2013

Breeches Roles Revisited: Negotiating Recognition in Renaissance and Restoration Comedies

Marcela B. Gamallo Tur
Lehigh University

Breeches Roles Revisited: Negotiating Recognition in Renaissance and Restoration Comedies

by

Marcela B. Gamallo Tur

A Dissertation

Presented to the Graduate and Research Committee

of Lehigh University

in Candidacy for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

English Department

Lehigh University

September 1, 2013

Approved and recommended for acceptance as a dissertation in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Marcela B. Gamallo Tur
Breeches Roles Revisited: Negotiating Recognition in Renaissance and Restoration Comedies

_____
Dr. Barbara Traister
Dissertation Director

_____
Approved Date

Committee Members:

_____
Dr. Scott Gordon

_____
Dr. Suzanne Edwards

_____
Dr. Robert Mundhenk

Acknowledgement

This dissertation would not have been possible without the generous support of my committee, friends, and family. I would like to begin by thanking Dr. Barbara Traister for her support, kindness, encouragement, and insightful feedback during this project. Her patience, compassion, and her extraordinary ability to give constructive feedback guided me during all my graduate years. Thank you for being a wonderful mentor. I would also like to extend my gratitude to my committee members Dr. Scott Gordon, Dr. Suzanne Edwards, and Dr. Robert Mundhenk for their continuous support and valuable insights.

I heartily thank the English Department for helping me out in so many ways. For their friendship and encouragement, I would like to thank Vivien Steele, Carol Laub, Donna Reiss, and Joann Deppert. For showing me what excellence in teaching means, I would like to express my gratitude to Professors Barbara Traister, Seth Moglen, Dawn Keetly, Scott Gordon, Betsy Fifer, Rosemary Mundhenk, Seth Moglen, Ed Whitley, Barry Kroll, Peter Beidler, Elizabeth Dolan, and Ed Gallagher. Thanks for sharing your wisdom and priceless teaching strategies with me.

I thank all my friends at Lehigh who helped me through this process. I am blessed to be part of the Fulbright community. Dr. Bill Hunter and my fellow Fulbrighters have been a true family for me during my years at Lehigh.

My sincerest thanks go to Kathleen Hutnik, director of Graduate Life Office, for organizing the dissertation bootcamps that provided me with distraction-free time to focus on my dissertation. Your devotion to improving graduate life is much appreciated.

For their friendship, love, support, hugs, and laughter, I thank my “citas” –Nancy Dwyer, Kathleen Hutnik, and Elcin Cetinkaya. You will always be in my heart.

For numerous rides, prayers, and unconditional support, I would like to thank Sujata Jagota, Linda Kreitz, Marie Bartos, and Cindy Moser. You are my Lehigh sisters.

Many thanks go to my friends in Argentina, my dearest friend Claire Decamp in Switzerland, and to all my friends in the Lehigh Valley. I owe my profound gratitude to MaryAnn Haller, Maria Ain, Hugo Caram, Alfredo Ramirez, Paula Michal-Johnson, Arlette Ngoubene Atioky, Anastasia Kokina, Ailsa Goh, Talida State, Jim and Peggy Hobbs.

And, of course, my deepest thanks and love go to my family who supported me with their unconditional love and prayers.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT

This project examines thirteen transvestite female characters featured in nine Renaissance comedies and romances (1598-1611) and in two Restoration plays (1677-1679) spanning roughly eight decades (1598-1679). I hope to deepen the critical discussion of the period by bringing generally overlooked plays such as Shadwell's *The Woman Captain,* Heywood's *Four Prentices of London* and *The Fair Maid of the West* into dialogue with much discussed plays such as Shakespearean comedies and well-known Restoration plays. I re-visit the "breeches roles" by focusing on the recognition scene, the moment where the female cross-dresser comes out of the disguise or is recognized as a woman. When analyzing those scenes, I employ two different definitions of recognition: a) an Aristotelian recognition by which the cross-dresser is re-apprehended as the person the onstage characters once-knew, and b) what I have called a Butlerian recognition based on Judith Butler's definition of recognition (*Precarious Life),* that is, a claim for a different future identity. I argue that these recognition scenes are more than mere plot devices; they are unique sites where both a constructivist and an essentialist narrative of gender briefly coincide, and where the playwright can reinforce or challenge hegemonic gender roles. In the recognition scenes, not only the characters who have been deceived by the one in disguise re-apprehend the once-known other when the disguise is left behind, but also the cross-dressed characters discover and recognize new future possibilities for themselves. The recognition scene is thus the site where the female cross-dresser re-emerges, in most cases, with an empowered sense of self after claiming her new identity.

Introduction

During my graduate studies, I have always been intrigued by scenes where intimates fail to recognize each other, i.e. instances where a sibling or a lover does not see through his beloved's disguise. Why such lack of recognition? What causes a lover or a relative not to see the person that he has once known intimately? Disguise leads to a temporary misrecognition which allows the playwright as well as the characters to deal with gender and sexuality issues. Even the audience, cognizant of what is occurring on stage, can be titillated by the possibility of incest or of same-sex relationships. Such concerns can be safely explored when they are justified by the temporary mask of disguise.

The wide-range of female cross-dressers always fascinated me as well because it allows us to see how female characters impersonate a number of male roles and how they perform different types of masculinity. Although females impersonating pages are the most conventional type of cross-dressers, early modern plays also provide the audience with cross-dressers who disguise as more independent young males. For instance, Rosalind dresses as a shepherd in *As You Like It,* Portia as a "doctor of the law" and Nerissa as a justice's clerk in *The Merchant of Venice,* and other dramatic cross-dressers choose to impersonate soldiers. Besides portraying an ample variety of "professions," playwrights also explore performances of different types of masculinity. Some heroines are afraid of fighting while others embrace it to the extent of being the ones to start fights. Many female pages perform a somewhat immature masculinity and swoon when they face their lovers. Even Rosalind, one of the most independent cross-dressers, faints at the

sight of blood. Other cross-dressers perform a more martial masculinity, which in some cases includes a vicious use of force (and violence). Although most of the cross-dressers are young, they exhibit different levels of maturity—some being naïve and fearful of cross-dressing, others willing to go as far as they can while dressed as men. The former shun martial behavior, the latter embrace adult male behavior such as disciplining other men and seducing ladies. Not surprisingly, this diversity of cross-dressers has drawn the attention of numerous critics and prompted numerous diverse readings of the plays they inhabit.

Many critics who have analyzed disguise in the Renaissance period have focused on cross-dressing, either on boy actors assuming female roles in the transvestite Renaissance stage or on cross-dressed heroines, who generally dress as pages to escape from the paternal house, to follow their lovers, or to protect themselves. Jean E. Howard's "Crossdressing, the Theatre, and Gender Struggle in Early Modern England" is one of the most influential essays on cross-dressing. Howard argues that "crossdressing, as fact and as idea, threatened a normative social order based upon strict principles of hierarchy and subordination, of which women's subordination to man was a chief instance" (418). Although Howard considers that the Renaissance sex-gender system was "under pressure," she claims that cross-dressed heroines usually reaffirm, rather than resist, the patriarchal system.

Other critics such as W. Robertson Davies in *Shakespeare's Boy Actors* and Lisa Jardine in *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare* deal with the topic of all-male casts, and they argue that the boy actors who dressed as women for the female roles elicited homosexual fantasies and were a focus of erotic

stimulation. Laura Levine, in *Men in Women's Clothing: Anti-theatricality and Effeminization from 1579 to 1642,* discusses cross-dressing as a practice that raises questions about the nature of human identity where the "hermaphroditic actor" embodies a non-essentialist conception of the self. Kathleen McLuskie in "The Act, the Role, and the Actor: Boy Actresses on the Elizabethan Stage" differentiates the unthreatening nature of onstage cross-dressing from the disturbing threats the practice of cross-dressing in real life poses to the society of the time. Phyllis Rackin, Juliet Dusinberre, Catherine Belsey and Jonathan Dollimore regard theatrical cross-dressing as a way of challenging an essentialist notion of gender.

When discussing transvestism, Mary Beth Rose, Linda Woodbridge, Jane Baston and many other critics also refer, albeit briefly, to two anonymous pamphlets written in 1620, namely *Hic Mulier: Or, The Man Woman,* which condemns cross-dressing and *Haec-Vir*: *or The Womanish-Man,* which defends it. These two political tracts show how controversial transvestism is during this period. Some critics also make reference to Phillip Stubbes' *Anatomie of Abuses* (1583) which criticizes women who cross-dress as men.

As we can see, much work has already been done on Early Modern dramatic cross-dressing. However, cross-dressing is such a complex and fascinating topic that it allows for further exploration if approached from different angles. In this project, I examine two main areas: gender performativity and recognition. Although many critical essays deal with gender issues when discussing cross-dressing, very few, to my knowledge, analyze the implications of the moment of recognition when the cross-dressing is revealed. Thus, this study analyzes the variety of ways in which women

characters perform gender with a focus on the moment when the performance ceases, when the female character reacquires, either partially or completely, her original identity in the eyes of her fellow characters. My dissertation focuses on transvestite female characters in a varied, though not exhaustive, selection of texts spanning roughly eight decades (1598-1679). I examine female cross-dressers in ten Renaissance comedies and romances (1598-1611) and in two Restoration plays (1677-1679). Since cross-dressers are also present in Restoration drama, I sample two Restoration plays to see how cross-dressed characters differ from their Renaissance counterparts in a period where female actors were present on stage. As the Renaissance stage was an all-male one, boys assumed female roles which sometimes required the boy actors to impersonate females who donned male attire—thus allowing for a double layer of disguise. Once female actors performed female roles one layer of cross-dressing was removed. I am aware of the limitations of such an approach. By considering only two Restoration plays, I will neither be able to gain accurate and comprehensive insights into the Restoration nor arrive at a substantial comparative argument. Nonetheless, the contrast between the two periods offers insight into each, and my project is a first step toward further diachronic analysis.

Before engaging in the discussion of the plays I would like to explain briefly the key terms that I will be using as my conceptual and theoretical framework. For instance, when I mention the term “recognition” in this study, I refer to the moment in which the cross-dresser comes out of disguise and is recognized by other characters as a former cross-dresser. In order to open up and explore the possibilities that this moment provides the cross-dressed heroine with, I take into account two different definitions of recognition.

In an Aristotelian sense, recognition (*anagnorisis*) is "a change from ignorance to knowledge, and so to either a close relationship or enmity, among people defined in relation to good fortune or misfortune" *(Poetics* 3.4.2, 20-34). In a strict sense, the Aristotelian recognition is recognition of persons. However, in Chapter 16 of *Poetics*, Aristotle expands on the different types of recognition. Recognition may be brought about by tokens, either inherited (a birthmark) or acquired (scar). It may be contrived by the poet, prompted by recollection, reasoning, inference or by the events themselves. We can observe how some of these types of recognition apply to early modern comedies. For instance, in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, recognition is prompted by the ring (token) that Julia gives Proteus. Similarly, though in a more complex way, Viola and Sebastian in *Twelfth Night* recognize one another gradually by first making reference to their father's mole (birthmark), and then engaging in a series of questions and answers (inference).

Aristotle explains the term *anagnorisis* in connection with tragedy and epics. However, scholars have argued that his definition can be applied to comedies as well. Although the *Tractatus Coislinianus* "makes no mention of anagnorisis," according to Terence Cave, it is "the only ancient text which might (controversially) be claimed to provide an outline of Aristotle's lost analysis of comedy" (Cave 47). In spite of this lack of direct evidence that Aristotle had used the term anagnorisis for comedies, scholars such as Cave[1] and Barry Adams have explained how the term anagnorisis was applied to comedies by Renaissance commentators.

[1] In Chapter 2, Terence Cave examines "Literal translation into Latin or Italian, brief philological commentary, paraphrase, copious commentary, independent treatises in which the themes of the Poetics are rephrased, reorganized and extended: the first view is one of a proliferation of possibilities, amid which the term anagnorisis visibly shifts its ground in relation both to its conceptual context and to the textual examples it glosses" (*Recognitions,* 55)

Even though in the Renaissance, *anagnorisis* is "still a recognition of persons, that is to say of one person by another or of two persons mutually, establishing nominal, genealogical and biographical identity" (Aristotle 63), the term anagnorisis, as Cave explains, has been expanded and re-defined across the centuries. In this study, I also make use of one of the most recent definitions of recognition. In *Precarious Life: The Power of Mourning and Violence*, Judith Butler, a post-structuralist American philosopher and gender theorist, discusses concepts such as recognition, vulnerability, aggression, retaliation and violence triggered by the Bush administration post-September 11, 2001. Butler ties the issue of recognition with that of vulnerability and power. In her work, she explains who can be recognizable and who cannot as well as the implications of being recognized or denied recognition. In *Precarious Life* Butler states that

> When we recognize another, or we ask for recognition for ourselves, we are not asking for an Other to see us as we are, as we already are, as we have always been, as we were constituted prior to the encounter itself. Instead, in the asking, in the petition we have already become something new, since we are constituted by virtue of the address, a need and desire for the Other that takes place in language in the broadest sense, one without which we could not be. To ask for recognition, or to offer it, is precisely not to ask for recognition for what one already is. It is to solicit a becoming, to instigate a transformation, to petition the future always in relation to the other. (44)

As will become clear when we deal with the texts in detail, some of the cross-dressed heroines seem to be conscious of the new recognition that they deserve. Therefore, they "solicit a becoming" as a new self—a self that has transformed during the cross-dressed experience, a self that, after tasting the possibilities available to the male gender, becomes aware of new possibilities that their future may hold.

Although *Precarious Life*'s context is totally different from Early Modern plays, I think that Butler's definition of recognition helps illuminate certain passages in which the precariousness lies in being gendered female and thus being unable to claim recognition from that disempowered position. Butler does not make such a claim, though she nods at the fact that women have occupied a disenfranchised position for centuries. She does not relate recognition to gender issues, nor does she apply her theory to literary works.

I would like to argue that by considering both the Aristotelian and the Butlerian notions of recognition, we are able to look at these revealing moments in the comedies of cross-dressing with new eyes. In the recognition scenes, the characters who have been deceived by the one in disguise not only re-apprehend the once-known other when the disguise is left behind and re-establish bonds they once had but also, in some cases, the cross-dressed characters discover and recognize new future possibilities for themselves. Thus, recognition scenes are key to analyzing gender dynamics in these plays since they highlight the female characters' successful, if temporary, attempt to cross gender boundaries. In addition, that moment of recognition —in which the cross-dressed character is often still wearing male clothes—temporarily allows both the audience and

the on-stage characters to imagine that the two genders coincide briefly in a moment in time.

Even though the focal point of this study is the recognition scenes, I also deal with gender issues involving female cross-dressed characters. In my analysis of the plays, I often refer to Butler's conceptualization of gender. According to Butler, "gender is a construction through which the individual materializes and is made intelligible in society" (*Gender Trouble* 12). Taking into account Butler's definition, we can examine closely the ways in which all the cross-dressers from the selected plays "materialize" in their social context. For instance, Portia "materializes" as a male judge in Venice. Butler argues that "Gender reality is performative which means, quite simply, that it is real only to the extent that it is performed" ("Performative Acts" 527). In *Gender Trouble*, Butler explains that:

> Gender ought not to be construed as a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts follow; rather, gender is an identity tenuously constituted in time, instituted in an exterior space through a *stylized repetition of acts*. The effect of gender is produced though the stylization of the body and, hence, must be understood as the mundane way in which bodily gestures, movements, and styles of various kinds constitute the illusion of an abiding gendered self. This formulation moves the conception of gender off the ground of a substantial model of identity to one that requires a conception of gender as a constituted *social temporality*. (191)

In this study, I attempt to demonstrate how dramatic cross-dressers are sometimes conscious of this performative aspect of gender. For instance, Portia tells Nerissa how she will perform as a man. She will walk with "a manly stride, and speak of frays/Like a fine bragging youth, and tell quaint lies" (*Merchant* III.iv.68-69).[2] She confesses having "A thousand raw tricks of these bragging Jacks,/Which I will practise" (III.iv.77-78). In the texts that I analyze in this dissertation, I am interested in seeing how individual performances of the cross-dressed heroines undercut (or reinforce) the hegemonic gender norms.

In my analysis of the plays, I therefore distinguish between gender as performative in Butler's sense and theatrical performance of gendered norms. I am aware that Butler only refers to gender as an act, a doing, without judging the performance. For the present study, however, I feel it is necessary to consider whether a certain performance is a success or a failure. By success I simply mean that the female cross-dresser passes as a man without being prematurely discovered. This added judgment of the cross-dressers' performances is relevant to the recognition scenes in the sense that the cross-dressers' failure or success in their performance of the male gender creates different types of recognition scenes as I discuss in detail in the chapters. Taking into account the variety of cross-dressers and the different themes present in this grouping of texts, I hope to separate certain issues and strands that have been used and re-used by several playwrights. Although there is no single template to which all of these plays fit, the

[2] This and all subsequent references to plays by William Shakespeare are to *The Norton Shakespeare*. Ed. Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus, and Andrew Gurr. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997.

grouping of texts in each of the four chapters allows me to explore different aspects of cross-dressing and to understand more fully the importance of the recognition scene.

Chapter One deals with the most common type of cross-dressing. Dressing as a page is the disguise that female characters seem to resort to when they need a temporary solution to a problem: they may need to disguise for safety, for travel, to hide or to follow a lover. Almost by definition, being a page is a temporary role. The female characters know they will not be able to sustain the disguise for a long period of time since pages grow up—and these women cross-dressed as pages are not going to grow up into males. It is the easiest role to embrace because the pages' duties are very similar to wives' household duties. In a sense, disguising as a page is good preparation to train a woman for what she has to do anyway, that is, to wait on a man. It is an easy disguise to adopt because most women of the upper classes, and thus most of the characters under consideration, have seen pages. Thus, they can imitate their behavior without much difficulty. As seen in *Merchant of Venice* (1596) with Jessica, it becomes almost conventional to cross-dress as a page. Jessica wants to leave her father's household undetected and she adopts male attire for a few hours. All her male companions know that she is in disguise. Dressing as a page is a highly focused, temporary type of cross-dressing that heroines adopt so as to not be recognized. I analyze female pages in Heywood's *Four Prentices of London* (1615), Shakespeare's *Cymbeline* (1611), *The Two Gentlemen of Verona* (1598), *Twelfth Night* (1601), Middleton and Dekker's *The Roaring Girl* (1611), and Aphra Behn's *The Rover* (1677). All of the female pages easily pass as young boys at the beginning of the plays, but what triggers recognition at the end of the

Renaissance plays? Why does the moment of recognition, by contrast, happen almost immediately in the Restoration play *The Rover*?

In Chapter Two, I examine two different issues, namely the fascination with siblinghood and with cross-dressing. I first analyze those topics in two little-known plays, *The Four Prentices of London* (1592) and *Love's Cure* (1605/1647), to explore their literary presentation in non-Shakespearean drama, and then in two Shakespearean plays where siblings and cross-dressing come together. The fascination with siblings and cross-dressing as tropes may lie in the potential erotic attraction that siblings may experience when they do not recognize one another. Misrecognizing one another, siblings may find themselves drawn to one another, giving the audience, which already knows about the cross-dressing, the sense of forbidden erotic possibility. This is taken to an extreme in *The Four Prentices of London* where all four brothers fall in love with their sister. This incredible love that they feel seems potentially incestuous, as the audience recognizes, instead of fraternal. Cross-dressing as their own brothers may be the chosen disguise for certain heroines since they have real individual models of male behavior and male dress. This can be observed in *Twelfth Night* (1601) where Viola patterns herself after her brother. I will further examine this trope in chapter 4 when discussing *The Woman Captain* (1679), and *The Fair Maid of the West* (1604/1630).[3]

In Chapter Three, I discuss both *As You Like It* (1599) and *The Merchant of Venice* (1596), whose independent young heroines decide to cross-dress as males who are not pages and who are beyond boyhood. I examine Rosalind first because she seems to grow out of the page tradition. She dresses as a shepherd, she is financially free, yet she

[3] When two dates are cited, the first one refers to the year when it was probably performed and the second makes reference to the year it was first published.

faints, like some of the female pages analyzed in Chapter One, when she sees the bloody handkerchief that belongs to her lover. Portia, in contrast, is the most distinctive Shakespearean cross-dresser in that she goes in and out of male attire, assuming the guise of a young lawyer, without raising any suspicion. What kind of masculinity do these two dramatic cross-dressers choose to perform? Shakespeare imagines two different kinds of recognitions for these characters. But in each play it is the cross-dressed heroine who scripts the recognition scene. In *As You Like It,* Rosalind employs Hymen, the god of marriage, to bring about recognition while in *The Merchant of Venice,* Portia herself forces recognition upon the male characters. Rosalind precipitates the recognition, but the recognition scene is brief and fairly conventional. It must go forward in order for Rosalind to move to the next stage of her life, marriage to the man she desires. To a certain extent, it is similar to the pages' necessary recognitions. In order to go on with her life, Rosalind has to force the recognition or she cannot move to the next phase of her life, marriage to Orlando. Portia's case, however, differs greatly from Rosalind's. Why does Portia need to tell Bassanio the truth? What kind of recognition is Portia asking for herself?

In Chapter Four, I analyze a variation of cross-dressing that we do not really see in Shakespeare. This very distinct type of cross-dressing female is unlike the Shakespearean cross-dressers who uniformly shun martiality. Bess in Heywood's *The Fair Maid of the West* (1604/1630?), Clara in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Love's Cure* (1605/1647), and Mrs. Gripe in Shadwell's *The Woman-Captain* (1679) perform a violent version of masculinity. Bess and Clara are women who are responsible for pulling their men out of danger. Having done so, they are not likely to play a subordinate part in their

future marital lives. How does their performance of the male gender complicate the recognition scene?

Although this grouping of texts is not fully representative of the range of plays where female characters cross-dress, I believe that, to a certain extent, putting the less discussed plays in conjunction with the well-known plays will enrich the dramaturgical conversation by showing how common the tropes associated with female cross-dressing were. I hope to deepen the critical discussion of the period by bringing generally overlooked plays such as Shadwell's *The Woman Captain*, Heywood's *Four Prentices of London* and *The Fair Maid of the West* into dialogue with much discussed plays such as Shakespearean comedies and well-known Restoration plays. Because I want to see what happens in the next period of English drama when cross-dressing still occurs in drama but when actresses rather than boy actors play the cross-dressed characters, I include in Chapter One a discussion of *The Rover* where a female character assumes the role of a page. And in Chapter Four, I analyze *The Woman Captain* in which Mrs. Gripe enacts a martial role. How do these Restoration heroines differ from their Renaissance counterparts? Why does the moment of recognition happen almost immediately? Are their performances of the male gender and their disguises less convincing? Why do the recognizers choose to play along instead of pressing the heroines to re-assume their female identities?

By moving from the female pages in Chapter One to the martial women in Chapter Four, I hope to show the range of cross-dressers and their corresponding representations of different types of masculinity on the Early Modern and Restoration stage. My study reveals not only the Early Modern fascination with crossing gender

boundaries but also the importance of having a recognition scene which, apart from being a plot device to advance the action, emphasizes the moment in which the on-stage characters re-discover the once-known other and sometimes grant the cross-dressed heroine a "new becoming." Thus, we can observe two types of recognition at work in most plays, an Aristotelian one and what I have called a Butlerian sense of recognition. The former is present in almost all the plays I examine. The latter, however, is apparent only in the plays where the heroines come out of the cross-dressed experience with a sense of self-empowerment. In some cases, their lovers who knew them before their cross-dressing grant them the recognition of a new identity, acknowledging their competence as revealed in their successful performance of masculinity.

Chapter One

Female pages: leaving the male disguise behind

Although pages are popular minor, and sometimes major, characters in Renaissance plays, there has not been much analysis of the chores they performed and the type of relationship they established with their masters. Ephraim Chambers, in his *Cyclopædia; or, an universal dictionary of arts and sciences*, provides the most comprehensive definition of the term "page": "a Youth of State, retain'd in the Family of a Prince or great Personage to attend in Visits of Ceremony, do Messages, bear up Trains, Robes, &c. and to have a genteel Education, and learn his Exercises"(734). In this chapter, I analyze female characters, including Julia, Viola, Jessica, Manet, Mary Fitzallard, and Hellena, who cross-dress as pages and perform page duties in *Two Gentlemen of Verona, Twelfth Night, The Merchant of Venice, Four Prentices of London, The Roaring Girl,* and *The Rover* respectively. Most heroines have no difficulty in performing as pages because of the similarity in age and in physical appearance that they share with young boys and due to the heroines' knowledge about pages who serve in their households.

In these plays, I trace the circumstances that trigger the recognition that the "page" is actually a young lady. I first analyze recognition in an Aristotelian sense, namely "a change from ignorance to knowledge, and so to either friendship or enmity, among people defined in relation to good fortune or misfortune" *(Poetics* 52a30). In the recognition scenes, most of the characters who have been deceived by the one in disguise not only re-apprehend the once-known other when the disguise is left behind but also re-establish the bond they once had. However, this bond has been re-shaped in the process. In most cases, the female character goes from being a disempowered woman who has been left behind to a cross-dressed page who experiences, albeit briefly, some empowering moments where she is able to enter the male sphere, learn the truth about her lover, and affect, to some extent, the power dynamics of their relationship when leaving the male disguise behind. The Butlerian conceptualization of recognition helps illuminate such passages since we can observe the heroines asking for a new becoming – a becoming where their female self can re-emerge, enriched by having experienced the male gender, and claim the recognition (and respect) that they feel they deserve.

With this theoretical frame in mind, I argue that recognition scenes are the site where the cross-dresser's authentic self emerges. This authenticity can only surface once the mask is dropped. The temporary disguise, however, is essential to achieve such authenticity since it provides the cross-dresser with a detached perspective of the dynamics of the bonds she was engaged in. When cross-dressed, she not only can see clearly who her lover truly is, but also appreciate her own previously untapped capabilities. This female character consciously takes herself out of the relational bond with her lover. Then, at the moment of recognition, she is re-apprehended as the former

lover but her cross-dressed experience has enabled her to re-surface in a more authentic self –a self that has crossed gender boundaries, and gained valuable insights about the male world. Although some critics may see this moment as a re-inscription of the female characters in the patriarchal world, I believe that such a return is voluntary and empowering for the female page.

I will start by analyzing why slipping into male attire and performing as boy pages is the most suitable way our heroines have to accomplish their primary goals—being reunited with their lovers or escaping dangerous situations when travelling alone—and ultimately find their authentic selves. As C. A. Patrides claims: "'I am not what I am' appertains to behavior we have considered in plays whether designated histories, comedies, or tragedies, and disguises, nominally 'a convention of comedy,' are in fact suggestive—invariably suggestive—of dissimulation, hypocrisy, deception" (49). Recognition scenes, in my opinion, are more than a necessary plot device. In order for a cross-dressed page to be re-apprehended as the once loved/admired lady, there is dissimulation and intended deception on the part of the female character in order to achieve her goals. This deception points to the fact that the senses, especially the eyesight, can be deceived. This deception is also possible due to the fact that gender can be constructed. According to Judith Butler, "gender is a construction through which the individual materializes and is made intelligible in society" (*Gender* 12). In the comedies herein analyzed, cross-dressed heroines construct themselves as boy pages by assuming male attire, by emulating male actions, and sometimes by assuming male names. Thus, their male garb and actions make them intelligible as males in the plays. I will explore how their performance of the male gender points at Butler's notion of gender

performativity and how the recognition scene serves as a locale for the convergence of competing gender formulations –an essentialist definition and a constructed notion of gender.

The cross-dressed pages differ greatly from other literary cross-dressers since the page identity has a time limit. In contrast, fictional female cross-dressers that adopt adult male roles such as judges, shepherds, clerks, and captains, those described in the following chapters, may theoretically keep their male identity as long as they wish. Gender construction for the female pages only holds for a limited time. By choosing to impersonate pages, female characters assume roles that are temporary in nature since the page will eventually become a man. He will grow facial hair and his voice will change. Thus, recognition for the female cross-dressers will be inevitable. Since pages lack the physical bulk of mature males, our cross-dressed female characters can participate in the male sphere without being expected to assert mature maleness. Apart from the "time limit" determined by the natural physical development of young boys, female pages are also limited by "stage time" since they have to accomplish their goals before some gender-related behavior such as fighting or wielding a sword is required.

As cross-dressing is disapproved of by Early Modern society, most females who disguise as pages are self-conscious about their disguise and aware of the negative consequences they may face due to cross-dressing. Their reputation can become tarnished if they are discovered, and most of them lose class privileges when becoming pages. As Tracey Sedinger states, "the crossdresser stages a moment of rupture, when knowledge and visibility are at odds, when difference cannot be defined solely by recourse to the visual" (68). Such a breach between "knowledge and visibility" hints at the unreliability

of the senses and the difficulty of discovering the "truth." Thus, some playwrights make their characters frown upon cross-dressing so that it becomes clear to the audience that crossing gender boundaries should not be approved of. Therefore, some pages such as Jessica, in *The Merchant of Venice*, Manet, in *Four Prentices,* and Julia, in *Two Gentlemen of Verona,* complain about having to cross-dress which assures the audience that they would not cross gender boundaries were they in better positions. Jessica, for instance, shows disgust and shame while in male attire. When leaving her father's house, she reflects on the way she is dressed:

Jessica: I am glad 'tis night, you do not looke on me,
For I am much asham'd of my exchange:
But love is blind, and lovers cannot see
The pretty follies that themselves commit,
For if they could, Cupid himselfe would blush
To see me thus transformed to a boy
Lorenzo: Descend, for you must be my torch-bearer
Jessica: What, must I hold a candle to my shames?
They in themselves, good sooth, are too light.
Why, 'tis an office of discovery love,
And I should be obscured (II.vi.34-44)

Jessica is fully aware that "transform(ing) (in)to a boy" is a reprehensible act in the society of her time, and it can only be justified as an act that enables a girl to follow her lover. Although Jessica is initially happy that night and darkness will cover her, she is

made even more self-conscious of her male attire when her first act as page after she escapes her paternal household is to hold the torch which highlights her assumed identity.

