

PATRIARCHAL TYRANTS AND FEMALE BODIES: *EKPHRASIS* IN DRAMA
AND THE NOVEL IN ENGLAND, 1609-1798

by

MEGAN M. WEBER

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Department of English

CASE WESTERN RESERVE UNIVERSITY

May, 2019

Case Western Reserve University
School of Graduate Studies

We hereby approve the dissertation of

Megan M. Weber

candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Committee Chair

Christopher Flint

Committee Member

Maggie Vinter

Committee Member

T. Kenny Fountain

Committee Member

Laura Hengehold

Date of Defense

21 March 2019

We also certify that written approval has been obtained
for any proprietary material contained therein.

Table of Contents

Introduction	3
1. Teach a Man to See: Vivid Imitations and Female Bodies in Ben Jonson's <i>Epicoene</i> and William Shakespeare's <i>The Winter's Tale</i>	27
2. In Their Own Image: Patriarchs and <i>Ekphrasis</i> in Aphra Behn's <i>The Forc'd Marriage</i> , <i>The Rover</i> , and <i>Oroonoko</i>	73
3. A Mirror for Patriarchs: <i>Ekphrasis</i> and the Development of Self in William Congreve's <i>Incognita</i> , <i>The Mourning Bride</i> , and <i>The Way of the World</i>	119
4. The Price of Morality: <i>Ekphrasis</i> and Contracts in Eliza Haywood's <i>A Wife to be Lett</i> , <i>Fantomina</i> , and <i>The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless</i>	170
5. "Such are mirrors and statues": Materiality, <i>Cathexis</i> , and <i>Ekphrasis</i> in <i>Tom Jones</i> and <i>A Simple Story</i>	229
Conclusion	278
Works Cited	291

Patriarchal Tyrants and Female Bodies: *Ekphrasis* in Drama and the Novel
in England, 1609-1798

Abstract

by

MEGAN M. WEBER

Ekphrasis influences descriptions of female characters in early modern drama and prose fiction. These vivid descriptions are conveyed with such clarity that they highlight the constructed nature of ideal feminine behavior within a patriarchal system, thereby exposing abuses of patriarchal power. Classical *ekphrasis* is a technique capable of transcending genre, aiding in the exposure of abuses of power and eliciting emotional responses from audiences. *Ekphrasis* is an effective way to appeal to an audience's emotions—when descriptions develop vivid images, they can bypass mental and emotional barriers constructed to protect one's emotions or self-image. Authors elicit emotions from readers in order to teach them how to name their emotions and feelings; being able to name and understand feelings is a crucial part of developing understanding, especially in a society that increasingly relied upon empirical evidence to determine the truth.

Introduction: The Paradox of Patriarchy and Persuasive Descriptions

Alexander Pope's "Observations of the Shield of *Achilles*" (1715) is perhaps the most famous examination of *ekphrasis* in the eighteenth century. In it, Pope offers an ekphrastic description of the shield, reflexively stating that he will examine Homer's lines "as a Work of *Painting*" (1443). In doing so, Pope intends to provide his readers with an "ocular Demonstration" (1449) to convince them of the superiority of Homer's detailed writing. The "ocular demonstration" is a series of descriptions operating like the concentric circles upon the shield—Pope moves through each ring, providing a complete picture, detailing each circle in relation to the previous description. The effect, according to Pope, is that his audience can now "consider this Piece as a complete *Idea of Painting*, and a Sketch for what one may call an *universal Picture*" (1452).¹ By calling on his readers to develop their own mental "*Idea*," or *phantasia*, Pope directly appeals to their imaginations as a way of acquiring "universal knowledge" through successive representations of the object world.

The technique *ekphrasis* and its ability to create vivid ideas, as Pope describes it, is central to this dissertation. Early modern writers, I contend, adopted classical rhetorical techniques to normalize the many social and political changes occurring during the period.² By implementing classical rhetorical techniques like *ekphrasis*, *phantasia*, and *enargeia*, they prompted their audiences to imagine new or different ways to comprehend the world around them. To understand how these writers used oratorical techniques in written form, I examine literary texts in dialogue with philosophical and rhetorical

¹ Unless otherwise specified, all italics in quotations reflect the original formatting.

² I understand the early modern period as encompassing the Reformation era (1517-1648) and the Enlightenment (mid-1600s-1800).

treatises published during the same period. Their reintroduction of classical rhetorical techniques was at least partially influenced by the British public's need for a vocabulary that could encompass the significant changes to political structures and social norms. One technique that received extensive attention from rhetoricians was the description of images in ways that could make them seem real to audiences. Early modern rhetoricians, from Henry Peacham to Hugh Blair, investigated these descriptive techniques, which operated in the same manner as *ekphrasis*, although they did not use that term.

In addressing this historical development, modern scholarship tends to employ the more recent version of *ekphrasis*, which defines the technique as the description of a real or imagined art object rather than the “ideal” of a “universal Picture.” Recognizing that poetry is the standard source material for the explication of vivid descriptions and significant literary themes in the period, many scholars have investigated poetical *ekphrasis* effectively and thoroughly.³ However, with the reopening of the theater in 1660 and the increasing popularity of prose fiction, late seventeenth-century writers produced works that, because they were less restricted by tradition and established rules, experimented with different approaches to descriptions. In fact, because poetry had such a long and continued history of use in the *belles lettres* of the early modern period, and used heightened forms of language it was precisely drama—which had always been fraught with issues of censorship in relation to its capacity for reproducing social realities—and prose fiction—a form not yet at its peak of popularity or sophistication—

³ See, for example, Simon Goldhill's “What is Ekphrasis For?”, Graham Zanker's “Enargeia in the Ancient Criticism of Poetry” for examinations of *ekphrasis* in classical poetry. For early modern applications of *ekphrasis* to poetry, see Timothy Erwin's *Textual Vision: Augustan Design and the Invention of Eighteenth-Century British Culture* and Tita Chico's “The Arts of Beauty: Women's Cosmetics and Pope's *Ekphrasis*.”

that offered new opportunities for innovative approaches to the descriptive methods long practiced in poetry.

In order to investigate how prose writers in the period employed *ekphrasis*, I examine the technique in relation to its classical definition. Beginning with drama in the early seventeenth century, I interrogate how different descriptive methods—particularly *ekphrasis* and *mimesis*—were employed for persuasive ends. Each chapter analyzes a different period of time and genres that were pivotal in reflecting this development in descriptive language: dramas, short prose fiction, and novels. By the eighteenth century, as the novel dominated literary production, *ekphrasis* became a particularly effective technique that provided authors with the freedom to integrate the fluid motion and expressiveness of the stage in prose form, prompting readers to imagine the written word as if it were being played out by actors on a stage. The rise in popularity of the novel in eighteenth-century Britain may have displaced the theater, but it was due in large measure to its adoption of dramatic modes of expression.⁴

Mimesis, or mimicry, is at the heart of dramatic writing and performance. However, since the fifth century CE, philosophers and theorists have struggled to articulate how dramatic copies relate to their originals—and whether imitation is a responsible source of meaning making. Perhaps the most famous instance of this struggle is in Plato's *Republic*.⁵ His proscription against mimetic representations, which focuses on a mirror, is dramatized in a conversation between Socrates and Glaucon in Book X:

⁴ David Kurnick observes that changes to the theater “transformed theatrical culture to reflect the new prominence of the domestically oriented and psychologically absorbed subject presumably called into being and sustained by the realist novel” (7). See also Anne F. Widmayer's *Theatre and the Novel from Behn to Fielding*, specifically pp. 17-19.

⁵ Marilyn Skinner offers a bibliography of non-Platonic sources, noting: “Visual pleasure and the truth of art is well documented for the later fifth century: see Gorg. *Hel.* 18, on figures and statues as affording, paradoxically, a “pleasant sickness” (*noson hēdeian*) to the eyes; Xen. *Mem.* 3.10.1-8, on representing the

SOCRATES. “Or don’t you see that there is a way in which you yourself could make all these things?”

“And what would that be?” he asked.

