario are separate characters and do have distinct social positions and prospects, it is difficult to exaggerate the similarity of their erotic trajectories: both declare their love for Philaster in the first scene in which they speak and both of them maintain their loyalty to Philaster in the face of his violent repudiation. In the play's final lines, their devotion to Philaster remains unshaken. There is a sense in fact in which Arethusa and Bellario are bound into a single erotic narrative before the play ever begins. The play's subtitle, “Love Lies a Bleeding,” refers to both of them, though it is Arethusa's bleeding that is depicted in the woodcut that accompanies the play's 1620 publication, a choice that reflects the representative

role Arethusa, rather than Bellario, will come to play. Bellario and Arethusa's parallel declarations of love establish an explicit narrative correspondence that is sharpened the moment Dion tells Philaster he has caught the two sleeping together. This plot development blurs the distinction between Arethusa's imagined betrayal and Bellario's, allowing Philaster's rage and doubt, though purportedly aimed at Arethusa, to appear in his relations with Bellario. Philaster argues that the news Dion brings cannot be true in terms that virtually repeat the terms the King has just used to describe Arethusa: her "few years and sex / Yet teach her nothing but her fears and blushes, / Desires without desire..." (1.1.92-4). Philaster likewise "coldly" reasons, "If she were lustful, would she take a boy, / That knows not yet desire?" (3.1.107-8). The almost identical positioning of Bellario and Arethusa *in relation to Philaster* serves to make chastity and loyalty interchangeable, a situation that facilitates the fluid exchange of terms, tropes and fantasies around the loyalty of pages and the chastity of lovers, or the "chastity" of pages, as Spenser might put it, and the loyalty of lovers.

Philaster's misapprehension leads to a series of dramatic exchanges with Arethusa and Bellario, wherein his confrontation with one prefigures his confrontation with the other. He begins by threatening to kill Bellario:

> Tell me when and where thou did'st enjoy her,
> Or let plagues fall on me, if I destroy thee not.
>
> *He draws his sword.*
>
> Bellario: By heaven, I never did; and when I lie
> To save my life, may I live long and loathed;

> Hue me asunder, and whilst I can think
> I'll love those pieces you have cut away
> Better than those that grow, and kiss those limbs
> Because you made ‘em so.
> ….
> If I be perjured, or have ever thought
> Of that you charge me with; if I be false,
> Send me to suffer in those punishments
> You speak of: kill me (3.1.247-76).

Bruce Smith has provocatively argued that in early modern drama, male rape is staged through dismemberment.[34] The eroticism of this intensely masochistic scene can hardly be denied, though in fact the scene evades intimations of rape: Bellario *invites* Philaster to dismember him. Later, Philaster discovers Bellario sleeping in the woods and stabs him.[35] Bellario wakes and says, “Blessed be that hand, / It meant me well. Again, for pity's sake” (4.4.26-27). Bellario's enthusiastic embrace of dismemberment and death at Philaster's hands gestures towards the kinds of silence that help to construct the discourse used to express perfect devotion, a discourse *Philaster* positions as the voice, the truest expression, of both loyalty and chastity. In relations defined by loyalty and chastity, the possibility of articulating rape winks out of existence.

These encounters between Philaster and Bellario, and their staging of an economy that elides the possibility of rape, are virtually reenacted when Philaster stumbles upon Arethusa in the woods:

Arethusa: If my fortune be so good to let me fall

Upon thy hand, I shall have peace in death.

Yet tell me this, there will be no slanders,

No jealousy in the other world, no ill there?

Philaster: No.

Arethusa: Show me then the way.

….

Philaster: Are you at peace?

Arethusa: With heaven and earth.

Philaster: May they divide thy soul and body. *Philaster wounds her*.

(4.5.65-85).

As these parallel scenes demonstrate, residual pederasty involved "the bodily enactment and reproduction of early modern subjection" substantially independent of gender.[36] Like the confrontations between Philaster and Bellario, the scene equates not only loyalty, but "chastity" with submission; here, as with Bellario, *chastity* will be established by the subordinate's willingness to submit to an eroticized attack on the part of her chosen lover, or, in Bellario's case, his chosen master. Not only is the possibility of rape evacuated from orderly relations between subordinate and superordinate, but the *refusal* of an eroticized attack would become the *sign* of disorderly relations, the failure of loyalty or chastity on the part of the subordinate.

The submission of Bellario and Arethusa exemplifies pederastic relations as King describes them; in doing so, they also foreground a troubling aspect of King's characterization of those relations: in King's elaboration of the economy of alliance,

rape *does not exist*. In *The Gendering of Men*, "rape" only appears twice: in neither case is the word integrated in any way into the conceptual framework King proposes.[37] This is not simply an oversight: the structure of alliance King outlines precludes a conception of rape defined in terms of the refusal of consent. King is critical of accounts in which sexuality transcends status: "gendered desires... have been idealized in modernity as the origin of sexualities capable... of dissolving the accidents of status."[38] King rather argues that *status* conditions *sexuality*. He foregrounds the obfuscation caused by the idealization of sexuality as a natural outgrowth of selfhood: "The liberal bias that construes sexuality as a space of freedom and self-expression remains at stake in these [problematic] accounts, underlying the inability to consider sex instead as a set of practices constructing dynamic economies of place, movement, and power and enacted among bodies rather than originating in bodies."[39] In focusing on exchanges among bodies rather than assuming an agency that originates in them, King brackets desire, thereby avoiding the pitfalls of attributing modern sexualities—homosexuality, bisexuality, heterosexuality—to early modern persons. These attributions, among other things, misleadingly cast all persons as possessing equal degrees of sexual agency.[40] The bracketing of desire, however, effectively brackets consent: if relations between Philaster and Bellario, or Philaster and Arethusa, are orderly—where orderliness is adjudicated by the economy of alliance—then sex, according to the model King proposes, is also orderly: the question of consent is moot. Without consent, of course, rape cannot signify. King does acknowledge the possibility of "coercion" and "abuse," terms that avoid the suggestion that a specifically sexual right has been

violated.[41] Choosing these terms instead of rape, of course, implies that early moderns had no conception of *specifically* sexual rights and privileges, a claim that is obviously wrong in relation to women as they circulated through the economy of alliance, but is also wrong in relation to boys and men, as I hope previous discussions have made clear.

King's model does not simply expunge the possibility of rape. If every orderly sexual act presupposes a power differential, as King has claimed, then it might be argued that coercion is inseparable from the pederastic relations organized within the economy of alliance. If consent is understood to hinge on the ability to refuse consent, then in some significant sense, consent *cannot* be granted in relations as King describes them: "rape" is absent from King's descriptions of pederastic relations because rape is everywhere. There are times, especially in relations involving wives and servants, when King's characterization seems distressingly accurate: the possibility of rape evaporates from perceptions of some relations precisely because coercion has been normalized: Fitzpatrick, a servant convicted of sodomy in the notorious Earl of Castlehaven trials, confessed in his gallows speech that he had "resolved never to come into my lord's house again; but it was through frailty, and because he was not furnished of another place."[42] In Jonson's *Volpone*, Corvino threatens to *punish* his wife by having anal intercourse with her, a right he possesses as superordinate partner within the institution of marriage.[43] It is clear in *The Shoemaker's Holiday* that Jane, the young wife of Rafe, a lowly apprentice, is expected to prostitute herself in order to survive when her husband is conscripted.[44] In Dekker's drama, her plight is the stuff of comedy. In jettisoning questions of

desire from his consideration of the economy of alliance, King risks reproducing the partisan evacuation of subordinate (sexual) agency on view here, as well as in the discourse of devotion as it is voiced through Bellario and Arethusa.

Despite the absence of rape from a variety of contexts and discourses, rape does, of course, appear in early modern drama—in relation to chaste women of high status, and, as I have argued in previous chapters, in relation to boys, men and other women to the degree that they were associated by others, or could associate themselves with these women. Instead of dismissing rape from formulations of pederastic relations, we might rather see rape, strictly defined through the absence of consent, as endemic, but only *appearing* through the successful manipulation of representational discourses, discourses mobilized directly around women and indirectly—through women—around men. In relation to discursive representations of homoeroticism, DiGangi has argued that "because the political significance of male relations... depended on contingencies of interpretation, the definitional boundaries of "orderly" and "disorderly" homoeroticism were open to negotiation, manipulation, and contestation—in short, to local struggles for social and ideological power."[45] The same might be said of the distinction between orderly sex and "rape:" if the victim were able to demonstrate that the act had catastrophic repercussions for orderly pederastic relations, "rape" could appear within the economy of alliance outlined by King. Alternatively, if dramatists wished to signal a threat to pederastic relations of significant proportions, "rape" was a means of doing so. In noting that pederastic subjection operated alongside, and sometimes figured as, the vulnerability of women,

King outlined one of the means through which rape could, and did, come to signify on male bodies.[46]

Jonathan Goldberg has argued that one form of sexuality current in the early modern period did not distinguish between boys and women as objects of desire,[47] a sexuality that would seem to be represented in the uncanny similarity of the roles played by Arethusa and Bellario, as each of them mobilize the discourse of devotion. Their obsessively doubled presence through the central acts of the play, however, would be redundant were the two truly offering fully interchangeable fantasies. The ways in which the erotic trajectories of Bellario and Arethusa diverge, then, are perhaps more interesting than their similarities, since these divergences justify the parallel structure around which their trajectories are oriented.

One of the most essential differences between Bellario's submission and Arethusa's is that in the latter case, the audience is expected to *recognize* the confrontation between Philaster and Arethusa as participating in a conventional means of representing sex. The confrontation occurs in the forest in the middle of a hunt, certainly one of the most venerable metaphors for sexual pursuit imaginable. Of course, the broad suggestiveness of the wounding is made explicit in the woodcut that accompanies the play's publication, in which Arethusa's legs lie open and her breasts are revealed. More importantly, however, Arethusa herself "recognizes" just how evocative the scene is: when the Country Gentleman interrupts Philaster's attempt to kill her, she tries to prevent her own rescue by casting the exchange as a sexual encounter: "What ill-bred man art thou, to intrude thyself / Upon our private sports, our recreations?" (4.5.90-91) Stabbing, however, does not actually look like

sex; stabbing is instead a conventional means of alluding to sex. Arethusa's comic attempt to deceive the Country Gentleman, aimed at the audience rather than the Country Gentleman, demonstrates just how recognizable that convention is. King has described pederasty as "an ubiquitous but *tacit* structure of power relations."[48] The clearest distinction, then, between Philaster's exchange with Bellario and his exchange with Arethusa is that the latter is embedded in a widely recognizable, *overtly* sexual system of signification.

Bizarrely, the Country Gentleman seems to accept Arethusa's characterization of the situation *after* he has succeeded in driving Philaster off: at that point, he says, "I prithee wench, come and kiss me now" (4.5.107-8). The emphasis here, I think, is on *me*. The Country Gentleman acts as if he has just won access to Arethusa in a fight over her favors. While difficult to account for within the trajectory of the plot, the Country Gentleman's behavior makes sense within the metanarrative, the space of interpretation in which the audience recognizes the impassioned exchange between Philaster and Arethusa in the woods as erotic. The Country Gentleman's demand, then, made to the half-undressed Arethusa while they are alone in the woods, briefly introduces the threat of rape, a threat firmly situated in contradistinction to the possible trajectories of her relations with Philaster. When the Country Gentleman, listed in the Dramatis Personae as the "Country Fellow," takes Philaster's place, demanding that Arethusa kiss him, his lowly station makes rape articulable—directly, in relation to Arethusa's body, and indirectly, in relation to Bellario's. In *Philaster*, the threat of rape is quickly diffused, though in a variety of other early modern dramas, the threat lingers, impacting fantasies of both male and female bodies.