Similarly, Manet, the French Lady, is fully aware of the implications of cross-dressing. When she decides to follow Guy, the former apprentice goldsmith, the French Lady briefly refers to her disguise: "Thus have I maskt my bashful modesty/Under the habite of a trusty Page …. and servant I made" (*Four Prentices* ll. 1130-31). Her choosing to enact a page is significant since she is not only acquiring a male identity but also a new social status. In fact, the French Lady realizes the implications of her actions from the very beginning. After Guy leaves for war, Manet says:

> Go flint, strike fire upon thy enemies steele,
> Whilst I descend one step from fortunes wheels:
> Thou goest before love bids me follow after:
> By thee, the king thy Lord must lose his daughter. (ll. 440-444)

Manet understands that she will no longer be a Lady in her father's castle since she will "descend one step from fortunes wheels." Of even more consequence, the king will lose his daughter. We do not know if the king has other children to inherit his kingdom, but were she the only child, as it is most likely the case since no other heirs to the throne are mentioned, it would have been quite tragic for the king not to know his daughter's whereabouts for more than a year. When leaving the court, Manet reflects:

> Thus have I maskt my bashfull modesty
> Under the habite of a trusty Page,
> And now my servants servant am I made
> Love, that transform'd the Gods to sundry shapes,

Hath wrought in me this Metamorphosis. (ll. 1130-35)

The French Lady justifies her cross-dressing by placing the blame on "Love" since she is just following the man who will eventually become her husband. Besides, the fact that she willingly becomes a "servant" makes her cross-dressing less threatening since she will not usurp a power position when crossing gender boundaries. These lines serve the purpose of justifying cross-dressing as a harmless choice in Manet's case—but a choice that requires the voluntary surrender of her class privileges.

Julia, in *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, also assumes the male garb that allows her to enter the male world without jeopardizing her chastity, although she understands her reputation may suffer if she is discovered. She needs to turn into a "well-reputed page" in order to "prevent/The loose encounters of lascivious men" (II.vii.38-39). She also decides that instead of cutting her hair, she will: "knit it up in silken strings,/With twenty odd-conceited true-love knots./To be fantastic may become a youth/Of greater time than I shall show to be" (II.vii.45-48). Not only will her hair-style make her appear older than she really is, but also she would be able to preserve her long hair, one of the "signs" of femininity. Although these verses can be a commentary on male vanity, they also serve to assert Julia's willingness to keep what she feels identifies her as female.

To complete her transformation, Julia asks Lucetta to provide her with breeches, although she feels uncomfortable about wearing a "codpiece," a "sign" of her fake masculinity. She argues that the codpiece will be "ill-favoured" implying that it will not fit her actual body shape, and it will be useless since it will not perform any function. On her, the codpiece is just an ornament and a visual and accusatory symbol of her deceit, her embodiment of the male gender. In spite of her initial reluctance, however, she agrees

to accept whatever breeches fit her "most mannerly." After choosing her male attire, Julia turns to her maid for advice and asks Lucetta about the cost to her reputation: "But tell me, wench, how will the world repute me/For undertaking so unstaid a journey?/I fear me it will make me scandalized" (II.vii.59-61). Julia is aware of the risks she is about to run when pretending to be a boy, and Lucetta disapproves of it knowing that such an enterprise is not worth pursuing at such a price –Julia should not jeopardize her reputation by going after an inconstant lover.

This awareness about the dangers of cross-dressing that female pages show emphasizes the idea that attempting to cross gender boundaries requires courage to go against social conventions. This courageous attitude accompanies the female cross-dressers not only at the onset of their journey, but also at the end, when they choose to end it by letting others recognize them as females. It is in the recognition scene where gender hegemony is questioned. To fully understand what is at stake in the recognition scene, we first have to examine the cross-dressers' journeys from the moment they choose to don male attire until the moment they decide to leave it behind. I will therefore briefly mention the cross-dressed moments that are relevant for the recognition scene in each of the plays I analyze in this chapter in order to point out how gender formulations are played out when the cross-dresser is recognized as female.

Four Prentices deals with a very special cross-dressing case since Manet is a Princess when she decides to follow her lover as a page, and she ends up being a Queen when she decides to end her cross-dressed experience at the end of the play. Hers is a unique journey in which, in spite of losing privileges related to class, Manet acquires

others associated with males. As a page, she develops an intimate bond with her lover. From the very beginning, Manet excels in performing page duties:

> My love and Lord, that honoured me a woman,
> Loves me a youth; employes me every where;
> I serve him, waite upon him, and he swears
> He favours both my truth and diligence:
> And now I have learnt to be a perfect Page,
> He will have none to trusse his points but me,
> At boord to waite upon his cup but me:
> To beare his target in the field, but me: (ll. 1135-1142)

The French Lady follows her future husband everywhere. She performs the role of a subservient male page both in the domestic and public sphere. She "serves him," "waits upon him," and "bears his target." Thus, although her male attire grants Manet access to the male sphere she would have been denied as a woman, in performing as the ideal subservient page she behaves as an obedient wife would in the domestic sphere.

Like Viola's service to Orsino, their page-master relationship is based on trust and serves as a pre-marital stage where both parties get to know and value each other and where the base for future marital roles is established. Guy praises Jacke's "truth and diligence," qualities highly desirable in a wife. At the same time, Manet recognizes she has "learnt to be a perfect Page," which can easily be rephrased as "a perfect servant." By assuming a disguise below Guy's status, the king's daughter reinforces the idea of submission. She has learned to be submissive, as the ideal wife of the period would have been, and she masters that virtue by becoming a page.

Her performance as male is impeccable until she is incapable of wielding a sword when a threatening situation arises. When Manet and Bella leave the camp, the clown threatens Bella Franca, and Manet is not brave enough to fight the clown who is trying to capture them:

> *Clowne*: Nay you cowardly Lady, that runne away from the Campe, and
> Dare not stand to it, I am glad I have light on you; choose your
> Weapon, choose your weapon; I am a Souldier, and a martiall man,
> And I will offer you the right of Armes: if you vanquish me, I'le
> Be your captive, if you be cast downe I'le carry you backe
> prisoner.
>
> *French Ladie*: I weare a weapon that I dare not draw:
> Fie on this womanish feare, what shall I do? (ll. 1760-66)

When the clown addresses Bella Franca calling her "cowardly Lady" because she is running away, the French Lady resents her "womanish feare" since it prevents her from acting like a male page who would have been able to protect his traveling companion. Yet, in spite of *his* inability to defend Bella with *his* sword, Jacke/Manet stays by Bella.

In spite of not being able to perform a martial masculinity, Manet/Jacke is valued and admired for *his* virtues. When Eustace saves Bella Franca, Eustace dislikes Jacke because *he* is the page to Guy, the Prince of France, who had banned Eustace. Bella intervenes for her page, and Eustace pardons *him*:

> *Bella Franca*: Yet my sweete brother, do not blame the youth,
> Full well he hath demean'd himselfe with me.
> He never, since we entred in these woods,

Left me in my distress; when we alone

Sit in these desarts never by rude force

Did do me the least shame, or violence

Eustace: Well, sirra, for your truth and honesty

I pardon thee, though I detest thy Lord. (ll. 1834-41)

Not mentioning the page's inability to protect her, Bella emphasizes the page's faithful companionship and *his* good manners towards her.

After being pardoned, Manet could have continued performing as a virtuous page; however, she prefers to embrace her femininity. Manet/Jacke cleverly plans to return to her female attire alleging that *his* master, the Prince of France (Guy), will not recognize *him* as his page if *he* is wearing women's clothing when they encounter him:

French Ladie: Then let me change my habite, gentle sir,

Least in this shape I chance to meete my Maister.

Then, if you please, I'le cloath me like a Lady,

And waite upon your sister in your Tent.

Eustace: Nay, if it please thee, I am well content.

French Ladie: (Aside) My plot is good; well, howsoere it prove,

'Twill either end my life, or winne my love. (ll. 1842-50)

Thus, Manet/Jacke reclaims her female identity in the hope that Guy can recognize her as Manet, the king's daughter, if they come across him. She is aware that she can either be punished or loved for such a move.

In the recognition scene, the initial "moment of rupture," as Sedinger puts it, is caused by the disguise comes to an end. Before sight and knowledge coincide, however,

Heywood uses this small window of misrecognition to raise questions about an essentialist definition of gender. Although the audience accompanies Manet in her transformation and listens to her plot, neither Bella nor Eustace suspects her plan. When Eustace tells Guy that the "pretty boy that stray'd" from him is now in his tent, Eustace makes it clear that the page is:

> … so disguis'd you cannot know him now,
> For hee's turn'd wench; and but I know the wagge,
> To be a boy, to see him thus transform'd,
> I should have sworn he had beene a wench indeed. (ll. 2519-22)

Eustace's statement suggests his lack of certainty in telling the genders apart when characters cross-dress. Eustace suggestively comments on the unreliability of the senses, especially sight, and on his own inability to see through the disguise. Manet transforms into the woman she once was. Yet, to those who have known her only as a page, she seems to be cross-dressed. Before even seeing the page dressed in female attire, Guy suggests how much he values that page by telling his brother:

> Pray, let me see him, brother in that habite,
> I would not lose the villaine for more gold,
> Then Syon would be sold for: he will blush
> To be tane tardy in his Maids attire. (ll. 2523-2526)

Guy praises the page's virtues which prepares the audience to admire Manet more. When the page finally appears, Guy rejoices since he sees Manet instead. The French Lady exclaims: "You know me then!" (2530) and Guy explains to her that " 'twas that disguise,/That all this while hath blinded my cleer eyes" (2531-2532). Similar to

Eustace's disbelief in his own eyes when he sees the page in female attire, Guy also understands that Manet's male attire had prevented him from seeing clearly her real gender.

This male-male kissing scene in which the tension notoriously rises is soon dismissed as the situation is rapidly clarified. When Guy and Manet kiss and embrace, Eustace reprehends his brother: "Fye, are you not asham'd to kiss a boy/ And in your armes to graspe him with such joy?" (ll. 2533-2534). As none of the other characters has seen the French Lady before, they think the page is the boy they know who is now dressed in "Maides clothes." Eustace and the other on-stage characters experience this moment of confusion as men looking at another man who has just turned into a woman. This moment is most disruptive for the characters when they see Guy kissing the formerly crossed-dressed Jacke: Guy soon explains to the other characters that the Page is, in fact, the French Lady whom he loves and to whom he owes his life. He emphasizes her virtue and innocence by saying: "she hath beene my bedfellow/ a year and more, yet I had not the grace" (ll. 2543-2544). Thus, he assures everybody that her virtue is intact and that her cross-dressing has not fostered in him any homosexual desire towards the page.

Manet's cross-dressing also portrays female desire as "self-tamable"—virtue that is highlighted in the recognition scene. Even if Manet impulsively follows the man she loves, when her object of desire is at hand, she does not surrender to temptation. After more than a year of having slept beside Guy, she acknowledges that she has seen "many a thing, which makes me blush to speake" (l. 1143). Then, she adds:

I dreame and dreame, and things come in my mind:

Onely I hide my eyes; but my poore heart

Is bard and kept from loves satiety

I see the Apples that I cannot taste

I'll stay my time, and hope yet, ere I die,

My heart shall feast as richly as my eye. (ll. 1145-1150)

As is clear from this passage, Manet has seen enough to unleash her female desire; yet, she has decided to patiently wait till the truth is revealed. Cross-dressing, in this case, is useful in portraying how virtuous women can restrain their desires. Manet tells Guy that "my love drew me along/ No shamelesse lust" (ll. 2554-2555); she has chosen to cross-dress due to pure and virtuous love, not lust.

In the recognition scene, when Manet finally regains her female identity at the end of the play, she explains her "metamorphosis" as "a wondrous change!" (l. 2552). She tells Guy that: "She that your Page hath beene/ Is now at length transform'd to be your queene" (ll. 2552-2553). Manet accurately explains her transformation as "wondrous" since she changes from Lady to Page to Queen. Most interestingly, this change seems to suggest that in order to change her status from single to married, Manet has to undergo the useful training as a page. One possible reading of this passage is that once the training into submission is successfully done, the French Lady is ready to be re-inscribed into the patriarchal system as a commendable queen who has not only learned to be submissive as is proper for a wife but has also shown control over her passions. Thus, her temporary performance as a submissive male has enabled her to grow in Guy's esteem.

Another possible reading of the recognition scene I would like to offer is that Manet emerges not only as the woman she was at her father's court, but as a new woman.

When embracing the female gender, she opts for authenticity. Instead of trying to go back to Guy as a page to reconstitute the intimate bond that they shared, she opts for the female gender, and lets Guy decide whether he accepts her as she is, as a new self who has shared with him some experiences in the male world, but who is now returning to the female world in an enriched form. Guy's response to that claim for recognition is positive. The man who once left her in pursuit of a military career, now, without thinking twice or worrying about what the other on-stage characters may think, kisses her in recognition for what she was and is. Instead of reprimanding her for having deceived him, he offers her marriage—accepting a woman with a "male past." Thus, in this recognition scene, we can see how Manet, by boldly facing Guy in her female attire, makes her claim for recognition—a recognition that holds both her past and her present, and which opens up a future of new possibilities for her.

In *The Roaring Girl*, Middleton and Dekker also use the confusion cross-dressing causes to explore the taboo topic of homoerotic desire. At the end of the play, the audience can see another male-male kissing scene which puzzles on stage characters, though it is promptly dispelled by the recognition scene. In IV.i, Sebastian kisses Mary Fitzallard who has run away from her paternal home in male attire to marry Sebastian. Although Sebastian, the priest, and Moll know he kisses a woman who is cross-dressed as a page, some of the other onstage characters do not know about Mary's disguise. The oddity of the scene is reflected in a short exchange between Moll and Sebastian:

Moll: How strange this shows, one man to kiss another.

Sebastian: I'd kiss such men to choose, Moll;

Methinks a woman's lip tastes well in a doublet. (IV.i, 45-47)

Two of the characters who know the truth are the ones who comment on the unusual case of what seems to be two men kissing. As Tracey Sedinger points out, "the erotic experience, for both Sebastian and the audience, is enhanced through cross-dressing, with its confusion of a normative heterosexuality" (70). Interestingly, it is Moll, herself a cross-dresser, who voices the society's point of view about homosexuality, i.e. two men kissing is a "strange" sight. What she sees is at odds with what society prescribes, namely heterosexuality. In spite of her blatant defiance of the contemporary dress code which forbids women to wear pants, Moll verbally adheres to the societal point of view concerning sexuality.

Sebastian's response is even more disturbing to the normative audience. He likes his experience and thinks that "a woman's lip tastes well in a doublet." According to the *Oxford English Dictionary,* a doublet is "a close-fitting body-garment, with or without sleeves, worn by men from the 14th to the 18th centuries." Thus, Sebastian's comment may indicate his support for the new social order which is emerging and which his father so deeply fears:

> *Sir Alexander*: Hoyda, breeches? What, will he marry a monster with two Trinkets? What age is this? If the wife go in breeches, the man Must wear long coats like a fool. (II.ii.74-76)

Sir Alexander is afraid that women wearing "breeches" may later usurp male positions while males turn into "fools." Then, when Sir Alexander overhears Moll and the tailor's conversation, Sir Alexander wonders: "Here's good gear towards, I have brought up my son to marry a Dutch slop and a French doublet, a codpiece-daughter" (II.ii.88-90). Even though Sir Alexander is mistaken about the cross-dressed Moll becoming his son's future

wife, he condemns women such as Moll Cutpurse for wearing male attire. Sebastian's reaction in the kissing scene may also imply that he would choose another man as a sexual partner if given the choice, thus publicly endorsing homosexuality. Yet, Mary's cross-dressing merely contributes to the play's overall emphasis on gender confusion. Everyone but Sir Alexander knows she is a woman. Thus, the recognition scene in this play serves the purpose of briefly exploring the taboo of homosexuality when two males kiss. Such an exploration, however, ends up as retrenchment into heterosexuality since the normative views are voiced by Moll, the character who is most likely to be against them. Since the audience and most of the characters are in the know, the recognition scene utilizes neither an Aristotelian nor a Butlerian recognition. Mary Fitzallard, the cross-dresser, seems to be only instrumental in the sense that her cross-dressed attire and performance allow the characters to voice their views on cross-dressing. Although Mary's role is minimal, we can still observe that cross-dressing in the recognition scene is a site where gender hegemony is questioned. Though most characters favor heterosexuality, Sebastian challenges such a view with his commentary after kissing his cross-dressed lover.

In *Two Gentlemen of Verona*, the recognition scene shows how the female gender needs to emerge after having been repressed under a mask of maleness. Julia's journey into the male world is a journey of discovery. Julia, like Manet, decides to don male apparel to follow her lover. Lucetta disapproves of Julia's plan and attempts to prevent her from following Proteus because she fears he "will scarce be pleased" to see Julia. Lucetta knows that "A thousand oaths, an ocean of his tears, /And instances of infinite of love" are "servants to deceitful men" (II.vii.69-70,72), and not a warranty of their love.

Julia's naïve response shows that her love for Proteus has led her to idealize him, and that she has only a distorted image of her lover. Julia strongly affirms that:

> But truer stars did govern Proteus' birth,
> His words are bonds, his oaths are oracles,
> His love sincere, his thoughts immaculate,
> His tears pure messengers sent from his heart,
> His heart as far from fraud as heaven from earth. (II.vii.73-78)

Julia's idealized image of her lover is soon destroyed when she listens to Proteus wooing Silvia. As it turns out, Proteus' thoughts are far from "immaculate." His love, as Lucetta suspected, is insincere, and his words form breakable "bonds" and worthless "oaths." As Barry Weller explains, "Like his mythological counterpart, . . . Proteus is chiefly remarkable for his power of self-transformation. His external form never changes, but his shifting loyalties make this constancy of his appearance a kind of embodied lie" (349) – which is in sharp contrast with Julia, whose appearance changes without altering her constancy.

Similar to Manet's, Julia's performance as a male page is flawless until *Two Gentlemen of Verona*'s last act, which suggests that gender boundaries can be easily, albeit temporarily, blurred. In disguise, Julia asks for lodging, interacts with male and female characters, and serves Proteus without being discovered. Her disguise enables her to occupy a position from which she can observe Proteus' actions and discover his true feelings without being suspected or condemned. For instance, when the host shows her where Proteus is, she observes how her lover woos Silvia under her window. The fact that the host asks her why "the pretty youth" is sadder than before shows that Julia is

visibly perturbed by what she sees. This indicates a temporary break in the performance of the male gender –a break where her feminine self threatens to emerge and give her away. Yet, she decides to retain her male disguise in order to find out the truth, namely if Proteous was being unfaithful to her. She does confess to the host that she does not like the musician (Proteus) because he is "so false that he grieves my very heartstrings" (IV.ii.58). Although the host is not able to grasp the full meaning of her comment, the audience can share Julia's pain and have a clear understanding of how Julia feels when she discovers the falsity of her beloved. Her pain may be caused not only by Proteus' unfaithfulness but also by her realization of her own naivety.

Julia finds her performance as a male challenging, which suggests that not being true to oneself, though having the pay off of finding the truth, is complex. Although Julia/Sebastian performs the role of a diligent page, there are instances where Julia's feelings are so strong that her words almost give her away. Proteus first confides in Sebastian/Julia because *he* looks like an honorable person:

> Sebastian, I have entertained thee
> Partly that I have need of such a youth
> That can with some discretion do my business,
> For 'tis no trusting to yon foolish lout, [referring to Lance]
> But chiefly for thy face and thy behaviour,
> Which, if my augury deceive me not,
> Witness good bringing up, fortune, and truth. (IV.iv.62-68)

Proteus bases his assessment on the external appearance of the page. Sebastian's facial features and *his* behavior show "good bringing up, fortune, and truth." Proteus trusts his

"augury" not to deceive him. Although he is able to read the inner characteristics of the page, he does not recognize Sebastian's real sex. Proteus is unable to make any connection between the page's face and his former lover's face, though he has presumably taken a close look at both of them. Even if Sebastian possesses all of the positive traits that Proteus mentions, Proteus is certainly deceived about the true identity of the page.

Julia/Sebastian takes advantage of her master's trust and becomes outspoken about Proteus' behavior while also praising her own female self. For instance, when Proteus asks Julia to give Silvia the ring that a woman who "love(d) (him) well delivered it to him," Julia, outraged, engages in a dialogue in which she is quite direct in spite of performing as a page:

Julia: It seems you loved not her, to leave her token.
She is dead belike?
Proteus: Not so. I think she lives
Julia: Alas
Proteus: Why does thou cry 'Alas'?
Julia: I cannot choose but pity her
Proteus: Wherefore should thou pity her?
Julia: Because methinks that she loved you as well
as you do love your lady Silvia.
She dreams on him that has forgot her love;
You dote on her that cares not for your love.
'Tis pity love should be so contrary,

And thinking on it makes me cry 'Alas'. (IV.iv.66-77)

For a newly-hired page, Julia/Sebastian is quite outspoken in the sense that *he* indirectly criticizes his master's behavior. *He* justly assumes that Proteus does not love Julia if he will give away the ring that she gave him as a token of her love. Though surprised by the page's reaction, Proteus lets the "boy" explain himself. In a lengthy self-justification, Julia/Sebastian not only successfully avoids being recognized but also vents *his* true feelings. Julia pities herself for continuing to dream about someone who does not care for her, and at the same time pities Proteus for attempting to conquer the love of Silvia, who is not interested in him. Cleverly, Sebastian displaces the blame from Proteus and makes "love" responsible for being "so contrary." Thus, she does not openly judge Proteus for his reprehensible inconstancy.

The disguise serves Julia well in that she not only discovers the truth, but also attempts to manipulate future events to her own advantage. Julia/Sebastian not only scolds her master but also intentionally deceives him when she appeals to Silvia's compassion towards Julia instead of advancing Proteus' cause. For instance, when interrogated by Silvia, Sebastian speaks highly of *his* lady:

Almost as well as I do know myself
To think upon her woes I do protest
That I have wept a hundred several times
…….
She hath been fairer, madam, than she is
…….
I know she is about my height

…….

For I did play a lamentable part

Madam, "twas Ariadne , passioning

For Theseus' perjury and unjust flight

Which I so lively acted with my tears

That my poor mistress, moved therewithal,

Wept bitterly; and would I might be dead

If I in thought felt not her very sorrow (IV.iv.135-37, 141,156,158-164)

Sebastian's words evince an intimate knowledge of Julia since *he* has worn *his* lady's clothes. In fact, Julia's woes have roused the page's pity to the point of tears. The intensity of Julia's suffering is emphasized by the hyperbolic phrase "a hundred several times," and Proteus' betrayal of Julia is indirectly alluded to by the carefully chosen role that the page is said to have acted out. Sebastian's actual wearing of Julia's gown emphasizes the close connection that the page has with Julia and his sympathy towards her.

In spite of having passed as a male page undetected, Julia's female self erupts abruptly in the recognition scene. Julia/Sebastian, who has proved witty enough to have come up with convincing and believable explanations for several tongue-slips, can no longer perform her role as a page well. She faints when she hears Valentine say "All that was mine in Silvia I give thee" (V.iv.83). Terrified by the possibility of losing Proteus, she can no longer stand quietly by. She cannot believe that Valentine is willing to give Silvia to Proteus, even after having seen Proteus' attempt to rape Silvia. After recovering from her faint, Julia gives the wrong ring to Proteus. She could have explained her

possession of Proteus' ring by repeating the same story that she had told Silvia, i.e. that Sebastian had also been Julia's page; however, Julia chooses to reveal herself by stating: "Julia herself did give it me,/And Julia herself hath brought it hither" (V.iv.125). Thus, Julia voluntarily chooses to embrace her female self again, whether or not Proteus will respond positively to her revelation. Proteus' subsequent marriage to Julia shows his acceptance not only of the Julia he left behind, but also of the Julia who has waited on him, and the Julia who knows his truth and who is willing to marry him in spite of his weaknesses.

In *Twelfth Night,* Viola, like Julia, is also her lover's truth-keeper in the recognition scene. Although she starts her cross-dressed journey for safety reasons, her performance of the male gender leads her to a deeper understanding of the Duke's feelings and of her own self. At the onset of her expedition to the male world, Viola, similar to Julia, needs an accomplice to help her hide her true identity. In Viola's case, the Captain who rescues her after the shipwreck is essential for her acquiring a new male identity:

> Conceal me what I am, and be my aid
> For such disguise as haply shall become
> the form of my intent. I'll serve this duke:
> Thou shall present me as an eunuch to him. (I.i.54-57)

Viola, unlike the other female pages, chooses to enact a male page whose masculinity is divested of any sexual prowess. This is the only time that her wish to be introduced as an eunuch is mentioned in the script. The audience does not know how she is actually introduced to the Duke. Viola "sells" herself as a very capable page who "can sing/And

speak to him in many sorts of music/That will allow me very worth his service" (I.i.58-60). In Viola's case, the deceit implied by her cross-dressing is only a tool which brings her protection and safety as she plans to enter a male-headed household in a foreign land.

Similar to the confusion Manet causes in the kissing-scene, Viola's disguise also provokes confusion especially for Olivia, the Duke, and the captain. After her first encounter with Viola/Sebastian, Olivia cannot stop thinking about the Duke's page. The audience knows about Viola's initial desire to enact a eunuch; yet, the lack of further mention may indicate either that Shakespeare changed his mind or that Viola changed hers about the nature of her male performance. Clearly, Olivia does not perceive Viola/Sebastian as an eunuch. She feels completely attracted to *him*. She repeats Sebastian's words and praises *his* body:

> 'What is your parentage?'
>
> 'Above my fortunes, yet my state is well:
>
> I am a gentleman.' I'll be sworn thou art;
>
> Thy tongue, thy face, thy limbs, actions and spirit,
>
> Do give thee five-fold blazon: not too fast:
>
> soft, soft!
>
> Unless the master were the man. How now!
>
> Even so quickly may one catch the plague?
>
> Methinks I feel this youth's perfections
>
> With an invisible and subtle stealth
>
> To creep in at mine eyes. Well, let it be. (I.v.258-67)

Olivia first questions the almost immediate attraction that she feels for the page and then allows herself to give free rein to her desire. Olivia can see that the page is of noble origin, and she admires *his* wittiness, beauty, and character. Viola/Sebastian reflects upon the undesired impact her male attire has had on Olivia when Malvolio tells her about the ring Olivia "returns" to Sebastian:

> I left no ring with her: what means this lady?
> Fortune forbid my outside have not charm'd her!
> She made good view of me; indeed, so much,
> That sure methought her eyes had lost her tongue,
> For she did speak in starts distractedly.
> She loves me, sure; the cunning of her passion
> Invites me in this churlish messenger.
> None of my lord's ring! why, he sent her none.
> I am the man: if it be so, as 'tis,
> Poor lady, she were better love a dream.
> Disguise, I see, thou art a wickedness,
> Wherein the pregnant enemy does much. (II.ii.15-38)

Viola/Sebastian shares with the audience the desperate situation she is in. Her male attire has "charm'd" Olivia who was so enamored of Sebastian's physical appearance that she could not speak properly, and in order to see Sebastian again she makes up the story of the ring. Olivia's desire for the page may signal a covert female-female desire which was not acceptable at the time. As Denise A. Walen explains:

> Textual representations of female-female desire and sexual behaviors existed in sixteenth-century England, which were available to playwrights and at least the educated members of their audience. Therefore, when female characters were positioned together in erotically coded situations, dramatists could be confident that a portion, if not all of their audience would discern the homoerotic references. To construct an erotic tension between two female characters, playwrights often employed the narrative convention of the cross-dressed female heroine. Since the disguised heroine's sartorial codes signify her as male, she becomes a potential object of desire for another woman. The erotic energy that passes between the disguised heroine and the desiring subject resonates with the broader cultural discourse of female-female desire and sexual practices, signifying those very behaviors and longings to the audience. However, from the viewer's perspective, the disguised heroine's mistaken identity also alleviates the desiring subject's guilt over her feeling for and actions toward another woman. (412)

Disguise thus works both inside the play as part of the plot and theme, and outside the script since the audience's meta-awareness of the "reality" can go beneath and beyond the disguise. In *Twelfth Night*, female-female desire is only portrayed by Olivia's passion for Viola/Sebastian. Viola, on the contrary, hates herself for provoking such an attraction in Olivia. Although Olivia is genuinely fooled by the disguise, her chief desire is for

marriage as she shows when she proposes to Sebastian later on. In the last scene, Viola's brother (now Olivia's husband) comments on Olivia's unintentional homoerotic behavior when he tells her that she would have been "contracted" and "betrothed" to a "maid." Viola, however, does not condemn Olivia's behavior. She places the blame on the vulnerability of the female gender:

> How easy is it for the proper-false
> In women's waxen hearts to set their forms!
> Alas, our frailty is the cause, not we!
> For such as we are made of, such we be.
> How will this fadge? my master loves her dearly;
> And I, poor monster, fond as much on him;
> And she, mistaken, seems to dote on me.
> What will become of this? As I am man,
> My state is desperate for my master's love;
> As I am woman,--now alas the day!--
> What thriftless sighs shall poor Olivia breathe!
> O time! thou must untangle this, not I;
> It is too hard a knot for me to untie! (II.ii.15-38)

Viola first feels compassion for Olivia who would be better off loving a "dream" than the false image of a man that Viola embodies. Viola describes herself, and the female gender in general, as having "waxen hearts" which take the impression of the "proper-false." She portrays herself as a "poor monster" whose cross-dressed identity has not only deceived

Olivia but has also prevented Viola herself from displaying her feminine nature and her love for the Duke.

In *Twelfth Night,* recognition occurs when the siblings meet in the same physical place; unlike most pages, Viola neither chooses nor is she in control of the recognition scene. In Act V.i, the Duke is the first to voice the confusion that onstage characters feel: “One face, one voice, one habit, and two persons,/A natural perspective, that is and is not!” (204-206). Then, Antonio adds: “How have you made division of yourself?/An apple, cleft in two, is not more twin/Than these two creatures. Which is Sebastian? (212-214); and Olivia joins their bewilderment uttering “Most wonderful!” (215). Interestingly, the three “deceived” characters only see Viola as a second Sebastian. It is Viola herself who reveals she is a woman in male attire:

> If nothing lets to make us happy both
> But this my masculine usurp'd attire,
> Do not embrace me till each circumstance
> Of place, time, fortune, do cohere and jump
> That I am Viola: which to confirm,
> I'll bring you to a captain in this town,
> Where lie my maiden weeds; by whose gentle help
> I was preserved to serve this noble count. (240-47)

Viola wants to bring a witness and ocular proof of her female identity, though like Julia, she is still in pages’ attire at the end of the play. The recognition scene also serves to re-direct Olivia’s original female-female desire towards heterosexual desire for Sebastian,

whom she has married. Sebastian poignantly points to the danger that disguise can bring about when he tells Olivia:

> So comes it, lady, you have been mistook:
> But nature to her bias drew in that.
> You would have been contracted to a maid;
> Nor are you therein, by my life, deceived,
> You are betroth'd both to a maid and man. (250-57)

The Duke happily steps in and addresses Viola first as his page: “Boy, thou hast said to me a thousand times/ Thou never shouldst love woman like to me” (261-62). Then, he asks her to: “Give me thy hand/And let me see thee in thy woman's weeds” (267-68). After asking his page to embody the female gender formally by wearing female attire, Orsino willingly offers Viola a new role:

> Your master quits you; and for your service done him,
> So much against the mettle of your sex,
> So far beneath your soft and tender breeding,
> And since you call'd me master for so long,
> Here is my hand: you shall from this time be
> Your master's mistress. (V.i.304-309)

The Duke recognizes Viola’s noble origin and acknowledges how Viola has performed actions which were inappropriate for a woman. In order to “compensate” Viola, now Orsino offers Viola his hand so that she can become his mistress after having being his faithful servant, much like Manet to Guy.