“Not difficult,” I said: “one that can be done quickly and anywhere. The quickest perhaps is to take a mirror, if you like, and carry it round with you everywhere. In no time you will make a sun and the heavenly bodies, the earth, yourself, and all the other living creatures, objects and plants and everything we’ve just been talking about.”

“Things we can perceive, yes,” he said, “but not, I think, the things that are real in the true sense.”

“Well done!” I said. “You’ve got the point of my argument. You see, I think the painter too is one of these types of craftsman. Isn’t that so?”

“Of course.”

“But I think you’ll say that what he makes isn’t the real thing, although in one sense the painter does make a bed, or is that not so?”

“Yes, he too makes something that is an appearance of a bed.” (395, 397)

For Plato, images reflected into a mirror are not “the things that are real in the true sense.” What is reflected in a mirror is not the same as the original; similarly, although painters create what appears on a canvas, what they paint is not the thing itself—a painting of a bed is not a physical bed.

In Plato’s discussion of *mimesis*, two objects are mentioned, and these two objects remain central to discussions of *mimesis* to this day: a metaphorical mirror and a painting

internal disposition of the subject and on "the illusion of life" (*to zotikon phainesthai*, 6) as art's most seductive pleasure" (205, fn.15)

of a bed. The images captured by mirrors and in paintings are literal imitations, but there is no perfect parallel between the respective images. A mirror reflects what is before it, in reverse. The subject in front of a mirror moves, and what is reflected in a mirror can change an infinite number of times. Paintings, on the other hand, are essentially static: what is put on canvas by the painter essentially remains the same. A painting is the artist's interpretation of the subject before them, filtered through the artist's perception and translated into an image on canvas. Neither, however, is always reliable: a person can change their appearance in front of a mirror with cosmetics, dyes, accessories, or by simply expressing varying emotions that alter the appearance. Take, for example, Belinda at her toilette in Pope's *The Rape of the Lock*:

Now awful Beauty puts on all its arms;
 The fair each moment rises in her charms,
 Repairs her smiles, awakens ev'ry grace,
 And calls forth all the wonders of her face;
 Sees by degrees a purer blush arise,
 And keener lightnings quicken in her eyes. (1.139-144)

Sitting before her mirror, Belinda fashions an appearance that imitates a "purer blush," one that is paradoxically created through artificial means. Her appearance as a "pure" woman is Platonic in its representation—her reflection is as far removed from the original idea of female purity as a painting of a bed is from a physical bed. Belinda's mirror reflects the pretense of realness, since what appears to be a "purer blush" is artificially manufactured. Further removed from the real in a Platonic sense, her dependence on exotic materials that manifest England's imperialistic ideology makes her

a representation of national identity dependent on foreign goods.⁶ Belinda's painted face is her interpretation of the pure English woman, just as a painting is an interpretation of the subject before it.

Belinda's imitation is closer to Plato's discussion of *mimesis* in Book X of *The Republic*. In Books II and III, however, a different analysis of the rhetorical technique takes place. Rather than imitation in a materialist sense, Socrates broaches imitation in a metaphysical manner. According to him, a young person "cannot judge what is allegorical and what is literal; anything that he receives into his mind at that age is likely to become indelible and unalterable," and therefore, only approved stories should be told to children (2.377). This is because "all mythology and poetry is a narration of events...and narration may be either simple narration, or imitation, or a union of the two" (3.392). Imitation is the manner by which the poet's narrative proceeds, meaning that a narrative may be an imitation of something negative, and because young people "cannot judge" what is story and what is true—what is imitation and what is real—imitation should be avoided. In relation to drama and fiction, imitation can be problematic, because when audiences agree to suspend disbelief and accept that the actors on stage *are* the characters they imitate, some may not be able to differentiate between the fictitious world and the real.⁷ In the Western tradition, dating back at least to Plato, imitation is therefore

⁶ The *locus classicus* of the imperialistic reading of Pope's poem is Louis Landa's "Pope's Belinda, The General Emporie of the World, and the Wondrous Worm." For other examples of the argument concerning England's empire and material goods in *The Rape of the Lock*, see Laura Brown's *Ends of Empire: Women and Ideology in Early Eighteenth-Century Literature*, pp. 103-135, esp. 119, and A.S. Crehan's "The Rape of the Lock and the Economy of 'Trivial Things.'" See also Jonathan Lamb's chapter "*The Rape of the Lock as Still Life*" in his monograph *The Things Things Say*, pp. 98-126 and in response, Elizabeth Kowaleski Wallace's "The Things Things Don't Say: *The Rape of the Lock*, Vitalism, and New Materialism."

⁷ This exact scenario occurs in Henry Fielding's *Tom Jones*, when Square believes the ghost in *Hamlet* is real.

distinct from artistic imitation. This dissertation is interested in artistic imitations more so than embodied, because of the mimetic nature of the stage. That is, embodied imitation is necessary for successful drama, and it is considered distinct from artistic imitation.

With the stakes of imitation being so high, it is logical that classical rhetoricians had recourse to descriptive methods other than *mimesis*. One of the most effective methods—one that still resonates—is *ekphrasis*. In her seminal study of classical *ekphrasis*, Ruth Webb explains that “The principle sources for the rhetorical conception of ekphrasis, the *Progymnasmata*, consist primarily of a set of definitions and instructions for the various exercises, of which ekphrasis was one” (17). From extant *Progymnasmata* sources, we know that *ekphrasis* is “a speech that brings the subject matter vividly before the eyes” (Webb 14, citing Theon, *Progymnasmata* (118, 1.7)). Also Theon’s definition alludes to *enargeia*, derived from Aristotle, which is “the ability to make visible” what is described.⁸ Webb notes that Theon is generally accepted as the ur-source for information on *ekphrasis*, dating to the first century CE, while Nikolaos’s *Progymnasmata* is dated to the fifth century CE (14). In Theon’s *Progymnasmata*, “the listeners ‘almost’ (*shedon*) see the subject; in Nikolaos they ‘all but’ (*mononou*) become spectators (*theatai*)” (Webb 53). In classical terms, *ekphrasis* is understood “as a type of speech that creates immaterial images in the mind” and “the speaker of a successful ekphrasis is therefore a metaphorical painter, the result of his words is a metaphorical painting” (Webb 27). That is, when descriptive language creates vivid mental images, those pictures become like paintings in the mind.

⁸ It is important to note that Aristotle did not use the term *enargeia* (see Zanker 1981).

Ekphrasis serves as the illustrative language that brings an image before the eyes; the image created as a result of successful *ekphrasis* becomes *phantasia*, defined by Quintilian as “the images of absent things [that] are presented to the mind in such a way that we actually seem to see them with our eyes and have them physically present to us” (6.2.30). In classical rhetorical applications, successful *ekphrasis* generates mental images, or *phantasia*, with the hoped-for outcome being that the images seem real, or *enargeia*. Quintilian defines *enargeia* as “a quality which makes us seem not so much to be talking about something as exhibiting it” (6.2.32). There is a three-tier connection between *ekphrasis*, *phantasia*, and *enargeia*: *ekphrasis* is the scaffolding upon which *phantasia* and *enargeia* are built.

In early *Progymnasmata*, concern over what Simon Goldhill calls the “*discourse of viewing*” (11) arose. What Goldhill means by “discourse of viewing” is the language that is used to capture what it means to be a viewing audience, encapsulating both the orator’s and the spectator’s experiences. *Ekphrasis* is important to developing a discourse of viewing, because “ekphrasis is designed to *produce a viewing subject*” (Goldhill 2). That is, ekphrastic descriptions are meant to turn the listener into a spectator by activating mental images that are vivid enough to seem real. With its intention to “produce a viewing subject,” *ekphrasis* is “particularly close to the theatre—the space of seeing and illusion” (Goldhill 3). The technique is closely linked to the theater and performance, because *ekphrasis* is meant to *produce a viewing subject* in the same way that theater audiences *are* viewing subjects. Indeed, as Alan T. McKenzie argues, “While the nature of the passions had long fascinated philosophers, the clarity of the passions was imparted largely by paintings (and

treatises on painting). The stage developed and elaborated them, and then writers of prose learned how to explore their intricacy” (5). McKenzie further observes that “The expression of passion was an essential tenant of humanism, in both the Renaissance and the eighteenth century,” and the eighteenth century in particular “found its source in the classics” (5-6). What distinguishes *mimesis* from *ekphrasis* is the effect: imitations are meant to be persuasive in the sense that the copy is true to the original; ekphrastic descriptions are meant to impact audiences, painting metaphorical pictures that affect the listener or reader.