The sexuality articulated through Arethusa's body threatens to contaminate the discourse of devotion that animates Bellario, not simply by staging the sex absent from scenes in which he features, but also by using the vocabulary of the discourse of devotion, especially in relation to conceptions of sleep and dreaming, in ways that themselves are tainted by sexuality. If indeed pederasty was seamlessly enfolded in a larger economy of subordination and superordination, as King has argued, then it seems plausible that discourses expressing idealized relations of patronage might place sex beneath other rubrics. The modern euphemism "to sleep with," and the indeterminacy upon which it relies, points toward the possibility of a broader, more expansive definition of "sleep," one inclusive of sex. We see just such an expansive definition in play around Bellario. Just after Philaster stabs Arethusa and just before Philaster stabs *him*, we find Bellario falling asleep in the woods: "A heaviness near death sits on my brow, / And I must sleep. Bear me, thou gentle bank, / For ever if thou wilt" (4.5.1-3). Here, and elsewhere, the appeal of a boy or man asleep was imbued with a dramatic magnetism we might find difficult to attribute exclusively to the promise of unbroken slumber. The notion of Philaster stabbing Bellario *while he is asleep* exerts its own peculiar appeal, an appeal located in what one might call plausible deniability.

We see that appeal clearly in *The Faithful Friends*, where Fletcher introduces the need for "sleep" into a narrative concerned with the friendship of two noblemen: Young Tullius is told that Aramanus, his "dearest friend" has betrayed him.[49] Tullius rushes off intending to wreak bloody vengeance upon him and discovers Aramanus

sleeping in the woods, himself in the process of seeking Tullius. Tullius does not recognize his friend:

> There's a happy man—
>
> no politic device keeps him waking.
>
> For mines of gold my mad and mutinous thoughts
>
> will not afford me such a minute's rest.
>
> These three days have these eyelids kept asunder
>
> and still unfriendly they deny to meet,
>
> yet I will lay me down by this blessed creature.
>
> It may be his example may teach me
>
> how to beguile fond passions....[50]

The lure of sleep, as Tullius enacts it here, clearly gestures beyond itself, offering another language of desire, one able to mobilize a productive ambiguity similar to Spenser's "chast" virtue. Notable is the way in which the scene, though circumspect, is hardly homophobic: we do not see a fearful rejection of homoerotic possibility of the kind we see in *Philaster's* final suppression of Bellario, but rather a dramaturgical embrace of homoerotic possibility *expressed in other terms*, spoken in the language of sleep.

In *The Faithful Friends*, sleep is more than a transparent reference to sex, for it bears with it its own palpable atmosphere. The isolated forest setting, Tullius's inability to recognize his "dearest" friend and the promise of unconsciousness all converge here, establishing an almost tangible fog of *not knowing*. Nicholas Radel imagines that a servant's lack of agency in relations with his master might produce

just such epistemological effects: “If I can't speak what is being done to me or even what I'm doing willingly, then, in some sense, I seem to be doing nothing at all or something else altogether. And perhaps I am.”[51] The pressure Radel places on agency, here, causes the “I” to slip away from “its” body; Radel is not contesting the nature of the activity undertaken by the body, but rather suggesting that an evacuation of agency might transform what “I” see, and indeed what “I” do. If sleep is a willing forfeiture of agency, then the drift from sleep to “sleep” may be experienced as a transition with little or no seam. If the discourse of devotion places sex between men beneath the rubric of sleep, the servant, Radel suggests, will often perceive it there.

In *The Friend,* Alan Bray has suggested that this epistemological state might extend, in some manner, to the master. He tells us that sodomy was understood in terms that themselves allied the act with sleep: “a sixteenth-century minister accused of sodomy said when first confronted that what he had done he had done in his sleep....”[52] Bray's point is that the minister's excuse must have seemed more plausible then than it does now: sodomy, he writes “was not part of the individual’s nature: it was part of all human nature and could surface when the mind was dulled or sleeping, much as someone might commit murder in a drunken fit or in a dream.”[53] Had the minister not been confronted, would he have continued to believe that he had simply been asleep? As with Radel's account of the servant, Bray foregrounds the distancing of sex from the self through the abrogation of agency: it is not “I” who actively participates in sex; rather sex is something that happens *to* me in a fit or in a dream. In this evocative haze of unknowingness, Tullius’s detailed explanation of his

own motives in *The Faithful Friends* suggests that whatever may transpire between himself and Aramanus, it will enter speech as “sleep.”

The discourse of sleep, as it appears in *Philaster* and *The Faithful Friends*, is gender specific; valences around sleep and dreaming differ as they circulate around characters marked as women. If we set aside characters of indeterminate gender, we find that female characters are not granted these almost aggressively ambiguous moments of unconsciousness. *Philaster's* Megra, whether intentionally or not, demonstrates the ease with which “sleep” may slide towards “sex” around her person: after having agreed to meet Pharamond secretly that same night, Megra takes her leave of Dion, Cleremont and Thrasiline by saying, “Gentlemen, good rest. Come, shall we to bed?” (2.4.32) The slippage from sleep to sex, however, is not limited to Megra, the play's embodiment of uncurbed desire. It also impacts notions of sleep and dreaming as they circulate around Arethusa, the play's chaste heroine. Arethusa's father, for example, associates virginity with untroubled sleep, (1.1.92-100) a sleep Arethusa herself does not experience. In lamenting the loss of Bellario, she says

> Who shall take up his lute, and touch it till
> He crown a silent sleep upon my eyelids,
> Making me dream, and cry, ‘O, my dear,
> Dear Philaster’? (3.2.81-84)

Though on one level this passage attests to Arethusa's chastity, her loyalty to Philaster, it also suggests, if viewed from the perspective articulated by the King, that Arethusa's perfect virginity is already compromised. Philaster himself, in fact, responds to Arethusa's lamentation as if it were an admission of her guilt. When

Pharamond demeans Arethusa's supposed frigidity with the words "she is afraid to lie / with herself, if she have but any masculine imaginings / about her," he insults Arethusa by characterizing her as overly fastidious, an insult that also relies on a perception that Arethusa's "masculine imaginings" might indeed, in some manner, compromise her (2.2.108-11). One of the conflicts voiced in *Philaster*, then, has to do with how to understand sleep and dreaming in relation to waking life: while the narrative, in ultimately vindicating Arethusa, insists that her dreams have not morally compromised her, Philaster and the King's obsessive concern about her virginity lead them to voice a different view: for them, sleep and dreaming, as they circulate around Arethusa, may themselves be accountable as sexual acts.

Notions of sleep and dreaming that circulate around Arethusa, already tinged with a familiar paranoia concerning sexual purity, themselves impinge on the very "chastity" defining Bellario's relations with Philaster, for it is in the context of these conflicting views of sleep and dreaming that Bellario falls asleep. As we later learn, he may also be dreaming of Philaster: when Bellario reveals himself to be Euphrasia, "she" tells the audience that love for Philaster drove "her" to dress as a boy and embark upon "a feigned pilgrimage" (5.5 .175-81). As we know from Euphrasia's father, it is "for the penance but of an idle dream" that "she" undertook that pilgrimage (1.1.321-22). In retrospect, we understand that Euphrasia's desire for Philaster has caused "her" to dream about him and that dream has led "her" to seek him out and serve him. Euphrasia's dream, like Arethusa's, testifies to "her" true love for Philaster, but also suggests that "she" is stabbed, as Bray might put it, "in a dream." Her dream reinforces the parallel erotic trajectories the play has

meticulously established between Arethusa and Bellario, a narrative feature that promotes the crossover of desires and anxieties from Arethusa to Bellario, and suggests that the paranoia attendant on Arethusa's dreams might also impact the sleep of Bellario, threatening to direct a similar paranoid scrutiny towards him and the sexuality he represents. King has argued that the economy of alliance, including the organization of pleasure around pederasty, was being gradually supplanted at this time by a modern economy of "sexuality." I suggest that the slippage from "sleep" to sex, carried out here through the narrative yoking of Arethusa and Bellario, exposes the vulnerability of the discourse of devotion to attributions of disorderly sexuality.

In a sense, the job of sleep is to *not* represent sex between men; it is perhaps no surprise, then, that in order to represent sex, sleep, in both *Philaster* and *The Faithful Friends,* gives way to stabbing, a trope that throws the roles of subordinate and superordinate into sharp relief. In *The Faithful Friends,* Aramanus wakes before he is stabbed and offers his exposed breast to Tullius's blade: "see, there's my sword / And thus my breast flies open to your fury / Strike and strike home, and when my guiltless blood / Shall die this green grass crimson, you shall see / How free t'was from corruption...."[54] Aramanus's lines closely echo Bellario's: "when I lie / To save my life, may I live long and loathed" but also Arethusa's "If my fortune be so good to let me fall / Upon thy hand, I shall have peace in death." The threat of stabbing staged here recalls King's characterization of pederastic desire as organized around degrees of superordination and subordination, suggesting that, for the desire expressed here, power differentials are essential rather than incidental.[55] Bruce Smith has argued that in tragedies in particular, desire between men finds its end in

violence, for "the desiring subject defines the object of his desire in terms of power."[56] Clearly, this overriding aspect of desire establishes boys and women in complementary roles in relation to men, complicating our use of terms like "homoerotic desire" and posing the question: is it in fact possible to locate homoerotic desire in early modern drama as distinct from heteroerotic desire?

In *Philaster*, at least, it is: Philaster's most impassioned declaration of love is made for Bellario, not Arethusa. After Philaster stabs Bellario, the King's men discover him and he lies to protect Philaster. It is at this moment, over the body of the fainting Bellario, that the Philaster exclaims:

> Would you have tears shed for you when you die?
> Then lay me gently on his neck, that there
> I may weep floods and breathe forth my spirit.
>
> [*Embraces Bellario*.]
>
> 'Tis not the wealth of Plutus nor the gold
> Locked in the heart of earth can buy away
> This armful from me; this had been a ransom
> To have redeemed the great Augustus Caesar,
> Had he been taken….
> Forgive me, thou that art the wealth
> Of poor Philaster (4.6.118-32).

This outpouring of emotion on Philaster's part is unique in the play. Though Arethusa appears immediately afterwards and likewise lies to protect Philaster, though she too has been stabbed and betrayed by him, there is no corresponding

praise for her. Nor is there such an attestation of love for her anywhere else in the play. The distinction between what Philaster feels for Bellario and what he feels for Arethusa suggests a space for desire within the structure of alliance proposed by King *separate* from social position: Philaster *should* love Arethusa; his love for her is assumed, both by himself and by a narrative trajectory involving one prince and one princess: "love you! / By all my hopes, I do, above my life," Philaster declares, "But...." (1.2.94.) Philaster's "but," like his declaration of devotion to Bellario, suggests that Philaster's primary erotic concern is with Bellario; more broadly, it suggests that the play's central erotic fascination is with the subordinate position Bellario represents, one also occupied, at moments, by Philaster.

As I argued earlier, the threat posed by discourses opposed to the reproduction of the economy of alliance during the first part of the seventeenth century lay not in the claim that a man of high status had sex with his subordinates, but that he had *become* a subordinate, a position newly vulnerable to sexual signification. Nicholas Radel has recognized the importance of social position on the legibility of sexuality: in reflecting on the Earl of Castlehaven trials, he tells us that Fitzpatrick, one of Castlehaven's servants, "confesses explicitly to carnal relations with Castlehaven, making legible in the mouth of the servant what is usually illegible as a power of the master."[57] The crux of the issue, then, is not sex itself, but the legibility of sex in the body of the stigmatized subordinate, a legibility that extends from Bellario to Philaster.