As the Duke has not previously known Viola as female, we cannot say that there is a recognition in an Aristotelian sense. Nonetheless, the recognition the Duke offers Viola may be explained with the Butlerian definition in mind. The Duke, who has known Viola only under the mask of the male gender, now recognizes her as a female who has gained insight into the male world when in disguise. Like Julia, Viola, having been her lover's confidante, knows the Duke's true feelings. Although she does not openly claim for a recognition of a "new becoming," as Butler would put it, the Duke graciously grants her one. Viola can return to the female gender with the certainty that the Duke accepts both her cross-dressed past and her present female self despite her male attire.

Unlike the Early Modern plays I have been discussing, the Restoration play *The Rover* features a cross-dressed page, Hellena, who, in spite of performing the male gender impeccably, is recognized almost immediately by her lover. Unlike some of her Renaissance counterparts, Hellena does not assume the role of her lover's page. Hellena is her own master. She puts on pages' clothing in order to convince Angellica, the courtesan, not to pursue Willmore, Hellena's lover. Hellena performs as a male so convincingly that she deceives both the courtesan and briefly her own lover until the moment Willmore looks directly at the page's face and recognizes her. Thus, recognition seems to arise not from a "failure" or a "break" in the performance but from recognition of facial features.

Hellena's motivation for cross-dressing is to fight the courtesan for her lover. Instead of rendering her service to her lover, as her Early-Modern counterparts did, Hellena takes the issue in her own hands and looks for her competitor for his affection.

Unlike Julia, who appeals to Silvia's compassion, Hellena boldly warns Angellica not to interfere with "his" lady's love affair:

> Madam, 'tis to entreat you (oh, unreasonable!)
> You would not see this stranger;
> For if you do, she vows you are undone,
> Though nature never made a man so excellent,
> And sure, he 'ad been a god, but for inconstancy. (IV.ii.284-288)

Hellena convincingly speaks on behalf of *his* lady stating that she is:

> Young, rich, and nobly born, but has the fate
> To be in love with a young English gentleman.
> Strangely she loves him: at first sight she loved him,
> But did adore him when she heard him speak:
> For he, she said, had charms in every word,
> That failed not to surprise, to wound and conquer. (IV.ii, 243-248)

By painting *his* lady as a victim of Willmore's fickleness, *he* makes quite an impression on Angellica. Angellica soon realizes that the page is speaking the truth because she has also fallen prey to Willmore's flattering words. Hellena continues exalting *his* lady by mentioning how she was won:

> With this addition to his other beauties,
> He won her unresisting, tender heart.
> He vowed, and sighed, and swore he loved her dearly;
> And she believed the cunning flatterer,
> And thought herself the happiest maid alive.

Today was the appointed time by both

To consummate their bliss;

The virgin, altar, and the priest were dressed,

And while she languished for th' expected bridegroom,

She heard he paid his broken vows to you. (VI. Ii.261-270)

Thus, the page describes *his* lady as a naïve virgin who is waiting to be married when she hears that Willmore, "the cunning flatterer," is not likely to appear in the wedding ceremony because he is at Angellica's. The page tries to convince Angellica that Willmore has already promised to marry *his* lady. By emphasizing Hellena's virtue, *he* demonizes Willmore even more in the hope that Angellica does not keep him for herself.

In fact, when Willmore finally faces the cross-dressed Hellena, he is able to penetrate her disguise without difficulty. Although Willmore threatens to give the page away by revealing the disguise, he eventually chooses to play along and becomes an accomplice:

Willmore: Ha! Do not I know that face?

(Aside) – By Heaven, my little gipsy! What a dull dog

was I. Had I but looked that way, I'd known her. Are all

my hopes of a new woman banished? (to Hellena) – Egad, if

I do not fit thee for this, hang me. (To Angellica)-

Madam, I have found out the plot.

Hellena: (Aside) Oh lord, what does he say? Am I discovered now?

Willmore: do you see this young spark here?

Hellena: (Aside) He'll tell her who I am

Willmore: Who do you think this is?

Hellena: (Aside) Ay, ay, he does know me. (To Willmore)- Nay, dear captain! I am undone if you discover me.

Willmore: Nay, nay, no cogging. She shall know what a precious mistress I have. (IV.ii.334-347)

In their asides, they use words of endearment such as "dear captain" and "precious mistress" to address one another. Besides, when recognizing Hellena, Willmore acknowledges their previous connection by referring to Hellena as the "precious mistress" he has. The disguise does not fool him as it does the courtesan who, in spite of having seen Hellena earlier in female attire, does not share an intimate connection with her. Wilmore provokes Hellena by speaking of her in derogatory terms:

Hellena: Will you be such a devil?

Willmore: Nay, nay, I'll teach you to spoil sport you will not make. (to Angellica)—This small ambassador comes not from a person of quality as you imagine, and he says – but from a very arrant gipsy, the talking'st, prating'st, canting'st little animal thou ever saw'st.

Angellica: What news you tell me; that's the thing I mean.

……..

Willmore: Mean that thing? That gipsy thing? Thou may'st as well be jealous of thy monkey or parrot as of her. A German motion were worth a dozen of her, and a dream were a better enjoyment—a creature of a constitution fitter for

Heaven than man. (IV.ii.348-354, 357-361)

Wilmore devalues Helena by comparing her to animals, but also manages to complain of her refusal to give in to him sexually: a dream would be "better enjoyment" and she is "fitter for Heaven" than for man.

Hellena: (Aside) Though I'm sure he lies, yet this vexes me.

Angellica: You are mistaken; she's a Spanish woman

Made up of no such dull materials

Willmore: Materials! Egad, and she be made of any that will either dispense or admit of love, I'll be bound to continence.

Hellena: (aside to him) Unreasonable man, do you think so? (IV.ii.362-367)

Willmore ends by taking charge of the situation and dismissing the page as if he had the authority to welcome or dismiss Angellica's visitors. In the end, he does not betray Hellena's trust by giving away her disguise, but he does not hurt his reputation either since he does not acknowledge any commitment to marriage in a clear way.

Willmore: (to Hellena) You may return, my little brazen head, and tell your lady / That till she be handsome enough to be beloved, or I dull enough to be religious, there will be small hopes of me.

Angellica: Did you not promise, then, to marry her?

Willmore: Not I, by Heaven.

Angellica: You cannot undeceive my fears and torments till you have vowed you will not marry her.

Hellena: (Aside) If he swears that, he'll be revenged on me indeed for all my rogueries.

Willmore: If it were possible I should ever be inclined to marry, it should be some kind young sinner; one that has generosity enough to give a favour handsomely to one that can ask it discreetly; one that has wit enough to manage an intrigue or love. Oh, how civil such a wench is to a man that does her the honour to marry her. (IV.ii.368-390)

Instead of swearing that he will not marry Hellena, Willmore signals a potential marriage when referring to his future bride as "young sinner," and a woman who has "wit enough to manage an intrigue or love." Hellena fits Willmore's description since she has behaved as a "young sinner" by blatantly transgressing the gender boundaries and, in doing so, she has "intrigued" and shown her love for Willmore.

Unlike Renaissance cross-dressed pages who are not recognized when they perform their roles well, this Restoration page, even when convincingly acting as a saucy page, is immediately discovered when Willmore looks at *him*. Yet, instead of being detrimental for the page, it is beneficial since they explore their mutual wittiness and thirst for adventure. Their complicity is highlighted by the use of aside comments. They playfully vex each other while not giving away the disguise. Willmore playfully speaks ill of Hellena while acknowledging his emotional connection to her. Willmore whispers to Hellena that Angellica "shall know what a precious mistress I have" and then he calls the page "my little brazen head" after referring to the page's mistress as "a very arrant gipsy, the talking'st, prating'st, canting'st little animal thou ever saw'st." Willmore's

criticism of Hellena indicates that disguise also restricts Hellena since she cannot defend herself directly while impersonating a page. Yet, in spite of this limiting factor, cross-dressing proves to be a useful tool for discovery and self-knowledge. Willmore not only re-apprehends Hellena as the woman he used to know, but also as a woman who can convincingly perform as male, which he finds most appealing. Thus, while Willmore has not been fooled as most of the other male lovers are by the disguise of a page, Hellena's daring behavior changes his attitude toward her and proves a catalyst to a genuine marriage.

In all the plays analyzed in this chapter, the cross-dressed heroines choose to construct themselves as men as a way of concealing their female gender and thus protecting themselves in circumstances where women might be in jeopardy. Venturing into the male world, female pages are determined to reunite with their lovers or, as in Viola's case, find protection in an unknown place or situation. Recognition scenes, which allow the plots to move forward, also permit the male characters to re-apprehend their objects of desire as they once knew them, or, in the Duke's case in *Twelfth Night*, the recognition scene enables his desire to flow freely to an acceptable heterosexual object.

Although there are not many female pages in Restoration plays, Hellena's case points to a change of perspective as far as recognition is concerned. While recognition in Renaissance plays is prevented by changes in outward appearance, often simply by changing clothes, in *The Rover*, disguise is easily penetrated when the lovers look into each other's eyes. Thus, there seems to be a shift from recognition being based on clothing and superficial features to recognition based on facial features. The convention that "clothes make the man" on the Early Modern stage, a convention surely strengthened

by all-male acting companies, seems to fade on the Restoration stage where actresses perform as characters of their own gender.

Committing themselves to a page-master relationship allows female characters to enact a role which they can quite easily perform. Due to their physical resemblance to young boys, young ladies could easily slip into male attire to carry out pages' duties such as carrying the target, singing, courting ladies for their masters, and delivering messages. They perform the male gender without much difficulty until physical strength or courage to fight is required. They seem to feel comfortable performing the role of a page due to its similarities to their future roles as wives. Furthermore, adopting the role of a page also allows the cross-dressed heroines to form a bond of subservience to a male based mainly on trust in which they, in turn, receive protection from harassment by other men.

We must not mistake the cross-dressers' willingness to establish a bond of subservience with their lovers, however, with complete and total obedience. On the contrary, it is the very subservient role that allows them to become subversive. We can see that their subversiveness challenges different societal structures. For instance, Jessica and Mary challenge their fathers' control over them. Hellena and Julia defy their lovers' agendas. Instead of portraying Willmore and Proteus favorably when they talk with Angellica and Sylvia, respectively, they praise their own feminine selves instead. Besides both Julia and Hellena, when cross-dressed, can make accusations that they could not have made easily or comfortably as women. Manet/Jacke, disobeys *his* master when *he* leaves the camp to accompany Bella Franca. Viola is the only page who does not cross-dress to pursue a lover. Whereas most of the other pages seem to have a more aggressive amorous intent, Viola cross-dresses more as a defensive ploy since she is

alone in a world that could harm a female, However, Viola's disguising disrupts the order of Orsino's court by threatening gender boundaries. Therefore, these cross-dressed pages briefly disrupt the paternal, spousal, and societal power dynamics.

These subversive performances of the male gender hint at the threat a performative conceptualization of gender has on patriarchy. If these individual performances show that gender boundaries can temporarily be crossed and that power dynamics can be tweaked, then patriarchy's power can be challenged by small increments at a time. Although these theatrical performances do not openly endorse the threat that crossing gender boundaries poses to patriarchy, they do challenge an essentialist definition of gender by briefly presenting the performative aspect of gender on stage.

Chapter Two

Cross-dressed Siblings: a taste of the 'other' gender

Playwrights explore the trope of cross-dressing in different kinds of relationships. In Chapter One, we saw how cross-dressing as a page is, to a certain extent, the easiest type of cross-dressing for a young lady who decides to venture out of the female sphere. This chapter deals with siblinghood and cross-dressing as popular tropes in four plays: Thomas Heywood's *The Four Prentices of London* (1592),[4] Francis Beaumont and John Fletcher's *Love's Cure* (1647),[5] William Shakespeare's *Twelfth Night* (1601), and *Cymbeline* (1611).

Siblinghood as a trope was highly popular in Early Modern drama, but there is not much scholarship concerning siblings as characters in Renaissance and Restoration drama. Some articles deal with sister-sister relationships, some with brothers as mentors

[4] Lisa Cooper in "Chivalry, Commerce, and Conquest" explains that *Four Prentices* "was popular enough not only to be staged in the late 1590', but to be printed again—if not actually performed as well—in the early seventeenth-century. The only surviving impressions of the play are from 1615 (STC#13321) and 1630 (STC # 13322). No manuscript of the play is extant, and the 1615 edition may have been its first printing. However, external evidence in Henslow's *Diary* as well as the Stationer's Register indicates that some version of the play was performed between 1592-94, and it was popular enough, as many have noted, to be the target of Francis Beaumont's satire in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, whose first edition is dated 1613" (160).

[5] Anne Duncan in "It Takes a Woman to Play a Real Man: Clara as Hero(ine) of Beaumont and Fletcher's *Love's Cure*" states that: "The earliest elements of *Love's Cure* seem to have been written by Beaumont and Fletcher before Beaumont retired in 1613, and probably earlier, around 1605. It is generally thought that Philip Massinger revised the play, reworking it considerably, sometime after 1625, and that he was heavily influenced by the Spanish play *La fuerza de la costumbre*, published in 1625 by Guillén de Castro y Bellris" (398).

for their sisters, and some examine incest as a trope mainly in tragedies where siblings are the main characters.[6] A number of women who cross-dress, or who emulate their brothers, look like their brothers and are mistaken for them. In these selected texts, the lack of recognition between siblings seems to offer playwrights a way of presenting taboo topics such as incestuous and/or same-sex desire on stage. I first explore the trope of siblinghood in *Four Prentices* and cross-dressing in *Love's Cure*. These two little-known plays help us see how Shakespeare's contemporaries chose those tropes for stage performance. Heywood in *Four Prentices* presents an extreme case of misrecognition since five siblings are unable to recognize one another when they are not in London, the geographical location where they used to live and where they saw one another for the last time. Such massive misrecognition, though it has a primary comedic function, serves as a commentary on the dangers of crossing class boundaries as well as of the potential erotic attraction that may lead to an incestuous relationship. In contrast, Beaumont and Fletcher, in *Love's Cure,* do not explore siblings' misrecognition, but they focus on interrogating gender questions. By making the opposite-sex siblings experience both genders, the play suggests that it is equally easy for each gender to perform as the other if they have the right models—in this case, the siblings imitate their parents. Unlike Heywood and Beaumont and Fletcher, Shakespeare combines both siblings' attraction to one another and cross-dressing in *Cymbeline* and *Twelfth Night*. The recognition scenes in the four plays give us insights into gender issues explored on the Early-Modern stage since they

[6] For a comprehensive study on sibling relationships in Shakespeare's plays see John Mercer's dissertation "Sibling relationships in Shakespeare's plays: course, quality, and function" in which he discusses 55 sets of siblings.

function as the locale that exposes the taboo topic of potential libidinal attraction among siblings as well as homoerotic desire.

In *The Four Prentices of London*, I examine Bella Franca's interaction with her four brothers, their mutual lack of recognition, and the brothers' incestuous desire for their sister. To justify the siblings' inability to recognize one another, the play locates each of the siblings in a different geographical area. The script also comments on each of the siblings' adventures after they survive shipwrecks and then brings them together on the way to a common destination—Jerusalem. When Bella Franca, the main female character, leaves London to go to Jerusalem, she class-cross-dresses as a poor girl so as not to be recognized. On her way to the Holy Land, Bella Franca accidentally meets her brothers. She does not recognize them because she thinks they have been shipwrecked and drowned. Likewise, her brothers—Godfrey, Guy, Eustace, and Charles— do not recognize her because she is "masked by poverty" (l. 1810) since she is not wearing her usual attire and because they think she is in London where they left her before they joined the First Crusade to reconquer the Holy Land for England—a crusade led by Robert Duke of Normandy, King William's son, in 1095. In fact, the brothers do not recognize each other either because each of them thinks the others have died in the shipwreck. Besides, they are wearing different clothes, not the apprentices' attire they were wearing when they left London—which emphasizes the convention that "clothes make the man."

Their preconception about each other's death and their reliance on the clothes' convention lead the siblings to discount any family resemblances. The first time the disguised Bella Franca sees her brothers, she notices that the two thieves that she encounters on the road and who protect her look like Charles and Eustace, but she

discards the idea because she thinks both brothers dead. Similarly, Eustace points to the resemblance between the girl and his sister; but since he left her in London, he does not think it is possible for her to be before him:

Bella Franca: [Aside] How like is he to Charles by Shipwracke dead:
And he to Eustace perisht in the waves!
But they are both immortall Saints in heaven:
Yet I am glad because these shapes are theirs.
My happy coming hath tane up their strife,
Preserving mine owne honour and my life.
Eustace: [Aside] So blusht my sister: and this Out-law Theife
Hath a resemblance to my brother Charles:
But she in London lives a Virgine pure:
He in some huge Whales belly too too sure. (ll. 711-720)

Eustace recognizes both his sister and one of his brothers but promptly dismisses these recognitions based on his preconceptions. They do not trust their senses, especially sight. All these aside comments draw the audience in and invite us to hear the characters convincing themselves that, in spite of the physical resemblance, their siblings cannot actually be in that particular geographical location. Thus, after hearing their asides, we may be willing to suspend any judgment on the brothers' incestuous attraction towards Bella Franca later in the play. We, as audience, "know" that they are attracted towards their sibling "only" because they do not know that they share a blood bond.

The disguise that allows for misrecognition also seems to serve as a way of justifying the libidinal attraction that the brothers feel as soon as they see their sister.

Charles and Eustace, the two brothers who first see Bella Franca, are immediately attracted to her. Charles sees her as "pretty wench" whom he will marry and "make her Queene of all this Out-law crew." Eustace confesses to himself that he is: "halfe in love already, at first sight:/How will this raging flame increase by night?" Then, they each propose to her:

Charles Faire beauteous maide, resigne your love to me;
Mistresse of all these Forrests you shall be.
Eustace Love me, I'le kisse away these teares of griefe;
Sweete wench embrace a True-man, scorn a Thiefe. (ll. 721-724)

One of the dangers of not being recognized by or of not being able to recognize one's siblings is clear in this passage. The brothers boldly court their own sister and, if not stopped, they would have unwittingly committed incest. Both brothers compete for Bella's affection. They first try to discourage one another from pursuing the maid's love. Yet, both have made up their minds and they draw their swords to settle the matter, in spite of Bella's attempts to stop them by stepping between them.

The play entertains the idea of incestuous attraction on several occasions. In this first instance, incest is averted by the clown who separates the brothers. He tells them not to fight and to be friends instead because they may need to fight Tancred, the Italian Prince, who is fast approaching. Once Tancred arrives, followed by Godfrey and Guy, they all feel attracted to the maid. As Lisa H. Cooper claims, "the brothers' instant attraction to Bella Franca seems designed to make an audience that does recognize her shudder even while it laughs at the incestuous sexuality that now threatens not only to divide the armies but also to destroy a family" (169). The audience sees such

misrecognition emphasized by Bella Franca's own inability to recognize her brothers which prevents her from appealing to their brotherly protection. She is threatened by male characters who would/should protect her if only they knew who she truly is. "Bella Franca's incestuously desired body," Cooper states, is "delivered into the protection of the Italian prince Tancred, a spoil to be won by the best man in the coming war" (169). This passage, like others where the brothers engage in fights to win Bella Franca, delays the final recognition, and gives the audience more time to ponder the negative consequences that disguise may bring about due to misrecognition.

Beaumont and Fletcher seem to emphasize the possible libidinal attraction brothers may feel towards their sisters by portraying all four brothers as being unable to see through any of Bella Franca's disguises. Cross-class dressing is particularly poignant in *Four Prentices* because none of her four brothers penetrates any of Bella Franca's class cross-dressings. They did not recognize her the first time they saw her because she was "obscur'd within a cloud and masked by poverty" (ll. 1809-10) and they do not recognize her later when she appears richly attired with the clothes Tancred has provided her. Unable to see through her disguise, the brothers only perceive her as a beautiful maid who has become their object of desire. When the four brethren see the beautiful Bella Franca by Tancred's side, their initial desire to fight for her love rekindles and they all draw their swords. Bella Franca immediately exhorts them to stop by threatening to destroy her beauty "Looke to behold my Christall eyes scratcht out,/My visage martyrd, and my haire torne off" (ll. 1299-1300). She then gives them the opportunity to "ransome" her beauty "with peace" (l. 1301). Her use of the word "peace" in this case seems to apply not only as her appeal to them to stop their fight over her, but also as yet

another way of indirectly averting incest by asking them to control their sexual desire for her. Bella Franca utilizes her beauty to command the male characters to stop their fighting. She is vocal and she articulates what she wants clearly. Although the four brothers are ready to fight for Bella Franca's love, they are unwilling to see Bella Franca destroy her own beauty, so they put their swords away until they return from war. Eustace justifies their behavior by telling Bella Franca: "Lady, the vertuous motions of your heart/ Adde to the aboundant graces of your fame,/It was your beauty that did blinde our soules" (ll. 1316-18). Thus, her beauty blurs their perception.

In order to untangle the massive confusion caused by disguise, Heywood uses two different recognition scenes. In the first, only Eustace and Bella Franca recognize each other. After Bella Franca decides to flee the camp with her page, the cross-dressed Manet, the clown follows and attacks them. As Bella Franca is fighting the clown with a sword, Eustace rescues her again. This time, brother and sister pay close attention to one another's looks, which triggers their mutual recognition:

Bella Franca: [Aside] I never markt this Gallant halfe so much:
He hath my brothers eye, my fathers brow,
And he is Eustace all from top to toe.
Eustace. I had a sister, Lady, with that red,
That gives a crimson tincture to your cheeke,
With such a hand hid in a glove of snow,
That spake all musicke, like your heavenly tongue;
And for ther sake, faire Saint, I honour you.
Bella Franca I had a brother, had not the rude seas

Depriv'd me of him, with that manly looks,

That grace, that courage, I behold in you.

A Prince, whom had the rude seas never seen,

Even such another had yong Eustace beene.

Eustace. Eustace! Even such an accent gave her tong

So did my name sound in my sisters mouth,

Oh Bella Franca, were't thou not obscur'd

Within a cloud and maske of poverty,

Such fame ere this had thy rare vertues wonne,

Thus had thy beauty checkt th'all-seeing Sunne. (ll. 1793-1812)

Both Bella Franca and Eustace first focus on facial features. Eustace also comments on her voice, her accent, and his name as it used to sound when his sister pronounced it. After having verbalized their recognition, both Eustace and Bella Franca, in aside comments, re-assert their sibling's identity to themselves by imagining how they would look if attired in their customary clothes:

Bella Franca: [Aside] It is my brother Eustace.

Eustace: [Aside] View her well.

Imagine her but attir'd, and she

Would Bella Franca, and my sister bee.

Bella Franca [Aside] But strip my brother from his Prentice cote,

His cap, his common souldiers base disguise:

Even such a gallant as this seems to me,

Such would my brother, my sweete Eustace be.

Eustace: Sister!

Bella Franca: Brother! (ll. 1812-1821)

Their asides in this passage reinforce the amazement that they experience when they acknowledge one another as a long lost sibling. It also emphasizes the trope of "clothes-make-the wo/man." This trope seems to be used in order to highlight the sincerity of the siblings' misrecognition—they truly cannot see their siblings within clothing that is below or above their class status. After internalizing each other's real identity, they express their delight in having found (or rather 'discovered') the other, and they ask questions about past events:

Eustace: Make me immortall then, by heaven I vow,

I am richer then the Persian Sophy now.

Bella Franca: All Asia flowes not with more plenteous treasure,

Than I, to embrace my brother, my hearts pleasure.

How did you scape the waves?

Eustace: How have you past

The perilious Land, and crest the Seas so vaste?

Bella Franca: Where are my brothers, Eustace?

Eustace: Oh, those words,

Pierce to my heart like Dart, and pointed swords,

Omite these passions, sister, they are dead. (ll. 1822-1830)

In spite of his own shipwreck survival, Eustace is certain about his brothers' demise. He does not even entertain the remote possibility that they may also be alive. Eustace's

surety about their brothers' death here makes the five siblings' reunion at the play's end even more wondrous.

Stripped of the descriptive and flowery language that the first recognition scene favored, the second recognition scene presents the audience with a different type of recognition. Instead of recognizing Bella Franca through a deductive process, as Eustace and Bella Franca did, the rest of the family is "forced" to grant recognition. This second recognition scene occurs in the final scene, in which the brothers, after having fought and won crowns, reunite with their father who was on pilgrimage to the Holy Land. They formally recognize one another after they kill the pagan kings. In that triumphant moment, they all lament that Bella Franca is not there to share that moment with them:

Earle: Oh were my daughter here this joy to see;

How light her soule; how glad would my heart bee!

Tancred: Would I had now my love.

Guy: Or I that Dame,

That addes to beauties sunne a brighter flame. (ll. 2472-2475)

Eustace surprises everyone by asking Bella Franca to come forward. Bella Franca enters and, in a riddling manner similar to Rosalind's, reveals her true identity:

Bella Franca: The lovely Princes.

Tancre : Faire Mistresse!

Charles: Lady!

Godfrey: Madame !

Guy: Honoured Saint !

Bella Franca: Nay pardon me, love comes not by constraint.

But Princes, will you grant me patience,

Before I part, I meane to please you all.

First holy Patriarch, tell me of all others,

Whom in the world you most desire to see.

Earle: My daughter.

Bella Franca: Prince Godfrey, Charles, and Eustace, whom say you?

All: Next your selfe our sister.

Bella Franca: And whom you?

Tancred: My love

Bella Franca: Whos' that?

Tancred: Your honoured selfe faire Maid.

Bella Franca: Nay, I'le make good the words that I have said.

Bella Franca: Father, I give a daughter to your hand:

Brothers, behold, here doth your sister stand.

Tancred behold the Lady you once ceas'd,

……

Eustace: My sister Bella Franca!

Brothers: Sister!

Tancred. Love!

Earle: I am to happy, and too full of joy.

Heaven powers on me more good then I can beare;

I that before was starv'd, now surfet here. (ll. 2479-91, 2493-98)

In a ceremonious way, Bella Franca identifies herself as the Earl's daughter, the apprentices' sister, and Tancred's future wife. She assumes a position of power in which she herself gives each of the male figures what he desires, although her identity is expressed in relationship to the men—which suggests that male hegemony still owns the play. The recognition scene allows the brothers to gain a sister while relinquishing a potentially incestuous relationship, which is voiced by Guy's comment: "Make love unto my sister! 'tis most strange" (l. 2507). Guy realizes that his behavior towards Bella Franca was inappropriate since he and his brothers were courting their own sister. Although Charles, Guy, and Godfrey do not penetrate Bella Franca's disguise, they acknowledge her as their sister based on her words, which are backed up by Eustace's introduction.

These two recognition scenes function primarily in an Aristotelian sense, for each of the siblings re-apprehends the others and the family is re-constituted since the siblings not only recognize one another, but they also recognize their father. These recognition scenes also prove to be a site for retrospective examination of the brothers' desire. Although incest is averted, it is staged as one of the possible negative consequences of disguise. Heywood gives us two recognition scenes, it seems, so that the audience can understand the difficulty the characters experience in telling reality from appearance. The first recognition scene abounds in details, asides, and questions that explain Bella Franca and Eustace's inability to recognize one another even after they had interacted on different occasions. The second recognition scene is direct, with few details. Bella Franca is in control of re-establishing the bonds with her male family members. Although she is re-inscribing herself into a patriarchal system, she makes sure that she is giving herself to

those who love her. Neither the father nor the brothers seem to recognize her, yet they willingly accept her when she declares herself "daughter" and "sister."

Instead of exploring an incestuous frisson, *Love's Cure* deals with the possibility of learning and teaching gender-based behaviors. In this play, both female and male genders are learned and performed successfully, at least until the age of marriage. The siblings, Clara and Lucio, are forced to cross-dress from an early age by their own parents for safety reasons. The cross-dressed siblings in this play are introduced to one another when Alvarez returns from exile with Clara after having been away for twenty years. In Act I. iii, cross-dressed Lucio greets the cross-dressed Clara with a mere "My deerest Sister," which Clara replies with "Kinde brother." Lucio had not been born when Alvarez took Clara into exile so no emotional bond had developed between the siblings. Eugenia, the siblings' mother, had assumed that both Alvarez and Clara had died in war. Unlike the siblings in *Cymbeline,* Clara and Lucio acknowledge their blood relationship because they are introduced to one another as siblings, but they do not feel drawn to one another as Imogen, Arviragus, and Guiderius do. In both plays, the male and female siblings have lived in separate households from an early age. However, Shakespeare suggests that there is a natural attraction between siblings while Fletcher and Beaumont do not acknowledge any magnetic attraction. This suggests that libido, ignored here, is what may distort perception in *Four Prentices* and *Cymbeline*, and that cross-dressing may reveal libidinal impulses.

Since both Lucio and Clara are aware of how to perform appropriately the gender in which they were brought up, each of them is critical of the other's performance of his or her imposed gender. For instance, after Bobadilla, the person in charge of their re-

gendering, tries to teach them how to ride a horse like a lady and like a man respectively, the siblings criticize each other:

Lucio: What into the Stable?

Not I, the Jades wil kick: the poore Groom there

Was almost spoyled the other day.

Clara: Fie on thee,

Thou wilt scarce be a man before thy mother.

Lucio: When wil you be a woman?

Clara: Would I were none.

But natures privy Seale assures me one. (II.ii.136-139)

Lucio's fear of getting hurt is repeated in many instances in the text where he is in danger of being attacked either playfully by Bobadilla, or seriously by his family's enemy, Vitelli. Similarly, Clara's reluctance to behave like a woman is emphasized in the play by her constant use of foul language and by her readiness to get into a fight whenever she can.