Early modern writers adopted classical rhetorical techniques as a framework through which they could normalize the many social and political changes occurring during the early modern period. Many of them turned to classical prototypes to develop a language that could effectively capture such events as the establishment of the Stuart line, the deposing and execution of Charles I, the resulting Interregnum, the Restoration, and the Glorious Revolution—just to cite the political upheavals. One discipline that sought to respond to shifting social structures was philosophy. Notable philosophers emerged during the period, including Thomas Wright, Francis Bacon, John Locke, and David Hume, who, although they published treatises that span almost 200 years, were equally concerned with materialist theories of perception that interrogated the correlations between the senses and understanding.⁹ In these, mirrors and paintings repeatedly exemplify the various theories of perception and knowledge, as they did for Plato.

⁹ The philosophers engaged in this dissertation take a distinctly anti-Cartesian approach to philosophy. Whereas Descartes believed the mind and body two wholly separate entities and that ideas were representations without any recourse to materiality, philosophers like Locke, Hobbes, and Hume argue for a direct correlation between the materiality of things and *phantasia*. Especially with Hume, philosophy takes a more skeptical viewpoint, rejecting innate knowledge. See Gianluca Mori’s “Hobbes, Descartes, and Ideas: A Secret Debate” (esp. pp. 198-200).

Because objects such as mirrors and paintings are included in definitions of *mimesis* and *ekphrasis* dating back to the fifth century CE and remained an important part of early modern philosophical discussions of meaning-making and descriptions, they became a motif that effectively reflected changes in social and political attitudes. It is possible, in fact, to trace the development of *ekphrasis* as a reliable descriptive mode through the appearance of mirrors and paintings in the works examined in this study.

The subjects captured in mirrors and portraits are as important as the objects themselves. Often appearing as the subject before a mirror or captured in a portrait are female characters who elicit either an awakening of conscience or evidence of moral turpitude in male characters. Throughout the early modern period, female characters were frequently described in terms of their second-class status within patriarchal systems, as Ellen Donkin observes: “It becomes clear that women wanting power, wanting money, wanting anything, was profoundly disruptive to a culture that had been built upon the idea of women being the thing wanted (or not wanted)” (39). It is telling that amidst the social and political chaos in early modern England, the image of the female character remains a reliable site for normalizing social expectations concerning ideal behavior. Authors used the trope of the diabolical or the angelic woman to critique larger social systems, including absolutism and patriarchy. In a sense, female characters act as foils to male characters, as Linda Bamber asserts in her study of male and female characters in Shakespeare: “What is most striking is that in *every* genre [comedy and tragedy] the possibilities for the masculine Self and the nature of the feminine are functions of one another. Masculine identity and masculine self-achievement in every genre are systematically related to the nature of the feminine in that particular mode” (5). Bamber’s

argument can be extended beyond Shakespeare to examine male-female relationships and descriptions of female characters in early modern literature. Her observation that “It is only when his sense of his own identity is threatened that the hero projects onto women what he refuses to acknowledge in himself” is a theme that plays out in multiple early modern literary texts, in both drama and prose fiction (6). The female characters in such works live primarily in a secondary social position, existing as objects upon which male characters can impose their sense of authority or express their anxiety concerning that authority. Male and female authors alike vividly detail the actions and emotions of female characters, developing ekphrastic descriptions of them that (often paradoxically) highlight male behavior more than they fully describe female characters. While there are exceptions, the vast proportion of literary representations of artistic or mirrored embodiment situates the male figure as primary agent and the female figure as passive reflection, capable of activating a change in masculine judgment.

In other words, descriptions of female characters position them as projections of male anxieties regarding shifting perceptions of patriarchal social structures. Female characters become the default sign that a patriarch’s power is threatened. The connection between classical *ekphrasis* and early modern depictions of female characters becomes clear when studying dramas and novels as symbiotic genres, because, I suggest, dramas and novels bring forth the exact type of mental image aimed at in oratorical *ekphrasis*. The impact of effective *ekphrasis* is that characters experience *anagnorisis* (*αναγνώρισις*), or recognition, in the Aristotelian sense. For Aristotle, “Recognition, as the name indicates, is a change from ignorance to knowledge, producing love or hate between the persons destined by the poet for good or bad fortune” (41). Although

Aristotle recognizes that “inanimate things of the most trivial kind may sometimes be the objects of recognition,” there is a more compelling means of causing *anagnorisis*: “But the recognition which is most intimately connected with the plot and action is, as we have said, *the recognition of persons*” (41, emphasis my own). This is because the recognition of persons causes a reversal, which is “a change by which the action veers round to its opposite” (41). The “recognition of persons” is a form of *anagnorisis* effective enough that characters experience a reversal in behavior or attitude. Ekphrastic descriptions of female characters aid in moments of recognition for tyrannical patriarchs, forcing these characters to acknowledge their despotic behavior. That drama has the ability to represent culture, and thereby influence social norms, suggests that dramatists intended for their audiences to learn from their plays. Early modern writers created an indelible link between ekphrastic descriptions and didactic intentions, and by writing dramatic and prose fiction capable of presenting images vivid enough to impact audience members, early modern authors gave them a model of behavior to emulate. Just as classical rhetoricians engaged with *ekphrasis* to explain and teach rhetorical techniques to their students, early modern authors purposefully explored *ekphrasis* to teach audiences how to behave in shifting social and political climates.

Methodology

Because my dissertation analyzes how literary works mediated public perceptions of behavioral standards, I focus on plays, short prose fiction, and novels that experienced high circulation rates. My methodology blends sociological and historical criticism, but I am not tied to the precise definitions of each. I examine how literary works influenced

(and were influenced by) cultural norms, studying both fiction and philosophy to gauge correlations between the two genres. In regard to historical criticism, unlike its traditional application, my main concern is not how an author's personal background shaped his or her literary productions. New Historicism is closer to my approach, as I focus on the political and social milieus surrounding and influencing literary works; I do, however, engage with historical events as focal points. In other words, historical events work like dots on a horizontal timeline, providing objective temporal points in which my analysis is embedded.

The framework for examining reflections of philosophy in literature derives from H. Lewis Ulman's *Things, Thoughts, Words, and Action: The Problem of Language in Late Eighteenth-Century British Rhetorical Theory*. Ulman engages things, thoughts, words, and actions to interrogate "conceptual grounds such as truth and persuasiveness, which identify sites of tension between traditional philosophy and rhetoric" (18). For Ulman, "Building on analysis in John Locke's *Essay on Human Understanding* (1690) and consideration of work done by Richard McKeon and Kenneth Burke, I argue that the eighteenth-century theories of language grow out of the philosophical commonplaces of things, thoughts, words, and actions" (3). Ulman places an early modern philosopher in dialogue with twentieth-century philosophers to engage with "the history and possibilities of relations between philosophies of language and theories of rhetoric" (19). It is precisely this intersection between philosophy and rhetoric that informs my study. However, rather than focusing on the generating signs behind philosophy and rhetoric, I examine how literary texts reflect contemporary philosophies of perception and rhetorical theories.

My critical perspective is a feminist one. What this means is that I am deeply interested in how female characters are impacted by descriptions of both their bodies and their expected social roles. To this end, I engage both male and female authors, in order to ensure a balanced examination. Either ekphrastic or mimetic descriptions of female characters occur in each work examined. This is not to suggest that male characters are not described in similar terms—they are, frequently. However, the focus in this study is to examine how different forms of description impact female characters and their ability to successfully persuade the male characters around them. *Ekphrasis* becomes a rhetorical tool capable of exposing aberrant and distasteful male behavior, repeatedly conveyed through vivid descriptions of women who are subject to male derelictions of duty.