Philaster is himself subject to identification as a "boy," a Hylas, as Megra and the Captain put it; he is in fact positioned in this subordinate role in spectacular

fashion early on. Prior to the opening of the play, Arethusa's father, the king of Calabria, has overthrown Philaster's father, king of Sicily. He now intends to permanently dispossess Philaster. In order to do so, he arranges for Pharamond, Prince of Spain, to marry Arethusa in the hope that he will be able to maintain control of Sicily through the added might of the Spanish army. In choosing this means of retaining control, however, the King positions Arethusa as the sole conduit through which that control might be brought to bear on Sicily. Arethusa, however, loves Philaster and rejects Pharamond. She declares her love for Philaster just after an extended confrontation between Philaster and the King in which Philaster very nearly claims his right to rule Sicily. He does not finally press that claim; the king departs and Philaster remains, a prince without a kingdom. It is at this moment that Arethusa sends for him:

> Arethusa: Philaster, know
>
> I must enjoy these kingdoms.
>
> Philaster: Madam, both?
>
> Arethusa: Both, or I die: by heaven I die, Philaster,
>
> If I not calmly may enjoy them both.
>
> Philaster: I would do much to save that noble life...
>
> ….
>
> Arethusa: Nay then hear:
>
> I must and will have them, and more.
>
> Philaster: What more?
>
> Arethusa: Or lose that little life the gods prepared

To trouble this poor piece of earth withal.

Philaster: Madam, what more?

Arethusa: Turn then away thy face.

Philaster: No.

Arethusa: Do.

Philaster: I can endure it; turn away my face?

I never yet saw enemy that looked

So dreadfully, but that I thought myself

As great a basilisk as he; or spake

So horrible but that I thought my tongue

Bore thunder underneath as much as his…

shall I then

Begin to fear sweet sounds? A lady's voice

Whom I do love? Say you would have my life,

….

If you entreat, I will unmovedly hear.

Arethusa: Yet for my sake a little bend thy looks.

Philaster: I do.

Arethusa: Then know I must have them, and thee.

Philaster: And me?

Arethusa: Thy love; without which, all the land

Discovered yet will serve me for no use

But to be buried in (1.2.54-84).

Here, Philaster, the rightful king of Sicily, has turned away his face; his submission has been secured; it is he who is unambivalently positioned as an object of desire. Philaster's submission is not merely another iteration of the Petrarchan lover's enslavement to the beauty of the divine beloved: thanks to Arethusa's father, Arethusa has been vested with the power of giving kingdoms. If Philaster gives himself to her, he will, in turn, gain Sicily, and more. The man who would be king responds to the revelation of Arethusa's desire with the paranoia that will come to characterize his interactions with Arethusa:

> love you!
>
> By all my hopes, I do, above my life;
>
> But how this passion should proceed from you,
>
> So violently, would amaze a man
>
> That would be jealous (1.2.92-96).

Though later Dion lies to Philaster, claiming Arethusa has been unfaithful, here Philaster's sudden suspicion is preceded by nothing other than Arethusa's declaration of desire, a declaration that positions Philaster as its passive object. King has noted that in an unpublished manuscript from about 1785, well after the establishment of the régime of "sexuality," Jeremy Bentham defined pederasty as the sexual use of "an object of the proper species but the wrong sex."[58] Arethusa is an object of the proper species; here, she *becomes* the "right" sex: the sexual scrutiny to which Philaster is newly subject as a *male* object of desire is routed through her, a figure already established as the natural target of sexual scrutiny; here, she is positioned to bear the

critical dramaturgical gaze to which Bellario—and Philaster—might otherwise be subject.

The submission of a young gentleman to the sexual advances of a more powerful woman is not necessarily seen in contemporaneous drama as cause for alarm. In another play by Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Honest Man's Fortune*, Montague is gulled out of his inheritance and comes to work as a servant in the household of Lamira, a wealthy and independent woman in the market for a husband. In the course of that service, Lamira forces Montague to humble himself before a group of worthless suitors:

> Lamira: Why sirrah, these are none of your comrades
> To drink with in the cellar; one of them
> For ought you know, may live to be your Master.
> ….
> Montague: I humbly pray you will be pleased to pardon,
> And to give satisfaction to you Madam
> (Although I break my heart) I will confess
> That I have wronged them too, and make submission.
> Lamira: No I'll spare that; go bid the Cook haste supper.[59]

The play ends on a happy note as Lamira gives the suitors a tongue-lashing and chooses Montague himself as her husband, though not before forcing him to dress in fine clothes in anticipation of his wedding to her servant, Charlotte. Though Lamira dominates Montague, that domination is clearly excused at the moment she chooses Montague as her husband. Montague, faced with the necessity of submission,

responds with resignation rather than paranoia, a resignation ultimately rewarded in his recovery of wealth and status through marriage.

The difference between *Philaster* and *An Honest Man's Fortune*, I think, lies in the way Lamira and Arethusa mediate relations between men. Despite her evocative name, Lamira's domination of Montague is cast as socially orderly: because she is not subject to the power of any male family member, her relations with her husband will be reversed after marriage. In gaining legal control of both Lamira and her assets, Montague will return to the caste to which he "naturally" belongs. Arethusa, unlike Lamira, is to a substantial degree an extension of her father: as Marie H. Loughlin has argued, in some very real sense Arethusa's virginal body belongs to the King, for it is his to give away.[60] Arethusa's role as an extension of her father is foregrounded in her declaration of love, couched, as it is, in terms of national conquest: her marriage to Philaster will enfranchise him, but will also legitimize her father's control. In Arethusa's reproduction of the King's subordination of Philaster, the sexual implications of subordination are brought to the fore. Philaster's vulnerability to being recognized as (sexually) subservient to the King has, in fact, already been established: "I am no minion," he tells Dion (1.1.297).[61] His positioning invites associations between himself and categories of identity only recently cataloged in English, categories characterized *in terms of* disorderly male sexuality: ganymede, catamite, ingle, and in *Philaster*, Hylas, stigmatize the subordinate in relations understood to be sexual.

Philaster's vulnerability to being positioned in a subordinate role with disorderly sexual implications like those Megra outlines for Bellario—or like those

attributed to him by the Captain—is written into the groundwork of the narrative in which Philaster is embedded. His position in his own kingdom is precarious: though Prince of Sicily by right, he is suffered to live only because the King fears the people will revolt if he is killed. His life depends on the King's calculated forbearance. Philaster is thus both master and servant; in King's terms, he is both subordinate and superordinate—not, as was typical, in different places and with different persons within the hierarchical structure of alliance—but in the *same* place, with the *same* people. This schizophrenic position impacts the construction of Philaster's body and his desire: Nicolas Radel foregrounds the connection between desire and social status in reference to subordination:

> mastery regulates the servant partly through control of his desire, allowing and disallowing him to act and articulate that desire not on his own terms but in terms defined socially and politically by others.[62]

Loughlin extends this social construction of desire to Philaster's body:

> In recognizing that Philaster himself is caught up in relations which define him as a subordinate, as an individual who in this case is subject to the power of an illegitimate monarch, we also recognize that Philaster's body verges on becoming the same kind of feminized subordinate body [as Arethusa's and Bellario's].[63]

Radel and Loughlin together make clear that Philaster's subordination to the King is concretely realized in his body and directly impacts his desires. He is drawn to dominate, to pierce, to be king, but also desires to be pierced and identifies with the

pierced body. Though he stabs both Bellario and Arethusa, he also offers up his own body to them, imagining that their lust will lead them to stab him:

> Dear Arethusa, do but take this sword, [*Offers his sword*]
> And search how temperate a heart I have;
> Then you and this your boy may live and reign
> In lust without control. Wilt thou, Bellario?
> I prithee kill me... (4.5.45-49).

The eroticism around Philaster's body reproduces the extremes of domination and submission characterizing Philaster's political position.

Philaster's subordination allies him with Bellario: the play, of course, points this out in identifying both Bellario and Philaster as Hylas. Philaster himself, however, apprehends the similarity between himself and Bellario, a similarity he enforces at the level of bodily boundaries: after stabbing Arethusa, he realizes he is being pursued and imagines he will be recognized as Arethusa's attacker by the wounds the Country Gentleman has given him. He therefore determines to injure Bellario in the manner he himself is injured, imagining his pursuers will "recognize" Bellario as himself: "Sword, print my wounds / Upon this sleeping boy. I ha' none I think / Are mortal, nor would I lay greater on thee" (4.5.23-25). In this extraordinary scene, Philaster transfers the wounds that identify him to Bellario, virtually writing his name upon the boy. In one motion, Philaster attempts to expunge the marks of his own particular subordination while simultaneously recognizing that his body and Bellario's are of a kind.

In the slippage between the role of master and that of servant embodied in Philaster, we see the possibility for a critical expansion of the discourse voiced by Megra and the Captain. Facilitated through Philaster's precarious social position, a discourse that identifies subordinates in terms of disorderly sexuality comes to threaten the sexuality of the master. Nicolas Radel sees his own project in writing about *Philaster* as contributing to a shift in critical discussion from "the search for the construction of homoeroticism per se to the search for the homophobic discourses that [come to] authorize... homosexuality itself."[64] Though the perspective voiced by Megra and the Captain is not a homophobic one, it does stigmatize subordinate boys and men by attributing to them a disorderly sexual identity, one *Philaster* suggests is contagious. Radel refers to Eve Sedgwick, who points out that the idea of homosexuality gives "whoever wields it a structuring definitional leverage over the whole range of male bonds that shape the social constitution."[65] The contagiousness of attributions of disorderly sexual identity seen in *Philaster* point toward the kind of global reach Sedgwick perceives in homosexuality, suggesting that the construction of modern homophobia may have begun with the stigmatization of a class of socially vulnerable boys and men. If, as King asserts, within the economy of alliance "superordination in one domain was subordination in another," then that economy was structurally vulnerable to discourses that began by targeting "the subordinate."[66]

Philaster's paranoia, however, is not a response to his simply being positioned as a sexual subordinate, nor to his simultaneous positioning in two contradictory social roles. Rather, paranoia emerges in Philaster as a response to being positioned in a subordinate role that the narrative establishes as grossly unjust: Philaster *is*, and

feels himself to be, passive, subordinate, and desiring, even as his submission is coded as shameful, testifying, as it does, to his acceptance of the King's illegitimate rule. In this way, Philaster's situation is distinct from that of the servant Radel describes: the servant *should* be subservient; that subservience is socially orderly. Philaster's position as prince, however, prevents him from participating in orderly subordination, since his subordination is coded as tyrannous and juxtaposed to his "rightful" role as king of Sicily. It is this coding that elicits paranoia in Philaster, and not, for example, in Bellario, though both are subordinated. The pervasive sense that sexual subordination, in Philaster's case, is *wrong*, that Philaster is, *but should not be*, "a Hylas," as Megra puts it, eerily prefigures homosexual panic. It grounds Philaster's paranoia and motivates his defensive targeting of Arethusa: the obsessive refusal to recognize sex in himself appears as an obsessive need to discover it in her.

Culturally emergent concerns about Philaster's sexual identity are displaced onto Arethusa, a character type for whom sex is already inexhaustibly at issue. Because Arethusa effectually represents the struggle over Philaster's sexual identity as well as the struggle over her own, *Philaster's* climactic demonstration of her innocence takes on additional weight: when Bellario's revelation demonstrates that Arethusa is innocent of sexual concourse with her page, it also conclusively shows that Philaster is innocent of that *same* moral lapse. At the moment that Philaster's unreasonable fears about Arethusa's fidelity are magically dispelled by Bellario's transformation into a woman, the discursive threat posed to an idealized vision of relations between men also, equally miraculously, disappears. Both concerns—one overt, one covert—are dismissed as the play asserts that Philaster, as well as the

court at large, is at fault for believing the slander of disreputable persons. Since the audience has known from the beginning that Arethusa is falsely accused, however, the play's final revelation *actually* vindicates Philaster and Bellario rather than Arethusa, purging their relations of any hint of sexual impropriety. The immediately recognizable cultural obsession with women's chastity and the familiar paranoia that obsession inspires is engaged in order to articulate, redirect and finally dispel another kind of paranoia, one concerned with the threat of being recognized as a catamite or ganymede, an ingle or a Hylas.