Apart from their dislike of their own gender's typical behavior, after twenty years of cross-dressing they have grown accustomed to their imposed gender and are critical of their own gender's clothing. For instance, when Lucio first wears male attire, he cannot stop complaining:

What would you have me doe? This scurvy sword

So gals my thigh: I would 'twer burnt: pish, looke

This cloak will ne'r keep on: these boots too hidebound,

Make me walk stiffe, as if my leggs were frozen,

And my Spurs gingle, like a Morris-dancer:

Lord, how my head akes, with this roguish hat;

This masculine attire, is most uneasie,

I am bound up in it: I had rather walke

In folio, againe, loose, like a woman. (II.ii.11-20)

Lucio pays attention to all the details of his new attire and how uncomfortable his new clothes are in comparison to his female attire. Similarly, Clara complains about her new women's clothing:

Clara: Oh, I shall no more see those golden

dayes, thes clothes will never fadge with me: a –o this filthie vardingale, this hip-hape: [to Bobadilla] brother why are womens hanches onely limited, confin'd, hoop'd in, as it were with these same scurvy vardingales?

Bobadilla: Because womens hanches onely are most subject to display and fly out. (II.ii.66-72)

As Bobadilla points out, Clara, in her female attire, will have to get used to her new role in society, to being on display, rather than taking action as she used to do while in exile. The comedy of their reactions in these passages suggests the mutable nature of gender by tying it directly to clothing. Both siblings are also unaware of their sexual urges until they discover heterosexual love and slowly become responsive to their own sexual orientation and needs when they fall in love. This aspect of the play will be analyzed in depth in the next chapter.

In this play, Beaumont and Fletcher flirt with the idea that gender can be learned and unlearned. Eugenia and Alvarez force their children to cross-dress from an early age and, as both point out, they are successful at modeling gender behaviors for their children. When Alvarez is pardoned by the king for having killed Vitelli's uncle, he tells his wife:

Alvarez: And to encrease thy comfort, know, this young man
Whom with such fervent earnestnesse you eye,
Is not what he appears, but such a one
As though with joy wilt bless, thy daughter Clara

Eugenia: A thousand blessings in that word.

Alvarez: The reason
Why I have bred her up thus, at more leisure
I will import unto you: wonder not
At what you have seen her doe, it being the least
Of many great and valiant undertakings
She hath made good with honour.

Eugenia: Ile returne
The joy I have in her, with one as great
To you my *Alvarez*: you, in a man
Have given to me a daughter: in a woman,
I give to you a Sonne: this was the pledge
You left here with me, whom I have brought up
Different from what he was, as you did *Clara*,

And with the like successe; as she appears
Alter'd by custome, more then woman, he
Transform'd by his soft life, is less then man. (I.iii.155-173)

After explaining their justification for having cross-dressed their children, they engage, almost playfully, in reversing the process by forcing their children to perform the opposite gender:

Alvarez. Now our mutuall care must be
Imploy'd to help wrong'd nature, to recover
Her right in either of them, lost by custome:
To you I give my Clara, and receive
My Lucio to my charge: and we'll contend
With loving industry, who soonest can
Turne this man woman, or this woman man (I.iii.176-182)

Safe from danger, they exchange their children so that they can provide them with new models and behavioral patterns that are more appropriate for their biological gender. The play, thus, emphasizes the idea of teaching and learning gender behavior. Although the gender boundaries have been blurred for twenty years in this play, its ending makes clear that Clara and Lucio need to re-gender in order to embrace marriage.

In *Cymbeline*, as in *The Four Prentices of London*, the siblings' meeting hints at the dangers of misrecognition between brothers and sisters. In this case, not only potential incest but also the titillating possibility for male deviant sexuality is temporarily entertained. Imogen, the main female character, had never seen her brothers who had been taken from their father's court at a young age. In III.vi, we see cross-dressed

Imogen, unaware of the relationship, interacting with her brothers for the first time. On her way to Milford, Imogen takes refuge in a cave where her brothers and their adoptive father, Belarius, live. When Belarius enters the cave, he is taken aback by the beauty of the disguised Imogen, who is pretending to be the boy Fidele: "By Jupiter, an angel – or, if not,/ An earthly paragon. Behold divineness/ No elder than a boy!" (III.vi.42-44). Similarly, Guiderius and Arviragus feel immediately attracted to Fidele:

Guiderius: were you a woman, youth,
I should woo hard but be your groom in honesty;
Ay, bid for you as I'd buy
Arviragus: I'll make't my comfort
He is a man, I'll love him as my brother;
[to *Imogen:*] and such a welcome as I'd give to him
After long absence, such is yours. Most welcome.
Be sprightly, for you fall 'mongst friends. (III.vi.67-72)

Both brothers, unwilling to see Fidele as a same-sex love object, welcome him as they would their own brother. According to the editor Martin Butler, "this is Cymbeline's nearest approach to the 'incest averted' motif which modern psychoanalytical criticism sees as central to romance; Imogen must reunite with her brothers, but avoid the dangers of getting too close to them" (*Cymbeline* III.vi.68-9 note). Imogen feels welcome and her first impression of her brothers is highly positive:

Great men
That had a court no bigger than this cave,
That did attend themselves and had the virtue

Which their own conscience sealed them, laying by
That nothing-gift of differing multitudes,
Could not outpeer these twain. Pardon me, gods,
I'd change my sex to be companion with them,
Since Leonatus' false. (III.vi.79-85)

In this aside, she exalts her brothers' manners and virtues. In a self-reflective moment, she also acknowledges that, due to her sex, she will not be able to "be companion with them." She sees her true sex as an impediment to becoming a companion to Guiderius and Arviragus. Although she feels comfortable in their company: "mongst friends,/If brothers! [Aside]Would it had been so that they/Had been my father's sons" (III.vi.66-75), she is aware of the temporary nature of her masculine disguise and, thus, her relationship with the two young men.

Guiderius and Arviragus are portrayed as caring brothers; however, their constant praise of Fidele's virtues and beauty shows their potential homosexual attraction towards the boy, or perhaps their incestuous attraction towards their own sister. Their growing fondness for Fidele is apparent when they are willing to forgo hunting in order to look after the boy who is not feeling well:

Belarius: [to *Imogen*] You are not well. Remain here in the cave,
We'll come to you after hunting.
Arviragus: [to *Imogen*] Brother, stay here.
Are we not brothers?
Imogen: So man and man should be,
But clay and clay differs in dignity,

Whose dust is both alike. I am very sick

Guiderius: Go you to hunting, I'll abide with him. (IV.ii.1-6)

Arviragus emphasizes the strength of their bond by constantly repeating the word 'brother' when addressing Fidele. He intuitively seems to know that there is a blood connection between them, while Imogen does not accept the term "brother" easily because of their seemingly different social status. Guiderius expresses the strong connection that he feels towards Fidele by openly confessing his love towards the youth:

Guiderius: I love thee; I have spoke it;

How much the quantity, the weight as much,

As I do love my father.

Belarius: What, how, how?

Arviragus: If it be sin to say so, sir I yoke me

In my good brother's fault. I know not why

I love this youth, and I have heard you say

Love's reason's without reason. The bier at door,

And a demand who is't shall die, I'd say

"My father, not this youth."

Belarius: [Aside] O noble strain!

O worthiness of nature, breed of greatness!

……

I'm not their father, yet who this should be

Doth miracle itself, loved before me.

……

Imogen: [Aside] These are kind creatures. (IV.ii.16-25, 28-29,33)

Being attracted to Fidele, both Guiderius and Arviragus perceive their desire as homosexual and try to repress it or justify it by claiming a bond of brotherhood. The audience, however, can clearly see that their claim to siblinghood is true, and that the attraction they feel is heterosexual. Due to Imogen's cross-dressing and their mutual lack of recognition, the brothers are developing incestuous desires for their sister. Belarius cannot explain the strong connection that the two brothers feel towards Fidele, but their preferring Fidele over him suggests to the audience that a blood bond is stronger than friendship.

The brothers' increased attachment to the boy peaks when they find Fidele dead. When Arviragus carries the boy in his arms, the brothers and Belarius feel sadness and melancholy for such an unfortunate and unexpected turn. Interestingly, not even when handling the inert cross-dressed body do the brothers recognize Imogen's true gender. The brothers' strong connection to their disguised sister becomes apparent when they comment on how they will take care of the grave. Arviragus promises Fidele to put all kinds of flowers in *his* grave. Both brothers are truly saddened by the boy's demise.

In V.vi, we witness several recognition scenes, where not only Imogen reunites with her brothers and her husband, but also the king "finds" his three children. These recognition scenes can be analyzed both with an Aristotelian and a Butlerian definition in mind. In an Aristotelian sense, all the characters re-apprehend Imogen as they once "knew" her. First, Belarius, Arviragus, Guiderus notice the strong resemblance between the king's young servant boy and their dead Fidele. Imogen had performed the male gender without any difficulty when she met her siblings. Being assigned ordinary

domestic chores, Fidele does not have to perform typically male tasks such as hunting or fighting:

Belarius: Pray, be not sick,

For you must be our housewife.

……

Arviragus: How angel-like he sings!

Guiderius: But his neat cookery!

Belarius: He cut our roots in characters,

And sauced our broths, as Juno had been sick

and he her dieter.

Arviragus: Nobly he yokes

A smiling with a sigh, as if the sigh

Was that it was for not being such a smile;

……

Guiderius: I do note

That grief and patience, rooted in him both,

Mingle their spurs together (IV. ii.43-44, 49-55,57-59)

Fidele is primarily identified as their "housewife" who excels in cooking. Belarius and the brothers admire Fidele's uncomplaining nature and amiable personality which persist in spite of *his* apparent grief. Although the conventions of femininity such as being silent and patient are present in Fidele, neither Arviragus nor Guiderius see through Imogen's disguise. Similarly, Lucius sees in Imogen the faithful page who has served him so well and who could now intercede for him. Yet, Lucius never suspected his page was a cross-

dressed woman. The king also recognizes a similarity between the page and someone he used to know, but he seems unable to see through Imogen's disguise. After Belarius' confession,[7] the astonished king exclaims:

Cymbeline: Oh, what am I,

A mother to the birth of three? Ne'er mother

Rejoiced deliverance more. Blest pray you be,

That after this strange starting from your orbs,

You may reign in them now!

[*Guiderius* and *Arviragus* rise]

O Imogen,

Thou hast lost by this a kingdom

Imogen: No, my lord

I have got two worlds by't. O my gentle brothers,

Have we thus met? O never say hereafter

But I am truest speaker. You called me brother

When I was but your sister, I you brothers,

When ye were so indeed.

Cymbeline: Did you e'er meet?

Arviragus: Ay, my good lord.

Guiderius: And at first meeting loved,

Continued so, until we thought he died

[7] When prompted, Belarius confesses that he stole the two boys out of revenge because he had been banished for something he had not done. For proof he shows the youngest's mark, a mole, and also a curious mantle that the queen had made.

Cornelius: by the Queen's dram she swallowed.

Cymbeline: O rare instinct (V.iv.369-381)

The king is pleasantly surprised to know that his three children have previously met and developed a love bond as Guiderius affirms. Interestingly, the king's calling himself "mother" suggests a figurative type of cross-dressing in which the king is willing to claim a female role.

Although the focus of this chapter is on siblings, Imogen also claims recognition, in a Butlerian sense. She demands a "new becoming" as a daughter and a wife. Both her father and her husband, who now see her in male attire, can perceive her as both male and female in the recognition scene where she is still attired as male, though verbally reclaiming her female self as daughter and wife. Therefore, their mutual bonds will be re-constituted with the understanding that the once obedient Imogen has now grown into a woman who has temporarily experienced and gained insight from the male world.

Similar to *Cymbeline* and *The Four Prentices of London*, *Twelfth Night* also deals with siblings' mutual recognition and the temporary confusion that cross-dressing causes. At the beginning of the play, Viola, like Bella Franca, thinks that her brother has drowned after the shipwreck. When she lands in Ilyria, she asks the ship captain for help. She decides to cross-dress and starts serving the Duke. In Act V.i, the siblings finally coincide in time and place (on stage). They have been living in the same geographical area, but they have not previously seen each other. When Viola and Sebastian finally reunite, they delay the moment of verbal recognition until they confirm their common background. Onstage characters cannot believe their eyes when looking at the twins. Duke Orsino comments: "One face, one voice, one habit, and two persons" (208). Antonio asks

Sebastian: “How have you made division of yourself?/ An apple, cleft in two, is not more twin/ Than these two creatures. Which is Sebastian?” (215-16). Olivia adds “Most wonderful!” (218) when she cannot believe what she is seeing. Similar to Eustace and Bella Franca’s recognition scene, only after these utterances of surprise does the audience hear the twins talking and going through an elaborate verbal recognition in spite of the obvious physical resemblance:

Sebastian [seeingViola]: Do I stand there? I never had a brother;
Nor can there be that deity in my nature,
Of here and every where. I had a sister,
Whom the blind waves and surges have devoured.
Of charity, what kin are you to me?
What countryman? what name? what parentage? (219-224)

Sebastian’s opening line “do I stand there?” echoes Viola’s surprise when she states “I my brother know/ yet living in my glass” (III.iv.344-45), after first donning male clothes. Then, the twins engage in a detailed dialogue about their place of birth, and their father:

Viola: Of Messaline: Sebastian was my father.
Such a Sebastian was my brother, too.
So went he suited to his watery tomb:
If spirits can assume both form and suit
You come to fright us.
Sebastian: A spirit I am indeed,
But am in that dimension grossly clad
Which from the womb I did participate.

Were you a woman, as the rest goes even,

I should my tears let fall upon your cheek,

And say 'Thrice-welcome, drowned Viola!' (225-234)

Instead of confirming her identity, Viola starts talking about their father, his mole, and the date of his death:

Viola: My father had a mole upon his brow.

Sebastian: And so had mine.

Viola: And died that day when Viola from her birth

Had numbered thirteen years.

Sebastian: O, that record is lively in my soul.

He finished indeed his mortal act

That day that made my sister thirteen years. (235-241)

The twin's talk suggests a deeper, family connection, but it is still necessary to verify such connection through facts that are not based on appearance. Thus, Shakespeare seems to go deeper than the "clothes make the man" trope in *Four Prentices*. However, clothes are still an important signifier of identity as Viola makes clear:

If nothing lets to make us happy both

But this my masculine usurped attire,

Do not embrace me till each circumstance

Of place, time, fortune, do cohere and jump

That I am Viola, which to confirm,

I'll bring you to a captain in this town,

Where lie my maiden weeds, by whose gentle help

I was preserved to serve this noble count.

All the occurrence of my fortune since

Hath been between this lady and this lord. (242-251)

After confirming their common background, Viola proposes to change into her female attire and to summon the captain who had helped her so that there is no doubt about her real identity. This elaborate delay in the recognition scene hints that a visual recognition, even one as obvious as seeing one's own twin, may not be enough. An additional confirmation of what the characters perceive visually seems to be required since they need to go over facts to confirm their recognition.

In this case, as in *Cymbeline*, the cross-dressed Viola causes the Duke and Olivia to experience apparently deviant sexual desire. Sebastian, in turn, reflects on the effect Viola's "masculine usurp'd attire" had on Olivia:

Sebastian: [to Olivia] so comes it, lady, you have been mistook:

but nature to her bias drew in that.

You would have been contracted to a maid;

Nor are you therein, by my life, deceived,

You are betroth'd both to a maid and man. (252-56)

Sebastian's comment points to Olivia's potential deviant sexual desire since she was attracted by and almost married to another woman. The same latent deviant desire applies to the Duke who is attracted to the boy, Cesario. The play deals with the possibility of non-heterosexual orientation only fleetingly, though. The recognition scene promptly brings heterosexual love to the forefront.

Although Viola is recognized by her brother in an Aristotelian sense, Viola does not seem to ask for a Butlerian sense of recognition. Of all the cross-dressed heroines analyzed so far, she is the least interested, it seems to me, in asking for a "new becoming" or for an identity that is different from the one she had at the beginning of the play. She is happy to have found her brother, which will allow her to admit her female identity to Olivia and marry the Duke.

The examples we have examined in this chapter point to the possibility of blurring gender boundaries with different degrees of success. Imogen, Clara, Lucio, and Viola are capable of performing the opposite gender without any difficulty. In *Cymbeline* and *Twelfth Night,* the inconvenience of remaining in that gender is only apparent when the characters' heterosexual urges trigger the recognition scene. In contrast, *Love's Cure* does not need a recognition scene between siblings, though it uses a recognition scene between Clara and Vitelli, which will be analyzed in depth in Chapter Four.
Siblings' attraction, which may verge on incestuous desire, is a negative consequence of cross-dressing. For instance, the four brothers are smitten the first time they see their sister. They offer their love to Bella Franca, but are only interested in her physical beauty. Bella Franca is never asked her name, her background, or the reason why she is on her way to the Holy Land. While the brothers feel an almost immediate attraction to their sister, Bella Franca shows no interest in them. She comments on some of their physical features and the resemblance they have to her own brothers, but she does not feel the same physical attraction as the prentices do. She limits her comments to maintaining the peace. A similar situation is explored in *Cymbeline*, where the two brothers feel immediate physical attraction towards their sister. Imogen, like Bella Franca, never

voices such an attraction to either of her brothers. The main difference between the sibling situations in the two plays is that in *Four Prentices*, the brothers and sister grew up together and therefore might be expected to recognize one another, while Arviragus and Guiderus had never shared the same physical space with Imogen. All the boys, however, seem to be immediately attracted towards their sisters when they meet in an unexpected geographical location.

In both plays, physical resemblance is not enough to bring about recognition, which points to the unreliability of the senses. The misrecognition is sustained for a long period of time due to the changed attire of the characters and the different and unexpected geographical location where they interact. Recognition takes place only when the female characters reveal themselves verbally. Their narratives are validated by male figures who knew them from before. In *Cymbeline*, Pisanio had provided Imogen with the male clothes, and he tells Posthumus that Lucius' page is actually his wife. Similarly, Eustace, after his own recognition scene with his sister, introduces her to their remaining brothers at the end of the play.

What we gain by examining these texts as a group is an understanding of how siblinghood as a trope serves different purposes. In *Four Prentices*, we see how Heywood explores the incest frisson by means of siblings' misrecognition caused by the siblings' "disguise"—the new attire that they assume when landing in different geographical areas, attire that does not coincide with their former social class. None of the five siblings is dressed as the others expect—which explains their inability to recognize one another. In *Love's Cure*, Beaumont and Fletcher utilize opposite-sex siblings to show that gender boundaries can be easily crossed, and that gender can be learned and unlearned.

Shakespeare in *Cymbeline* and *Twelfth Night* explores both cross-dressing and the incest frisson (in Imogen's case). As in *Four Prentices*, the idea of incest is dismissed in the recognition scene in which siblings' blood bonds are re-apprehended or discovered.

In all four plays we see how recognition provides the characters with the unsettling moment of discovering and reevaluating their sexual orientation. Even though the recognition scene brings with it a retrenchment into heteronormative expectations, the Duke had been attracted to the cross-dressed Viola. Similarly, Guiderius and Arviragus were attracted to Fidele. We can argue that their desires were always heterosexual since no one's desires are transparent to them as homoerotic. And they have felt attracted to the person behind the disguise, except for Olivia whose attraction towards cross-dressed Viola is based on Viola's external appearance. Unlike *Cymbeline* and *Twelfth Night, Four Prentices* stages another unsettling moment in the recognition scene. Incest, which has been accidentally averted in several scenes, is prevented for good by the brothers' re-apprehension of the beautiful maid as their own sister.

These plays flirt with a whiff of impropriety whether it is the possibility of incest or the shock of parents forcing children into new gender behaviors. Notwithstanding, all of the plays ultimately reinforce conventional gender roles. A taste of the other gender is enough to convince the characters and the audience to remain within the constraints of their own genders—perhaps not to be limited by those boundaries but to embrace its best gender-specific characteristics. Male characters can enact their masculinity and protect their sisters instead of experiencing homoerotic and incestuous feelings towards the unrecognized sister. Similarly, by enacting their female gender, sisters can count on their brothers' protection, and wives can rely on their husbands' intervention. When cross-

dressed women reclaim their female attire and their original role, the confusion brought about by the temporary cross-dressing vanishes. By the end of the plays, both characters and the audience realize that without the recognition, the cross-dressing might have led to disaster. Nevertheless, class and gender cross-dressing, although not encouraged as a permanent behavior, allows the female characters to gain a deeper understanding of their male siblings' interiority as well as to re-establish family bonds. They also come to accept their own gender and role as their most convenient option to live in a nurturing and safe environment after having experienced the dangers and struggles of the opposite sex.

Chapter Three

Scripting Recognition: Re-defining the female-gendered self in *As You Like It* and *The Merchant of Venice*

As we have seen in previous chapters, theatrical cross-dressing allows playwrights to explore different types of relationships between men and women—relationships in which power dynamics are sometimes at stake. Such relationships get re-defined in the recognition scenes. In Chapter One, I discussed cross-dressed heroines who develop a relationship with their lovers by assuming the subservient role of a page. In Chapter Two, I examined cross-dressers who interacted with their own brothers when in disguise. I would now like to focus on young women who decide to cross-dress as independent young males who are beyond boyhood, and who are not pages. In this chapter, I examine Rosalind in *As You Like It,* and Portia and Nerissa in *The Merchant of Venice*. I analyze Rosalind first because she seems to grow out of the page tradition since she shares some of the characteristics of the female pages in spite of impersonating a financially independent shepherd. Portia is the most unusual Shakespearean cross-dresser in that she goes into and out of male attire without raising any suspicion. For these two cross-dressed heroines, Shakespeare employs different types of recognition scene. Despite the unusual introduction of Hymen, Rosalind scripts a recognition scene which is

fairly conventional, which frees her to marry the young man of her choice. In *The Merchant of Venice,* the recognition scene comes after the play's central problem is solved. The characters could have continued their lives without even knowing about Portia and Nerissa's disguise. Portia and Nerissa unmask themselves only to teach their male partners that they should prioritize the marriage bond over friendship.

In *As You Like It,* Rosalind, unlike the female pages, cross-dresses as a male who does not depend on others for protection or survival. Rosalind and Celia plan their escape carefully. They gather their jewels, their wealth and they even decide to bring the clown along for "comfort" (not for protection) during their travel. Rosalind devises a new role for herself:

> Were it not better,
> Because that I am more than common tall,
> That I did suit me all points like a man,
> A gallant curtal-axe upon my thigh,
> A boar-spear in my hand, and in my heart,
> Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will.
> We'll have a swashing and a martial outside,
> as many other mannish cowards have,
> That do outface it with their semblances. (I.iii.108-116)

After rejecting for herself Celia's idea of dressing "in poor and mean attire/and with a kind of umber smirch [their] face[s]," Rosalind comments on what kind of accessories she will wear to enhance her performance. Not only will she carry an axe and a boar-spear but she will also adopt a "martial outside" and she will hide her fears. She is well

aware of the dangers ahead: “Alas, what danger will it be to us,/Maids as we are, to travel forth so far!/Beauty provoketh thieves sooner than gold” (I.iii.5-8). Each girl embraces her new role by adopting a new persona. Celia becomes Aliena, and Rosalind takes the name of Jove’s page’s name, Ganymede. When in disguise, both girls are careful to address one another by their new names or as “brother” or “sister.”

Cross-dressing poses some challenges for Rosalind, which shows that crossing gender boundaries is more than just donning male apparel. For instance, she cannot take advantage of her female self to ask for help. When Rosalind and Celia meet Corin and Sylvius, Rosalind appeals to them in behalf of Celia not herself:

> I prithee, shepherd, if that love or gold
> Can in this desert place buy entertainment,
> Bring us where we may rest ourselves, and feed.
> Here’s a young maid with travel much oppressed,
> And faints for succour. (II.iv.65-69)

Rosalind/Ganymede emphasizes that it is *his* ‘sister’ who really needs food and shelter. She feels she cannot show any weaknesses while she is performing as a man in public.

When in “private,” that is when only Aliena and the clown are present, however, Rosalind’s performance of the male gender varies. Sometimes, she forces herself to behave like a man, and she gives comfort to Celia, in spite of her own tiredness:

> *Rosalind*: O Jupiter, how weary are my spirits!
> *Touchstone*: I care not for my spirits, if my legs were not weary.
> *Rosalind*: I could find in my heart to disgrace my man’s
> Apparel and to cry like a woman. But I must comfort

> The weaker vessel, as doublet and hose ought to show itself courageous to petticoat; therefore, courage, good Aliena! (II.iv.1-8)

Her lines emphasize the idea that "clothes make the wo/man." Gender, in this passage, seems to be inscribed, or rather, reduced to clothing since a "doublet" is supposed to give courage to a "petticoat," according to Rosalind's reasoning. Some other times, Rosalind demands that she be perceived as a woman in spite of her attire. For instance, when they talk about the poems that they have found in the forest, Rosalind wants Celia to tell her everything she knows about them at once: "Good my complexion! Dost thou think, though/ I am caparisoned like a man, I have a doublet and hose/In my disposition?" Rosalind keeps interrupting Celia and justifies herself saying: "Do you not know I am a woman? When I think, I must speak. –Sweet, say on" (III.ii.241). Thus, Rosalind describes herself as a woman in spite of her external appearance. She allows herself to behave as a woman when she is alone with Celia. In such moments, Rosalind seems to question the idea that gender can be reduced to certain attire. Unlike other cross-dressers, Rosalind (and Portia) are lucky to have companions who are in on their secret and to whom they can speak as a woman in spite of their male attire.

In spite of the challenges Rosalind faces, cross-dressing provides her with the opportunity to discover Orlando's true feelings towards her. She uses the male-male bond that she develops with Orlando to encourage his feelings towards Rosalind. She teaches him to woo, and they practice the marriage ceremony:

> *Rosalind*: Why then, can one desire too much of a good thing? Come, sister, you shall be the priest, and marry us. Give me your

hand, Orlando. What do you say, sister?

Orlando: Pray thee, marry us.

Celia: I cannot say the words.

Rosalind: You must begin 'Will you, Orlando'-

Celia: Go to. Will you, Orlando, have to wife this Rosalind?

Orlando: I will.

Rosalind: Ay, but when?

Orlando: Why, now; as fast as she can marry us.

Rosalind: Then you must say 'I take thee, Rosalind, for wife.'

Orlando: I take thee, Rosalind, for wife.

Rosalind: I might ask you for your commission; but- I do take thee, Orlando, for my husband. There's a girl goes before the priest; and, certainly, a woman's thought runs before her actions. (IV.i.105-119)

Orlando not only follows Ganymede's instructions but also assures Ganymede that he wants to marry Rosalind as soon as he can, by making it clear that he would marry the pretend-Rosalind as soon as Celia can marry them. This passage is relevant for the recognition scene because Rosalind chooses to leave male attire behind because she is certain of Orlando's intentions.

Part of Rosalind's male performance consists of speaking ill of the female gender. It tests Orlando's patience, and it infuriates Celia. Ganymede warns Orlando about how women may transform after marriage and also makes reference to men's inconstancy:

Rosalind: Now tell me how long you would have her, after you

have possess'd her.

Orlando: For ever and a day.

Rosalind: Say 'a day' without the 'ever.' No, no, Orlando; men

are April when they woo, December when they wed: maids are May

when they are maids, but the sky changes when they are wives. I will be more jealous of thee than a Barbary cock-pigeon over his hen, more clamorous than a parrot against rain, more new-fangled than an ape, more giddy in my desires than a monkey. I will weep for nothing, like Diana in the fountain, and I will do that when you are dispos'd to be merry; I will laugh like a hyen, and that when thou are inclin'd to sleep.

Orlando: But will my Rosalind do so?

Rosalind: By my life, she will do as I do.

Orlando: O, but she is wise. (IV.i.121-136)

Cross-dressed Rosalind uses her disguise not only to criticize male inconstancy, but also to test Orlando's reaction towards Rosalind's future role as a married woman. She starts speaking about Rosalind in the third person by asking Orlando how long he would have "her," thus apparently leaving the imaginary role-play of the marriage ceremony. Then, she starts talking in the first person again assuring Orlando that "I will be jealous," " I will weep for nothing," and "I will laugh like a hyen whe you are inclin'd to sleep." This change in pronouns may point to Rosalind's agitated emotional state as well as to a break in the male performance. Although Orlando detaches himself from the role-play by

saying “Will my Rosalind do so?” implying that Ganymede is not Rosalind, Rosalind makes both third and first person converge in the same sentence when she says “By my life, she will do as I do,” thus identifying herself with the women she had just described instead of Ganymede, the shepherd.

Not only Orlando but also Celia questions Rosalind’s harsh speech about women. Being Rosalind’s best friend, Celia feels free to openly criticize Rosalind when she thinks Rosalind has made a mistake. When Orlando leaves, Celia comments on Rosalind’s words: “You have simply misus'd our sex in your love-prate. We/ must have your doublet and hose pluck'd over your head, and show/the world what the bird hath done to her own nest” (IV.i.184-87). Celia’s criticism and Orlando’s skepticism of Rosalind’s speech seem to question gender stereotypes. Orlando is uncertain that his Rosalind will behave as Ganymede portrayed married women. Celia questions Rosalind’s female identification since she criticizes women instead of defending her own gender. Neither Celia nor Orlando agrees with Ganymede’s depiction of the female gender’s stereotypical behavior.

Although Rosalind performs the male gender convincingly, some of her personal traits threaten to give away her disguise. Orlando, for instance, notices that her “accent is something finer than you could/ Purchase in so removed a dwelling” (IV.i.327-28). Rosalind promptly answers:

> I have been told so of many; but indeed an old
> religious uncle of mine taught me to speak, who was in
> his youth an inland man; one that knew courtship too
> well, for there he fell in love. I have heard him read

many lectures against it, and I thank God I am not a
woman, to be touched with so many giddy offences as
he hath generally taxed their whole sex withal. (IV.i.329-35)

She offers a convincing justification of her accent by telling Orlando the story of her imaginary uncle. Her answer also seems to emphasize Ganymede's maleness by embracing *his* male self, not wanting to be a "woman," and by speaking negatively about women.

In spite of such a vocal claim against women, which no other cross-dresser in the plays I analyze has made, Rosalind resembles a female page in that her male performance seems to crumble when she receives bad news. Rosalind faints when she hears Oliver's story about how Orlando had been attacked by a lioness:

Celia: Why, how now, Ganymede! sweet Ganymede!

Oliver: Many will swoon when they do look on blood.

Celia: There is more in it. Cousin Ganymede! (IV.iii.156-158)

Although Celia does not falter in calling Rosalind Ganymede, she refers to Ganymede as "cousin" instead of "brother." She almost gives Rosalind away by telling Oliver that "there is more in it," implying that it was not just the sight of blood that caused Ganymede's swoon.

Rosalind's faint suggests a break in the male performance. She soon attempts to regain composure by claiming counterfeit:

Celia: We'll lead you thither.
I pray you, will you take him by the arm?

Oliver: Be of good cheer, youth. You a man!

You lack a man's heart.

Rosalind: I do so, I confess it. Ah, sirrah, a body would think this was well counterfeited. I pray you tell your brother how well I counterfeited. Heigh-ho!