Literature Review

It should be noted that ekphrastic descriptions undergo a change, starting with Pope's description of the shield of Achilles. Pope states that his description will be like a painting, and this iteration of description moves the formal understanding of *ekphrasis* closer to its modern definition. Currently, the common method for analyzing *ekphrasis* in literature is linked to the modern definition of the technique, which defines *ekphrasis* as a description that refers to an art object. Twentieth-century scholars like Jean H. Hagstrum, James A. W. Heffernan, and John Hollander revived the current interest in *ekphrasis*, although they do not employ the term in its classical form. Hagstrum's influential study of the connection between painting and poetry in the early modern period argues that poetry is most pictorial when it references an art object (xvii-iii). Building upon Hagstrum, Heffernan defines *ekphrasis* as "*the verbal representation of visual representation*" (3).

Transferring Heffernan's understanding of *ekphrasis* to the imaginative realm, Hollander coined the term "notional *ekphrasis*" to mean "the verbal representation of a purely fictional work of art" (4). The similar language in the two definitions is purposeful—Hollander cites Heffernan as his starting point. The direct object in both Heffernan's and Hollander's definitions relates to the art object: Heffernan's is a "visual representation," suggesting a subject portrayed in an artistic medium; Hollander's is a "work of art"—although the artwork is a fiction.

The accepted practice of applying the modern version of *ekphrasis* is also the most common method employed by scholars examining early modern texts. Of the few who examine *ekphrasis* in early modern literature (namely Timothy Erwin and Tita Chico), the authors focus on ekphrastic descriptions of art objects in poetic or prose writing. Both discuss Homer's detailing of Achilles's shield, a passage so frequently cited as the first instance of *ekphrasis* in poetry that Webb refers to it as the "inescapable *ur-ekphrasis*" (6). Like Erwin, I believe that Thomas Hobbes, Joseph Addison, Alexander Pope, and David Hume ushered in a new interpretation of imagery. Erwin's analysis, however, does not include an explanation for how and why the transformation took place—he applies the modern definition of *ekphrasis* to the works he examines, without justifying its use. Chico examines how Pope's *The Rape of the Lock* renders cosmetics (in the form of face-painting) as both visual and verbal art forms, arguing that Pope's purpose is to "set up a hierarchy between makeup and poetry" (10-11). While Chico's recognition of *ekphrasis* in the epic is an interesting premise, her application of *ekphrasis* binds the classical and modern definitions together without clearly explaining that there is a difference between the two: while representations of external accoutrements do

contribute to the ekphrastic description of a character, only the classical definition includes people as subjects of *ekphrasis*.

My understanding of the nuanced differences between classical and modern *ekphrasis* in this examination derives from Ruth Webb's *Ekphrasis, Imagination and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice*. In response to Heffernan and Hollander, Webb acknowledges that "the *idea* of the visual underpins this mode of speech [*ekphrasis*] which rivals the effects of painting or sculpture, creating virtual images in the listener's mind" (8-9). She critiques the modern definition for its limiting of the subjects available for ekphrastic description:

So, not only was *ekphrasis* *not* understood in antiquity as a term for 'description of a work of art,' it was not even understood in the same terms as our 'description.' The subject matter is not a factor in the definition; instead an *ekphrasis* is distinguished by qualities of the language and, most importantly, its effect on the listener. (70)

The purpose of *ekphrasis* is to develop "virtual images" that have an "effect on the listener." The effect should be similar to viewing a painting or sculpture—the image should be vivid enough in the listener's mind that they can picture what is described for them. Developing the description *from* a painting or sculpture, however, is not a prerequisite for classical *ekphrasis*.

To best understand how ekphrastic images are developed, I rely on philosophical and rhetorical treatises published in the same time period as the literary works under examination. Simon Goldhill's article "What is Ekphrasis For?" suggests that scholars engaging with *ekphrasis* "should investigate what the cultural difference between ancient

and modern concerns can tell us” (1). That is, Goldhill examines literary examples of *ekphrasis* in their contemporary milieus. Goldhill insists that “*Phantasia*, which utilizes the same power of *enargeia* as *ekphrasis*, *does* something to the listener. It is a *weapon* of rhetoric” (5). *Ekphrasis*, *phantasia*, and *enargeia* are a powerful unit because they become “a rhetorical weapon to get around the censor of the intellect, to cut the listener off from the fact, to leave him not just ‘as if a viewer at events,’ but with the destabilizing emotions of that event” (6). The “destabilizing emotions” elicited through successful *ekphrasis* are precisely what lead to *anagnorisis* in literary characters, allowing them to recognize their bad behavior and rectify the damage done. Evidence of Goldhill’s theory is apparent in Peacham and Puttenham’s treatises, which rely on Cicero’s conclusion that “the orator...must treat cases in court in a style suitable to instruct, to delight, and to move” (5.16.367). The passages cited by Peacham and Puttenham arise from texts that defined persuasion as the ability to move, to bend, to stir the emotions. *Ekphrasis*, as Goldhill notes, is particularly effective at stirring emotions, bypassing the “censor of the intellect.”

The framework for comparing plays and novels derives mainly from Anne F. Widmayer’s monograph *Theatre and the Novel, From Behn to Fielding*. Widmayer engages with plays and long-form fiction writing by Aphra Behn, Delariveir Manley, William Congreve, and Henry Fielding. Her approach centers on the close reading of what Widmayer terms “dramatic scenes”: “These dramatic scenes, placed in prose narratives, function like dramatic set pieces put on for the audience’s amusement” (3). In passages deemed dramatic scenes, Widmayer pays “particular attention to dramatic techniques that map characters’ movements within the whole of the stage space” (9) in

order to “show that many early novelists drew upon their experiences writing for the stage to create visually memorable scenes in prose that deliberately trouble the idea of presenting readers with unmediated reality” (13). While I do not focus on author mediation in the works examined in this study, I am deeply interested in writing that seeks to “create visually memorable scenes.”

For this study, I am not concerned with the binary between the public nature of plays and the private nature of novels. Spacks’s monograph *Privacy* effectively dismantles the binary, arguing: “Novels operate both within and against the public sphere, generating their own kind of reality” (9). Jürgen Habermas’s understanding of how the public operates further refines my approach: “We call events and occasions ‘public’ when they are open to all, in contrast to closed or exclusive affairs—as when we talk of public places or public houses” (1). Habermas also notes the impact a reading public can have on public perceptions: “On the one hand, the empathetic reader repeated within himself the private relationships displayed before him in literature... They formed the public sphere of a rational-critical debate in the world of letters within which the subjectivity originating in the interiority of the conjugal family, by communicating with itself, attained clarity about itself” (50-1). There is too much interconnectedness between viewing and reading, public areas and private homes, and the ability of literary works to transgress each of these boundaries, to suggest that public and private, drama and novel, are irreconcilable.

I engage with plays and novels as literary devices that intend to influence contemporary normative codes. Terry Castle’s seminal work *Masquerade and Civilization: The Carnavalesque in Eighteenth-Century Culture and Fiction* examines

how spectacles are “rituals of inversion” that “can demonstrate the fictionality of classifications systems, exposing them as man-made rather than natural or divine” (88). Castle’s scholarly approach to examining the cultural systems critiqued by literary works shapes this study by providing a framework for interrogating how ekphrastic descriptions expose abuses of authority within patriarchal systems. Paula R. Backscheider’s *Spectacular Politics: Theatrical Power and Mass Culture in Early Modern England* also influences my examination, as Backscheider effectively proves connections between social structures and politics, examining how both impact the portrayal of female characters in different literary genres. She notes that in the early modern period, “structures of order and authority of all kinds were being studied, reconceived, and renegotiated, and woman, that sign for something else, figures prominently. Since at least the fifteenth century woman had been used extensively as such on the English stage, primarily as moral rhetorical or socio-rhetorical constructs” (xvii). Positioning female characters as the control, it is possible to examine “moral rhetorical or socio-rhetorical constructs” that arise out of patriarchal systems. The intersections between philosophies of language and rhetorical theories presents a method for understanding early modern perceptions of truth. Philosophy and rhetoric, in turn, influence how authors sought to convey truth to their audiences. It is precisely this relation between philosophies of language and theories of rhetoric that informs my study. Examining how literary works reflect contemporary philosophy and rhetorical theories reveals that *ekphrasis* was key to developing truthful, persuasive images for readers and theater audiences.