While Radel sees *Philaster* as purging homoerotic possibility, I have argued that what we see is something more specific, the purging of homoerotic articulation. For Radel, *Philaster's* protohomophobia is manifested in the organization of eroticism in binarized terms: because Bellario is only revealed to be a young woman at the very end of the play, Radel sees the play as marking a significant break from earlier plays in which the audience is included from the beginning in the "boy's" secret: in those plays, an "undifferentiated" eroticism is made available to the audience through its knowledge of the character's dual identity. According to Radel, Bellario's unambiguous status as a young man instead shapes the play's tensions around a divide between homoeroticism and heteroeroticism, articulating a specifically homoerotic possibility that may then be expelled from the plot at the moment Bellario's "true" gender is revealed.[67] While Bellario and Euphrasia do outline just such an erotic binary, it is easy to overemphasize its power to organize elements of the play. By 1609, the year in which *Philaster* was probably performed, a division between homoeroticism and heteroeroticism organized around the figure of the cross-dressed

page would probably have been limited to the play's narrative, rather than its imaginative terrain: by that time, the cross-dressed page was a figure already familiar to early modern audiences and would have been recognizable even without explicit revelation. Michael Shapiro, for instance, has documented the performance of thirty-one plays with cross-dressed pages between the years of 1570 and 1609.[68] As Shapiro points out, Bellario is introduced to the audience in a description that places him solidly in the category of the "frail waif" character, one of two of the most common character types into which cross-dressed pages tended to fall.[69] The relative novelty, then, of Bellario's confession late in the play probably had little influence on the gender(s) he placed into imaginative circulation, but rather served to suppress a discourse with growing influence, one capable of identifying otherwise unimpeachable patronage relations in terms of disorderly sexuality. Here, as with the play's staging of stabbing and sleep, homoerotic possibility is in fact embraced *when expressed in other terms*, "terms" that include female characters.

The way in which the revelation of a cross-dressed character's true gender circumscribes articulation is visible in other plays from the time: in *Twelfth Night*, for example, Viola's appearance as Sebastian's sister undermines the homoerotic possibilities developed in the play between Orsino and Cesario, the young man she has pretended to be, by suggesting that the character of Viola has come to replace that of Cesario. This suppression, however, is only partial: *Twelfth Night* refuses the nominal transformation of Cesario into Viola: "Cesario, come— / For so you shall be while you are a man..." Orsino says, a gender Cesario will evidently retain through the last moments of the play (5.1.387-88). As Stephen Orgel has pointed out, the

play's final image does not expunge homoerotic potential: it ends with Orsino and Cesario standing together, with the "women's weeds" capable of transforming Cesario back into Viola perpetually out of reach.[70] After Bellario reveals himself to be Euphrasia, *Philaster* enacts a similar refusal to forgo homoerotic potential: Philaster rejects Bellario's new name and also perhaps his "true" gender: "But, Bellario / (For I must call thee still so)..." Philaster says, a mode of address that holds through the play's conclusion (5.5.153-54). What *Twelfth Night* and *Philaster do* accomplish is the expulsion of homoerotic possibility from the plot, routing it outside of explicit articulation, as Radel recognizes at one point: "the text," he says, simply ignores [homoeroticism] as constitutive of meaning in the last moments of the play."[71] What we see in the play's final moments, then, is not precisely the suppression of homoeroticism, but rather a suppression of its *articulation*. If homoeroticism can no longer be articulated, it cannot *mean*.

The homoerotic possibility expelled from *Philaster's* plot continues to resonate in the play's erotic imaginary, ghosting its final moments in the figure of Euphrasia who, now a young woman dressed as a man, reveals a love for Philaster that will never be consummated. The staging of unrequited love in "the lovely garnish of a boy"[72] strikes a note of lamentation significantly at odds with the play's resolution of conflict between Philaster, Arethusa and the King. Euphrasia's extramarital role recalls the Antonios in *Twelfth Night* and *The Merchant of Venice,* though the plot establishes an intimacy between the couple and the third figure unmatched by Shakespeare's plays. Euphrasia's final lines are a request:

if I may have leave to serve the Princess,

To see the virtues of her Lord and her,

I shall have full hope to live (5.5.196-98).

Ian Fletcher has called this resolution "an oddly platonized ménage-à-trois."[73] Certainly it recalls the constellation of characters first imagined by Megra, a constellation organized around Bellario rather than Euphrasia. Though Bellario has been banished from the plot, "he" is clearly still present in name and image, in the play's final moments and in its projected future. He has lost, however, a certain hold on reality, specifically the "reality" conveyed through representation in coherent discourse. The associative disconnect Radel outlines may then apply more broadly: "If I can't speak what is being done to me or even what I'm doing willingly, then, in some sense, I seem to be doing nothing at all or something else altogether. And perhaps I am."[74] If idealized relations between master and servant, or prince and page, are no longer speakable, then, in some significant sense, they no longer "are": they have become "something else altogether."

Indeed, what they have "become" complicates the binaries we still depend upon in thinking about sex and its representation in the early modern period. Perhaps because sex between men has been so thoroughly stigmatized in our own time, it has seemed necessary to ground claims about historical relations between boys and men in dramatic representations of boys and men, rather than in dramatic representations of women. Anything else has seemed risky, unconvincing. Cross-dressed characters, for example, though clearly reflecting erotic relations outside our immediate historical experience, have posed an immediate and obvious problem: they are vulnerable to claims that homoeroticism is not, in fact, being represented. Yet

gender, as it is produced through some of the dramatic discourses reflected in *Philaster*, is strikingly flexible: when Bellario is miraculously transformed into Euphrasia, the narrative takes a few moments to reassure us that "he" has been "her" all along, a conceit that affirms the unchanging nature of gender. Yet Bellario's transformation is of a piece with transformations such as the one occurring in Lyly's *Gallathea*, where a young woman is transformed into a young man by the divine intervention of a god.[75] In this absolutely conventional twist, the very body that undergirds gender stability is subject to change beneath the transformative pressure of desire. That change should give us cause to doubt whether tracing out relations between characters marked as male should take on de facto status as the most authoritative mode of accessing historical relations between men.

In focusing exclusively on representations of boys and men in early modern drama, rape, and the manner in which it comes to signify—or not signify—on male bodies, disappears from view. In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, relations between Valentine and Proteus take on an originary status that conditions the whole array of erotic relations in which they engage, including Proteus's infamous attempted rape of Silvia. In *Titus Andronicus*, the violent eroticism that circulates around the rape of Lavinia works as a kind of dramatic scaffolding through which the tragedy can approach another very similar eroticism, one primarily, however, concerned with the body of Bassianus. In these dramas, the threat of rape, articulated through a female character, comes to mean on a male body; in *Philaster*, however, the *evaporation* of rape from Philaster's eroticized attack on Arethusa reflects a similar absence in his relations with Bellario. The narrative yoking of Arethusa and Bellario suggests that

we might read Gondarino's assertion another way: “if you hope to trie him truly, and satisfie your selfe what frailtie is, give him the Test... put him too’it without hope or pittie, then yee shall see that goulden forme flie off, that all eyes wonder at for pure and fixt, and under it, base blushing copper.” With the tiniest shift in gender designation, we see simultaneously the disappearance of male rape and the appearance of a homophobic discourse, one which asserts that male relations, if tried “without hope or pittie” will always yield some incriminating hint of the “wrong” kind of desire. Neglecting the relevance of female characters and the kinds of discourse accessible only through them mystifies the development of homophobia and elides male rape, reproducing a silence already profoundly imbricated in early modern discourses of friendship and patronage.

Notes

Chapter I: Introduction

All references to Shakespeare's works follow *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974) and are cited parenthetically in the text.

[1] Other ads in the same series featured such phrases as "Make cocktails not war," and "Make handbags tax-deductible." See blog entry "Svedka Girl: Make Cocktails, Not War," 28 Jan. 2008, under "Washington Whispers," *U. S. News And World Report*, 17 Aug. 2008 <http://www.usnews.com/blogs/washington-whispers/2008/1/28/svedka-girl-make-cocktails-not-war.html>.

[2] Judith Fetterley, *The Resisting Reader: a Feminist Approach to American Fiction* (Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1977) xxii.

[3] Fetterley, vii,ix.

[4] Denise Riley, *"Am I That Name?": Feminism and the Category of Women in History*, (Minneapolis: U of Minnesota P, 1988) 6.

[5] Riley is primarily concerned with tracing the shifting boundaries between the categories of "women" and "humanity" through history. She suggests that the horror of homogeneous femininity may be dispelled by reconceptualizing women to include a gender-neutral space (or time) marked as human. See *"Am I That Name?"* esp. 6. Judith Butler, of course, following Simone de Beauvoir, has argued against the possibility of subjectivity outside of gender: for her, taking on a gender is precisely the act that grants access to subjectivity. See Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, (New York: Routledge, 1990) 181-190. See also *Bodies That Matter: on the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (New York: Routledge, 1993) 95.

[6] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick describes the desire said to "swerve" or suffer cultural displacement. See "A Poem Is Being Written," *Representations* 0:17 (1987): 110-43, esp 130.

[7] Michel Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, trans. A. M. Sheridan Smith (New York: Random House, 1972) esp. 27.

[8] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: Volume 1: An Introduction*, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Random House, 1978) esp. 77-78.

[9] Alan Bray, *Homosexuality and Renaissance England* (London: Gay Men's Press, 1982) 19.

[10] Terry Eagleton, *The Function of Criticism* (London: Verso, 2005) 10. Quoted by Thomas A. King in *The Gendering of Men, 1600-1750: the English Phallus*, vol. 1, (Madison: The U of Wisconsin P, 2004) 12.

[11] King, 5.

[12] King, 19.

[13] For an overview of how Derrida foregrounds the limitations of the distinction between mourning and melancholia, see Penelope Deutcher, "Mourning the Other, Cultural Cannibalism, and the Politics of Friendship (Jacques Derrida and Luce Irigaray)," *Differences: a Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 10 (1998) 159-82, esp. 163-64.

[14] Mario DiGangi, *The Homoerotics of Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997) 6.

[15] Alan Bray is concerned with the consonance between representations of sodomy and representations of early modern friendship. See "Homosexuality and the Signs of Male Friendship in Elizabethan England," *History Workshop Journal* 29 (1990): 1-19, esp. 4-6. Though Gregory W. Bredbeck does not explicitly distinguish between different forms of sodomy, he does distinguish between sodomitical desire recognized and penalized as as such and that which escapes signification. See his readings of Barnfield and Shakespeare in *Sodomy and Interpretation: Marlowe to Milton* (Ithaca: Cornell UP, 1991) esp. 152, 180. Jeffrey Masten focuses on the intersection between homoeroticism and collaboration as fully integrated into early modern culture. See Masten, *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities and Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1997). DiGangi is primarily concerned with homoeroticisms that appear beneath rubrics other than sodomy. See *Homoerotics*, esp. 9-10.

[16] The phrase is DiGangi's. See DiGangi, "How Queer Was the Renaissance?" *Love, Sex, Intimacy and Friendship between Men, 1550-1800*, ed. Catherine O'Donnell and Michael O'Rourke (London: tile grave McMillan, 2003) 126-47, esp. 132.

[17] Bray, "Homosexuality," 2.

[18] Claude Levi-Strauss, *The Elementary Structures of Kinship*, trans. James Harle Bell (Boston: Beacon Press, 1969) 115.

[19] Gayle Rubin, "The Traffic in Women: Notes on the 'Political Economy' of Sex," *Toward an Anthropology of Women* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975) 201.

[20] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia UP, 1985) 35.

[21] Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 1-2.

[22] Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 38.

[23] DiGangi, *Homoerotics*, esp. 9.

[24] DiGangi, *Homoerotics*, x.

[25] DiGangi, "How Queer Was the Renaissance?" 142.

[26] Cynthia Marshall, *The Shattering of the Self: Violence, Subjectivity and Early Modern Texts* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 2002) 135.

[27] Richard Rambuss, *Closet Devotions* (Durham: Duke UP, 1998) 7-8.