Oliver: This was not counterfeit; there is too great testimony In your complexion that it was a passion of earnest.

Rosalind: Counterfeit, I assure you.

Oliver: Well then, take a good heart and counterfeit to be a man.

Rosalind: So I do; but, i' faith, I should have been a woman by right.

Celia: Come, you look paler and paler; pray you draw homewards. Good sir, go with us.

Oliver: That will I, for I must bear answer back How you excuse my brother, Rosalind.

Rosalind: I shall devise something; but, I pray you, commend my counterfeiting to him. Will you go? (IV.iii.161-180)

Oliver does not seem to be fooled by Rosalind. He accuses Ganymede of not having a "man's heart" and he is certain that it was not counterfeit. Besides, he may have suspected that Ganymede was not a man when he listened to Orlando's description of the shepherd: "The boy is fair,/ Of female favour, and bestows himself/ Like a ripe sister; the woman low,/ And browner than her brother" (IV.iii.84-87). Thus, Ganymede is described as having female characteristics though wearing male attire and claiming to be Aliena's brother.

As in the previous plays that I have analyzed so far, cross-dressing allows for the examination of sexual desire and its "corrective" retrenchment into heterosexuality. In *As You Like It*, Phoebe is instantly attracted to Ganymede:

> Think not I love him, though I ask for him;
> 'Tis but a peevish boy; yet he talks well.
> But what care I for words? Yet words do well
> When he that speaks them pleases those that hear.
> It is a pretty youth- not very pretty;
> But, sure, he's proud; and yet his pride becomes him.
> He'll make a proper man. The best thing in him
> Is his complexion; and faster than his tongue
> Did make offence, his eye did heal it up.
> He is not very tall; yet for his years he's tall;
> His leg is but so-so; and yet 'tis well.
> There was a pretty redness in his lip,
> A little riper and more lusty red
> Than that mix'd in his cheek; 'twas just the difference
> Betwixt the constant red and mingled damask.
> There be some women, Silvius, had they mark'd him
> In parcels as I did, would have gone near
> To fall in love with him; but, for my part,
> I love him not, nor hate him not; (III.v.110-128)

Although Phoebe denies being in love with Ganymede, she certainly pays attention to different aspects of Ganymede's personality and physicality. This deviant same-sex desire is presented on stage, it seems, only to be corrected or, at least, redirected in the recognition scene. At this moment only the audience is aware of Phoebe's homoerotic attraction since Phoebe herself is attracted to what she sees—a young boy. However, after Ganymede reveals who *he* really is, Phoebe may gain insights about her own sexual impulses retrospectively. What does it mean that she felt attracted towards another woman? The play, it seems, leaves this issue as an open question since Phoebe accepts Silvius after Ganymede confesses that *he* is Rosalind.

The recognition scene, therefore, is needed to untangle the bonds. In *As You Like It*, Shakespeare introduces two unusual elements in the recognition scene: an elaborate set-up, and the presence of Hymen, the God of marriage. Here, the recognition scene is not accidental or spontaneous as in many of the other plays we have examined. Setting up for her self-revelation, Rosalind exhorts Silvius, Phoebe, and Orlando to meet her at a specific place the following day:

> [To *Phoebe:*] I would love you if I could.- To-morrow meet me
> All together. [To *Phoebe:*] I will marry you if ever I marry
> woman, and I'll be married to-morrow. [To *Orlando*] I will satisfy
> you if ever I satisfied man, and you shall be married to-morrow. [To
> *Silvius*] I will content you if what pleases you contents you,
> and you shall be married to-morrow. [To *Orlando:*] As you love
> Rosalind, meet. [To *Silvius*] As you love Phoebe, meet;- and as
> I love no woman, I'll meet. So, fare you well; I have left you commands.

(V.iii.103-111)

In a riddling way, she promises a solution for everyone. Also, as part of the set-up for the recognition scene, the audience hears the conversation between Duke Senior and Orlando:

Duke Senior: I do remember in this shepherd boy
Some lively touches of my daughter's favour.

Orlando: My lord, the first time that I ever saw him
Methought he was a brother to your daughter.
But, my good lord, this boy is forest-born,
And hath been tutor'd in the rudiments
Of many desperate studies by his uncle,
Whom he reports to be a great magician,
Obscured in the circle of this forest. (V.iv.26-34)

Like Bella Franca, Rosalind is partially recognized, but then the recognition is refused because of context. Orlando's explanation of the boy's background helps delay recognition.

Unlike the other plays discussed so far, recognition in *As You Like It* becomes a mediated ritual. In this play, Hymen brings Rosalind to the Duke so that he can give her hand to Orlando:

Hymen: Then is there mirth in heaven,
When earthly things made even
Atone together.
Good Duke, receive thy daughter;

Hymen from heaven brought her,

Yea, brought her hither,

That thou mightst join her hand with his,

Whose heart within his bosom is.

Rosalind: [To *Duke*] To you I give myself, for I am yours.

[To *Orlando*] To you I give myself, for I am yours

Duke Senior: If there be truth in sight, you are my daughter.

Orlando: If there be truth in sight, you are my Rosalind.

Phoebe: If sight and shape be true,

Why then, my love adieu!

Rosalind: I'll have no father, if you be not he;

I'll have no husband, if you be not he;

Nor ne'er wed woman, if you be not she. (V.iv.97-113)

Thus, the father-daughter bond is re-established and the Duke recognizes his daughter. Rosalind, in her female attire, clears the confusion that her male attire has caused. She disenchants Phoebe, who finally agrees to marry Silvius. After renewing the bond with her father, Rosalind freely and willingly enters a bond with Orlando who is to become her husband. Both father and lover recognize Rosalind in an Aristotelian sense since they re-apprehend the girl they have once known. Rosalind comes out of the cross-dressed experience because she is sure that Orlando loves her, and she also knows they have started to develop a bond of trust when she was Ganymede. Thus, Rosalind's return to her female identity is enhanced by a more intimate knowledge of her lover. Orlando's marriage to Rosalind implies that he is also willing to grant her a recognition in a

Butlerian sense because he embraces the Rosalind he knew as Ganymede, that is, a Rosalind who has taught him how to woo, a Rosalind that can guide the course of their relationship, and a Rosalind capable of thriving in a world (and a gender) previously unknown to her.

Unlike Rosalind, the female characters that don male attire in *The Merchant of Venice* are so convincing in their performance as males that they are never recognized, in the Aristotelian sense, by the onstage characters. Different from all the cross-dressed heroines previously discussed, in *The Merchant of Venice*, female characters actively seek recognition, in a Butlerian sense, after impeccably acting as males. I will first focus on Portia and Nerissa's success at performing male roles, and I will then analyze its implications for the recognition scene.

Portia and Nerissa's success at impersonating men can be attributed to the female characters' strong bond with one another based on trust, the disguise they choose, and their personal temperance. Like Rosalind and Celia in *As You Like It*, Portia and Nerissa form a bond based on complicity, mutuality, friendship, and respect, which may be unusual in a master-servant relationship. As Portia's waiting lady, Nerissa is supportive of Portia's ideas. They freely talk about Portia's suitors and Portia listens to Nerissa's words. Portia trusts Nerissa completely, and she explains to her the plan to save Antonio once their husbands have left Belmont. Portia knows Nerissa will not let her down when performing as a clerk at court.

Portia and Nerissa's mutual complicity and the disguise they choose are essential in making their performance successful. In contrast to female pages who fail to perform the male gender due to their lack of skill or strength to carry out male duties, Portia and

Nerissa, who disguise as a judge and a clerk respectively, are never required to perform physical tasks since they adopt disguises of the higher classes. Their professional male attires exempt them from performing physical male tasks such as fighting, or lifting heavy weights. Both of them excel at showing their intellectual capacity and their wit in a male environment. Although Nerissa is initially surprised by Portia's idea "to turn to men" (III.iv.79), she fully engages herself in her newly assigned clerical role. Nerissa enters the court with the letter that contains Portia's new identity. Without hesitation, she gives Bellario's letter to the Duke who reads it out loud:

> Your grace shall understand that at the receipt of your letter
> I am very sick, but in the instant that your messenger came
> In loving visitation was with me a young doctor of Rome:
> His name is Balthazar. I acquainted him with the cause in
> controversy between the Jew and Antonio the merchant. We
> Turned o'er many books together. He is furnished with my
> Opinion which, bettered with his own learning—the greatness
> Whereof I cannot enough commend—comes with him at my
> Importunity to fill up your grace's request in my stead. I
> Beseech you let his lack of years be no impediment to let him
> Lack a reverend estimation, for I never knew so young a body
> With so old a head. I leave him to your gracious acceptance,
> Whose trial shall better publish his commendation. (IV.i. 150-62)

As we can see, the letter explains why Bellario is not present in the trial and helps the male audience trust the young doctor who comes in Bellario's place. Bellario's letter

grants Portia a new name ("Balthazar"), a profession ("doctor" in law), and a place of residence ("Rome"). Although Balthazar's "lack of years" is emphasized in the letter, Bellario convincingly commends the young doctor's intellectual capacity, his "own learning," and sound judgment. After Nerissa's convincing performance, Portia enters the court and excels in her judicial role. Notably, neither does Nerissa falter when presenting false information nor does Portia show dismay when displaying her new role in a place where truth is honored and where females are not supposed to have access.

Their complicity is most evident in the last scene. Nerissa brings up the ring issue, then Portia follows. After both husbands, Bassanio and Gratiano, have been proved disloyal in that both of them have broken their vows, Nerissa and Portia engage in another round of trickery by announcing that they have slept with the judge and the clerk respectively. Though not technically a lie, for they have slept with their own selves, they successfully manage to deceive their husbands into believing they have slept with other men, the main proof being the rings the husbands gave away to the judge and his clerk. As Lisa Jardine points out, Nerissa and Portia refer to their sexual infidelity "not as future possibility, but as achieved fact" ("Cultural Confusion," 14). In V. i, Portia tells Bassanio "I had it (the ring) of him: pardon me Bassanio,/For by this ring the doctor lay with me" (V.i. 257-58). Similarly, Nerissa adds: "And pardon me my gentle Gratiano,/ For that the same scrubbed boy (the doctor's clerk)/ In lieu of this, last night did lie with me" (V.i. 260-61). Their use of past tense contributes to the building up of tension and forces the male characters to react as if their wives have been disloyal indeed. This intense, albeit brief and temporary, moment forces the onstage characters to feel the consequences of their carelessness about their marital rings.

In this last scene, Portia, though no longer in male attire, retains her judicial role by distributing what belongs by law to the different characters, namely the letter about the ships to Antonio and the title to Jessica and Lorenzo. As Trisha Olson states, "Bassanio stands as quasi-defendant before Portia who, in confronting him with the loss of the ring, must pronounce his judgment" (303). Nerissa also retains a vestige of her clerical character by stating that she will hand over the document "without a fee" (289). Thus, their female bond empowers both female characters, as they support one another regardless of the gender they perform.

Male characters also support and depend on one another; yet, the nature of their bond is more fragile than that of Portia and Nerissa. The three main male-male bonds in the play, namely Antonio-Shylock, Antonio-Bassanio, and Bassanio-Gratiano, are primarily financially-based, though affection also plays a role in the last two. Antonio and Shylock are bound only in a pecuniary way; yet, Antonio's monetary commitment has physical implications since he agrees to give a pound of his flesh if he cannot pay his debt in the stipulated time. Antonio and Bassanio, apart from being financially bound, also share a strong homosocial bond though Bassanio needs Antonio for constant financial support. Bassanio trusts Antonio will do his best to help him out. Antonio, however, cannot necessarily rely on Bassanio in financial matters since he has not paid off any of his previous debts to him. Antonio, in spite of his love for Bassanio, is not convinced that he can trust his friend in emotional matters either. In fact, Antonio's letter reads:

> Sweet Bassanio, my ships have all miscarried,
>
> My creditors grow cruel, my estate is very low, my bond to

> The Jew is forfeit, and since in paying it, it is impossible I
> Should live, all debts are cleared between you and I *if* I
> Might but see you at my death. Notwithstanding, use your
> pleasure; *If* your love do/not persuade you to come, let
> not my letter. (III.ii.318-19, *my emphasis*)

Antonio is careful to state in the previous lines that "all debts are cleared/between you and I, *if* I might but see you at my death" (III.ii.316-17, *my emphasis*). Thus, he first mentions Bassanio's financial debt which he is willing to consider paid *if* Bassanio satisfies Antonio's emotional need. I place emphasis on the two "if" clauses that Antonio uses in his letter to highlight a love relationship which is not unconditional, but one which, in spite of being based on generosity, expects a certain reciprocation. In his letter, Antonio longs for Bassanio to take action and, by inserting a conditional clause, Antonio voices his doubt as far as Bassanio's love is concerned. Antonio's letter and Portia's encouragement ultimately mobilize Bassanio to go to Venice, even before consummating their marriage.

Bassanio and Gratiano's relationship replicates that of Bassanio and Antonio in that Gratiano depends on Bassanio financially. Bassanio accepts Gratiano's service without much thought, in an impulsive way. However, Bassanio does seem aware that Gratiano may not be the ideal servant, especially when wooing his lady:

> *Gratiano*: I have a suit to you
> *Bassanio*: You have obtained it.
> *Gratiano*: You must not deny me, I must go with you to Belmont
> *Bassanio*: Why then you must. But hear thee, Gratiano,

Thou art too wild, too rude and bold of voice,
Parts that become thee happily enough
And in such eyes as ours appear not faults;
But where thou art not known, why, there they show
Something too liberal. Pray thee, take pain to allay
with some cold drops of modesty
Thy skipping spirit, lest through thy wild behavior
I be misconstered in the place I go to,
And lose my hopes. (II.ii.156-66)

This passage shows Bassanio's impulsiveness. He grants Gratiano his suit before even knowing what Gratiano wants. Bassanio also points out Gratiano's "wild," "rude," "bold," and "liberal" behavior which can be detrimental when wooing Portia. Unlike Nerissa, who is always protective of her mistress, Gratiano has no qualms in putting responsibility for the ring give away on Bassanio. When accused by Nerissa, he justifies his behavior by saying that his master, Bassanio, has given away his ring too. Gratiano tells Nerissa:

My lord Bassanio gave his ring away
Unto the judge that begged it, and indeed
Deserved it too; and then the boy his clerk
That took some pains in writing, he begged mine,
And neither man nor master would take aught
But the two rings. (V.i.178-83)

Although Gratiano blames the clerk for taking both rings, he starts his argument by mentioning his lord's reprehensible action first.

Unlike the male characters, Portia and Nerissa share an unbreakable bond and a similar personality trait, namely self-control, which is crucial to their success at the court, and which has a direct pay-off in the recognition scene. Portia displays self control and dominance over herself throughout the play. For instance, when Nerissa asks Portia about her feelings towards the suitors, she calmly replies "I pray thee overname them, and as thou namest them, I will describe them, and according to my description level at my affection" (I.ii.31-33). Thus, Portia is reluctant to answer Nerissa's question by showing her emotions. Rather, she relies on the spoken word to show her level of affection. Similarly, when Bassanio is choosing the casket and he makes the right choice, Portia asks for moderation in her happiness:

> How all the other passions fleet to air:
> As doubtful thoughts, and rash-embraced despair,
> And shuddering fear, and green-eyed jealousy.
> O love, be moderate, allay thy ecstasy,
> In measure rain thy joy, scant this excess.
> I feel too much thy blessing: make it less
> For fear I surfeit. (III.ii.108-13)

Portia does experience strong "passions" such as "despair," "fear," and "jealousy" which could lead her to disobey her father's commandment. Yet, not only does she manage to control her negative emotions but also she asks for moderation when she experiences overwhelming positive emotions such as "ecstasy" and "joy." This temperance is handy

in the court when she hears her husband telling Antonio that he would risk his wife and his life in order to save him. Portia notices how Bassanio prioritizes Antonio over herself when Bassanio tells his friend:

> Antonio, I am married to a wife
> Which is as dear to me as life itself,
> But life itself, my wife, and all the world
> Are not with me esteemed above thy life.
> I would lose all, ay, sacrifice them all
> Here to this devil, to deliver you. (IV.i.277-82)

Bassanio starts equating his love for Portia to his love for his own life. But then, he expresses the depth of his love for Antonio when he states that he would sacrifice his own life, his wife, and the world in order to save his friend. Bassanio's excessive language stands in stark contrast to his ability to deliver on his promises. Would he really sacrifice his own life if he were able to save Antonio? Although Bassanio makes good use of language, we can argue that language is the only asset he does possess. Portia, in contrast, has the power to help Antonio in court as well as to "correct" her husband's values. As will become clear in the recognition scene, the marital bond takes priority over the friendship bond with Antonio.

Like Portia, Nerissa shows similar temperance when she does not falter after hearing Gratiano say: "I have a wife who I protest I love;/ I would she were in heaven, so she could/ Entreat some power to change this currish Jew" (IV. i.285-88). Nerissa, after hearing her husband's comment, understands that Gratiano shares Bassanio's hierarchy of values. Gratiano wishes his wife were dead so that she "could entreat some power to

change this currish Jew." Nerissa, instead of voicing her opinion and reprimanding Gratiano in that moment, remains silent. Her temperance will later pay off since she will have the upper hand in their relationship after the recognition scene.

Portia and Nerissa's shock and disapproval of their husbands' priorities is similarly voiced by Shylock. Upon hearing Bassanio and Gratiano, Shylock observes: "These be the Christian husbands. I have a daughter:/ Would any of the stock of Barabbas/ Had been her husband, rather than a Christian" (IV.i. 290-92). Shylock's comment echoes Portia and Nerissa's awareness of the oddity of the two husbands' emotional priorities. After hearing Bassanio's words, Portia comments "Your wife would give you little thanks for that/ if she were by to hear you make the offer" (IV.i.284-85). Similarly, Nerissa states "'Tis well you offer it behind her back,/ The wish would make else an unquiet house" (IV.i.288-89). Shylock does not share the male Christian perspective and his comment, perhaps a result of his own membership in a disadvantaged minority, is not seen as important and goes unheard by the other characters.

Although none of the side comments are overheard or commented on by the onstage characters, the audience hears another perspective—the perspective of the disenfranchised. Thanks to those brief fleeting comments, the comedy takes a new spin. As Susan Oldrieve points out, Portia realizes that "by defeating Shylock … the very system she upholds would make a victim of her as a woman and a mockery of the marriage … and she recognizes the similarity between the Jew's plight and her own" (94-95). Recognizing herself in a disempowered position as a woman, Portia later decides to change the course of events as far as her relationship with Bassanio is concerned. In fact,

those overheard comments prompt the future actions of the cross-dressed women in ways that alter the power dynamics of their marriages.

Cross-dressing allows our heroines to discover the truth behind appearances. When in male attire, Portia and Nerissa acquire first-hand knowledge about their husbands' priorities. At the court, Portia sees a different reality which causes her to change her perception of herself and of her husband. At the beginning, she considers Bassanio as the perfect suitor who is willing to risk everything for her. She considers him as a Hercules:

> Now he goes
> With no less presence, but with much more love
> Than young Alcides, when he did redeem
> The virgin tribute, paid by howling Troy
> To the sea-monster: I stand for sacrifice,
> The rest aloof are the Dardanian wives,
> With bleared visages come forth to view
> The issue of th' exploit: go Hercules! (III.ii.53-60)

Portia compares Bassanio to Alcides who saves Hesiodes from being killed by a sea monster. She attributes to Bassanio the presence of Alcides but specifies that he feels "much more love" for her since Alcides saves the virgin in order to get the recompense of horses that her father offered. Her confidence in Bassanio's love is also apparent when she turns herself and her household over to him without reservation once he makes the right choice of casket. Her herculean version of Bassanio, however, promptly changes when she hears her husband tell Antonio that he would risk his life, his wife and his

money to save Antonio. As we can see from the passage above, Portia thinks Bassanio professes "more love than young Alcides" for her. Yet, the trial scene suggests that Bassanio prefers Antonio over Portia, if he had to choose only one of his dearest affections. The depth of his bond to Antonio is also shown in the fact that Bassanio is "prepared to give up Portia's wealth in order to ransom his friend from imminent death" (Hyman 114).

Unexpectedly, her cross-dressing also allows Portia to re-assess her self-perception. We can observe a change in her appraisal of her worth when we compare the Portia of the "casket scene" with the Portia in the recognition scene. In the casket scene, Portia also undervalues herself. She perceives her self as incomplete. She accuses Bassanio for having "overlooked" her: "beshrow your eyes,/ They have o'erlook'd me and divided me" (III.ii.14-15). Harry Berger thoroughly explains the multiple meanings of the word "overlook'd":

> (1) "given me the evil eye, bewitched me" (the sense under which the OED lists this line), and here she shifts blame to his eyes for her impulse to sin against her father's will; (2) "looked down on me from above," which suggests the danger of mastery encoded later in her prospective image of Bassanio Triumphant, "when true subjects bow/To a new-crowned monarch" (III.ii.49-50); (3) "looked over and beyond me" – toward the inheritance-"thus failing to see me, or disregarding me." Hence, "you have divided me between the desire that induces me to surrender wholly to you, and the premonition that makes me afraid of

letting myself be reduced to the golden fleece and locked in a marital casket." (158)

As Harry Berger Jr. suggests, "self-division makes Portia address their relationship as a struggle for power and possession" (158). Portia then tells Bassanio she wishes herself:

much better, yet *for you*
I would be trebled twenty times myself,
A thousand times more fair, ten thousand times
More rich, that only to stand high in *your* account
I might in virtues, beauties, livings, friends,
Exceed. (III.ii, 151-56, *my emphasis*)

Portia here wishes she had more money, virtues and beauty *for* Bassanio. However, in the last scene, she tells Bassanio that if he knew the true value of the person who gave the ring to him, he would have kept it better. This utterance reflects her own self-assessment which depicts her self- (re)appreciation which she tries to enforce on him.

Her temperance not only allows Portia to have the patience needed to fully grasp her husband's feelings but also empowers her to change from a passive figure to an active woman. She is trapped by her father's will, yet she shows the potential agency she would have were she to decide to trick some of the candidates into choosing the wrong casket. She is passive in Act II in the sense that her "weary body" is tired of being just a target of male fortune-hunters, a victim without choice. She considers herself a victim who "stands for sacrifice" and relies on Bassanio to rescue her. She voices her willing surrender. She is clever, though, to put a condition for their relationship to remain that of master and willing servant, i.e. Bassanio should not part with the ring. At this point in the play, she

has no reason to suspect Bassanio's infidelity; yet, she is cautious enough to highlight the importance of the marital vow.

After hearing Bassanio read Antonio's letter, she decides to be active in a most obvious way. She orders Bassanio to marry her before going, gives him money, and as soon as he departs, she devises a plan to save Antonio, orders Lorenzo and Jessica to take care of the household while she is "praying for her husband," disguises as a judge, gives sentence, and returns before her husband to Belmont.

Interestingly, Portia and Nerissa's (self-) revelation happens in Belmont, not in Venice. John P. Sisk relates the two locations to the bonds formed among characters:

> The passage from bondage to liberation is reinforced by the Venice-Belmont polarity of the play. Venice exists at a hyperbolic remove from the everyday world so that it is itself a story world in which the Antonio-Shylock contract is believable, but Belmont—Frye's green world (pp. 125-129)—defines it as a bound world. Venice is a place of good-in-evil, a world of time, change, and doubtful appearance, where good men are preys of fortune and lose their argosies, and where fair terms disguise a villain's mind. (220-221)

In fact, it is "doubtful appearance" and deceit that saves "good men" such as Antonio from dying. Venice is also a world where the truth about male characters and their bonds is revealed. After describing the Venetian world, Sisk goes on to discuss the "green world" of Belmont:

> Belmont, on the other hand, is a world of release and revelation . . . Belmont, like all the other green worlds in the plays, is a school in which the lessons needed for living in the time-bound world are learned: here, for instance, the right relation between gold and love, between appearance and reality, between justice and mercy. For the meaning of the play is that the opposed members of these pairs can be reconciled in a larger harmony. (221)

The "passage from bondage to liberation" that Sisk speaks about, it seems to me, only occurs when the characters enter into new bonds such as the one Antonio volunteers to commit to in order to safeguard Portia's ring, or when characters re-enter previously established bonds as in Bassanio and Gratiano's cases. In Belmont, Bassanio and Gratiano are forced to acknowledge their wives' wit as well as the seriousness of the marital bond. Antonio is compelled to acknowledge the re-distribution of power in his personal relationship with Bassanio. Now, according to Portia's terms, Antonio has to make sure that Bassanio prioritizes his marital bond over friendship.

Recognition in *The Merchant of Venice* is essential in order to reinforce and re-structure previously established bonds. In Chapter One, we observed how some female characters dressed as pages fail in their male performances and accidentally reveal their female nature, which leads some critics to argue that those female characters are being re-inscribed in the patriarchal system. In *The Merchant of Venice*, however, it is the male characters who are forcefully re-inscribed in the marital bonds they first sought and later devalued. Portia and Nerissa wittingly and subtly force Bassanio and Gratiano to re-think

their marital relationships and to prioritize marital love over male friendship. Thus, it is the male characters who end up being re-inscribed in a society where marital vows are not supposed to be broken. Portia and Nerissa seem to claim a marriage in which both parties are equally committed

After their outstanding performance as male characters, and after saving Antonio, we may wonder why Portia and Nerissa decide to reveal themselves since, in spite of their good intentions, they had committed potentially reprehensible acts when deceiving the men present at the court. In spite of having deceived the onstage male audience, Portia and Nerissa do not feel any sense of remorse. Peter Brand claims that "a successful disguiser . . . requires a victim, and if disguise and other forms of deception show the value of enterprise and ingenuity, they also underline man's vulnerability to deception and fraud" (19). Being disguised as males, Portia and Nerissa consciously and willingly deceive not only their husbands but also all the male characters present at the Venetian court. To a certain extent, we may then argue that misrecognition fosters deceit. These male characters can be considered the victims of female dishonest behavior. The men in court even compliment the judge's superior knowledge and his unbiased sense of justice. Not knowing that they are being deceived, they are honest in their praise. Had Portia and Nerissa been discovered in court, they would most likely have been reprimanded by their husbands (and those present at the court). Does their masterful deceit commend the females' acting capacity; or does it reveal the males' inability to see through the disguise? Are males victims of female deceit; or are they victims of their own inability or unwillingness to see clearly? What do Portia and Nerissa achieve by forcing recognition on their husbands and on the other on-stage characters?

Portia reveals herself in Act V in order to be recognized as an empowered woman. She not only shifts the power dynamics in her relationship with her husband but also makes the onstage audience aware of the power women may achieve if they work together, disguise their gender and exercise self-control. Although Antonio's conflict has been solved in a satisfactory way and there is no need for anyone to know the true identity of the witty judge, Portia longs for public recognition at the end of the play. It is obvious to the audience that had it not been for Portia, Antonio might have lost his life. Yet, as most of the onstage audience is ignorant of who saved Antonio, Portia and Nerissa engage in an elaborate multi-layered conversation so that their husbands and Antonio learn the truth.

By forcing public recognition of her accomplishment, Portia successfully achieves multiple objectives. First, she makes Antonio enter into a bond that is even tighter and more extreme than the one Antonio has previously established with Shylock. Antonio acknowledges the different nature and depth of both bonds when he tells Portia:

> *Antonio*: I once did lend my body for his wealth,
> Which but for him that had your husband's ring
> Had quite miscarried. I dare be bound again,
> My soul upon the forfeit, that your lord
> Will never more break faith advisedly.
>
> *Portia*: Then you shall be his surety (V.i. 248-53)

Portia thus accepts Antonio's soul (and body) to act as the protector and warranty of her ring. Shylock has only asked for a pound of flesh. Portia, instead, claims power over Antonio's soul, were the ring to be given away again. In his first bond, Antonio is the

sole person responsible for fulfilling his promise to Shylock. In his second bond, however, Antonio is not only responsible for keeping his promise to Portia but also for making Bassanio remain loyal to his marital bond. Although Antonio is still bound to Bassanio, the gender and power dynamic of the triangulation shifts. As Steve Patterson puts it, "(t)he friend (Antonio) will enter into the service of marriage, a minor player in a reconfigured narrative" (26). By making Antonio indebted to her for saving him and for giving him the good news about his ships, Portia ensures that her marital bond to Bassanio will be supported and even guaranteed by Antonio.

By forcing Bassanio to recognize her as the doctor in the court, Portia makes Bassanio understand that he is unable to "see" clearly. Portia has subtly laid her possible future claim in the casket scene. She starts by stating:

> But now I was the *lord*
> of this fair mansion, *master* of my servants,
> *Queen* o'er myself and even now, but now,
> This house, these servants, and this same myself
> Are yours, my lord's. I give them with this ring,
> Which when you part from, lose, or give away,
> Let it presage the ruin of your love
> And be my vantage to exclaim on you. (III.ii.167-74, *my emphasis*)

She perceives herself as an empowered woman who has control over her household and her body. However, she is willing to grant Bassanio total control as long as he respects his bond and promises to keep the ring. Bassanio promptly replies:

> Madam, you have bereft me of all words.

Only my blood speaks to you in my veins,
And there is such confusion in my powers
As after some oration fairly spoke
By a beloved prince there doth appear
Among the buzzing, pleased multitude,
Where every something being blent together
Turns to a wild of nothing, save of joy
Expressed and not expressed. But when this ring
Parts from this finger, then parts life from hence,
O then be bold to say Bassanio's dead. (III.ii.175-85)

Bassanio's inner confusion is apparent in his speech; yet, not seeing any problem in keeping the ring, he tells Portia he will die before giving it up. However, he shows himself unable to keep his promise. In the final scene, he voices his confusion once again when he asks Portia, "Were you the doctor, and I knew you not? " (V.i.279). Portia then claims a position of authority within the power dynamic of their relationship. Bassanio finally recognizes Portia as the "sweet doctor," granting Portia a double gendered attribute. He recognizes her as a "sweet" woman, but also acknowledges her skill as a "doctor."

It is worth noting that Antonio and Lorenzo, in contrast, are unwilling to grant Portia the possibility of a double-gendered appellative such as "sweet doctor". They insist on forcing Portia into the female role of "Sweet lady" or "Fair lady." Perhaps only lovers (or relatives) are capable of granting full recognition once the truth has come out. Onlookers, or those who have only had partial access to the events, may want to hold on

to what they have visually perceived. For instance, Lorenzo has only seen Portia dressed as a woman in her household. Even after her narration, he may be unable to picture her in male attire or to fully believe the narrated events. Antonio has seen Portia only after the trial and for such a short time that he may not have been able to perceive the similarities between the judge's facial features and Portia's. Bassanio, in contrast, has seen Portia before and after the trial and, though unable to recognize his beloved in male attire, he is finally willing to grant her full recognition.