Overview of Chapters

Chapter One examines *mimesis* and *ekphrasis* as persuasive rhetorical tools in early seventeenth-century dramas. The chapter focuses on Ben Jonson's *Epicoene, or The Silent Woman* (1609) and William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* (1611). In the dramas, audiences view actors performing successful imitations that lead to persuasion. Integral to the dramas is sensory perception as it relates to knowledge attainment and understanding. Thomas Wright's and Francis Bacon's philosophies of perception supplement examination of the dramas, revealing the close relationship between *mimesis* and the senses. In both plays, female characters function as mimetic imitations of the feminine ideal. While operating as imitations (Epicoene as a woman, Hermione as a statue), these characters have no persuasive effect on tyrannical patriarchs until the male characters are confronted with real bodies. Ekphrastic descriptions of female characters occur immediately prior to male characters recognizing their despotic behavior, lending authority and authenticity to the descriptions. The result is that female bodies (or a false imitation of them) have the power to persuade tyrannical patriarchs that their behavior is undesirable, culminating in *anagnorisis* in the male protagonists.

After the Restoration in 1660, London's theaters underwent major changes, one of the most important being the inclusion of female authors and the normalization of actresses on stage. Chapter Two confronts similar social and political problems discussed in Chapter One, but this time the traditional systems are critiqued from a female perspective. One of the most famous and successful dramatists during the Restoration period, Aphra Behn's *oeuvre* explores the impact of tyrannical patriarchs on female characters. But Behn's relationship with the monarchy and its absolutism complicates her

critiques. Chapter Two examines three works by Behn: *The Forc'd Marriage* (1671), *The Rover* (1677), and *Oroonoko* (1688). Supplementing Behn's fictional works are Bacon and Wright, allowing a comparison between male- and female-authored texts and how they integrate specific philosophies into their writing. In Behn's works, patriarchy (both patrilineal and fraternal) is critiqued by the negative impacts it has on female characters. Male characters who act like tyrants within their homes and their social networks are described as imitations of autocratic monarchs. Although *mimesis* remains useful for Behn, it is not persuasive; instead, *ekphrasis* operates as a device capable of describing scenes in such detail that it seems likely that Behn intended to activate her audiences' imaginations in order to persuade them to rethink the traditional acceptance of patriarchy as an effective social system. Yet not every male character is a tyrant; Behn also incorporates models of the male ideal, describing characters who hold positions of power without abusing female characters, as if to suggest a resolution that preserves traditional models of masculine authority.

Chapter Three examines three works by William Congreve. In *Incognita* (1692), *The Mourning Bride* (1697), and *The Way of the World* (1700), descriptions of female characters reflect developing notions of personhood as influenced by John Locke. Congreve's use of physical objects as totems that reflect contemporary philosophy underscores the use of *ekphrasis* as a means to present vivid images for readers. Drawing from the *de Casibus* tradition, which intended to hold a mirror up to those in power, reflecting their misdeeds back to them, I examine the role that objects play in ekphrastic descriptions, presenting male characters with their own reflections. In *Incognita*, narrative explications of the gap between experience and description undermine the

viability of universal images. *The Mourning Bride* relies on mirrors as metaphorical objects that aid in the explanation of the mechanical philosophy of perception, and the drama suggests that descriptions based on common ideas, people, and landscapes can contribute to successful descriptions of what audiences may not know. Finally, *The Way of the World* engages with mirrors as objects that prompt ekphrastic descriptions of female characters. *Ekphrasis* also operates as a persuasive device that is manipulated by bad actors. Those wishing to manipulate female characters utilize vivid descriptions to persuade them into actions that are not in their best interests.

In Chapter Four I focus on three works by Eliza Haywood, a prominent figure in theatrical, novelistic, and periodical domains of the early eighteenth century. In *A Wife to be Lett* (1724), Haywood offers *ekphrasis* as an alternative to mimetic forms of persuasion by focusing on the imagination of her female characters. The two female leads manipulate vivid descriptions of themselves to convince their husbands that the men have abused the patriarchal systems they depend upon. *Fantomina, or, Love in a Maze* (1725) centers on a female character whose interior life shapes the prose fiction's action; through her imagination, Fantomina creates her own ideal world, influencing and manipulating the object of her desire. Fantomina's descriptions of her fabricated personae persuade Beauplaisir that her stories are true. The chapter closes with an examination of *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751). In *Betsy Thoughtless*, pockets of vivid descriptions build upon one another, developing into fully ekphrastic descriptions. Haywood's method reflects both Locke's and Joseph Addison's philosophies of perception, as well as Pope's technique in describing Achilles's shield, integrating methods of knowledge attainment into the development of a fully realized heroine.

Anagnorisis is made possible by scaffolded ekphrastic descriptions that eventually become powerful enough to persuade characters to interrogate their own understandings.

Chapter Five closes the study with Henry Fielding's *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling* (1749) and Elizabeth Inchbald's *A Simple Story* (1791). Both novels engage with objects as signs capable of mediating moments of intense emotion, including a mirror and a painting, that facilitate *anagnorisis*. In *Tom Jones*, the description of Sophia is bookended with references to the *Venus de Medici*. One of the central points of Fielding's philosophy of fiction is that descriptions are successful when the picture can be confounded with the original. *Ekphrasis* is key to making this happen: vivid descriptions of Sophia develop throughout the novel, culminating in a final scene, before a mirror, that is potent enough to elicit *anagnorisis* in her. In contrast, *A Simple Story* makes a male character the object of artistic representation. Lord Elmwood and his portrait are described in language that is too similar to differentiate between the imitation and the original. Descriptions of the man and the imitation build throughout the novel, developing into cumulative *ekphrasis* that incites *anagnorisis* in him, exposing his tyranny and suggesting that a despot can never truly reform. Hugh Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783) supplements the two novels; in his philosophy of perception, Blair makes an important distinction between imitation and description, and the crux of the difference is the materiality of objects. In both *Tom Jones* and *A Simple Story*, material objects are described in short, descriptive moments that build upon one another into fully ekphrastic scenes. Haywood's *Betsy Thoughtless*, along with Fielding's and Inchbald's novels signal a striking departure from the other works in this study. In

the novels, female—not male—characters experience complete *anagnorisis* that reverses how they operate in and perceive the world around them.

Each chapter in this examination builds upon the previous chapter to highlight the development of *ekphrasis* as a reliable, descriptive technique in the early modern period. As philosophies of perception and theories of language developed, the incorporation of these new ideas into literary texts shows how authors engaged with modes of knowledge attainment. Grounding each chapter in descriptions of female characters provides a through-line that allows a comparison of *ekphrasis* in different genres. *Ekphrasis* operates as a handmaiden to didacticism, exposing tyrannical male characters and the flaws inherent to patriarchal systems in the early modern period. In the end, these vivid descriptions of female characters teach readers how to interrogate the world around them; *ekphrasis* becomes the rhetorical technique most effective at conveying philosophy in prose writing, in turn making developments in philosophies of perception more easily accessible to the reading public.

Chapter 1

Teach a Man to See: Vivid Imitations and Female Bodies in Ben Jonson's *Epicoene* and William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*

In early seventeenth-century English drama, playwrights frequently employed mimetic language in a play's early scenes to describe the behavior of female characters, defining them in terms that essentially (and, in some cases, explicitly) make them aesthetic objects, existing solely to entice the male gaze. In many instances, female characters functioned as imitations of male desires. Close examination of later scenes reveals, however, that mimetic descriptions of female characters continually yield to later ekphrastic descriptions. That is, the ultimate delineation of important female characters relies on *ekphrasis*, not *mimesis*, making *ekphrasis* seem like a more powerful rhetorical tool, both for its persuasive power and its more nuanced exploration of women. The impetus to do so appears logical: relying on images and stereotypes that their audiences understood, dramatists manipulated the relationship between creator and spectator in order to test cultural assumptions about social behavior.