[28] Thomas Middleton, "The Spanish Gypsy," *The Best Plays of the Old Dramatists*, ed. Havelock Ellis, vol. 1 (London: Scholarly Press, 1969) [1.1] 367-453, esp. 372.

[29] The Country Wench is from Middleton's *Michaelmas Term*. She is recruited from the countryside to become a prostitute. *A Mad World, My Masters and Other Plays*, "Michaelmas Term," ed. Michael Taylor (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995) [1.2.] 67-136, esp. 80.

[30] Bev Jafek, "The Unsatisfactory Rape," *Wild Women: Contemporary Short Stories by Women Celebrating Women*, ed. Sue Thomas (New York: The Overlook Press, 1994) 300-306, esp. 301.

[31] The phrase appeared in the court records in the Castlehaven trials. See B. R. Burg, "Ho Hum, Another Work of the Devil: Buggery and Sodomy in Early Stuart England," *Journal of Homosexuality* 6.1 (1980) 69-78, esp. 73.

[32] Bruce R. Smith, *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare's England: a Cultural Poetics* (Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 1991) 50.

[33] Burg, 72.

[34] Bruce R. Smith, "Rape, Rap, Rupture, Rapture: R-rated Futures on the Global Market," *Textual Practice* 9 (1995) 421-43, esp. 423.

[35] Bruce R. Smith, "Making a Difference: Male/Male Desire in Tragedy, Comedy, and Tragi-comedy," *Erotic Politics: Desire on the Renaissance Stage*, ed. Susan Zimmerman (New York: Routledge, 1992) 127-49, esp. 138.

[36] Bray, "Homosexuality," 2.

[37] Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Random House, 1977) 10.

[38] Alan Bray, *The Friend* (Chicago: The U of Chicago P, 2003) 146-56.

[39] King, 26.

[40] Michel de Montaigne, "Of Friendship," *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1976) 141.

[41] Janet Adelman, "Male Bonding in Shakespeare's Comedies," *Shakespeare's "Rough Magic": Renaissance Essays in Honor of C. L. Barber*, ed. Peter Erickson and Coppelia Kahn, (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1985) 73-103, esp. 75-76.

[42] Adelman, 75. See also Jeffrey Masten, 39.

[43] Masten, 30.

[44] Adelman describes the ending of *Two Gentlemen* as "a fantasy," "magically denying conflict." I agree with her characterization of the tone, but attribute it to a different cause. See Adelman, 75, 79.

[45] Nicolas F. Radel, "Fletcherian Tragicomedy, Cross-dressing, and Constriction of Homoerotic Desire in Early Modern England," *Renaissance Drama* 26 (1995) 53-82, esp. 65, 68-69.

[46] King, 5, 19.

[47] Gondarino of Fletcher's "The Woman Hater" expresses the view quite clearly:

> Doe's your Grace thinke, wee carry seconds with us, to search us, and see faire play: your Grace hath beene ill tutord in the businesse; but if you hope to trie her truly, and satisfie your selfe what frailtie is, give her the Test... put her too'it without hope or pittie, then yee shall see that goulden forme flie off, that all eyes wonder at for pure and fixt, and under it, base blushing copper...."

See Fredson Bowers, ed. *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, vol. 1, "The Woman Hater," John Fletcher (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1966) 5.2.47-54.

[48] Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 88-89.

[49] Radel, 68-69.

[50] Radel 69-70.

Chapter II: "What is thy body but a swallowing grave…?": Male Rape in *Titus Andronicus*

[1] Venus to Adonis in "Venus and Adonis," l. 757.

[2] Bruce Smith, "Rape, Rap, Rupture, Rapture: R-rated Futures on the Global Market," *Textual Practice* 9 (1995): 421-43, esp. 423.

[3] Smith, 430.

[4] Jeffrey Masten, "Is the Fundament a Grave?" *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe*, ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (New York and London: Routledge, 1997), 129-45, esp. 131.

[5] Coppelia Kahn drew my attention to this image. See Kahn's *Roman Shakespeare: Warriors, Wounds and Women* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 56. Daniel Kane also sees the vaginal symbolism of the pit as "so obvious as to be almost comical." See "The Vertue [sic] of Spectacle in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*," *Connotations* 10.1 (2000/01): 1-17, esp.13. See also Marion Wynne-Davies, "'The Swallowing Womb': Consumed and Consuming Women in *Titus Andronicus*," in *The Matter of Difference: Materialist Feminist Criticism in Shakespeare*, ed. Valerie Wayne (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1991), 129-51, esp. 135-36, for a reading which places the pit's vaginal imagery in a broader social context.

[6] Coppelia Kahn and Arthur L. Little Jr. do discuss Bassianus, though neither consider the homoerotic implications of his presence at the bottom of the pit. See Kahn, p. 53 and Little, who writes, "Not withstanding the blatant nature of the female genitalia imagery in the pit scene, it is not Lavinia's but Bassianus' body that plays through her sacrifice story—his blood stains the leaves and reminds Martius of Pyramus and Thisbe." See *Shakespeare Jungle Fever: National-Imperial Re-Visions of Race, Rape and Sacrifice* (Stanford: Stanford UP, 2000), 53.

[7] Italics in the original. See Karen Bamford, *Sexual Violence on the Jacobean Stage* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000), 7-8.

[8] See the entry for "pillow" in Gordon Williams, *A Dictionary of Sexual Language and Imagery in Shakespearean and Stuart Literature*, 3 vols. (London and Atlantic Highlands, NJ: The Athlone Press, 1994), 2:1031.

[9] My use of "bottom" here to denote a particular sexual role might seem anachronistic. That anachronism, however, extends primarily to the use of the word as a noun referring to a generalized sex role, not to its connotations of sexual subordination. Mario DiGangi has argued that "'ass' can signify at once the beast of burden and the bodily locus of disciplinary/sexual subordination" through a homonymic pun on the word "arse." Shakespeare's character Bottom, with his ass's head, certainly suggests that connotations of sexual subordination could extend to the

word “bottom.” For a fuller argument on the early modern discourse of subordination as it circulated around the figure of the ass, see Chapter 3: The Homoerotics of Mastery in Satiric Comedy, in DiGangi’s *The Homoerotics of Early Modern Drama* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1997), esp. 65.

[10] Thomas Nashe, *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, ed. Ronald B. McKerrow and F.P. Wilson, 5 vols. (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1958), 2:187-328, esp. 292.

[11] *The Geneva Bible: a facsimile of the 1560 edition* (Madison: The U of Wisconsin P, 1969). The Geneva Bible (1587) does not use the word “abomination” or any of its variants to condemn the act of having sex with a woman against her will *per se*. The idea that a woman might be raped is itself only reflected to a limited degree—in the word “ravishment” for example—which is seldom used, and then only in conjunction with invading nations (Is. 13:16; Lam. 5:11; Zec. 14:2). Terms like “abuse” or “defilement,” which characterize inappropriate sex within the nation of Israel, do not in themselves engage the question of the woman’s consent. The term “abomination” *is* applied at one point to what we would call a gang rape. The townsfolk of Gibeah take a concubine in lieu of the man who possesses her. She is found on the doorstep in the morning raped to death. The man to whom she belonged describes the incident as an abomination. See Jud. 19:24-28, 20:06. For the concordance of one version of *The Geneva Bible*, printed 1587, see the full-text database *The Bible in English (990-1970)*, ed. Gerald Hammond and Sylvia Adamson (Chadwyck-Healey Inc., 1997-2003), <http://collections.chadwyck.com>, available through the research branch of the New York Public Library, Humanities and Social Sciences.

[12] *The Geneva Bible*, 1560.

[13] J.C. Maxwell, ed., *Titus Andronicus*, by William Shakespeare (Cambridge: Methuen, 1968), 44n.

[14] Valerie Traub, *Desire and Anxiety: Circulations of sexuality in Shakespearean drama* (London and New York: Routledge, 1992), 113.

[15] Cynthia Marshall, *The Shattering of the Self: Violence, Subjectivity and Early Modern Texts* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins UP, 2002), 107. See pp.121, 123 for a discussion of the shift in identification away from Chiron and Demetrius.

[16] John Marston, *The Wonder of Women; or, The Tragedy of Sophonisba*, *The Works*, ed. Arthur Henry Bullen, 3 vols., vol. 2 (1887; Hildesheim and New York: Georg Olms Verlag, 1970), 3.1.9-11.

[17] Marston, 3.1.63-64.

[18] Marston, 3.1.176-86.

[19] Zeus was said to have preferred Ganymede over Hebe as cupbearer. Ganymede's clear association with desirable boys in the early modern period suggests that the pleasure "none but the gods should reap" might allude to Zeus' fabled preference, the sexual connotations of which are foregrounded in the opening scene of Christopher Marlowe's *Dido*, printed in 1594. See The *Tragedy of Dido, Queen of Carthage* in *The Life of Marlowe and the Tragedy of Dido Queen of Carthage*, ed. Tucker Brooke (New York: Gordian Press, Inc, 1966), 128-232. Marlowe also reminds us of the intimacy between Hercules and Hylas: in *Edward II*, a play which itself revolves around Edward II's love for Gaveston, Marlowe has Edward compare his love for Gaveston to Hercules' love for Hylas: "Not Hylas was more mourned of Hercules / Than thou hast been of me since thy exile." See *Edward the Second*, ed. W. Moelwyn Merchant (New York: Hill and Wang, 1967), 1.1.143-44.

[20] In Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Tragedy of Valentinian*, Lucina asks of two old bawds: "why should you two…After that Angel age, turn mortal Devils?" See Act 2, Scene 1 in "The Tragedy of Valentinian," *The Works of Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher*, ed. A.R. Waller, M.A., 10 vols. (New York: Octagon Books, 1969), 4:8.

[21] Haber shows that rape is often seen as the initiator of desire in virtuous women, and as such, also marks their fall from virtue. She notes that the virtuous Sophonisba is preserved "the only way she can be—by being killed"—prior to *any* kind of consummation. Sophonisba dies with "Faith pure, a virgin wife / … most happy in [her] husbands arms" (5.4.3-6). See Haber in "'I(t) could not choose but follow': Erotic Logic in *The Changeling*," *Representations* 81 (2003): 85.

[22] "Devil" may strike us as a masculine term, though it was frequently used to describe both men and women in the early modern period. See the use of "devil" in *Othello* to describe both Othello and Desdemona (3.3.481, 4.1.43; 5.2.131, 5.2.133). Mario DiGangi alerted me to the use of this particular word in *Othello*.

[23] Shakespeare, 2.2.240; Marston, 3.1.196.

[24] Francis Barker, *The Tremulous Private Body: Essays on Subjection* (London and New York: Methuen, 1984), 90-91.

[25] Andrew Marvell, *Andrew Marvell*, ed. Frank Kermode and Keith Walker (Oxford and New York: Oxford UP, 1992), ll. 25-28.

[26] Marston, 4.1.113-23.

[27] The authorship of *The Second Maiden's Tragedy* is contested. Candidates include Tourneur and Middleton. *The Second Maiden's Tragedy*, ed. Anne Lancashire (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1978), 4.4.70-71.

[28] Quintus and Martius are beheaded. Chiron and Demetrius have their throats slit. Both sets of murders are susceptible to Freudian readings of castration as punishment.

[29] Traub, 8.

[30] Mario DiGangi has resisted this conflation. See *Homoerotics*, 15.

[31] See Smith, 433.

[32] Marston, 3.2.194-95.

[33] DiGangi, introduction, *Homoerotics*, x.

[34] Mario DiGangi, "How Queer Was the Renaissance?" *Love, Sex, Intimacy and Friendship Between Men, 1550-1800*, ed. Katherine O'Donnell and Michael O'Rourke (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 126-47, esp. 142.

[35] Alan Bray, *Homosexuality in Renaissance England* (London: Gay Men's Press, 1982), 19-26.

[36] Italics mine. Traub, 104.