Portia is not only "recognized" in an Aristotelian sense, namely acknowledged as the doctor who saves Antonio in court, but also in a Butlerian sense. As pointed out in the introduction, according to Butler, "to ask for recognition, or to offer it, is precisely not to ask for recognition for what one already is. It is to solicit a becoming, to instigate a transformation, to petition the future always in relation to the other" (*Precarious Life* 44). In this passage, Butler claims that the subject's recognition is a petition for a future identity that is different from the one s/he already has. In this way, the future offers the subject not only the possibility of transforming herself/himself but also the chance of being recognized, or at least, asking to be recognized as other. This future recognition is "always in relation to the other." The subject needs the other not only to become herself/himself a subject, but also to give the other the possibility of becoming. This mutual dependence is positive for both subjects in that it allows both recognizer and recognized to be acknowledged as newly constituted subjects whose previous identity has been left behind by this new interpellation.

In Portia's case, Portia asks to be recognized as a newly-constituted subject. She is certainly not the Portia that Bassanio meets at the beginning of the play as she has

grown in respect and power. Bassanio is willing to recognize Portia as a new subject when he combines traditionally male and female appellatives to address his wife. Similarly, Bassanio is also a newly-constituted subject in that his self has become enlightened by the knowing, recognition, and acceptance of the truth. Portia manages to shift the power dynamics by making Bassanio aware of her value. She is not only a beautiful young woman "richly left" but also a witty woman capable of saving Antonio—something that Bassanio could not do. After Portia makes Bassanio aware of his own narcissism, Bassanio's perception of Portia changes.

Portia sows the seeds for this petition for future recognition in a rather direct way when Portia is dressed as a doctor and she tells Antonio: "I pray you know me when we meet again" (IV.i.415). We may infer that Antonio is looking the judge/Portia in the eye while she is uttering this sentence; yet, despite their eye-contact during and after the trial scene, Antonio does not recognize Portia when they meet again in Belmont. Antonio is unable to grant full recognition, in the Butlerian sense, to Portia. He does thank her profusely; yet, he insists in using only female appellatives when referring to her. His new bond to Portia implies that his privileged position in respect to Bassanio has changed. Bassanio, though emotionally bound to Antonio, is financially free now thanks to Portia's riches. Besides, Bassanio has agreed to recognize Portia's new identity as an empowered and active, rather than passive, member in their relationship.

Portia's new perception of her self also forces Bassanio to re-examine himself. Bassanio changes towards the end of the play, after he realizes how his narcissistic behavior has jeopardized his relationships with both Antonio and Portia. At the beginning, he is self-centered and narcissistic in the relationships he establishes.

Although he professes friendship towards Antonio, his relationship seems to be based on the financial favors that he asks from him. Similarly, Bassanio sees Portia as a way of bettering himself, as a way of freeing himself from his debts. He honestly tells her that "all the wealth (he) had ran in (his) veins" and that "his state is nothing" (III.ii,257), but when he talks about her to Antonio, he stresses her wealth first and foremost. In court, Bassanio proves to Antonio that he is willing to be at his side in his last moment, though he is unable to save him.

Portia and Nerissa, after discovering their husbands' emotional priorities, take full charge of their relationships and lay absolute claim to their husbands. As Marianne L. Novy explains, "the acceptance of Portia's self-assertion" in the final scene is a "celebration of otherness" (151). The final triumph of their "otherness" may be partially attributed to their ability to express themselves when in disguise. Robert Weimann suggests that "the voices speaking through disguise may be understood, as Peter Erickson claims, 'not as always already neutralized by the ideologies they must speak through in order to be heard, but rather as inflecting, distorting, even appropriating such ideologies, genres, values, so as to alter their configuration'" (204). In fact, we hear Portia's point of view as far as justice and mercy are concerned; yet her voice has to be camouflaged by adopting typically male discourse while "inflecting" it with her beliefs.

By being misrecognized, Portia is not only able to save Antonio and to get to know her husband's emotional hierarchy, but also she is able to voice her view on mercy. Although she describes herself as "unlearned," she articulates very clearly what she thinks mercy is. She first asks Shylock to extend it to Antonio, then she asks Antonio to grant it to Shylock and finally she herself is merciful towards Bassanio when she forgives

him for having parted with the ring. In disguise, she voices her thoughts; as a woman, when she returns to Belmont, she practices what she has earlier preached. The audience and the onstage characters who recognize that Portia and the judge are the same person have already heard her point of view concerning mercy and witness her consistency in practice. Olson states that "selflessness, a willingness to abase one's ego that an otherwise 'hot temper' may prompt one to satisfy, is mercy's most salient feature" (305). Portia embodies all of mercy's features, and her male attire gives Portia the possibility to voice her opinion which she can finally put into practice in Belmont.

Recognition scenes may also have a ripple effect on the audience. In *The Merchant of Venice*, the audience can see clearly the motivation that guides the disguised to understand her claim and to recognize her "petition for the future," as Butler puts it, in silence before the onstage characters do. We see the full picture at all times, and we do know that Portia and Nerissa are aiming at a recognition that goes beyond the Aristotelian sense. We see the female characters acquiring unexpected information during the trial scene. They have had time to consider which would be the best way of making use of that knowledge. Their plotting, though not staged, leads them to ask their husbands for their rings which in turn triggers a chain reaction which elicits recognition. The audience does not experience Bassanio and Gratiano's confusion, since we have known it all along and also know that they have not been cuckolded. For the male characters, however, the lines in which the women declare they have slept with the judge and the clerk certainly cause inner turmoil. Thus, the audience is privileged in that it is enlightened with the truth but not disturbed by the discovery.

The audience, in spite of knowing that Portia and Nerissa are disguised, sometimes has the same experience as the onstage characters. The audience knows that the judge is Portia; however, it does not know about her witty solution. The audience is surprised at the same time as the onstage characters. Recognition of the judge's wit comes at the same time for both. Yet, the audience's previous knowledge of the doctor's real gender makes its recognition even more powerful since the audience can appreciate that the solution comes from a woman disguised as a judge.

Bringing up the ring issue in public serves as a lesson to the theater goers and onstage audience. Portia and Nerissa make clear that marital bonds are not to be broken and that they precede male friendship in importance. As Portia and Nerissa point out, they could have been unfaithful to their husbands who had given away their wedding rings. Karen Newman explains:

> The ring no longer represents the traditional relationship it figured in Act III, ii. On its figural as well as literal progress, it accumulates other meanings and associations: cuckoldry and thus female unruliness, female genitalia, woman's changeable nature and so-called animal temperament, her deceptiveness and potential subversion of the rules of possession and fidelity that ensure the male line. (131)

Both characters and audience are confronted with all these "accumulated meanings" which signal the dangers society may face if marital bonds are taken lightly.

In *The Merchant of Venice,* the female-gendered self is re-defined in the last scene where male characters are forced to grant recognition to their female partners. Portia and

Nerissa at the end of the play are to be considered fully capable beings who not only save Antonio but also make their husbands apologize for their wrong-doings and renew their marital vows, promising never to part with their wedding rings again. Portia and Nerissa successfully re-inscribe the male characters in a power dynamic that is more beneficial for the female gender.

In *As You Like It* and The *Merchant of Venice,* Shakespeare explores gender issues and power dynamics from different angles. By allowing the heroines to cross gender boundaries temporarily, the playwright allows the characters to discover the truth about their lovers, and to assess their own self-worth. Both Rosalind and Portia make sure to enter (or to re-enter in Portia's case) the marriage bond not in a disempowered position, but in a loving and meaningful one. Both cross-dressers have tested their lovers' love toward them and they have made sure that the men will value them in the future. Their husbands have seen the cross-dressed heroines both as men and as women, and, by (re)entering the marital bond, they accept both their lovers' male past and their female present. Thus, they grant them the recognition of a "new becoming" –a becoming which implies a marital relationship in which the married pair recognize each other as equals.

Chapter 4

Martial female cross-dressers

Whether as a page, shepherd, clerk or "doctor of the law," all the cross-dressers that I have analyzed in the three previous chapters have shunned violence. Cross-dressed female aggression is not a trope that Shakespeare seems interested in exploring. As we may remember, Viola is dreadfully afraid of a sword fight and Rosalind faints at the sight of Orlando's blood. However, some of Shakespeare's contemporaries deal with female violence in an interesting way. In this chapter, I examine female cross-dressers who choose to perform a martial version of the male gender, which is a fascinating category because it not only makes the characters less passive than pages, but it also interrogates a questionable aspect of male behavior. Bess Bridges, in Heywood's *Fair Maid of the West – Part I* (1604/1630), dons male attire when she decides to search for her husband's body after being informed that he had been killed in war. Clara, in Beaumont and Fletcher's *Love's Cure* (1605/1647), is trained and dressed as male from birth. She has no option but to follow her father's orders and imitate her male companions at war during the first twenty-one years of her life. In Shadwell's *The Woman-Captain* (1679), Mrs. Gripe chooses to dress and act like her brother, who is a captain in the army, to force her husband to give her a monetary allowance and her freedom. Gender barriers in these

three plays are easily crossed, and even when Mr. Gripe can see through Mrs. Gripe's disguise, her violent performance convinces him that he is mistaken and that the "soldier" must be Mrs. Gripe's brother. The performance of violence and physical dexterity, such as wielding a sword, or disciplining soldiers—activities conventionally gendered male—plays a role in the recognition scene because these martial women come out of their disguise empowered by their male performance. The three plays explore the issue of gender in both an essentialist and a constructivist way. The playwrights of these plays seem to shift between an essentialist idea of gender and a constructivist one until their predominant version of gender becomes clear in the recognition scene. In order to understand how the recognition scene functions in each of the plays, it is necessary first to see how gender issues are played out in the plays.

Compared to the other cross-dressers that we have seen in previous chapters, the cross-dressed heroines in these later plays display not only the violence with which they perform their roles but also the dexterity some female characters possess. This may be not only indicative of new roles and possibilities for women, at least in the scripted and safely explored world of the theater, but it may also hint that some women may have "natural" capacities to perform certain roles that the social order does not permit women to display or embrace publicly. Thus, cross-dressing may be an avenue for these women to use their otherwise hidden skills. These martial roles grant the heroines the opportunity to show that they can excel in fighting without being recognized, in Bess and Clara's cases, or that if the disguise is questioned, as in the case of Mrs. Gripe, her martial performance can compensate for the unconvincing disguise or for the obvious physical resemblance to a female character. These three heroines, like Portia, use the final

recognition scene as an empowering tool, a petition for a future identity that is different from the one they already have. By the end of the plays, these female characters are recognized as courageous and strong martial ladies who can perform both female and male gender roles with equal adroitness. Although cross-dressing enables them to perform as male, in the recognition scene the onstage characters can re-apprehend the woman the cross-dressed character was –Aristotelian recognition—as well as grant them a claim for a future which encompasses both the female and male possibility—Butlerian recognition.

In *Fair Maid of the West – Part I*, Bess Bridges crosses gender boundaries with ease and without hesitation, which points to the performative nature of gender. Bess, the chaste young owner of a tavern, cross-dresses at different moments in the play. As a businessperson she has, to some extent, crossed into generally male territory. Her profession also allows her to see men at their worst and to imitate that behavior. The first time she dons male attire she intends to teach Roughman a lesson so that he will stop harassing her maids and interfering with her business:

> Let none condemn me of immodesty
> Because I try the courage of a man
> Who on my soul's a coward; beats my servants,
> Cuffs them, and as they pass by him, kicks my maids;
> Nay, domineers over me, making himself
> Lord o'er my house and household. (II.iii.27-32)

Bess is aware that she may be considered immodest for donning male clothes, but she is determined to show Roughman who is in charge of the tavern. She justifies her cross-

dressing in the name of justice. Roughman's treatment of her and her servants is unfair, and she decides to stop him.

Bess is certain that she can behave as a man if she so desires. She dresses like a page with a sword, and she tells Clemence, her apprentice, about her plan:

> But that I know my mother to be chaste,
>
> I'd swear some soldier got me.
>
> ……..…
>
> Methinks I have a manly spirit in me
>
> In this man's habit.
>
> ……..…
>
> Methinks I could be valiant on the sudden
>
> And meet a man i'th' field
>
> I could do all that I have heard discours'd
>
> Of Mary Ambree or Westminster's Long Meg. (II.iii.1-2,5-6,10-13)[8]

The first pair of lines reinforces gender stereotypes at the same time that the character subverts them. Just by donning male attire she feels "valiant on the sudden," which, at first, seems to emphasize the trope that "clothes make the man" and that the clothes are metonymic—that is, they do make others think she is powerful. However, when she mentions two famous female cross-dressers whom she can imitate since she knows their stories, she seems to indicate that her manliness is a matter of performance. Interestingly, Bess is the only cross-dresser in this selection of plays who has other females as role models for her male performance. The narratives that she has heard about real female

[8] See Appendix "Early-modern real life cross-dressers"

cross-dressers inspire her. Her choice of female narratives is relevant to this study because it hints at the idea of gender as performative. Bess' predecessors have performed as men for long stretches of time, thus suggesting that women can learn to perform as men.

Male clothes, for Bess, are empowering. Invigorated by her male attire, Bess finds Roughman, catches him off-guard, and strikes him to get his attention. Roughman refuses to fight, arguing that he had made an oath not to fight that day. Bess mocks him saying: "oh, your name's Roughman./No day doth pass you but you hurt or kill/ Is this out of your calendar?" (II.iii.63-64). Bess asks him to throw away his sword, tie her shoe, and untruss a point. Then, she asks him to lie down, and she walks over him. When Beth is done with Roughman, he thanks her for having spared his life:

Roughman: Oh, you are generous; honor me so much
As let know to whom I owe my life.
Bess: I am Bess Bridges' brother.
Roughman: Still methought
That you were something like her.
Bess : And I have heard
You domineer and revel in her house,
Control her servants, and abuse her guests,
Which if I ever shall hereafter hear,
Thou art but a dead man.
Roughman: She never told me of a brother living,
But you have power to sway me.

Bess: But for I see you are a gentleman,
I am content this once to let you pass;
But if I find you fall into relapse,
The second's far more dangerous. (II.iii.77-89)

Roughman immediately associates his assailant with Bess due to the aggressor's physical resemblance to the tavern owner. In spite of not having heard of Bess' brother, he is persuaded by Bess's violent performance that he is in the presence of a male. Roughman caves in without a struggle and with no swordplay. Notably, when Roughman wants to know who his attacker is, Bess identifies herself as "Bess Bridges' brother." By mentioning her own name first, instead of providing Roughman with her brother's proper name, she may be emphasizing what Roughman must remember. What is important is the tavern owner, and not the brother's name. Thus, the brother is an extension of her rather than a separate being, that is, "Bess Bridges' brother," not "John Bridges." Therefore, Roughman is not to harass Bess again.

Bess later goes one step further and forces Roughman to recognize her bravery in public, thus "petitioning," as Butler would put it, a new identity for herself. From this point onwards, she is not only a tavern owner but she will also be recognized as a person capable of defending and fighting for what is hers. When Roughman goes to Bess' tavern and tells a tall tale about being attacked by a dangerous villain, Bess forces Roughman not only to rectify the story but also to recognize that she herself had put him in that situation:

Bess: That gallant fellow,
So wounded and so mangled, was myself.

You base, white-liver'd slave! It was this shoe

That thou stoop'd to untie, untruss'd those points,

And like a beastly coward lay along

Till I strid over thee. Speak, was't not so?

Roughman: It cannot be denied

Bess: Hare-hearted fellow, milksop, dost not blush?

Give me that rapier. I will make thee swear

Thou shalt redeem this scorn thou hast incurr'd

Or in this woman shape I'll cudgel thee

And beat thee through the streets.

As I am Bess, I'll do't

Roughman: Hold, hold! I swear – (III.i.114-126)

When Roughman half-heartedly acknowledges that he was put to shame by a cross-dressed woman, Bess presses him until he tells the truth. Bess uses the threat of violence again even though she is no longer cross-dressed. In this scene, Bess claims the capacities she had while crossed dressed after she has abandoned the disguise, which implies that those capacities are "natural" to her.

By now Roughman believes that Bess is capable of cudgeling and beating him. In spite of feeling ashamed, however, Roughman is inspired by Bess' courage to act valiantly again. He reflects:

She hath waken'd me

And kindled that dead fire of courage in me

Which all this while hath slept. To spare my flesh

And wound my fame, what is't? I will not rest

Till by some valiant deed I have made good

All my disgraces past (III.i.131-135)

Violent threats from Bess produce "courage" and violence in Roughman. Roughman succeeds in his new resolution and bravely fights with a sailor. When Bess hears of this deed, she comments "how shame, base imputation, and disgrace/ can make a coward valiant!" (III.iii.7-8). She recognizes that by ruining Roughman's reputation, she has actually helped him find the courage he has lost. Although Bess' interaction with Roughman and his newly found "courage" are positive on the surface, this scene may also serve as a commentary on the negative aspect of extreme male behavior. Is violence, "shame" and "disgrace" really needed to bring about "courage"? Or does violence produce more violence? In this case, Roughman goes to fight sailors without any apparent reason. Thus, Beaumont and Fletcher may be employing both Bess and Roughman to criticize extreme martial behavior.

Like Portia, Bess reveals herself and forces recognition on the listener. As we saw in Chapter Two, this recognition, in Butler's terms, is a petition for the future. Not only will Roughman continue to regard Bess in a different light from now on, but Bess will also see herself differently because of the power she has exercised over this man. Once her domestic sphere is in order, her bravery and determination lead her to venture abroad to retrieve her lover's body. Bess decides to buy a ship and embark on a trip to Spain. Knowing his mistress' capabilities, Roughman joins the trip without even knowing where they are heading:

Roughman: But whither are we bound?

Bess : Pardon me that;

When we are out at sea, I'll tell you all.

For mine own wearing I have rich apparel,

For man or woman as occasion serves. (IV.iii.84-88)

These lines show her power over Roughman and her putative agency in any situation.

Bess has already proved to herself and others that she can cross gender boundaries fluidly and that she can perform both genders well. For the trip, Bess takes both female and male attire. However, at the moment she first sees that her lover is still alive among the prisoners she is surveying, there is a temporary break in her male performance:

Bess: These gentlemen have been dejected long.

Let me peruse them all and give them money

To drink our health. And pray forget not, sirs,

To pray for – [She sees Spencer.] Hold, support me or I faint.

Roughman: What sudden unexpected ecstasy

Disturbs your conquest?

Bess: Interrupt me not,

But give me way for heaven's sake! (IV.iv.131-137)

Thus, her male attire is not enough to suppress the emotional impact of the discovery since Bess almost collapses when she recognizes Spencer. Contrary to what happens in *Cymbeline* and *The Merchant of Venice*, these two lovers recognize each other immediately, but discount that recognition. Like the siblings in *Four Prentices*, when Spencer sees Bess in disguise, he notices a resemblance to his lover. He says in an aside: "Methink he looks like Bess, for in his eyes/Lives the first love that did my heart

surprise" (IV.v.157-1158), yet he cannot explain how Bess would be in this country.[9] Similarly, Bess dismisses what she sees because she thinks Spencer is dead. When they see one another again in the king's court, Bess is dressed as a woman and recognition is immediate. By the end of the play, Spencer knows about Bess's martial encounters at sea, and her bravery. Bess has demonstrated to herself that she is able not only to fight Roughman but also to lead her own ship and her crew with dexterity and efficiency. She fights pirates, brings solace to soldiers, and finds her Spencer. Thus, she embraces her newly empowered agency while demanding recognition from the characters and the audience. This recognition, which I have been referring to as Butlerian recognition, that is, a demand for a different kind of identity moving into the future, reflects her willingness to embrace authenticity. Her authentic self is made up of both male and female characteristics which is shown in her performance of both genders.

Love's Cure, like *Fair Maid of the West*, deals with a cross-dressed martial woman who, in spite of performing the male gender impeccably, does not have Bess' ability to change from female to male attire and performance fluidly. As we saw in Chapter Three, Clara was trained and dressed as a boy since birth. Her adjustment to female attire and feminine behavior was very slow and painful. Clara not only shows Bess's dexterity with the sword, but she has also adopted a male way of speaking. For instance, when Bobadilla threatens to hit her brother, Clara does not hesitate to stop him:

> First doe I breake your Office o're your pate,
> You Dog-skin-fac'd rogue, pilcher, your poore John,
> Which I will beat to Stock-fish. [Beats him.]

[9] Presumably Spain, no location stated in the text.

. . . . . .

You Cittern-head, who have you talk'd to, hah?

Your nasty, stincking, and ill-countenanc'd Cur. (I.ii.104-106,108-109)

She uses similar foul language when she speaks to her brother, who is trying to get used to male attire after having lived twenty years as a girl. Clara's male language emphasizes how a woman can imitate both male behavior, as we have seen in most cross-dressed heroines, and their word choice, as well as the readiness with which some men use such language. Unlike Bess who deliberately assumes her male disguise, Clara has been so acclimated to male culture that it is "natural" for her to use foul language because of the male world in which she learned it. Although her use of foul language may be a critique of maleness, it also shows that women, with practice, can convincingly imitate such male markers.

What sets Clara apart from other cross-dressed heroines is that she verbally defies her father. In previous chapters, we have examined how cross-dressed heroines such as Manet and Jessica challenge their parents' order by escaping the paternal household in male attire. Clara, however, uses her male apparel to voice her point of view to her father's face. Although Alvarez knows of her cross-dressing since he imposed it on her, Clara's verbal defiance both pleases and irritates him:

Clara: No, in this I'le presume to teach my Father,

And this first Act of disobedience shall

Confirme I am most dutifull.

Alvarez: [aside] I am pleas'd

With what I dare not give allowance to. –

Unnaturall wretch, what wilt thou doe?

Clara: Set free

A noble Enemy: come not on, by –

You passe to him, through me (I.iii.135-142)

When Clara plans to set Vitelli free against her father's command, reprehending her father for trying to ambush his enemy in a most unfair way (i.e. without a warning and outnumbering him), Alvarez is pleased with his daughter's code of honor, but he objects to her disobedience.

At this point, Vitelli does not know that Clara is cross-dressed, so he assumes Lucio is the one who is interceding for him. Clara's cross-dressed performance is so persuasive that Vitelli cannot tell that the person who saved his life is a woman. Although Clara challenges her father in order to protect their enemy in a situation that she considers unjust, she also warns Vitelli:

Clara: [To Vitelli] the way is open:

Farewell: when next I meet you, doe not look for

A friend, but a vow preserve you, for the honour

Of my sword onely.

Vitelli: [aside] Were this man a friend,

How would he win me, that being my vow'd foe

Deserves so well? – I thank you for my life

But how I shall deserve it, give me leave

Hereafter to consider. (I.iii.381-389)

Clara's words confirm her code of honor. She would not protect Vitelli in a fair fight. Vitelli's aside shows his immediate attraction to and admiration towards his savior.

Unlike most of the cross-dressed heroines analyzed in previous chapters, Clara is referred to as a "man," not a "youth" or a "page." This word choice emphasizes Clara's impeccable performance as a soldier. Vitelli could never imagine that the person who had protected him was a woman. Convinced that he has been saved by Lucio, Alvarez' son, Vitelli later goes to thank him:

*Vitell*i: Are you the Lucio, sir, that sav'd Vitelli?

Lucio: Not I indeed sir, I did never brable;

There walks that Lucio, metamorphosed.

Vitelli: Do ye mock me?

Exit [Lucio].

Clara: No, he do's not: I am that

Supposed Lucio that was, but Clara

That is, and daughter unto Alvarez.

Vitelli. Amazement daunts me; would my life were riddles,

So you were still my faire Expositor:

Protected by a Lady from my death.

Oh I shall weare an everlasting blush

Upon my cheek from this discovery:

Oh you the fairest Souldier, I ere saw;

Each of whose eyes, like a bright beamy shield

Conquers, without blowes, the contentious. (II.ii.165-178)

During the recognition scene Vitelli sees Clara as a powerful woman. Clara's metamorphosis takes Vitelli by surprise. He verbalizes the consequences of such a realization. He feels ashamed for having been "protected by a lady." He acknowledges his debt to her by mentioning the "everlasting blush" that he will wear on his cheek. This scene suggests a role reversal since "blush" is usually associated with women. Thus, this passage supports the fluid nature of gender roles. From this point onwards, Vitelli recognizes Clara as a valiant woman who is capable of saving a man's life.

Clara's encounter with Vitelli leads to mutual transformation. Not only is Vitelli's perception of Clara changed but also Clara's perception of herself. After listening to Vitelli speak, Clara starts embracing her more feminine side:

> This Sword. –
>
> [Aside.] I never heard a man speak till this houre.
>
> His words are golden chaines, and now I feare
>
> The Lyonesse hath met a tamer here:
>
> Fie, how this tongue chimes: - what was I saying?
>
> Oh: this favour I bequeath you, which I tie
>
> In a love-knot, fast, nere to hurt my friends;
>
> Yet be it fortunate 'gainst all your foes
>
> (For I have neither friend, not foe, but yours)
>
> As ere it was to me: I have kept it long.
>
> And value it, next my Virginity:
>
> But good, return it, for I now remember
>
> I vow'd, who purchas'd it, should have me too. (II.ii.230-242)

Vitelli's words conquer Clara. She feels herself surrendering and bluntly offers him her sword, which she then coyly asks back as she associates it with her virginity and whoever takes one should take the other too. Clara seems willing to move to the female realm, but she describes herself as a powerful creature, a "lyonesse." Although she is constituting herself a female, prizing virginity, she is also controlling the "negotiation." Thus, she is now willing to allow Vitelli to take total control over her. At the same time, she feels some kind of transformation taking place in her:

> I am sick me thinks, but the disease I feele
> Pleaseth, and punisheth: I warrant love
> Is very like this, that folks talke of so;
> I skill not what it is, yet sure even here,
> Even in my heart, I sensibly perceive
> It glows, and riseth like a glimmering flame,
> But know not yet the essence on't nor name. (II.ii.253-259)

Unable to fully articulate the process that is taking place within, Clara tries to adjust to her "former nature" by thinking about new ways that she can fight:

> Oh leave me living: - what new exercise
> Is crept into my breast, that blauncheth clean
> My former nature? I begin to finde
> I am a woman, and must learn to fight
> A softer sweeter battaile, then with Swords. (II.ii.248-252)

Clara clearly states the maleness is gone, but she is still prepared for "softer, sweeter" battles. This suggests to me that she retains some sense of empowerment even though she

loses the trappings of martial maleness. The soldier nature remains in her but it is transformed. Now she has to make use of more feminine weapons rather than a sword. As Duncan points out “femininity in this play seems to be grounded in biology” (402). In the first part of the play, Bobadilla often reminds Clara that underneath her attire she is a woman and that she should behave as one. Lucio, in a similar way, demands that his sister behave as a lady since she was born female. In spite of these numerous appeals, it is only after her encounter with Vitelli that Clara is drawn towards an acceptance of her biological gender, and embraces her femininity. What has been “natural” to Clara until her encounter with Vitelli is the masculine social behaviors in which she has been trained since her youth. Her femininity is particularly challenging for Clara since she has to be self-conscious about its performance. Thus, we see a character whose performance of the male gender is so ingrained that for her to align her gender with femininity, she needs to consciously start performing as a woman.

Granting Clara the recognition that she derives as a martial woman initially prevents Vitelli from establishing a love relationship with her. Considering the challenges of marrying “Bell the Dragon,” as Bobadilla calls her, Vitelli does not pursue her further. Clara, however, is determined to chase him. When she finds him wooing a whore, she does not flee away. She saves Vitelli’s life a second time: “Show your old valour, and learn from woman,/ One Eagle has a world of odds against/ A fight of Dawes, as these are” (IV.ii, p.66). Although Vitelli is embarrassed at being saved a second time by Clara, Clara herself is not shy about taking the conventional masculine role even as a female, and teaches him how to behave courageously.

Unlike the other cross-dressed heroines we have examined, Clara boldly proposes to Vitelli. Since she is the only dramatic cross-dresser who has lived maleness for much of her life and has not simply assumed male garb as a convenience, perhaps this means that her male behavior has given her some male qualities that give her power and greater agency than the other females who return to mostly female roles at the end of the play. She knows that her boldness is "beyond a Virgins bounds," but she is determined to proceed even if it means her "losse of blushes, and good name." Clara needs Vitelli "to give a safe protection to her lust." Vitelli is flattered by such a proposition, but he knows he cannot woo the daughter of his enemy since her father would reject their union. Besides, Vitelli is afraid of martial Clara:

> Grant all this so, to take you for a wife
> Were greater hazard, for should I offend you
> (As tis not easy still to please woman)
> You are of so great a spirit, that I must learn
> To weare your petticoat, for you will have
> My breeches from me. (IV.ii.179-183)

Vitelli, though attracted to Clara, fears a power reversal in their future marital relationship in which he will be forced to obey her.

Aware of the new position that she wants to occupy—that of a married woman—Clara realizes that she must change certain behaviors. As she senses Vitelli's fear, she assures him that she can be submissive:

> Rather from this house
> I here abjure all actions of a man,

And will esteem it hapinesse from you

To suffer like a woman: love, true love

Hath made a search within me, and expel'd

All but my natural softnesse, and made perfect

That which my parents care could not begin.

I will show strength in nothing, but my duty,

And glad desire to please you, and in that

Grow every day more able. (IV.ii.184-193)

In this passage, Clara embraces the stereotypical role of a woman: she will "suffer like a woman" and she will keep her "natural softness." Here she seems to embrace a narrative of essentialism by considering that having been raised as a man was an aberration that has now been rectified and "made perfect." By surrendering her strength, Clara emphasizes her willingness to please him and to leave behind her martial past.

In vowing to throw over her martial –extreme male– behavior, she gets him to throw over his whoring—also extreme male behavior. So she successfully negotiates an end to extreme male behavior in both of them. Vitelli is amazed by Clara's change and imagines a "brave race" coming from their union. He is also transformed:

Vitelli: well, I will leave whoring,

And luck heaven send me with her. –Worthiest Lady,

Ile wait upon you home, and by the way

(If ere I marry, as ile not forswear it)

Tell you, you are my wife.

Clara: Which if you do,

From me all man-kinde women, learne to woe. (IV.ii.204-210)

Clara is aware of her success as a wooer and, if Vitelli takes her as his wife, she can teach other women to woo.