Contemporary definitions of social structures and meaning-making can be culled from philosophical and rhetorical texts that arise during the period. In order to responsibly examine how dramatists question the efficacy of *mimesis* as a means to normalize shifting social structures, a thorough understanding of contemporary philosophy and rhetoric provides the appropriate framework from which to examine the relationship between seventeenth-century theater and its didactic purpose. The plays discussed are Ben Jonson's *Epicoene* (1609) and William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* (1611). Supplementing close readings of these texts are rhetorical treatises, including George Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589) and Henry Peacham's

The Garden of Eloquence (1593), and the philosophical treatises of Thomas Wright (*The Passions of the Minde in Generall* (1604)) and Francis Bacon (*The Advancement of Learning* (1605) and *Novum Organon* (1620)). Close reading of descriptions (both mimetic and ekphrastic) within the plays reveals correlations between mental images (what Greek rhetoricians called *phantasia*) and the language used to develop these mental images (*ekphrasis*). As later early modern rhetoric and philosophy increasingly turned to empirical evidence, characters in seventeenth-century plays exhibited increasingly sophisticated methods of persuasion through the manipulation of perception. That is, audiences witnessed successful persuasion on the stage and learned how rhetorical techniques could mimic, substitute for, or obscure the forms of knowledge enabled by sensory perception.

Sixteenth-century rhetorical treatises by Puttenham and Peacham reflect contemporary understandings of the relationship between literary creations, philosophy, and language. Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* situates the poet and his creation as the product of imitation: "A Poet may in some sort be said a follower or imitator, because he can express the true and lively of every thing is set before him, and which he taketh in hand to describe...and Poesie an art not only of making, but also of imitation" (3). Puttenham recognizes the correlation between poetic writing and imitation, or *mimesis*, but he does not use the same vocabulary as his predecessors (in part, because he did not write in Greek). Rather than *mimesis*, Puttenham refers to the same technique as "*Icon*, or resemblance by imagerie and portraiture": "When we liken a humane person to another in countenance, stature, or speach or other qualitie, it is not called bare resemblance, but resemblaunce by imagerie or pourtrait, alluding to the painters [*sic*]

terme” (204). In addition, he uses a term that encompasses *ekphrasis*, *phantasia*, and *enargeia*: “*hipotiposis*.” As he puts it, “The matter and occasion leadeth us many times to describe and set foorth many things, in such a sort as it should appeare they were truly before our eyes though they were not present” (199). Puttenham also invokes the term *enargeia*, albeit briefly, when he states that persuasion should: “satisfie & delight th’ eare onely by a goodly outward shew set upon the matter with words, and speaches smoothly and tunably running” (132). Nonetheless, it does not seem that much importance is given to *enargeia*, as the term is included neither in the Table of Contents nor the Names of Figures tables.

Like Puttenham, Peacham also aligns successful descriptions with painting in *The Garden of Eloquence* (134). Peacham defines *mimesis* as “an imitation of speech whereby the Orator counterfaiteth no onely what one said, but also his utterance, pronunciation, and gesture, imitating every thing as it was” (138), but he does not employ *ekphrasis*, *phantasia*, or *enargeia*. The term “*icon*” is used, defined as “a forme of speech which painteth out the image of a person or thing, by comparing forme with forme, qualitie with qualitie, and one likeness with another” (145). According to Peacham, the technique *icon* results in a “visible and lively image” (146). *Icon* is persuasive when poets make appropriate comparisons to a “visible and lively image” that they can expect their audience to know. Peacham’s definition of *descriptio* aligns with *ekphrasis* and its concomitant effects:

A description is when the Orator by a diligent gathering together of circumstances, and by a fit and naturall application of them, both expresse and set forth a thing so plainly and lively, that it seemeth rather painted in

tables, then [*sic*] declared with words, and the mind of the hearer thereby so drawn to an earnest and stedfast contemplation of the thing described, that he rather thinketh he seeth it then [*sic*] heareth it. (134)

Here, description is the equivalent of *ekphrasis* (the words), *phantasia* (“the mind of the hearer thereby so drawn to an earnest and stedfast contemplation”), and *enargeia* (“that he rather thinketh he seeth it then [*sic*] heareth it”). For Puttenham and Peacham, then, the poet’s power lies in appropriate imitations made by mimicking what reading or listening audiences previously knew in order to excite their imaginations. This positive view of *mimesis* as a didactic tool is reflected in Philip Sidney’s *Defense of Poesy* (1595). Sidney’s understanding of the imitative nature of poesy derives from the Aristotelian, positive view of *mimesis*: “*Poesie* therefore, is an Art of *Imitation*: for so *Aristotle* termeth it...that is to say, a representing, counterfeiting, or figuring forth to speake Metaphorically. A speaking *Picture*, with this end to teach and delight” (6). That *mimesis* can aid in teaching makes it a valuable tool for philosophers, rhetoricians, and dramatists. Sidney goes so far as to say that when poets take up historical accounts, they make them both instructional and entertaining, benefitting the student by “bewtifying it both for further teaching, and more delighting as it please him” (33). From Peacham, Puttenham, and Sidney, it seems that as long as imitations are done with the purpose of instructing and delighting, *mimesis* can be a reliable rhetorical device.

Engaging contemporary definitions of *mimesis* and *ekphrasis*, Chapter One traces how *mimesis* can be used to trick or manipulate those who do not interrogate what they see and perceive.¹⁰ In both plays, a primary female character is described in mimetic

¹⁰ Numerous plays detailing similar patterns exist but cannot each be examined within one chapter. These plays include *The Merry Wives of Windsor* (1602), *The Roaring Girl* (1611), *The Knight of the Burning*

terms. Yet no behavior modifications arise from strictly mimetic descriptions; underneath the explicitly mimetic descriptions lies an anti-mimetic tone, stealthily undercutting the rhetorical technique's ability to persuade, thus paving the way for disclosures that rely instead on intense ekphrastic moments. These ekphrastic moments occur just prior to moments of *anagnorisis* in each drama's patriarch. The moment of realization is linked to tyrannical impositions of patriarchy on female characters. Examining the treatment of female characters as *topoi*, as accepted signs capable of mediating behavior, this chapter interrogates a pattern that recurs in early modern theater: just prior to a play's denouement, ekphrastic descriptions of female characters expose objectionable, usually male, behavior that casts suspicion on earlier mimetic representations of female conduct. In these plays, *ekphrasis*, as a rhetorical tool, facilitates *anagnorisis* by manipulating depictions of female characters in order to critique unpleasant vestiges of traditional social structures, typically aberrant male behavior condoned by patriarchy.

At the heart of each play is a fictional society grappling with the transition from patrilineal patriarchy to fraternal patriarchy. The term "fraternal patriarchy" comes from Susan Pateman's seminal study, *The Sexual Contract*. Using legal and fictional documents from the eighteenth century, Pateman argues that:

Patriarchy ceased to be paternal long ago. Modern civil society is not structured by kinship and the power of fathers; in the modern world, women are subordinated to men *as men*, or to men as a fraternity. The original contract takes place after the political defeat of the father and creates modern *fraternal patriarchy*. (3)

Pestle (1613), *The Platonick Lovers* (1636), *Marriage à la Mode* (1673), *The Rover* (1677) [analyzed in Chapter Two], and *The Lost Lover* (1696).

Pateman traces the beginning of fraternal patriarchy to Locke's social contract. But the disruption of patrilineal patriarchy begins much sooner. Within this examination, I focus on the destabilization of traditional power structures that occurred during the Stuart reign (recognizing that previous instances occur, both within England and outside its borders).