[37] Susan Snyder, "'The King's not here': Displacement and Deferral in *All's Well That Ends Well*," *Shakespeare Quarterly* 43:1 (1992): 20-32, esp. 23.

[38] Snyder, 23.

[39] In *As You Like It*, for example, Touchstone's ruminations on the inevitability of cuckoldry and the burden of providing sexual satisfaction complement Rosalind's ongoing anxiety about the faithfulness of Orlando, an anxiety indirectly expressed by her testing of him in the guise of Ganymede (3.2.336-423; 3.3; 4.1.37-192). In *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, Launce's list of the virtues and vices of the milkmaid he desires parodies the erotic blazon just prior to the moment Valentine's love for Silvia is dramatized through his forced parting from her (3.1.261-362).

[40] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick describes the desire said to "swerve" or suffer cultural displacement as "already gendered and physically very localized." Her reading implies that desire also exists in forms with flexible physical and gendered coordinates, qualities which might render it more amenable to conventional forms of expression. The desire I trace out in *Titus* is of the former variety, since Lavinia does not prove to be a wholly adequate substitute. See "A Poem Is Being Written," *Representations* 0:17 (1987): 110-43, esp.130.

[41] Snyder, 21.

[42] The association between sex and stabbing in early modern drama is virtually ubiquitous. For a partial listing, see the entry for stabbing in Gordon Williams' *Dictionary*, 3:1300.

[43] Kahn, 17.

[44] Kahn, 54.

[45] Williams documents the use of "trap" to mean "vagina." See Williams, 3:1416.

[46] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire* (New York: Columbia UP, 1985), 38.

[47] For a discussion of the castle in *The Changeling* as a metaphor for Beatrice-Joanna's body, see Anne Lancashire's article, "The Emblematic Castle in Shakespeare and Middleton," in *Mirror up to Shakespeare: Essays in Honor of G.R. Hibbard*, ed. J.C. Gray (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1984), 223-41. See also Haber, who writes "the Citadel…is associated with her—and more specifically, with her genitals—throughout the play." See Haber, 89.

[48] Thomas Middleton and William Rowley, *The Changeling, Three Jacobean Tragedies*, ed. Gamini Salgado (New York: Penguin Books, 1969), 3.1.2;5-7.

[49] Middleton and Rowley, 5.3.108.

[50] Haber makes a strong case for Beatrice-Joanna's rape. See Haber, 79-98.

[51] Haber shows that sex of any type radically changes the virgin, potentially transforming her into a whore. This radical change includes instances of rape, as in Bianca's case in Middleton's *Women Beware Women*. See Haber, 83-84.

[52] Jonathan Goldberg, "*Romeo and Juliet's* open Rs," *Queering the Renaissance* (Durham and London: Duke UP, 1994), 218-35, esp. 230.

[53] Middleton and Rowley, 1.1.238-44.

[54] Mario DiGangi, personal communication, 19 Nov 2005.

[55] Marston, 4.1.117.

[56] Middleton and Rowley, 2.1.52-62.

[57] Middleton and Rowley, 2.2.156.

[58] Middleton and Rowley, 5.3.114-7.

[59] Anthony B. Dawson, "Giving the Finger: Puns and Transgression in *The Changeling*," *The Elizabethan Theatre XII*, ed. A.L.Magnusson and C.E .McGee (Toronto: P. D. Meany Company Inc., 1993), 93-112, esp.110.

[60] Middleton and Rowley, 2.2.109-110; 117-18.

[61] Middleton and Rowley, 3.2.18. While in *The Changeling*, the sounds of death may recall sex, in *A Mad World, My Masters*, the sounds of sex are disguised as the pangs of death, foregrounding audience apprehension of these acts as sounding similar. Celia Daileader points out that while Penitent Brothel and Mistress Harebrain enjoy themselves backstage, the Courtesan "covers" for them, by staging her own final illness: "Huff, huff, huff. Why, how now, woman? Hey, hy, hy, for shame, leave. Suh, suh, she cannot answer me for snobbing [sic]." See Thomas Middleton, *A Mad World, My Masters, A Mad World, My Masters and Other Plays*, ed. Michael Taylor (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1995), 3.2.197-99, and Celia Daileader, *Eroticism on the Renaissance stage: Transcendence, desire, and the limits of the visible* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1998), 32-33.

[62] Kahn, 53.

[63] For the English translation of "anus" see the *Oxford Latin Dictionary*, 1997 ed.; for the derivation of "anus" from the Latin "ring," see *Webster's Third New International Dictionary*, 1981 ed. Stephen Orgel shows that the association between ring and anus is placed in play in the ring trick at the end of *The Merchant of Venice*, in *Impersonations: The performance of gender in Shakespeare's England* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1996), 76.

[64] Leo Bersani, "Is the Rectum a Grave?" *AIDS: Cultural Analysis, Cultural Activism*, ed. Douglas Crimp (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1988), 197-222, esp. 222.

[65] Bersani, 222.

[66] Bersani's essay was printed in 1988, in a text devoted to exploring the impact of AIDS.

[67] Marston, 1.2 .61sd.

[68] Haber, 84.

[69] Snyder, 23-24.

[70] Mario DiGangi, personal communication, 25 August 2004.

[71] Marshall, 116.

[72] Marshall, 130.

[73] Marshall, 121-22, 129, 133.

[74] Marshall, 133.

[75] Marshall, 135.

[76] Marshall, 130.

[77] Sedgwick, "A Poem Is Being Written," 123.

[78] Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass, *Renaissance Clothing and the Materials of Memory* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 2000), 211.

[79] Jones and Stallybrass, 216-17.

[80] Titus' line, "I can interpret all her martyred signs," has widely been read as his claim to speak for Lavinia—both literally and figuratively (3.2.36).

[81] Simone de Beauvoir, *The Second Sex*, ed. and trans. H. M. Parshley (New York: Random House, 1989), xxii.

[82] Dympna Callaghan points out that the Peacham drawing, possibly the only contemporary visual record of a Shakespearean performance, includes Aaron, a fact which may reflect the importance of *seeing* Aaron. Callaghan writes of Peacham's sketch: "black and gesticulating, [Aaron] offers a stark and conspicuous contrast to the nondescript Romans lined up stage left." See *Shakespeare Without Women: Representing gender and race on the Renaissance stage* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000), 4. If June Schlueter is correct, the Peacham drawing in fact depicts a scene from *Eine sehr klägliche Tragœdia von Tito Andronico und der hoffertigen Käyserin (A Very Lamentable Tragedy of Titus Andronicus and the Haughty Empress)*, a play performed in Germany by English actors. See "Rereading the Peacham Drawing," *SQ* 50:2 (1999): 171-84. In either case, the image still suggests the importance of *seeing* black characters.

[83] Royster acknowledges the possibility that Aaron's confession literally attributes the rape to him. She writes that the first lines of the confession may create "a kind of vicarious black rape that still plays into racialist fears about Moorish lust…." Royster, however, believes that this kind of fantasy is mitigated by both Aaron's (5.1.99-100) and the play's attribution of lust to Tamora, since it is Tamora who tries to seduce Aaron in the woods. Both of these claims, however, assume that the audience's final judgment of Aaron is dependent on a considered weighing of all the evidence for and against Aaron's guilt. I, in contrast, argue that Aaron's dramatic confession makes possible the erasure of some of the evidence to the contrary. See "White-limed Walls: Whiteness and Gothic Extremism in Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*," *SQ* 51:4 (2000): 432-55, esp. 446. Arthur L. Little Jr. reinforces Royster's initial sentiment, writing, "The black man has an almost omnipresent place in early modern rape drama, but, not surprisingly, is never actually allowed to rape the white woman." Little lists several early modern plays which feature black rapists who do not actually

rape anyone. They include Dekker's *Lust's Dominion*, the second part of Heywood's *The Fair Maid of the West* and Rowley's *All's Lost by Lust*. See Little, 59. From this perspective, Aaron, the black man who represents violent miscegenational desire though he does not commit an act of violent miscegenation, is typical of early modern representations of race and sexuality.

[84] Callaghan, 92.

Chapter III: Identity Theft in *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*

[1] Douglas Hofstadter, *I Am a Strange Loop* (New York: Basic Books, 2007) 234.

[2] Hofstadter 230.

[3] Michel de Montaigne, "Of Friendship," *The Complete Essays of Montaigne*, trans. Donald M. Frame (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1976) 141.

[4] In responding to this passage, Janet Adelman writes, "For Proteus, loving Julia entails separation not only from his friend but from himself...." Certainly the conversation that precedes these lines supports Adelman's interpretation; the behavior of these gentlemen, however, clearly does not. Adelman accepts Proteus's nomination of Julia as the source of his distress—"Thou, Julia, thou hast metamorphis'd me"—a judgment we are given every cause in the course of the play to doubt (1.1.66). See Adelman, "Male Bonding in Shakespeare's Comedies," *Shakespeare's "Rough Magic": Renaissance Essays in Honor of C. L. Barber*, ed. Peter Erickson and Coppélia Kahn (Newark: U of Delaware P, 1985) 73-103, esp. 77.

[5] Jacques Derrida, "The Politics of Friendship," *The Journal of Philosophy*, trans. Gabriel Motzkin, 11 (1988): 632-44, esp. 643.

[6] Noreen O'Connor and Joanna Ryan note that in Freud's elaboration of healthy object relations, "the binary opposition of desire and identification, and the heterosexual rendering of desire, is preserved at all costs." See *Wild Desires and Mistaken Identities: Lesbianism and Psychoanalysis* (New York: Columbia UP, 1993) 240.

[7] Both Janet Adelman and Marjorie B. Garber adopt the conventional psychoanalytic developmental narrative in which homoeroticism is positioned as a stage which must be passed through in order to reach maturity, a stage associated with modern heterosexuality. See Adelman, esp. 75-76. Garber's claim embraces the Shakespearean canon: interestingly, though she discusses thirty-some Shakespearean plays, she omits *Two Gentlemen*. See Garber, *Coming of Age in Shakespeare*, (New York: Routledge, 1997) 38.

[8] Jeffrey Masten, *Textual Intercourse: Collaboration, Authorship, and Sexualities in Renaissance Drama* (Cambridge UP: Cambridge, Great Britain, 1997) 41.

[9] Masten, *Textual Intercourse*, 37.

[10] William C. Carroll, introduction, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, by William Shakespeare (London: The Arden Shakespeare, 2004) 12.

[11] Carroll does acknowledge some of the homoerotic possibilities available through the cross-dressed boy heroine. See 54.

[12] See Masten's essay "A Modern Perspective," in The New Folger Library's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, ed. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine (New York: Washington Square P, 1999) 199-221.

[13] See, for example Stephen Booth's appendicular comments beneath the heading "Homosexuality" in his influential scholarly edition of the Sonnets: "William Shakespeare was almost certainly homosexual, bisexual, or heterosexual. The sonnets provide no evidence on the matter." He goes on to explain, "The sexual undercurrents of the sonnets are of the sonnets; they probably reflect a lot that is true about their author, but I do not know what that is; they reveal nothing and suggest nothing about Shakespeare's love life." Though in absolute terms, of course, Booth is right, the self-referentiality he imposes on the text in this instance is quite remarkable. The standard for proof, were it to be uniformly applied to literary texts, would result in readers who knew nothing and surmised nothing about the texts they read and the cultural conditions that produced them. See Appendix 1, *Shakespeare's Sonnets*, ed. Steven Booth (New Haven: Yale UP, 1977) 548-49. For a brief overview of the history of the critical dismissal of nonnormative sexualities as pertinent to the study of early modern literature and ways in which this position resonates in current criticism, see Mario DiGangi, "Queer Theory, Historicism, and Early Modern Sexualities," *Criticism*, 1 (2006) 129-142, esp. 129-33.

[14] Carroll, 99.

[15] Carroll, 28, 30.

[16] Carroll, 34.

[17] Carroll, 34.