Clara's didactic approach is valuable for both men and women. She instructs men how to treat other men according to the code of honor and how to behave with women. Clara also teaches women how to pursue what they want, even if that includes the bold action of proposing to their lovers. Her martial success lies in an extraordinary performance of the male gender in which she shows courage, strength, and bravery. Thus, Clara, through her male performance and her re-adjustment to the female gender, makes clear to herself, to Vitelli, to the other characters, and to the audience that she wants to be recognized as a different subject—a subject whose versatility has enabled her to embrace her femininity while having made obvious the strength and dexterity she is able to use if needed.

As we have seen, the recognition scene in this play –the moment when Vitelli is informed that his savior was the cross-dressed Clara—triggers a complex examination of Clara's "nature." Although she willingly embraces her femininity and she considers herself to be a woman in essence, she still keeps male traits after her return to the female gender. Besides taking charge of negotiating her marriage, she describes herself as a wooer—a conventionally male-role. Moreover, the final scene challenges an essentialist reading of the play since Clara and her future sister-in-law draw their swords and threaten to kill one another if their lovers, Vitelli and Lucio, do not stop their fight. Clara is thus showing her strength and courage again, but this time in what she considers her duty—to preserve Vitelli's life—though disobeying his orders.

To complicate matters even more, the narrative of essentialism apparently favored at the end of the play is challenged by a constructivist notion of gender which is present throughout. Clara first performs as a male, but her masculine presentation of self seems to go beyond performance because she finds it comfortable and "natural." Then, she is forced to perform as a woman, which she does self-consciously because it does not come "naturally" to her until she falls in love with Vitelli.

Thus, in this play we do not see recognition in an Aristotelian sense, since Vitelli and Clara have not seen one another before. We can observe, however, a Butlerian recognition since Clara claims for recognition as a different subject. She is no longer the martial man Vitelli first saw or the martial lady who saved his life a second time. She is now a woman who is willing to embrace a conventional female role while retaining the physical courage she has shown as a male.

The theme of martial cross-dressers is also present in Restoration drama, which may indicate the playwrights' fascination with the possibility the stage provided them to explore unconventional female behaviors—behaviors that could disrupt patriarchy by presenting women who subvert the power dynamics of traditional marital relationships, for instance. In Thomas Shadwell's *The Woman-Captain* (1679), we encounter another martial lady who fights against injustice. According to Vicky J. Bancroft, the play was a "resounding success" because it offered the public everything they expected, i.e. "visual and verbal comedy, rakes and whores, songs and dance" and because "Shadwell's 'breeches role' had a prominence which it had not attained in his earlier plays" (165). In this play, Mrs. Gripe is cross-dressed as a captain for most of the play and she performs

different male roles. She goes from being a bully captain to a successful seducer of ladies—both of which are satirizable aspects of extreme male behavior.

Unlike, the female cross-dressers we have analyzed so far, Mrs. Gripe is trapped in a tyrannical marital relationship in which she is deprived of not only the freedom of socializing with others but also the basic right to food. When she cannot endure her situation any more, she faces her husband:

> *Mrs. Gripe*: No- I have endured your cruel Tyranny too long; but above all, your Jealousie is most provoking.
>
> *Gripe*: 'Tis nothing but my Love, my great Love. Dost thou think I do not love my Money – why I am Jealous of that, and lock it up as I do thee – I know what a Treasure thou art.
>
> *Mrs. Gripe*: Give me leave to know my own value too: And that I deserve not to be used so, I will have the liberty of a She-Subject of England.
>
> *Gripe*: What a Pox! The liberty of Cuckolding your husband for that it comes to, to receive Visits, and sculk about in Chairs in Vizors, to meet damn'd Roguy Whoremasters, which they call Admirers with a Pox to 'em.
>
> *Mrs. Gripe*: Thou deserv'st to be used so. When you are at home I am never out of my Prison, but in your presence, my cruel Jailor; and when you are abroad, I am fed at a Gate like the Lyons in the

> Tower (if I may call it feeding.) If there be any means under the Sun to get my liberty, I will attempt it. (Act I, p. 28)[10]

Mr. Gripe's explanation for his jealousy does not convince his wife. Mrs. Gripe demands the "liberty of a She-Subject of England." By using that term, she joins the community of women who have already obtained certain freedoms in England.

Yet, like Clara who challenges her father, Mrs. Gripe is perceived as a threat to male authority since she questions her husband's abusive treatment:

> *Mrs. Gripe*: 'Sheart! talk no more to me of that, you have worn out all my patience; and I henceforward will be a Tigress to thee.
>
> *Gripe*: Audacious!
>
> *Mrs. Gripe*:I have a Brother, who comes this Night to Town, he loves me, we were Twins, he'll right me; Thou never saw'st him, but shortly to thy cost thou shalt – His Serjeant spoke to me out at my Prison Window, he is beating up Drums for a supply for Flanders. There is not a fiercer young Officer in the Army: He'll cut thy Throat if thou abusest me so.
>
> *Gripe*: Death, is that Hectorly Fellow come, you use to threaten me with? Oh Imprudence! my Family is turn'd Topsy-turvy (Act II, p. 38)

Mrs. Gripe verbally threatens her husband. Like Clara who refers to herself as a "lioness," Mrs. Gripe sees her future self as a "tigress." Both heroines choose powerful animal imagery to describe themselves, which hints at their high self-esteem. Their self-perception reveals their inner strength. Clara is willing to be tamed while Mrs. Gripe will

[10] No scenes or lines are provided in the original text.

use her fierceness to escape. Although Mrs. Gripe's threat relies on a male figure performing her revenge (i.e. her twin brother would chastise Mr. Gripe), she herself comes up with the plan to escape and eventually regain her freedom.

Mrs. Gripe's wittiness excels when she takes advantage of a riot to trick her husband. She does not approve of the bullies who provoke the riot, but she uses their chaotic visit to run away. She convinces Richard, her faithful servant, to pretend he is Mrs. Gripe and so manages to escape. Although she does not reveal her escape plan to Richard, their relationship is based on trust and mutual support. Mrs. Gripe's successful escape is similar to Margerie Pinchwife's in *The Country Wife*. Both Margerie and Mrs. Gripe want to socialize freely with others. To obtain their freedom they resort to disguise and deception to leave their husbands. In both cases, the husbands' desire to control actually weakens their control.

To attain her liberty, Mrs. Gripe comes up with a strategic plan which she carefully prepares and carries out. She primes her husband's mind with stories about her brother whom Mr. Gripe refers to as "Hectorly Fellow" (Act II, p. 38), though in disbelief. She talks to her brother's sergeant through her window. When an unexpected opportunity comes up, she takes advantage of it. Profiting from chaos produced by the rascals who come to see Mr. Gripe, Mrs. Gripe escapes. To achieve her goals, i.e. freedom and a monetary settlement, Mrs. Gripe decides to dress as her twin brother.

Like Viola and Sebastian, Mrs. Gripe and her brother share a striking physical resemblance, which enables the female characters to pass as their brothers. Even the characters who are acquainted with Viola's and Mrs. Gripe's brothers cannot tell brother and sister apart. Antonio confuses Viola and Sebastian, and the Sergeant cannot notice

any difference between the twin siblings. He assures Mrs. Gripe that she looks and acts just like her brother:

> *Mrs. Gripe*: Am I compleatly set to like a young Officer? Do my Brother's Accountrements sit well upon me?
>
> *Serj*: They become you admirably; you are as brisk, as fierce an Officer as the best of 'em; and so like your Brother, 'tis amazing, had not I been privy to your Design and his, I should have sworn you were my captain. (Act III, p. 54)

Mrs. Gripe is intent on performing her male role well in order to ensure success for her purpose. Therefore, she asks the Sergeant if she "strut[s], cock[s], and look[s] fierce enough." This passage suggests that the playwrights are satirizing the extreme behavior of males by having a woman perform them. The Sergeant reassures her that she is performing her captain's role "to a Miracle!" Jessica Munns notes that cross-dressed roles "often merely offered the opportunity for a display of female legs and sexy roguishness, but they could also indicate that it is custom, not ability or intrinsic modesty, that keeps women covered and quiet" (145). In Mrs. Gripe's case, although she remains quiet and obedient due to "custom" at the beginning of the play, she easily breaks away from it. As the Sergeant later emphasizes, Mrs. Gripe just has to get used to the new role, and practice will enable her to perform as a male. Although the Sergeant is her accomplice, he suggests it would be better for a male, in this case Mrs. Gripe's brother, to punish another male, Mr. Gripe. But the Woman-Captain emphasizes her need to teach her husband a lesson. Due to the extreme abuse that she has undergone, Mrs. Gripe does not

aim at a reconciliation with her husband. The only two options that she considers are to have him under her control or "press him for Flanders."

Both the Sergeant and Mrs. Gripe know that their success will depend mostly on how they perform their roles. In their role rehearsal, they talk about their potential mistakes:

> *Serj*: I will, Madam! 'Sheart I shall forget to call you Captain.
>
> *Mrs. Gripe*: Well, I shall strut, look big, and huff enough for a Captain, I warrant you: by your leave Modesty for a while. A desperate ill, must have a desperate cure: But these words of Command stick in my Throat, and I cannot swear worth a farthing. (Act III, p. 54)

The Sergeant, out of respect, keeps referring to Mrs. Gripe as "madam," which might give her away when they meet Mr. Gripe. The Woman-Captain is aware that acting like a man will compromise her "modesty," but she is determined to do whatever needs to be done to get out of her oppressive relationship with Mr. Gripe. She justifies her cross-dressing by arguing that she is the victim of "a desperate ill" which "must have a desperate cure." However, she knows that her short-coming as a male is that she cannot swear well, unlike Clara who makes extensive use of expletives. Mrs. Gripe compensates for her inability to swear by over-emphasizing her skill at disciplining men with force, which includes caning the Sergeant—a gesture to show her accomplice who is in charge.

Although Mrs. Gripe needs reassurance at first, her self-confidence has increased by the end of the play, which emphasizes the idea that certain male behaviors such as using physical force and giving orders in a violent way can be learned. She is excited about the success of her plan and she marvels at the fact that everybody takes her for her

twin brother. The Sergeant, who knows both siblings, confirms their complete resemblance in appearance and behavior.

Mrs. Gripe: Your servant: Was ever design so well begun, and so hopefully carried on? They all take me for my Twin Brother.

Serj: I that know you both, don't wonder at it.

Mrs. Gripe:Come Souldiers March – March, I say – (Act IV, p. 68)

Due to her remarkable resemblance to her twin brother, Mrs. Gripe is immediately associated with Mr. Gripe's wife by other on-stage characters. When Mrs. Gripe introduces herself as her brother to Sir Humphrey, he cannot believe his eyes:

Mrs. Gripe: Sir, your most humble Servant. I hope you will excuse the Disturbance, when you shall know my Business.

Sir Humph: A Gentleman's Commands can never disturb me.

Mrs. Gripe:Sir, I am Brother to the unfortunate Mrs. Gripe, the Wife of a wretched Usurer; who I am inform'd is in your House.

Sir Humph: He is Sir, but I should have taken you for her, Her self in man's habit.

Serj:A Woman! He has been my Captain abroad these four years; if you had seen what brave Actions he has perform'd in the midst of fire and smoak, you would not have taken him for a Woman,

Mrs. Gripe: I should not wonder much at your mistake; for just before I went out of England, she was dress'd in man's habit; and we were so like, we could not be known asunder.

Sir. Humph: indeed I have heard there was a strange likeness betwixt you; the very Look and Voice! Hah!

Mrs. Gripe: But Sir, if I be inform'd right, you cannot mistake; for she is in your House.

Sir Humph: She is not, upon my Honour. This is most amazing. I never saw much likeness- they speak so like too (Act IV, p. 56-57)

Although Sir Humphrey addresses her as "Gentleman" based on her male uniform, he makes it clear that he thought it was Mrs. Gripe "in man's habit." He reinforces his disbelief by pointing out that not only the physical appearance but also the voice is similar to Mrs. Gripe. If we compare this passage with the Heywood play analyzed in Chapter II, we may observe that the comic trope seems to be shifting. In *Four Prentices*, the siblings' first response to "resemblance" is to deny the possibility that the character is the sister or the brother. In this play, however, "resemblance" is immediately acknowledged and even insisted upon. The characters "know" that it is Mrs. Gripe in male attire from the very first time she comes on stage as the Captain. Sir Humphrey's reaction is soon echoed by Bellamy and Wildman:

Bellamy: Was ther ever such likeness between two, as betwixt this Captain and his Sister?

Wildman: It is prodigious – I never heard her speak but once, and methinks their Voices have some likeness.

Bellamy: They have so - This is a very Effeminate man to look at, yet they report him o be a brave Fellow. (Act IV, p. 60)

The three prostitutes, Phillis, Chloris, and Celia show the same amazement when Sir Humphrey introduces them to the Woman-Captain:

> *Sir Humph*: This is the Captain's that's so like his Sister. [They salute.
>
> *Phill*: There is a strange resemblance betwixt 'em-
>
> *Chlo*:I never saw one so like another days o' my breath. (Act IV, p. 61)

Apart from looking and sounding like Mrs. Gripe, the woman-captain chooses to enact a masculinity that does not quite fit expectations: a captain should drink, use profanity, and whore. Mrs. Gripe, however, holds her ground and justifies her behavior:

> *Mrs. Gripe*: Sir Humphrey, I must desire my Liberty. Wine does not agree with me, I never drink hard.
>
> *Sir Humph*: Every Gentleman is free in my House.
>
> *Sir Chr*: Hey! we shall have fine work indeed. What a Devil, a Captain, and cannot Drink? Can you Whore?
>
> *Mrs. Gripe*: So, so – well enough for a young Beginner.
>
> *Sir Chr*: Not Drink! 'Sheart! a man is not fit for a Captain that cannot Drink. (Act IV, p. 64)

Her performance is hardly believable at the beginning because of physical factors such as her voice, her resemblance to Mrs. Gripe, and her refusal to drink or use profanity. Indeed, she herself questions her ability to survive in this completely different environment, "Mrs. Gripe. What shall I do amongst 'em; I cannot drink: yet I have a great Curiosity to see what it is that charms men to sit up whole Nights at eating Houses

and Taverns" (Act IV, p. 64). She uses her male attire not only to punish her husband but also to explore the male world as much as she can.

In spite of lacking certain male habits, the Woman-Captain is so successful at attracting women that she is perceived as a threat by other males. Bellamy does not like the Woman-Captain's interaction with women, and he realizes that "this Beardless Officer will be too hard for us" (Act IV, p.60). He then adds, "These Wenches are stark mad after smooth-faced fighting fellows, let'em be never such Puppies" (Act IV, p.61). The three prostitutes immediately fall for the Woman-Captain, whom they consider a "mighty pretty Man," a "fine Gentleman," and "a very sweet Person." Unlike Viola's reluctance to accept Olivia's advances or Rosalind's rejection of Phebe, Mrs. Gripe is willing to go as far as she can with her performance. She is "resolved to carry on this frolick as far as 'twill go" (Act IV, 60). She kisses each of them and makes arrangements to meet with each of them privately later that evening.

The Woman-Captain is not only a successful seducer but also a forceful and merciless Captain, which makes her the most versatile cross-dresser that we have examined so far. Reassured by the Sergeant's comments, Mrs. Gripe is confident that she is acting her role well. She uses force on the bullies and on her husband. As soon as Mr. Gripe explains that "she is run away from me, and I believe she is in the house playing the Whore/ here with Sir Humphrey," the Woman-Captain strikes him, stating that Mr. Gripe is lying. Her performance of an extreme masculinity serves the double purpose of showing Mr. Gripe and the other on-stage characters who is in control, as well as convincing them that she is a male since it would not be possible for a woman to give such "hard blows" or make them tremble. Her successful performance also triggers Mr.

Gripe's public confession that he had wronged his wife. She makes sure to defend her own honesty in public "I know [Mrs. Gripes's] virtue; all thy damn'd Generation put together, have not half her Honesty," (Act IV, p. 58) thus guarding her own modesty and reputation while cross-dressed.

After disciplining her husband, she applies the same strategies with Sir Charles and the rascals who thought the Woman-Captain would protect them from the bailiffs. Her interaction with them shows her principles:

> *Blund*: Good Bully Captain, you over-acted your Part, and laid on too hard before the Bailiffs tho' – let me tell you that.
>
> *Heild*: You broke my head; I do not use to put it up, but upon this occasion.
>
> *Mrs. Gripe*: I must keep strict Discipline amongst my Souldiers, you shall find that was nothing. (Act V, p. 75)

The Woman-Captain does not support the rascals' behavior and takes advantage of her temporary role to punish them physically quite viciously. As Blunderbus points out, Mrs. Gripe "over-acted" her role. Yet, Heilderbrand acknowledges that she has "ten bullies" in her, which suggests not only her extreme enactment of the male gender but also the possibility that a woman has enough physical strength to discipline men. Her performance of physical violence is particularly relevant for the recognition scene since it is what has convinced the onstage characters that Mrs. Gripe is a Captain. Her martial performance overwrites her resemblance to Mrs. Gripe to such an extent that characters in the recognition scene are confused by Mrs. Gripe's revelation and cannot explain how they were fooled by a woman.

Her bullying strategies, however, do not produce the desired effect on Mr. Gripe, who is reluctant to sign the deed granting her freedom. The Woman-Captain then tries a different strategy. She dresses once more as Mrs. Gripe and encourages her husband to sign the deed:

> *Mrs. Gripe*: Why my Dear! If thou sign'st that Deed, I'll return it thee again. And be thy most obedient Wife.
>
> G*ripe*: Poor Rogue! Wilt thou? That's kind indeed; prithee kiss me, my pretty Dear: Thou overjoy'st me with thy Love! Hah – I have thought on the best way, if I can get her home with me, I´ll give her Opium in her drink, and that ne'r a Doctor or Chyrurgeon on 'em all can discover, when they open her. Ay, it shall be so! – [Aside.] (Act V, p. 81)

Although Mrs. Gripe acts the role of a repentant wife, bitterness and no forgiveness is reflected in Mr. Gripe's language. Both characters are using love language for a far from loving end. Mrs. Gripe is planning to keep the deed, while Mr. Gripe's aside indicates his murderous intent.

Mrs. Gripe, in the final recognition scene, claims a new subjectivity for herself—a subjectivity that embraces her female self which has been enhanced by her cross-dressed experience. After Mr. Gripe reluctantly signs the deed, her freedom is assured. Mrs. Gripe asks the on-stage characters to be witnesses of Mr. Gripe's signature, and then reveals herself: "And now good Mr. Gripe, your much abus'd Wife is free, and thanks you for her Liberty" (Act V, p. 84). The recognition scene is forced upon the onstage characters by Mrs. Gripe. She could have walked away with the deed and never revealed

her true identity. Like Portia, however, the Woman-Captain prefers to teach her husband what a woman is capable of doing. All the onstage characters are surprised by Mrs. Gripe's self-revelation:

> *Gripe*: O Devil! Is it she all this while?
>
> *Ladies*: A Woman!
>
> *Mrs. Gripe*: Yes Ladies, I am; but wish my self a Man, for your sakes, and my own
>
> *Sir Humph*: How this Mistake was carried?
>
> *Mrs. Gripe*: I'll bring my Brother to thank you for your favours to me, and then you'l Mistake as much.
>
> *Gripe*: Am I thus Cozen'd – I'll go home, and starve to Death. The Devil take you all – and so farewell – [Exit Gripe.
>
> *Sir Chr*: Cudgel'd and beaten thus damnably by a Woman! I hope she- Captain, you will release us now –
>
> *Mrs. Gripe*:Yes go- I'll have no Bullies in my Company now.
>
> *Blund*:'Sheart! were ever men so dishonour'd as we!
>
> *Heild*: Beaten and bruis'd by a Woman!
>
> *Sir Chr*: As for that damn'd Jade, I will scowr and break her Windows every night in the year.
>
> *Mrs. Gripe*: Now all ye Husbands, let me Warn ye!
>
> If you'd preserve your Honours, or your Lives;
>
> Ne´r dare be Tyrants o're your Lawful Wives. (Act V, pp. 84-85)

Each character reflects on the consequences of Mrs. Gripe's cross-dressed performance. All the characters had allowed themselves to be persuaded about her gender based on her performance of manhood rather than on her appearance and voice which were remarkably similar to Mrs. Gripe's. Mr. Gripe signed the deed thinking the Captain is Mrs. Gripe's brother. The ladies were seduced by the young captain, and the bullies were beaten by a woman. Although all of them had initially seen and pointed out the Captain's incredible resemblance to Mrs. Gripe, they had gradually been convinced that the Captain was a man due to her performance. To comfort them, Mrs. Gripe assures them that if her brother were there, they wouldn't be able to tell them apart. Mrs. Gripe "wish[es] [her] self a Man." She has tasted the male gender and enjoyed the power her assumed gender granted her not only to obtain her freedom but also to correct bullies and tyrannical husbands.

Mrs. Gripe successfully teaches a lesson to her husband—although there is little indication that he has actually learned anything. She mentions that the lesson may be applicable to all husbands, thus having a far-reaching effect. As John P. Zomchick suggests, "Mrs. Gripe's success in attaining her ends shows that power is a performance rather than an essence, and that sexuality can be provisional and migratory rather than an essential and determining characteristic of the human actor" (180). By means of her performance of maleness she has proved to herself and others that she is able to "correct" her abusive husband.

In this play we see recognition in an Aristotelian sense since the characters re-apprehend the Mrs. Gripe they once knew. We can also observe a Butlerian recognition in that Mrs. Gripe claims for herself a new identity. Her performance of a martial

masculinity grants her the power to escape the submissive role she had in her marriage. Although Mr. Gripe leaves the stage without vocally granting Mrs. Gripe recognition of her new standing, both male and female characters as well as the audience can see Mrs. Gripe in a new light. The Mrs. Gripe that reveals herself after Mr. Gripe signs the deed is different from the submissive Mrs. Gripe that we see at the beginning of the play. Unlike all the cross-dressers I have examined, Mrs. Gripe is the only one that refuses to be re-inscribed in a marital relationship. After attaining her freedom and her monetary allowance, Mrs. Gripe leaves her husband and his household. The play thus seems to favor a constructivist notion of gender to show how hegemonic male control can potentially be disrupted.

The aggressive cross-dressing depicted in these three plays emphasizes the plays' didactic and satiric potential since it interrogates extreme aspects of maleness. The three female cross-dressers share a passion for fighting for what they consider to be just. Clara teaches valuable lessons to the male characters. She challenges her father's order to kill his enemy since she believes that her father should behave in an honorable way even with his enemy by giving him the chance to defend himself. She also teaches Vitelli to appreciate how much a martial woman differs from the prostitutes he is used to. A martial woman like herself not only possesses strength and has the ability to save his life when he is in danger, but she can also metamorphose and embrace her feminine side when in love. In a similar fashion, Bess reprehends Roughman for his inappropriate behavior. She shows him that a woman can fight against unjust treatment. She also proves to Spencer that a woman is strong enough to fight for what she wants. She courageously goes abroad to retrieve her lover's body from Spanish hands. Likewise, Mrs. Gripe teaches a lesson to

her husband as well as to all husbands on stage and in the audience. She clearly testifies to the fact that if husbands mistreat their wives, females can fight for what they consider just and fair.

Apart from the didactic purpose that these plays exhibit, they also demonstrate the fluidity with which these martial women can cross gender boundaries and perform both genders well. Mrs. Gripe and Bess Bridges easily go back and forth from one gender to the other while Clara finds it hard to go back to her biological gender, perhaps because of her youth and her lack of female models. In spite of Clara's initial difficulty in acting like a woman, these three cross-dressers show that gender boundaries can be transgressed and that gender-based behaviors can be learned.

As in *The Merchant of Venice*, the recognition scenes in these three plays act as a petition for the future. None of these cross-dressers will again be considered as submissive and disempowered women. Even if they choose to behave submissively, as Clara promises Vitelli she will, their husbands know their wives' potential since they have seen them effectively perform as males. These heroines choose when to stop their performance and when to reveal themselves. Their exercise of power allows them to negotiate a position with which they are comfortable, even if it stays within expectations for the female gender; having demonstrated they can move beyond it, they show they are capable of more than submissiveness. Their lovers, as well as the other characters and the audience, bear witness of their transformation and grant them the recognition they ask for. The three heroines are regarded as empowered female subjects by the end of the plays.

Conclusion

After examining thirteen dramatic cross-dressers in eleven plays, we can observe that, regardless of their choice of "profession" (pages, advocates, clerks, captains, or martial ladies), female cross-dressers choose to don male attire in an exploratory journey into the male gender. In such a cross-dressed journey, they obtain knowledge not only about the male world but also about themselves. It starts with the desire to not be recognized as a female, yet it ends with the urge to embrace their feminine side. Although some critics consider such a return to femininity as a subjection to the patriarchal system, I would argue that such a turn is the embrace of their authentic self. This authentic self is a newly-conceived one, a self that has gained insight from the cross-dressed experience and that now can both claim knowledge of the male sphere and value the female side. These female cross-dressers re-emerge into the female gender with a re-conception of their own value and of the males in their lives, which is most apparent in Portia's case in *The Merchant of Venice*. With this new insight, they (re-)embark on relationships that have been silently re-shaped or, as in Mrs. Gripe's case, the cross-dresser decides to step out of the abusive relationship—thus refusing to be re-inscribed in a patriarchal institution.

The recognition scene, more than a plot device, functions as a site of conversation, a site where both genders converge for a brief moment, where perception and knowledge coincide again after having been disrupted by the disguise. This moment of clarity allows the characters to re-apprehend one another, in an Aristotelian sense, and

it also enables some of the cross-dressed characters to "make a petition for the future" in a Butlerian sense. Having the recognition scene as a focal point of analysis grants us the possibility of seeing how playwrights try to reconcile or settle for either a constructivist or an essentialist version of gender. As we have observed, *Love's Cure* seems to be the most complex because the narrative of essentialism that is sustained at the end is undercut by Clara's earlier behavior.

Some playwrights use the "clothes-make-the wo/man" trope to hint at the performative nature of gender. Bess, for instance, feels empowered by male attire, yet, she makes sure to tell Roughman that it was she who fought against him. However, male attire also functions as a trapping for the cross-dresser's authentic self. Julia in *Two Gentlemen of Verona* and Jessica in *The Merchant of Venice* feel ashamed of it because they cannot show their femininity or act as women. Rosalind in *As You Like It* also feels the trappings of disguise when she feels the need to protect Celia or when she has to justify her fainting as counterfeit when she sees the handkerchief with Orlando's blood. Similarly, Hellena in *The Rover* cannot defend herself against Willmore's accusations since she is disguised as Hellena's page.

In the two Restoration plays, we can also observe a change in the perception of female cross-dressers and a different type of recognition scene. On the Restoration stage, "breeches roles," now performed by women, were very popular. According to Jenn Fishman:

> Between 1660 and 1700, eighty-nine of the three-hundred and seventy-five plays produced in London featured at least one female actor in male disguise, and women frequently made cross-dressed appearances in

> entr'act entertainment and in all-female productions. Female actors, especially cross-dressed female actors, greatly appealed to male audience members. In his diaries, Samuel Pepys often records greater details about cross-dressed actresses than the plays in which they appeared. In 1666/7 he writes, "[O]nly Mis. Davis did dance a jig after the end of the play, and there telling the next day's play; so that it come in by force only to please the company to see her dance in boy's clothes" (8:11). The cross-dressed actress arouses heterosexual desire in the male spectator, who remains aware of the female body beneath the male costume and of the particular actress whose body the performance tantalizingly revealed. (36)

Although Restoration female actors were allowed on stage and could perform a variety of roles, this apparently greater freedom is undercut by their reduction to sex-objects, as Fishman suggests. While the Restoration audience is aware of the female body in disguise, the Renaissance audience is aware of the male body underneath the female attire. This change in the meta-awareness allows for different readings of the plays. In the Renaissance, seeing boys disguised as women may have aroused homoerotic desire in the audience. This desire, in the Restoration, seems to have shifted to a heterosexual object when female actors performed as boys.

The Rover and *The Woman Captain* provide us with recognition scenes in which the moment of discovery does not seem to be what matters the most. Both Hellena and Mrs. Gripe are recognized immediately by those who know them, yet, they keep playing their roles. In *The Rover*, the recognition scene leads to an exploration into the couple's power dynamics which is titillating for both parties. Willmore and Hellena enjoy their

battle of wits, and Hellena does not need to come out of her disguise. Mrs. Gripe, however, stages a recognition scene that surprises all the onstage characters, in spite of their initial reluctance to accept her disguise. It takes a long time for the characters to accept that the Captain is not Mrs. Gripe. Only her martial performance convinces them otherwise. Yet, at the very end, when Mrs. Gripe finally reveals the truth, all the onstage characters are taken aback. Mrs. Gripe is the most radical of all the cross-dressers analyzed in this study since she removes herself from her marriage.

Most of these cross-dressed theatrical performances seem to question the rigidity of gender roles. By having female cross-dressers perform different types of masculinity, playwrights explore different ways in which patriarchy can be challenged. Although such an exploration ends up, in most cases, with the return to the hegemonic order, such return is re-inscribed in relationships that have been slightly changed. The recognition scene thus is the site where the cross-dresser sets the terms of her new identity—an identity that she will carry into her marital relationship or, as in Mrs. Gripe's case, an identity which is sufficient to start anew without depending on a husband, thus resisting the patriarchal system.

Appendix

Early-modern real life cross-dressers

1- Long Meg

According to Simon Shepherd,

> The story of Long Meg's life runs like this: in the reign of Henry VIII she arrived in London from Lancashire and she was given a job serving in the Eagle tavern at Westminster. After several victorious clashes with debtors, thieves and braggarts, she went with soldiers to Boulogne. Here she defeated the champion of the French and was honoured by the king. Then she returned to England, married a soldier and set up a tavern of her own in Islington.
>
> Meg, encounters a destitute soldier and decides to try him in physical combat. He proves too strong, 'being a marvellous tall fellow, and one that feared not his flesh, laid on such a load, that Meg was feing to bid him stay his hand, and discover who she was' (Life, pp. 17-8). Proper manly power forces Meg to be a submissive woman. Thus Meg, like the warrior woman, sorts out for us the proper man from the braggart.
>
> Again like the warrior, she reinforces the institution of marriage. When she returns from her fighting in France, she marries a soldier. He immediately offers to 'trie her manhood' (Life and Pranks, sig. B2v). She refuses to fight and 'in all submission fell down upon her knees, desiring

him to hold his hands and to pardon her' (Life, p.36). He promptly beats her, and she, without protest, promises her obedience: 'never shall it be said, though I can cudgel a knave that wrongs me, that Long Meg shall be her Husbands master, and therefore use me as you please; (Life and Pranks, sig B3r).