That Stuart monarchs relied on mirrors as applicable symbols of imitative behavior is explicitly stated in James I's *Basilikon Doron* (1603): "Let your owne life be a law-booke & a mirrour to your people; that therein they may read the practice of their own laws; and therein they may see, by your image, what life they should leade" (61).¹¹ James' reliance upon mimetic imitations is problematic philosophically, because imitations are not perfect—whatever people see, they interpret through their own perceptions. James's assertion that the ideal monarch is a reflection to be emulated—the ideal because ordained by God—contradicts contemporary philosophies of perception. To take an image, let us say that of the king, and to accept it as ideal and worthy of imitation (without any examination of the image), is to open oneself to undesirable behavior. By positioning the king as an infallible entity, James takes an autocratic position concerning patrilineal patriarchy. When James asserts that the monarchy is divinely ordained, and because of this is infallible, he creates a closed loop of information, refusing to acknowledge differing viewpoints.¹²

¹¹ *Basilikon Doron* was written for James's son Henry, who died before reaching the throne. It is a text meant to educate and direct his son concerning the behavior of an ideal monarch (according to James).

¹² James writes that "the false and vnreuerent writing or speaking of malicious men against your Parents and Predcessors" is a "crime to be vnardonable" (31). That is, it is a crime to speak out against the Stuart monarchy, and that crime can never be forgiven. James encourages his successor to punish anyone speaking out against the monarchy, creating a society that by necessity makes the monarch "a lawfull good King"—the good king believes himself secure "in hauing their harts," contrasted with the tyrant who "thinketh neuer himself sure, but by the dissention & factions among his people" (23). James ensures that there is no "dissention" or development of "factions among his people," because no subject may speak against the monarchy.

Contemporary philosophies of perception developed a mechanical, sense-based system of knowledge attainment. Thomas Wright's *The Passions of the Minde in Generall* (1604) presented a system keenly attuned to the connection between perception and the senses. Wright termed "the motions of the soule" the "Passions," and passions are "determined to one thing"—perception: "as soone as they [passions and sense] perceyve their object, sense presently receives it, and the passions love or hate it: but reason, after shee perceiveth her object, she standes in deliberation, whether it bee convenient shee should accept it, or refuse it" (9). Reason, therefore, is different from passion solely for its deliberative faculty. Feelings and reason spring from the same source, the senses. To be reasonable, one must contemplate sensory inputs. Wright draws an analogy between skewed perception and green spectacles, observing that:

Indeede the Passions, not vnfittely may bee compared to greene spectacles, which make all things resemble the colour of greene; even so, he that loveth, hateth, or by any other passion is vehemently possessed, iudgeth all things that occurre in favour of that passion. (49)

That is, wearing green spectacles makes everything appear green, shading all levels of sensory perception. The green spectacle analogy acknowledges how people create closed loops of information—when all sensory inputs confirm what the person already believes true, everything is shaded by preconceptions. Wright's analogy of the green spectacles is similar to what Bacon will assert in his *Novum Organon* (1620). There, Bacon argues that "the human understanding is like a mirror, which, receiving rays irregularly, distorts and discolors the nature of things by mingling its own nature with it" (Aphorism 41). Comparing human understanding to a mirror when understanding is skewed by

improperly received sensory input is not unlike Wright's argument that perceptions can be shaded by preconceived notions. Bacon's critique of mirrors recalls Plato, while also linking human understanding, mirrors, and the philosophy of perception.

It is this tension between the monarch's decrees and philosophical treatises concerning the creation of knowledge that is central to this chapter. Early seventeenth-century plays by Jonson and Shakespeare show that the two playwrights—who in their own words admire the other's works—represent a meeting point between overlapping generations. The overlap proves a fruitful point from which to interrogate how dramatic works can model appropriate language for audiences to emulate, because *Epicoene* and *The Winter's Tale* both present the worst sort of patriarch and the explicit consequences these characters experience within the worlds of the plays. While both dramatists ultimately condone patriarchal systems, their respective plays do not have parallel endings. Jonson's play mocks the bombastic performance of the assumed superiority belonging to a patriarch, foiling an uncle's plan to disinherit his nephew; ultimately, the nephew (and fraternal patriarchy) triumph. In Shakespeare's play, patrilineal patriarchy remains dominant, but the system is so broken by the play's end that cannot possibly continue; the monarch's bloodline ends as a result of his despotic behavior. There is, then, a difference between how *ekphrasis* operates in comedic versus tragic plays: in comedy, the patriarch who is exposed has little to no impact on his peers; Morose alone is mortified. In tragedy, however, the exposed patriarch has the power to ruin kingdoms; Leontes is the king, and his inability to interrogate his reason leads to the downfall of both his family and his kingdom.

There is a marked tension between proponents of *mimesis*, who argue that it imitates real things, and those skeptical of the technique. The skeptic, educated in the Platonic tradition and aware (along with Wright and Bacon) that perception can have a distorting effect on perception, may argue that *mimesis* tends to reproduce stereotypes, commonplaces, and the idea of universal knowledge more than actual truths. It is this skepticism that will inform the philosophies of later eighteenth-century intellectuals, including Locke, Hobbes, and Hume. From a more modern perspective, J. Hillis Miller analyzes sign creation as the process by which any thing comes to have meaning: “No sign, moreover, can exist without repetition, without being used more than once. In that repetition the second version becomes the origin of the sign-function of the first” (46). That is, a sign is only created when a second (or third, or fourth) iteration of the original version validates the existence of the first. The stage is a logical locus for sign creation: audiences see actors play characters that inform and confirm social ideas. Validation of a sign occurs continually on the seventeenth-century stage; the inherently mimetic nature of the stage means that most characters represent figures or types of people who exist (or potentially could exist) in the world. These representations become conventions: the sign-function of the first is confirmed when multiple examples of the same sign exist. The conventions become social norms through continual repetition.

Examining sign-creation on the seventeenth-century stage is one way to understand the creation of contemporary social norms. How female characters operate as normative models depicted on the stage reveals the link between *mimesis* and its ability to effectively imitate known behavior. In early modern drama, female characters traditionally function as sites of behavioral correction. The depiction of female characters

as models of negative behavior appears to have an equivalent didactic value to representations that perpetuate positive behavior. Female characters tend to normalize what is desirable within a patriarchal system. Stephen Orgel observes that, “What constitutes an acceptable representation of female behavior on the stage, moreover, is determined entirely by the conventions of that stage” (70). Orgel’s statement confirms the cyclical nature of behavior normalization facilitated by representations of female behavior on the stage. But his argument is confined to the playhouse—that is, there seems to be a gap between social and theatrical performances of gender. By examining the interconnectedness between drama, philosophy, and language theory, it seems that Orgel’s “conventions of that stage” can be expanded to the conventions of the society that houses that stage. Acceptable representations in the theater do not occur in a vacuum; theater and society are mutually constitutive entities, influencing and being influenced by one another.

Wright, Puttenham, and Peacham each posit that the imagination derives from sensory perceptions and personal experiences, and that what people can imagine is an imitation of those perceptions and experiences. It stands to reason, then, that female characters on the stage imitated perceptions and experiences playwrights could reasonably assume their audiences had. Characterizations of female behavior in plays could not function effectively—could not successfully mimic actual women—if playwrights did not take inspiration from how they saw the world around them. To that effect, the creation of a sign—let us say the aberrant woman as cautionary tale—depends on that sign’s pre-existence. It seems, then, that dramatists exploited contemporary stereotypes of female behavior in order to bolster the verisimilitude created by ekphrastic

descriptions. By representing stereotypes on stage, playwrights confirmed preconceived ideas of female behavior, manipulating what audiences believed to be true in order to condone or critique social norms.