[18] Carroll, 15.

[19] Carroll, 12.

[20] Carroll, 13.

[21] Jody Greene, introduction, *The Work of Friendship: in Memoriam Alan Bray*, ed. Jody Greene, spec. issue of *GLQ* 10 (2004): 319-37, esp. 330.

[22] Valerie Traub, "Friendship's Loss: Alan Bray's Making of History," ed. Jody Greene, spec. issue of *GLQ* 10 (2004): 339-65, esp. 339-40.

[23] Proteus is here referring to Julia's letter, which he calls "the agent of her heart" (1.3.47).

[24] J. L. Simmons has also noticed that Julia proposes menage-a-trois. See "Coming Out in Shakespeare's *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*," ELH 60 (1993): 857-77, esp. 870.

[25] Simmons notes that this constellation figures as an "autoerotic strategy." See 870.

[26] For homosexuality as a narcissistic disorder, see "On Narcissism," 545-62, esp. 545-46. For Freud's perception of narcissism as a healthy when describing an aspect of identification, see "The Ego and the Id," 628-60, esp. 639. All essays are in *The Freud Reader*, ed. Peter Gay (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1989). For an excellent overview of the contradictions in Freud's description of homosexuality, especially in "Leonardo da Vinci," see Tim Dean's "Homosexuality and the Problem of Otherness," *Homosexuality and Psychoanalysis*, ed. Tim Dean and Christopher Lane (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2001) 120-43, esp. 122-23.

[27] Freud, "The Ego and the Id," 639.

[28] Penelope Deutscher, a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Philosophy at the Australian National University, makes this point explicitly: "at this point [of primary narcissism], there is not a distinction between ego and object libido precisely because rather than libido being directed outward toward the ego, it enfolds the object within its boundaries as part of the self. What is designated the 'me' or 'mine' is always already the object or other." Deutscher herself does not limit this indeterminacy to primary narcissism, extending it to a discussion of mourning and melancholia. See Deutscher, "Mourning the Other, Cultural Cannibalism, and the Politics of Friendship (Jacques Derrida and Luce Irigaray)," *Differences: A Journal of Feminist Cultural Studies* 10 (1998) 159-82, esp. 172.

[29] The Latin is "alter idem:" Carroll suggests this might better be translated as "another, the same." Early moderns, however, often translated it as "another myself." See Carroll, 7.

[30] See Melchiori, "Peter, Balthasar, and Shakespeare's Art of Doubling," *The Modern Language Review*, 78 (1983): 779.

[31] For the association between chameleons and lovers, see Carroll, 55-56.

[32] Montaigne, 139.

[33] In a reading of this passage, Masten notes that "will" could mean (a) 'one's will,' what one wishes to have or do... (b) the auxiliary for indicating futurity and/or purpose... (c) lust, carnal desire... (d) the male sex organ... (e) the female sex organ…." I don't wish to downplay just how evocative this passage is: instead, I want to foreground the indeterminacy produced alongside eroticism through the use of "will." See Masten, *Textual Intercourse*, 35.

[34] Simmons addresses the recursive structure of Valentine's letter, though he ultimately characterizes the desire the letter articulates as "not so much frustratingly homoerotic as... reassuringly autoerotic." See 870. Masten also discusses Valentine's letter, noting that it is "in a fundamental way... a homosocial text—a letter between *man*. As such it figures collaboration at its most homo-erotic...." See *Textual Intercourse,* 42-43. Both Simmons and Masten focus on the collapse of two men into one. I focus rather on the process wherein relations between men are recast as relations *within* one.

[35] Thomas Elyot, *The Boke named The Gouvernour / deuised by Sir Thomas Elyot, knight,* ed. H. H. S. Croft (London: K. Paul, Trench, 1883 [1537]) 140, EEBO [pg 146], New York Public Library, Humanities and Social Sciences, 29 March 2008 <http://eebo.chadwyck.com/home>.

[36] Freud writes, "thus we form the idea of there being an original libidinal cathexis of the ego, from which some is later given off to objects, but which fundamentally persists and is related to the object-cathexes much as the body of an amoeba is related to the pseudopodia which it puts out." See Freud's "On Narcissism," 547. For the construction of the ego through the retraction of pseudopodia in a process resembling melancholia, see Freud's "The Ego and the Id," esp. 638.

[37] Christopher Marlowe, "Hero and Leander," *The Complete Works of Christopher Marlowe*, 5 vols, ed. Roma Gill (Oxford: Clarendon P, 1987) 1:175-209, ll. 64-65.

[38] Alan Stewart and Heather Wolfe, *Letterwriting in Renaissance England* [published in conjunction with the exhibition of the same title at the Folger Shakespeare Library] (Seattle: U of Washington P, 2004) 23.

[39] Stewart and Wolfe, 80.

[40] Masten points out the way in which this letter circulates, appropriated by other writers and shifting from receiver to receiver, through a process of "homosocial emulation." He does not specifically address the impact of that emulation on constructions of the subject. See *Textual Intercourse*, 43.

[41] Valentine's sonnet has only twelve lines; it would still have been considered a sonnet in the early modern period.

[42] Quoted in Stewart and Wolfe, 29.

[43] Simmons, 868.

[44] In Shakespeare's *Titus Andronicus*, as Joseph A. Porter points out, the god Mercury appears as Titus shoots arrows carrying messages to the gods, suggesting that Shakespeare associated messages and their delivery with Mercury. Porter argues for an associative connection between the name "Valentine" and the messenger god; he

notes that the “herald thoughts” that appear in Valentine's sonnet are an allusion to Mercury in his role as messenger, another sign of the fruitful association between Valentine, messengers and messages in *Two Gentlemen*. See Porter, *Shakespeare's Mercutio: His History and Drama* (Chapel Hill: The U of North Carolina P, 1988) 12-13.

[45] Even at moments when subject and object would seem to converge, as for example in Freud's recognition of “cases of simultaneous object-cathexis and identification,” Freud took steps to ensure that subject and object remained distinct: the ego “says” to the id, in this instance, “Look, you can love me too—I am so *like* the object [italics mine].” Freud imagines *two* objects, the original object and a faithful reproduction of it. The production of two objects allows Freud to keep processes of identification and desire separate by imagining the erotic cathexis to be lodged in the actual object, while identification concerns itself with the internalized simulacrum. As the doubling of objects preserves the distinction between identification and desire, it also allows the distinction between subject and object to remain crisp: I *desire* an external object; I recognize a separate, internal copy of it as part of myself. See “The Ego and the Id,” 639. For a more authoritative evaluation of this psychoanalytic trend, see Dean and Lane, introduction, 32.

[46] The doubling Freud hypothesizes (n.46) is only partly successful in maintaining a distinction between self and other because the psyche is compartmentalized: while one portion perceives a distinction between the object and its simulacrum, another portion does not. In the mechanism of identification Freud describes above, the id is rendered less capable of distinguishing between the ego and the lost object of desire. In fact, if identification is successful, then the id should not distinguish between the two at all: the id can make no distinction between interior and exterior, having no direct access to the latter. As Freud explains, the ego “is that part of the id which has been modified by the direct influence of the external world….” See Freud, “The Ego and the Id,” 635-36.

[47] Freud recognized the virtual “melting away” of the distinction between self and other as explicitly nonpathological when it occurred “at the height of being in love.” He writes, “Against all the evidence of his senses, a man who is in love declares that ‘I’ and ‘you’ are one, and is prepared to behave as if it were a fact.” See Freud, “Civilization and Its Discontents,” 724.

[48] Dean and Lane, introduction, 32.

[49] For Freud’s perception of narcissism as regressive when associated with homosexuality, see “Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood,” 443-81, esp. 463. For homosexuality as a narcissistic disorder, see “On Narcissism,” 545-62, esp. 545-46.

[50] Freud, “The Ego and the Id,” 638-39.

[51] Freud imagined that "an individual's first and most important identification… is a direct and immediate identification and takes place earlier than any object-cathexis." See "The Ego and the Id," esp. 639.

[52] Freud, "The Ego and the Id," 638.

[53] In the case of the homosexual, desire follows identification: the boy who would be homosexual identifies with his mother *and then* loves other boys as she loved him. See "Leonardo da Vinci," 443-81, esp. 463. This passage, then, cannot be collapsed into a larger narrative of pathologized homosexuality; it should instead be aligned with Freud's exploration of mourning, an alignment Freud himself would seem to approve, since it appears in his essay advancing melancholic identification as, potentially, "the sole condition under which the id can give up its objects. See "The Ego and the Id," esp. 638.

[54] Quoted in Rayna Kalas, "The Technology of Reflection: Renaissance Mirrors of Steel and Glass," *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, 32 (2002): 521.

[55] A "perspective" is any one of a variety of glasses that can alter perception: telescopes, for example, are one variety; optical devices that superimpose one image onto a second image, causing these images to merge, is another. In this instance, the "perspective" acts as a mirror, "doubling" a single image.

[56] Quoted in Laurie Shannon, *Sovereign Amity: Figures of Friendship in Shakespearean Contexts* (Chicago: The U of Chicago Press, 2002) 4.

[57] Shannon also alludes to this collapse. See Shannon, 4.

[58] Montaigne, 141-42.

[59] John Lyly *Euphues: The Anatomy of Wit*, ed. Morris William Croll, Ph.D. (New York: Russell & Russell, Inc., 1964) 31.

[60] Reprinted in Masten, *Textual Intercourse*, 28.

[61] Montaigne, 140.

[62] Montaigne, 141.

[63] Will Fisher, personal communication, 9 January 2007.

[64] Masten makes this argument. See Masten, *Textual Intercourse*, 28.

[65] I have taken the liberty of modernizing spelling. The italicization is also mine. The authorship is not wholly settled. See *The Faithful Friends*, 1812 (Oxford: The Malone Society Reprints, Oxford UP, 1975) ll. 232-239.

[66] Shannon is here interested in the formation of “quasi-civic” bodies and the political role they play, rather than the constructions of subjectivity that may or may not support and maintain these political structures. See Shannon, 5.

[67] Quoted in Masten, 61.

[68] In discussing Aubrey's passage, Masten notes “the collaborative theatricality and intersubjective indiscernability (individuality) of two playwrights who, in a culture where clothes literally and legally made the man, share the ‘same clothes and cloak and, &c., between them.’” Masten’s major focus is collaboration, but here he considers constructions of subjectivity, positing an “intersubjective indiscernability” that appears to underwrite Beaumont and Fletcher's collaboration. See Masten, 61.

[69] Elyot, 137 [EEBO 143].

[70] Shannon, 22.

[71] Quoted in Stewart and Wolfe, 108.

[72] Freud, “Civilization and Its Discontents,” 724.

[73] John Donne, *The Complete English Poems*, ed. A. J. Smith (New York: Penguin, 1986) 231-32, ll. 19-22. This poem was originally cited in Shannon. Shannon argues that the poem is typical of characterizations of friendship except for the positioning of two women as friends rather than two men. See Shannon, 87-88.

[74] Carroll, 27.

[75] Luce Irigaray, *I Love to You: Sketch of a Possible Felicity in History*, trans. Alison Martin (New York: Routledge, 1996) 110.

[76] Carroll, 34.

[77] Carroll, 34.

[78] Beaumont and Fletcher, *The Faithful Friends*, ll. 232-36.

[79] Brackets appear in the Riverside edition.

[80] Freud, “The Ego and the Id,” 639.

[81] Quoted in Arthur F. Kinney, *Shakespeare's Webs: Networks of Meaning in Renaissance Drama* (New York: Rutledge, 2004) 15.

[82] In response to Proteus's claim that he loves his friend's beloved "too too much," Masten writes, "Proteus has difficulty distinguishing his own feelings from Valentine's…." See Masten, "Perspective," 208.

[83] Hofstadter, 234.

[84] Carroll, 27.

[85] Carroll, 34.

[86] Carroll, 12.

[87] Karen Bamford, *Sexual Violence on the Jacobean Stage* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 2000) 10.