This sudden marital submission in the most disconcerting part of Meg's life: it follows so suddenly from what has preceded it. The goal of the marital union, and in Meg's case the severe stress on submission, are the most difficult aspects of the warrior woman to take. (70-72)

2- Moll Cutpurse

According to Gustav Ungerer, the following is Mary Frith's "documentary life":

1600

Mary Frith began her career as a purse snatcher about 1600. She, Jane Hill, and Jane Styles, were all three spinsters dwelling in the City of London, indicted by the Justices of Middlesex for having snatched, on 26 August 1600.

The petty crime that led to the arrest of the fifteen-year-old Mary Frith reveals that in her formative years as a delinquent she was plying her craft with two female partners. She was obviously working in a small female gang to reduce the risk of detection. Partnership with two women is likely to have been less combative than a partnership with men as regards dividing the loot into equal shares.

1602

As early as 1602 Mary Frith was apparently doing business in the neighborhood of the Fortune theatre where in the spring of 1611 she was to give her public stage debut.

1610

Endowed as she was with a theatrical talent, she had chosen the neighborhood of the Bankside theatres in the parish of St. Saviour's to mount her street performances and indoor floorshows in male dress. She can claim the status of a marginal entertainer who evaded the licensing system. She was, however, no innovator. She simply joined the transvestite movement, which after its eruption in the 1570s and 1580s had subsided in the 1590s to flare up again about 1605 and that was to reach its peak in the 1620s. See chapter 6 in Linda Woodbridge, Woman and the English Renaissance: Literature and the Nature of Womanhood, 1540-1620 (Urbana: Illinois University Press, 1984).

1611

On 27 January 1612, Mary Frith was summoned by the bishop's court of London to answer charges of public immorality.

Mary Frith also confessed to being still "associated . . . with cut purses" and to frequenting the "lewd company" of "blasphemous drunkardes & others of bad note & most dissolute behaviour."

1612

Mary Frith's efforts at self-definition as a cross-dressed entertainer were played out as much in outdoor as in indoor venues. As Chamberlain put it,

she used "to go in mans apparell," walking the streets of London and Southwark disguised as a man. It was during these urban perigrinations that she pursued her sartorial rivalry with the gallants of London and Southwark and that she must have hatched out her policy to take advantage of her male disguise as her signature of a cross-dressed entertainer. Parading as a gallant, as an object of wonder, simply involved a change of costume; in public she performed the part of a man in order to eke out a living. Thus her own signature style contributed to the perpetuation of her myth as a mannish woman.

1614

On 23 March 1614, Lewknor Markham and Mary Frith were married at St. Saviour's (St. Mary Overbury), Southwark.

Marriage and ownership conveyed status and respectability. Mary Frith's marriage to an esquire of Nottingham (see 1624 entry) provides a key to approaching the mystery of her sexual and gender identity as well as to explaining her new career as a broker. Her scheme to open up a fencing business is likely to have matured while she was frequenting the London alehouses; for brokerage was originally a sideline of the innkeepers.

1621

It appears from a Star Chamber bill, edited by Margaret Dowling in "A Note on Moll Cutpurse--'The Roaring Girl,' " Review of English Studies 10 (1934): 67-71, that by 1621 Mary Markham, alias Mary Frith, alias Mary Thrift, alias Mal/Moll Cutpurse, was running a licensed fencing

business or lost property office in the city of London, which she had been building up after 1612 with the help of her close ties with the underworld. She had made her way from pickpocket to street entertainer, walking the streets in conspicuous male disguise and thereby issuing, as John Chamberlain put it, a sartorial challenge to "divers gallants" or fops. She had now achieved notoriety as the receiver of stolen goods, that is as the entrepreneur of a metropolitan-based brokerage. By the time the transvestite controversy reached its height, she had given up the status of a criminal and had succeeded in arrogating the position of a paralegal intermediary to herself, which enabled her to mediate between the victims and the pickpockets, between authorities and the underworld.

1624

In 1624, Richard Pooke, hatmaker, sued "Marye Frith alias Markham of London, Spinster," in the Court of Requests for the unpaid bill for some beaver hats that she had bought about 1616.

Mary Markham, a woman of the lower class, committed a double breach of the sumptuary laws in flaunting beaver hats and wearing male dress; it was a violation of both class and gender boundaries.

1644

Why Mary Frith was declared insane and hospitalized in Bethlehem Hospital, which is described as a filthy rundown place, remains a matter of speculation. (…) Considering that Mary Frith had a natural gift for impersonating, she may have been shamming madness in order to avoid

the political turmoils of the first civil war (1642-45) and the pressure that was put on all the citizens of London, women of all classes and children included, to do statute labor for the fortification of the city in 1642-43.

1659

The will proves that Mary Markham, nee Mary Frith, died a wealthy woman. She left a legacy of 20 to her kinsman Abraham Robinson and enough money for the sole executrix, her niece Frances Edmonds, to pay an extra fee for the funeral and burial rites. Frances Edmonds complied with her aunt's request to be "decently buried in Christian buriall within the parish Church" of St. Bridget's in Fleet Street, a privilege confined to those of greater wealth and higher standing. For death and burial practices see Clare Gittings, *Death, Burial and the Individual in Early Modern England* (London: Routledge, 1984).

Mary Frith died on 26 July 1659 and was buried in the church of St. Bridget's in Fleet Street on 10 August.

3- **Mary Ambree**

According to Jessica Salmonson, Mary Ambree was an English captain who was captured in the city of Ghent in 1584. Captain Mary Ambree, along with several other Dutch and English volunteers, fought to liberate the city. Ambree eventually became the subject of an English ballad.

Mary Ambree

I

WHEN captains couragious, whom death could not daunte,
Did march to the siege of the citty of Gaunt,
They muster'd their souldiers by two and by three,
And the foremost in battle was Mary Ambree.

II

When brave Sir John Major was slaine in her sight,
Who was her true lover, her joy, and delight,
Because he was slaine most treacherouslie,
She vow'd to revenge him, did Mary Ambree.

III

She clothèd herselfe from the top to the toe
In buffe of the bravest, most seemelye to showe;
A faire shirt of mail then slippèd on she;
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

IV

A helmet of proofe she strait did provide,
A strong arminge sword she girt by her side,
And on each hand a goodly faire gauntlett put shee;
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

V

Then tooke she her sworde and her target in hand,
Bidding all such as wo'ld to be sworn of her band;
To wayte on her person came thousand and three:
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

VI

'My soldiers,' she saith, 'soe valiant and bold,
Nowe follow your captaine, whom you doe beholde;
Still foremost in battel myself will I be':
Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

VII

Then cry'd out her souldiers, and loude they did say,

'Soe well thou becomest this gallant array,

Thy harte and thy weapons soe well do agree,

There was none that was ever like Mary Ambree.'

VIII

She chearèd her souldiers, that foughten for life,

With ancyent and standard, with drum and with fyfe,

With brave clanging trumpetts, that sounded so free;

Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

IX

'Before I will see the worst of you all

To come into danger of death or of thrall,

This hand and this life I will venture so free':

Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

X

She led up her souldiers in battaile array

Gainst three times theyr number by break of the daye;

Seven howers in skirmish continuèd shee:

Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

XI

She fillèd the skyes with the smoke of her shott,

And her enemyes bodyes with bullets soe hott;

For one of her owne men a score killèd shee:

Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

XII

And when her false gunner, to spoyle her intent,

Away all her pellets and powder had sent,

Straight with her keen weapon she slasht him in three:

Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree!

XIII

Being falselye betrayèd for lucre of hyre,

At length she was forcèd to make a retyre;

Then her souldiers into a strong castle drew she:

Was not this a brave bonny lass, Mary Ambree?

XIV

Her foes they beset her on everye side,

As thinking close siege shee co'ld never abide;

To beate down the wallès they all did decree:

But stoutlye defyed them brave Mary Ambree.

XV

Then tooke she her sword and her target in hand,

And mounting the walls all undaunted did stand,

There daring their captaines to match any three:

O what a brave captaine was Mary Ambree!

XVI

'Now saye, English captaine, what woldest thou give

To ransome thy selfe, which else must not live?

Come yield thy selfe quicklye, or slaine thou must bee.'—

O then smilèd sweetlye brave Mary Ambree.

XVII

'Ye captaines couragious, of valour so bold,

Whom thinke you before you now you doe behold?'—

'A knight, sir, of England, and captaine soe free,

Who shortèlye with us a pris'ner must bee.'—

XVIII

'No captaine of England; behold in your sight

Two brests in my bosome, and therfore no knight:

Noe knight, sirs, of England, nor captaine you see,

But a poor simple lass, callèd Mary Ambree.'—

XIX

'But art thou a woman, as thou dost declare,

Whose valor hath prov'd so undaunted in warre?

If England doth yield such brave lasses as thee,
Full well may they conquer, faire Mary Ambree!'

XX

Then to her owne country shee backe did returne,
Still holding the foes of faire England in scorne:
Therfore, English captaines of every degree,
Sing forth the brave valours of Mary Ambree!

(from Kinsley, *The Oxford Book of Ballads*)

Bibliography

Adams, Barry B. *Coming-To-Know: Recognition And The Complex Plot In Shakespeare.* New York, NY: Peter Lang, 2000. Print.

Altaba-Artal, Dolors. *Aphra Behn's English Feminism: Wit and Satire.* Selinsgrove, PA: Susquehanna University Press, 1999. Print.

Aristotle. *Poetics I.* Trans. and ed. Richard Janko. Indianapolis: Hackett Pub. Co., 1987. Print.

Bancroft, Vicky J. "'A Desperate Ill, Must Have a Desperate Cure': Cross-Dressing in the Plays of Thomas Shadwell." *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660-1700.* 20.2 (1996): 165-74. Print.

Barber, C. L. *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy; A Study of Dramatic Form and Its Relation to Social Custom.* Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1959. Print.

Baston, Jane. "Rehabilitating Moll's Subversion in *The Roaring Girl*" *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900, Tudor and Stuart Drama* 37.2 (Spring, 1997): 317-335. Print.

Beaumont, Francis and John Fletcher. *Love's Cure*. Ed. George Walton Williams. Vol. 3, pp. 1-113. In *The Dramatic Works In The Beaumont And Fletcher Canon*. Ed. Beaurline, et al. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1976. Print.

Behn, Aphra. *The Rover ; The Feigned Courtesans ; The Lucky Chance ; The Emperor of the Moon.* Ed. Jane Spencer. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995. Print.

Belsey, Catherine. "Postmodern Shakespeare." *Estudios Ingleses De La Universidad Complutense*.4 (1996): 41-52. Print.

Berger, Harry, Jr. "Marriage And Mercifixion In *The Merchant Of Venice*: The Casket Scene Revisited." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 32.2 (1981): 155-162. Print.

Boebel, Dagny M. H. "Shylock and Portia: Secret Sharers." *CEA Critic: An Official Journal of the College English Association* 53.3 (1991): 39-48. Print.

Brand, Peter. "Disguise and Recognition in Renaissance Comedy." *Journal of Anglo-Italian Studies* 1 (1991): 16-32. Print.

Butler, Judith. *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"*. New York: Routledge, 1993. Print.

---. *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. Thinking gender. New York: Routledge, 1990. Print.

---. "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution: An Essay in Phenomenology and Feminist Theory." *Theatre Journal* 40: 4 (Dec., 1988): 519-531. Print.

---. *Precarious Life: The Powers of Mourning and Violence*. London ; New York: Verso, 2004.

---. *Undoing Gender*. New York: Routledge, 2004. Print.

Butler, Martin. See Shakespeare, William. *Cymbeline.* Ed. Martin Butler.

Case, Sue-Ellen. *Feminism and Theatre.* New York: Methuen, 1988. Print.

--- *Performing Feminisms: Feminist Critical Theory and Theatre.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1990. Print.

Cave, Terence. *Recognitions: A Study in Poetics.* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988. Print.

Chambers, Ephraim, *Cyclopædia, or, An universal dictionary of arts and sciences : containing the definitions of the terms, and accounts of the things signify'd thereby.…* J. and J. Knapton [and 18 others], 1728. 2 v. Print.

<http://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/HistSciTech.Cyclopaedia01>. Online.

Chedgzoy, Kate. *Shakespeare, Feminism and Gender*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave, 2001. Print.

Clark, Sandra. "Hic Mulier, Haec Vir, and the Controversy over Masculine Women." *Studies in Philology* 82.2 (1985): 157-183. Print.

Cohen, Derek. "*The Country Wife* and Social Danger." *Restoration and 18th Century Theatre Research.* 10.1 (1995): 1-14. Print.

Cohen, Derek. "The Revenger's Comedy: Female Hegemony in *The Country Wife*." *Atlantis: A Women's Studies Journal* 5.2 (1980): 120-30. Print.

Cooper, Lisa H. "Chivalry, Commerce, And Conquest: Heywood's *The Four Prentices Of London*." *Material Culture and Cultural Materialisms in the Middle Ages and Renaissance*. 159-175. Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2001. Print.

Coyle, Martin. *The Merchant of Venice, William Shakespeare*. New casebooks. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1998. Print.

Crupi, Charles. "Subduing Bess Bridges: Ideological Shift in the Two Parts of *The Fair Maid of the West*." *Cahiers Elisabéthains: Late Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 54 (1998): 75-87. Print.

Davies, W. Robertson. *Shakespeare's Boy Actors.* New York: Russell & Russell, 1964. Print.

Di Michele, Laura, and Kate McLuskie. "Shakespeare and Gender." *Textus: English Studies in Italy* 20.3 (2007): 509-661. Print.

Dollimore, Jonathan. *Radical Tragedy: Religion, Ideology, and Power in the Drama of Shakespeare and His Contemporaries.* London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1989. Print.

---."Subjectivity, Sexuality, and Transgression: The Jacobean Connection," *Renaissance Drama* 17 (1986): 53-81. Print.

Drakakis, John. *Alternative Shakespeares.* London, England: Routledge, 2002. Print.

Duncan, Anne. "It Takes A Woman To Play A Real Man: Clara As Hero(ine) Of Beaumont And Fletcher's *Love's Cure*." *Literature Criticism from 1400 to 1800* Volume 149. 109-114. Farmington Hills, MI: Gale, 2008. Print.

Dusinberre, Juliet. *Shakespeare and the Nature of Women.* London: Macmillan, 1975. Print.

Finucci, Valeria, and Regina Schwartz. *Desire In The Renaissance: Psychoanalysis and Literature.* Princeton: Princeton UP, 1994. Print.

Fishman, Jenn. "Performing Identities: Female Cross-Dressing in *She Ventures and He Wins*." *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660-1700* 20.1 (1996): 36-51. Print.

Freeburg, Victor Oscar. *Disguise Plots in Elizabethan Drama: A Study in Stage Tradition*. Columbia University studies in English and comparative literature, 51. New York: Columbia University Press, 1915. Print.

Freedman, Barbara. *Staging the Gaze: Postmodernism, Psychoanalysis, and Shakespearean Comedy.* Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991. Print.

Gay, Penny. *As She Likes It: Shakespeare's Unruly Women.* London: Routledge, 2002. Print.

Greenblatt, Stephen. *Renaissance Self-Fashioning: From More to Shakespeare.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980. Print.

---. *Shakespearean Negotiations: The Circulation of Social Energy in Renaissance England.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 1988. Print.

Hamill, Monica J. "Poetry, Law, and the Pursuit of Perfection: Portia's Role in *The Merchant of Venice*." *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 18.2 (1978): 229-43. Print.

Hic Mulier: Or, The Man-Woman (And) Haec-Vir: Or, The Womanish Man. Exeter: The Rota, U. of Exeter, 1973. Print.

Heywood, Thomas. *Thomas Heywood's* The Four Prentices of London*: A Critical Old-Spelling Edition*. Ed. Mary Ann Weber Gasior. New York: Garland Pub, 1980. Print.

---. *The Fair Maid of the West, Parts I and II.* Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1967. Print.

Hirschfeld, Heather. “What Do Women Know?: The Roaring Girl and the Wisdom of Tiresias” *Renaissance Drama.* New Series 32: 123-146. Print.

Howard, Jean E. “Crossdressing, the Theatre, and Gender Struggle in Early Modern England.” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 39.4 (Winter, 1988): 418-440. Print.

---. *The Stage and Social Struggle in Early Modern England*. London: Routledge, 1994.

Howe, Elizabeth. *The First English Actresses: Women and Drama, 1660-1700.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992. Print.

Hyland, Peter. "Shakespeare's Heroines: Disguise in the Romantic Comedies." *Ariel: A Review of International English Literature* 9.2 (1978): 23-39. Print.

Hyman, Lawrence W. "The Rival Lovers In *The Merchant Of Venice*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 21.2 (1970): 109-116. Print.

Jardine, Lisa. "Cultural Confusion and Shakespeare's Learned Heroines: 'These Are Old Paradoxes'." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 38.1 (1987): 1-18. Print.

---. *Still Harping on Daughters: Women and Drama in the Age of Shakespeare.* Totowa, N.J.: Barnes and Noble, 1983. Print.

Kastan, David Scott, and Peter Stallybrass. *Staging The Renaissance: Reinterpretations Of Elizabethan And Jacobean Drama.* New York: Routledge, 1991. Print.

Kimbrough, Robert. "Androgyny Seen through Shakespeare's Disguise." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 33.1 (1982): 17-33. Print.

Kinsley, James. *The Oxford Book of Ballads: Newly Selected and Edited*. [New ed.]. Oxford: Clarendon P., 1969. Print.

Lanier, Henry Wysham. *The first English actresses, from the initial appearance of women on the stage in 1660 till 1700*. New York: The Players, 1930. Print.

Lee, Young-Cho. "A Study of the Female Character in Shakespeare's Comedy.-With an Emphasis on Portia of *The Merchant of Venice*." *Shakespeare Review* 29 (1996): 155-87. Print.

Lenz, Carolyn Ruth Swift, Gayle Greene, and Carol Thomas Neely. *The Woman's Part: Feminist Criticism of Shakespeare*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1980. Print.

Levin, Richard. "The Economics and Erotics of Cross-Class Dressing in Early Modern (formerly Renaissance) English Drama." *JTD: Journal of Theatre and Drama* 3 (1997): 93-101. Print.

Levine, Laura. *Men in Women's Clothing:Anti-Theatricality and Effeminization, 1579 to1642.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 1994. Print.

Mann, David. *Shakespeare's Women: Performance and Conception.* Cambridge, England: Cambridge UP, 2008. Print.

Marcus, Leah S. “Shakespeare’s Comic Heroines, Elizabeth I, and the Political Uses of Androgyny.” *Women in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance.* Ed. Mary Beth Rose. Syracuse: Syracuse University Press,1986. 135-153. Print.

Mathis, Mary S. "Portia's Role-Playing in The Merchant of Venice: Yes, Nerissa, We Shall Turn to Men." *Conference of College Teachers of English Studies* 53 (1988): 42-51. Print.

McLuskie, Kathleen. "The Act, the Role, and the Actor: Boy Actresses on the Elizabethan Stage." *New Theatre Quarterly* 3.10 (1987): 120-30. Print.

McNay, Lois. "Subject, Psyche and Agency: The Work of Judith Butler." *Theory, Culture & Society* 16.2 (1999): 175-93. Print.

Mercer, John Moore. "Sibling Relationships in Shakespeare's Plays: Course, Quality, and Function." *Dissertation Abstracts International* 45.2 (1984): 530A. Print.

Middleton, Thomas, Thomas Dekker. *The Roaring Girl.* Ed. Paul Mulholland. Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 1987. Print.

Mikalachki, Jodi. "Gender, Cant, and Cross-Talking in *The Roaring Girl*." *Renaissance Drama* 25 (1994): 119-43. Print.

Munns, Jessica. “Change, Skepticism, And Uncertainty.” *The Cambridge Companion to English Restoration Theatre*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge UP, 2000. 142-157. Print.

Newman, Karen. *Fashioning Femininity and English Renaissance Drama.* Women in culture and society. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991. Print.

---. "Portia's Ring: Unruly Women And Structures Of Exchange In *The Merchant Of Venice*." *The Merchant of Venice*. Ed. Martin Coyle. New York, NY: St. Martin's, 1998. 117-138. Print.

Norman, Jean Reid. "Can She Talk the Talk? What Speech Patterns Say about Viola/Cesario." *Journal of the Wooden O Symposium* 7 (2007): 65-76. Print.

Novy, Marianne L. "Giving, Taking, And The Role Of Portia In *The Merchant Of Venice*." *Philological Quarterly* 58 (1979): 137-154. Print.

---. *Love's Argument: Gender Relations in Shakespeare*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1984. Print.

Nordlund, Marcus. *The Dark Lantern: A Historical Study Of Sight In Shakespeare, Webster, And Middleton*. Göteborg, Sweden: Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis, 1999. Print.

Oldrieve, Susan. "Marginalized Voices In 'The Merchant Of Venice'." *Cardozo Studies In Law And Literature* 5.1 (1993): 87-105. Print.

Olson, Trisha. “Pausing upon Portia.” *Journal of Law and Religion* 19:2 (2003 - 2004): 299-330. Print.

Orgel, Stephen. *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Shakespeare's England.* Cambridge [England]: Cambridge University Press, 1996. Print.

---. “The Subtexts of the Roaring Girl.” *Erotic Politics: Desire on the Renaissance Stage*. Ed. Susan Zimmerman. New York: Routledge, 1992. 12-26. Print.

Orgel, Stephen, and Sean Keilen. *Shakespeare and Gender*. Shakespeare, the critical complex, 2. New York: Garland Pub, 1999. Print.

Patrides, C. A. “Shakespeare and the comedy beyond Comedy.” *The Kenyon Review* New Series, 10:2 (Spring, 1988): 38-57. Print.

Patterson, Steve. "The Bankruptcy Of Homoerotic Amity In Shakespeare's *Merchant Of Venice." Shakespeare Quarterly* 50.1 (1999): 9-32. Print.

Rackin, Phyllis. “Androgyny, Mimesis, and the Marriage of the Boy Heroine on the English Renaissance Stage.” *PMLA* 102.1 (Jan., 1987): 29-41. Print.

---. *Shakespeare and Women*. Oxford Shakespeare topics. Oxford [England]: Oxford University Press, 2005. Print.

Ramet, Sabrina P. *Gender Reversals and Gender Cultures: Anthropological and Historical Perspectives.* London: Routledge, 1996. Print.

Rose, Mary Beth. “Women in Men’s Clothing: Apparel and Social Stability in *The Roaring Girl*.” *English Literary Renaissance* 14 (1984): 367-91 Print.

Rubin, Gayle. “The Traffic in Women.” *Toward an Anthropology of Women.* Ed. Rayna R. Reiter. New York: Monthly Preview Press, 1975. 157-210. Print.

Salmonson, Jessica A. *The Encyclopedia of Amazons: Women Warriors from Antiquity to the Modern Era.* New York: Paragon House, 1991. Print.

Schwartz, Murray M., and Coppelia Kahn. *Representing Shakespeare*: *New Psychoanalytic Essays.* Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1980. Print.

Sedinger, Tracey. “‘If Sight and Shape be True’: The Epistemology of Crossdressing on the London Stage.” *Shakespeare Quarterly* 48.1 (Spring, 1997): 63-79. Print.

Shadwell, Thomas. “The Woman-Captain.” *The Complete Works of Thomas Shadwell.* Ed. Montague Summers. New York: B. Blom, 1968. Print.

Shakespeare, William. *Cymbeline.* Ed. Martin Butler. Cambridge, UK : New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005. Print.

Shakespeare, William. *The Norton Shakespeare.* Ed. Stephen Greenblatt, Walter Cohen, Jean E. Howard, Katharine Eisaman Maus, and Andrew Gurr. New York: W.W. Norton, 1997.

Shell, Marc. "Portia's Portrait: Representation as Exchange." *Common Knowledge* 7.1 (1998): 94-144. Print.

Shepherd, Simon. *Amazons And Warrior Women: Varieties Of Feminism In Seventeenth-Century Drama*. New York: St. Martin's, 1981. Print.

Sisk, John P. "Bondage And Release In *The Merchant Of Venice*." *Shakespeare Quarterly* 20.2 (1969): 217-223. Print.

Slagle, Judith Bailey. “Thomas Shadwell Reconsider'd: Essays in Criticism.” *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660-1700* 20. 2 (1996): 69-249. Print.

Stone, James Waller. *Crossing the Mirror: Androgyny and Transvestism in the English Renaissance*. Diss. University of California, Berkeley, 1996. Ann Arbor: UMI, 1997. Print.

Stuart, Roxana. "Dueling en Travestie: Cross-Dressed Swordfighters in Three Jacobean Comedies." *Theatre Studies* 38 (1993): 29-43. Print.

Stubbes, Phillip. *The Anatomie of Abuses*. Ed. Margaret J. Kidnie. Tempe, Ariz: Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies in conjunction with Renaissance English Text Society, 2002. Print.

Ungerer, Gustav. "Mary Frith, Alias Moll Cutpurse, In Life And Literature." *Shakespeare Studies* 28 (2000): 42-84. Print.

Velissariou, Aspasia. "Patriarchal Tactics of Control and Female Desire in Wycherley's *The Gentleman Dancing-Master* and *The Country Wife." Texas Studies in Literature and Language* 37.2 (1995): 115-26. Print.

Waage, Frederick O. "Meg And Moll: Two Renaissance London Heroines." *Journal Of Popular Culture* 20.1 (1986): 105-117. Print.

Walen, Denise A. "Constructions of Female Homoerotics in Early Modern Drama." *Theatre Journal* 54: 3 (October 2002): 411-430. Print.

Warburton, Rachel. "Travestied Hermeneutics: Social and Semiotic Instability in Hic Mulier and Haec Vir." *Social Semiotics* 16.1 (2006): 151-172. Print.

Weimann, Robert. "Textual Authority And Performative Agency: The Uses Of Disguise In Shakespeare's Theater." *New Literary History: A Journal Of Theory And Interpretation* 25.4 (1994): 789-808. Print.

Weller, Barry. "Identity and Representation in Shakespeare." *ELH* 49: 2 (Summer, 1982): 339-362. Print.

Woodbridge, Linda. *Women and the English Renaissance.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1984. Print.

Worthen, W. B. "Drama, Performativity, and Performance." *PMLA* 113.5 (1998): 1093-1107. Print.

Wycherley, William. *The Country Wife.* Ed. Thomas H. Fujimura. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1965. Print.

Zomchick, John P. "Force, Contract, And Power In *The Woman-Captain*." *Restoration: Studies In English Literary Culture, 1660-1700* 20.2 (1996): 175-188. Print.

MARCELA B. GAMALLO TUR
Lehigh University
Drown Hall. 35 Sayre Dr.
Bethlehem, Pennsylvania 18015
e-mail: mbg204@lehigh.edu

Education

Lehigh University, Bethlehem, Pennsylvania
Ph.D. in English **2013**
Breeches Roles Revisited: Negotiating Recognition in Renaissance and Restoration Comedies
Women's Studies Certificate **2013**
M. A. in English **2006**
Thesis: "Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier's* influence on Seven Shakespearean plays"
Aconcagua University, Mendoza, Argentina
Translator **2003**

Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, Mendoza, Argentina
Licenciada en Lengua y Literatura Inglesa. **2000**
Thesis: "Edith Wharton's Novellas with Rural Setting: Summer and Ethan Frome."
Profesora en Enseñanza Media y Superior en Lengua y Literatura Inglesa. **1997**
Teacher of English language and Literature for Higher education. (An equivalent of a teacher's certificate)

Awards

- IPS (International Peace Scholarship)- PEO Sisterhood **2006 – 2007**
- Fulbright Scholarship **2004 – 2006**
- Lehigh Award: Tuition **2004 –2013**
- Delta Kappa Gamma: Key Women in Education **2004 – 2006**
- Selected in Who's Who Chancellor's List **2004 – 2006**
- Teacher Exchange Program, St Louis, MO (Scholarship) **1998 – 1999**

Sponsor: Webster University and Universidad Nacional de Cuyo

Administrative Experience

- GLOBAL UNION GA
- CAS GA
- GLO GA
- Gipson Institute GA
- Government Relations GA

Editorial Experience

- Proofreading: "A Reader's Companion to J.D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye"* by Peter G. Beidler. Coffeetown Press, 2009
- Digital Projects at Lehigh University:
  - Estes' journal. Prof. Barbara Traister (unpublished)
  - Pocahontas. Prof. Ed Gallagher
  - American Reel. Prof. Ed Gallagher
  - The Jefferson-Hemings Controversy. Prof. Ed Gallagher

Teaching Experience

Lehigh University

Teaching Assistant **2008 - 2013**
English Composition and Literature I
English Composition and Literature II
Immigration Literature
Themes in Immigration Literature (online)

Adjunct Professor **2009**
American Pragmatics

Colegio Universitario del Aconcagua, Mendoza, Argentina

Coordinator – EFL department **2003 - 2004**
Coordinated the seven EFL teachers in the syllabus design and in the activities to be carried out throughout the year by the EFL department: dramatization of an English play, guided visits in English to tourist places, museums and government buildings.

Universidad Champagnat. Mendoza, Argentina

Instructor –EFL intermediate level for International Relations **2000 - 2004**
Developed syllabus and overall course structure, met with students upon request, graded all written and oral work, including final exam papers, and administered all grades.

Universidad Nacional de Cuyo, Mendoza, Argentina **2000 - 2004**
Instructor – EFL beginner, intermediate and advanced level for adults.
Developed syllabus and overall course structure, met with students upon request, graded all written and oral work, including final exam papers, and administered all grades.

Webster University, St. Louis, MO **1998 - 1999**

Spanish Teaching Assistant- Spanish Intermediate I, II, Spanish Intermediate Conversation, Advanced Conversational Spanish, Spanish Weekend (Immersion Program)
Collaborated on curriculum and exam development, met with students upon request, and graded all written work, including final exam papers.

Instructor EFL teaching in different high schools and elementary schools in Argentina **1996 -2004**

Professional development

- TESOL (1999 (New York), 2010 (Boston), 2011 (New Orleans), 2012 (Philadelphia), 2013 (Dallas)
- "Human Trafficking", "AIDS", "Immigration" (UN, 2006)
- Fulbright Seminar: Immigration in the 21st century (New York, 2005)
- Sight, Consecutive and Simultaneous Interpretation (Mendoza, Argentina, 2003)
- Writing for teachers (Missouri, USA, 1999)
- Computers in education (Missouri, USA, 1999)
- Technology in the classroom (Missouri, USA,1998)
- Arts and Music methods (Missouri, USA, 1998)
- ACTFL convention (Chicago, 1998)
- English for Teachers: General English plus Business English (Oxford, England, 1997)
- "Jornadas Internacionales de Literatura Infantil y Juvenil" (Mendoza, Argentina, 1996)
- "Drama Techniques in Language Teaching" (Mendoza, Argentina, 1991)

Languages

Spanish: Native language
English: Advanced level
French: Intermediate level