[88] Porter has argued for an associative connection between the name "Valentine" and the works of Christopher Marlowe, specifically as those works represent an alternative to heterosexual union: he points out that in *Romeo and Juliet*, "Valentine" appears as Mercutio's brother, a development without precedent in the source material. He then reviews the way in which Mercutio himself embodies a homoerotic alternative to Romeo's pursuit of Rosalind: "Prick love for pricking and you beat love down" (1.4.28). Finally, he writes, "Mercutio's service to Shakespeare—and this is to say, to Shakespeare's culture—[is] as a means of processing the memory of Christopher Marlowe… [a memory that] has of course its sexual dimension." See Porter, 1, 5, 157-58.

[89] Ovid, *The Heroides and Amores*, ed. T. E. Page, trans. Grant Showerman (London: William Heinemann, 1931) 245-75; Musaeus, *Callimachus: Aetia—Iambi—Lyric Poems—Hecale—Minor Epic and Elegiac Poems—and Other Fragments: C. A. Trypanis, M.A.: Musaeus: Hero and Leander*, trans. Cedric Whitman, (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1978) 344-89.

[90] Henceforward I will be using the term "male rape." The term is problematic, first because its use reinscribes "rape" as a crime *defined* by its targeting of women. I argue elsewhere that this definitional influence is reciprocal: "rape," preceded by the qualifier "male," contributes to the construction of the identity category "women" as precisely those persons who are vulnerable to rape. See Tina Mohler, "'What is thy body but a swallowing grave...?'": Desire Underground in *Titus Andronicus*," *SQ* 57.1 (2006): 23-24. The term is also problematic because, as I argue in the following paragraph, it names an idea that is almost inarticulable in the early modern period. In this sense, to employ it here is clearly anachronistic. I do, however, need a means of speaking about a crime conceptualized in relation to women's bodies and then transferred to the bodies of men, the purpose the term must serve here.

[91] Masten claims that there "is no difficulty in associating to play with *Hero and Leander*…" in part because the first known reference to the play appears in 1598, the

same year in which the first known edition of *Hero and Leander* was published. See Masten, *Textual Intercourse*, 180 n.34.

[92] Ovid, 269.

[93] Marlowe, ll. 667-75.

[94] Marlowe, ll. 703-08.

[95] Marlowe, ll. 641-655.

[96] Marlowe, ll. 753-772.

[97] Ovid, 259.

[98] Simmons calls the woods in *Two Gentlemen* "the homoerotic forest," in part because the outlaws note that Valentine is "beautified / With goodly shape," etc. (4.1.53-54). See Simmons, 871.

[99] Mohler, 35.

[100] In Thomas Middleton's *The Changeling*. See Tina Mohler, "'What is thy body but a swallowing grave...?'": Male Rape in *Titus Andronicus*," diss. ch. 1, CUNY Graduate Center, 2008, 29.

Chapter IV: *Philaster's* Chastity: Voicing Homophobia, Silencing Rape

All references to *Philaster* are drawn from *The Revels Plays* series, ed. Andrew Gurr (London: Methuen & Co. Ltd., 1969) and are cited parenthetically in the text. References to Shakespeare's works are taken from *The Riverside Shakespeare*, ed. G. Blakemore Evans (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1974) and are cited by play and line in the notes.

[1] Fredson Bowers, ed. *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, vol. 1, "The Woman Hater," John Fletcher (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1966) 5.2.47-54.

[2] For a reading of *Philaster* foregrounding the obsessive need to secure proof of virginity and the constant erosion of that proof, see Marie H. Loughlin, "Cross-dressing and the Politics of Dismemberment in Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher's *Philaster*," *Renaissance and Reformation*, 2nd ser. 21.2 (1997): 23-44, esp. 29 and 33. For a discussion of chastity in women as miraculous, see "Will Fisher, "Handkerchiefs and Early Modern Ideologies of Gender," *Shakespeare Studies*, ed. Leeds Barrel, vol. 28 (Madison: Farleigh Dickinson UP, 2000) 199-206, esp. 203.

[3] See Nicolas F. Radel, “Fletcherian Tragicomedy, Cross-dressing, and Constriction of Homoerotic Desire in Early Modern England,” *Renaissance Drama* 26 (1995) 53-82, esp. 71. Radel is referring to Fletcher's *The Loyal Subject* here, a play he reads along with *Philaster*. He sees it as similar to *Philaster* in terms of the development of a specifically homoerotic desire and its eventual expulsion.

[4] Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick describes the desire said to “swerve” or suffer cultural displacement as “already gendered and physically very localized.” Her reading implies that desire also exists in forms with flexible physical and gendered coordinates, qualities which might render it more amenable to conventional forms of expression. The desire I trace out is of the former variety, since *Philaster* refuses to forgo investment in Bellario's male body. See “A Poem Is Being Written,” *Representations* 0:17 (1987): 110-43, esp. 130.

[5] For an overview of Thomas A. King's main contention, see the introduction to *The Gendering of Men, 1600-1750: The English Phallus*, vol. 1 (Madison: The U of Wisconsin P, 2004) esp. 5.

[6] Sidney's phrase, “mongrel tragi-comedy” is from “The Defense of Poesy,” reprinted in part in *The Winter's Tale: Texts and Contexts*, ed. Mario DiGangi (Boston: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2008) 140-145, esp. 145.

[7] Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality: an Introduction*, vol. 1 (New York: Random House, 1990) esp. 17-35.

[8] King, 5.

[9] King, 19.

[10] Terry Eagleton, *The Function of Criticism*, (London: Verso, 2005) 10. Quoted in King, 12.

[11] King, 23.

[12] Bruce R. Smith, “Making a Difference: Male/Male ‘Desire’ in Tragedy, Comedy, and Tragi-comedy,” *Erotic Politics: Desire on the Renaissance Stage*, ed. Susan Zimmerman (New York: Routledge, 1992) 127-49, esp. 138.

[13] Thomas Blount, *Glossographia* (London: Thomas Newcomb, 1656) EEBO <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. For “Ingle,” see 166 of 344; for “Sodomite,” see 288 of 344.

[14] According to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 1989 ed, “sodomite” dates to 1380; “ingle” appears in 1592.

[15] Nora Johnson does not explicitly offer this timeline; she is primarily concerned with late Shakespearean romance and contemporaneous texts. See "Ganymedes and Kings: Staging Male Homosexual Desire in *The Winter's Tale*," Nora Johnson, published in *Shakespeare Studies*, v. 26, 1998, 187-218. Accessed through EBSCOhost; database: MasterFILE Premier. 10 Apr. 2008. Page numbers are from MasterFILE Premier.

[16] Johnson, 5.

[17] Johnson, 5.

[18] King, 4.

[19] Richard Brathwait, *A Strappado for the Divell*, (London: I. Beale, 1615) EEBO <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. See 6 of 183.

[20] Richard Brathwait, *Times Curtaine Drawne*, (London: Iohn Dawson, 1621) EEBO <http://eebo.chadwyck.com>. See 45 of 96.

[21] Mario DiGangi, *The Homoerotics of Early Modern Drama*, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge UP, 1997) 64.

[22] Radel, "Fletcherian Tragicomedy" 66-67.

[23] DiGangi, 42-44.

[24] Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene* (London: Penguin, 1987) 4.10.26-27.

[25] According to *The Oxford English Dictionary*, 1989 ed, "chastity" in the sense of abstinence dates to 1225; "chastity" as purity from unlawful sexual intercourse dates to 1305.

[26] Gregory Bredbeck makes a related argument. After showing that Richard Barnfield was criticized for writing recognizably homoerotic poetry, Bredbeck contrasts the relations established between "the sodomite" and language in Barnfield and Shakespeare's poetry: "For Barnfield the sodomite enters language.... For Shakespeare the sodomite destroys or uses up language and thereby establishes a space different from language for the poet." See *Sodomy and Interpretation: Marlowe to Milton* (Cornell UP: Ithaca, 1991) 180.

[27] Sedgwick, *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*, (New York: Columbia UP, 1985) 26.

[28] DiGangi, 11.

[29] DiGangi, 11.

[30] Smith, 138.

[31] DiGangi, 66.

[32] King, 50.

[33] Michael Shapiro, *Gender in Play on the Shakespearean Stage: Boy Heroines and Female Pages* (Ann Arbor: the U of Michigan P, 1994) 177.

[34] Bruce Smith, "Rape, Rap, Rupture, Rapture: R-rated Futures on the Global Market," *Textual Practice* 9 (1995): 421-43, esp. 423.

[35] Andrew Gurr seems somewhat at a loss to account for this far from subtle plot repetition: "It is a measure of Philaster's being out of his right mind that he should follow his wounding of a woman with an attack on a sleeping boy. Either action would be sufficient to underline the effects of adversity..." (88 n.24). Instead of the second stabbing merely compounding the effects of the first, as Gurr suggests, I rather argue that the two incidents are complementary: Arethusa articulates a sexuality that is not compatible with the discourse animating the page engaged in noble service.

[36] King, 5.

[37] King lists rape only twice in the index to *The Gendering of Men*. Neither of these imagine the victim of rape as anything other than female. King does describe Lady Haughty as attempting to rape Cleremont's page in Ben Jonson's *Epicoene*, a bizarre attribution since, according to King, when the page says "No," Lady Haughty "calls [him] innocent" and lets him go. See 76-77.

[38] King, 5.

[39] King, 24.

[40] King, 24.

[41] King, 50.

[42] Radel, 159.

[43] DiGangi, 85.

[44] Thomas Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, *Six Elizabethan Plays*, ed. R. C. Bald (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1963) 98.

[45] DiGangi, x.

[46] King, 50.

[47] Jonathan Goldberg, "*Romeo and Juliet's* Open Rs," *Queering the Renaissance*, ed. Jonathan Goldberg (Durham: Duke UP, 1994) 218-35, esp. 232.

[48] King 61; italics mine.

[49] Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher, *The Faithful Friends*, available through The Malone Society Reprints (Oxford: Oxford UP 1970 [1975]) 713.

[50] *The Faithful Friends*, 2295-2303.

[51] Radel, "Can the Sodomite Speak? Sodomy, Satire, Desire and the Castlehaven Case," *Love, Sex, Intimacy and Friendship Between Men, 1550-1800*, ed. Catherine O'Donnell and Michael O'Rourke (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), 148-67, esp. 163.

[52] Alan Bray, *The Friend* (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2003) 183.

[53] Bray, 183.

[54] *The Faithful Friends*, 2374-2378.

[55] King, 44.

[56] Smith, "Making a Difference" 135.

[57] Radel, "Can the Sodomite Speak?" 150.

[58] King, 6.

[59] Fredson Bowers, ed. *The Dramatic Works in the Beaumont and Fletcher Canon*, vol. X, "The Honest Man's Fortune," John Fletcher (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1966) 3.3.139-51.

[60] Loughlin, 29.

[61] Andrew Gurr points out the erotic connotations of the word "minion." See n. 19 in Gurr's introduction.

[62] Radel, "Can the Sodomite Speak?" 162.

[63] Loughlin, 33.

[64] Radel, "Fletcherian Tragicomedy," 58.

[65] Sedgwick, *Between Men*, 86.

[66] King, 4.

[67] Radel, "Fletcherian Tragicomedy," 65, 75.

[68] Shapiro 221-22.

[69] Shapiro 65-91, 177.

[70] Stephen Orgel, *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Shakespeare's England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996) 104.

[71] Nicolas F. Radel, "Fletcherian Tragicomedy," 75.

[72] *The Merchant of Venice*, 2.6.45.

[73] Ian Fletcher, qtd. by Marie H. Loughlin, 40.

[74] Radel, "Fletcherian Tragicomedy," 163.

[75] John Lyly, *Gallathea*, *Gallathea and Midas*, ed. Anne Begor Lancashire (Lincoln: U of Nebraska P, 1969) 5.3.142-3.

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