The assertion that female characters serve as models of bad behavior in the early modern period is not new; Paula Backscheider recognizes that within the early modern period, “groups of women are often tropes for unauthorized forms of power” (xvii). A coterie of women often stood in for all womankind—a small sampling of female characters was often talked about as representing all women. The “unauthorized forms of power” cited by Backscheider, include women behaving outside the boundaries allowed them in a patriarchal society. Orgel notes:

In a society that has an investment in seeing women as imperfect men, the danger points will be those at which women reveal that they have an independent essence, an existence that is not, in fact, under male control, a power and authority that either challenges male authority, or, more dangerously, that is not simply a version or parody of maleness, but is specifically female. (63)

If we combine the insights of Orgel and Backscheider, “unauthorized forms of power” seem to indicate women challenging patriarchal norms. The idea that a woman could obtain independence outside—or, more upsettingly, from within—the confines of marriage threatened the system of male authority. Robert Filmer’s vehement defense of patrilineal patriarchy, for example, depends upon the “naturalness” of patriarchy to uphold the monarchy; citing St. Robert Bellarmine (against whom *Patriarcha* was written), Filmer manipulates language to secure his viewpoint:

If many men had been together created out of the Earth, they all ought to have been Princes over their Posterity. In these words we have an Evident Confession, that Creation made man Prince of his Posterity. And indeed not only *Adam*, but the succeeding *Patriarchs* had, by Right of Fatherhood, Royal Authority over their Children...And this subjection of Children being the Fountain of all *Regal Authority*, by the Ordination of God himself; It follows, that Civil Power...in general is by Divine Institution. (11-12)

According to Filmer, the entire monarchical system functions on the basic premise that the monarch is the divinely ordained father of his people. In order for the monarch to retain authority, the father must similarly retain sole authority within his household. The idea that a woman could function independently of her husband (or even *a* husband at all) threatened not only familial structures, but monarchical structures as well. Women behaving badly—or being told that they behave badly—became a standard method for highlighting forbidden conduct. But, as will be shown in this chapter, the chastisement of female behavior often leads to the exposure of male characters abusing the patriarchal system under which all characters operate.

Dress Me Up Like a Lady: Ben Jonson's *Epicoene* and Persuasive *Mimesis*

Both *mimesis* and *ekphrasis* rely upon language to bring subject matter before the audience's imagination. And *Epicoene* is, if nothing else, a play centered on imitation—a topic of “central concern for theorists and artists alike” during the early modern period (Sanchez 313).

In *Epicoene*, Jonson recognizes the potentially upsetting implications of contemporary *mimesis*. The titular character is—through and through—a mimetic representation of a woman. The play’s complexity relies upon a manipulation of audience expectations: following casting traditions, the actor playing Epicoene would have been a young boy dressed as a woman. Audiences therefore expected the woman’s role to be played by a young boy. The play’s twist is that within its plot, Epicoene is *actually* a boy playing a woman. Descriptions become a hall of mirrors, a *mise en abyme*, layering imitations upon imitations to challenge preconceived expectations. The very nature of casting reflects issues concerning truth, representation, and *mimesis* in complex ways. The unnamed actor playing Epicoene so successfully imitates female behavior that everyone in the play—men and women alike—is convinced that *he* is in fact a *she*.

Throughout *Epicoene*, Jonson plays with the potential implications of similitude. Jonson manipulates representations of what his audience knew in order to place them within the world created by the play; both location and character stereotypes relate directly to the play and the playgoers. At the center of Jonson’s critique is Epicoene—a simulacrum of the feminine ideal as espoused by the drama’s antagonist, Morose. Morose displays detestable behavior that incites a larger critique of intractable narcissistic behavior, culminating in corrective ekphrastic descriptions just prior to the play’s denouement: the description of Epicoene, followed by the revelation of her true sex. Even secondary characters, like Daw and La Foole, are conflation of the symbolic and the real in *Epicoene*. There is no clear distinction between imitations and originals, or what constitutes something as the original. In his drama, Jonson employs *mimesis* as a means of deception, questioning the efficacy of imitations.

Jonson's own interpretation of *mimesis/imitatio* influenced how he applied the technique to his own writing; his intimate knowledge of classical Greek and Roman rhetoricians is reflected in the 1711 Folio edition of William Drummond's papers. Drummond, a Scottish poet, and Jonson were in frequent epistolary contact, and the records of their conversations provide insight concerning Jonson's personal reading material. In one instance, Drummond notes that "he [Jonson] recommended to my reading Quintilian (who (he said) would tell me the faults of my Verses as if he had lived with me) and Horace, Plinius 2dus Epistles, Tacitus, Juvenall, Martiall" (2.12-15).¹³ Drummond concluded that Jonson "was better versed, and knew more in Greek and Latin, than all the Poets in England" (51.698-990). With an understanding of Jonson's relationship to classical rhetorical treatises in mind, Reuben Sanchez argues that "it is difficult to believe Jonson does not intend to offer a critique of *imitatio* via this problem play [*Epicoene*]" (313). The entire play revolves around the problems created by imitation and its ability to deceive. Extrapolating the textual evidence in Drummond's letters suggests that Jonson discussed and admired classical rhetoricians far more than contemporary rhetoricians—and neither Peacham nor Puttenham are mentioned once in Drummond's collection.¹⁴ Jonson's attention to classical rhetoricians suggests that he, like Plato, approached *mimesis* with a certain level of skepticism.

Jonson's intention to subsume his audience into the world of *Epicoene* begins with the play's setting. Adam Zucker notes that "*Epicoene* is widely regarded to be the

¹³ As further evidence of Jonson's study, I offer the following excerpts from Drummond: "To me he read the preface of his Arte of Poesie, upon Horace Arte of Poesie" (8.79-80); "that Quintilianes 6.7.8 bookes were not only to be read, but altogether digested" (9.137-8).

¹⁴ Numerous contemporaries are mentioned in Drummond's collected letters, albeit critically. Contemporary authors/translators mentioned include John Donne and John Fletcher; specific translations mentioned include Michael Drayton's *Polyabion*, Joshua Silvester's *Du Bartas*, and John Harington's *Ariosto*.

first ‘West End comedy,’ or the first play to deal exclusively with the concerns of ‘polite society’” (41). Jonson masterfully set and staged his play in a specific London enclave, Whitefriars. Mimi Yiu observes that “Jonson’s play reflexively refers to the space of its first performance: the private indoor theatre of Whitefriars, whose audience would hardly have failed to appreciate Jonson’s numerous geographic allusions to their home turf” (74). *Epicoene* is reflexive on multiple levels: audiences could recognize both their “home turf” and their neighbors in different characters. One character in particular, Morose, is the subject of talk long before he appears on stage. Morose becomes the embodiment of absurd elitist behavior. He operates within a social niche his audience understands, yet Morose, the audiophobic narcissist, is a repulsive character. The mimetic and ekphrastic tenor of Jonson’s play directly implicates his audience in the distasteful behavior Morose exhibits on stage. He could be their neighbor, their husband, or themselves. Exploiting the reflexive nature of *Epicoene*’s setting, Jonson manipulates his audience’s sense of community in order to teach them how to enact the developments depicted in Wright’s philosophy of perception and Peacham and Puttenham’s language theories.

Epicoene expertly maneuvers between models of behavior, in a manner that is simultaneously elegant and explicit. Morose is an old man who embodies pompous, patrilineal behavior—he expects that since he is wealthy, everyone around him must bow to his demands. Dauphine, Morose’s nephew, is a young man who reflects the fraternal form of patriarchy; arguably not much better than Morose, Dauphine plans to secure his inheritance by making a public spectacle of his uncle. Both characters perpetuate patriarchal order, but Dauphine’s nuanced and sophisticated manipulation of the system

suggests that patrilineal patriarchy may not be the most effective social order. Once people understand exactly how to placate the upper-class, they can mimic the behavior desired by the elite, without meaning a thing they do or say; there is a sense of falsehood implicit in the imitations. By setting *Epicoene* in Whitefriars, Jonson initiates a temporary social contract with his audience: he will show them settings and characters they can expect to know, and in turn, they will suspend reality and believe what is displayed before them. Understanding narrative as mimetic, James Phelan notes that “mimesis is not a product of faithful imitation of the real (or whatever that is) but rather a set of conventions for representing what we provisionally and temporarily agree to be real” (228). That the audience is in the midst of what they “agree to be real” works on a metaphorical and a literal level. In her examination of the architecture of both the cityscape and the play, Yiu observes that:

Unlike the court or household revels that bring theater into the heart of the home, that turn private spaces into makeshift public stages, *Epicoene* demands that Whitefriars patrons go out so as to come in, making centrifugal movement a precondition for discovering spatial and psychological interiority. (74)

By drawing in audiences able to pay the price of admission and making references to local landmarks, *Epicoene* exploits what those living in or around Whitefriars knew to exist in order to subsume them into the narrative.¹⁵

¹⁵ For further analysis of the connection between *Epicoene*, the theater, and the district, see William A. Armstrong, "The Audience of the Elizabethan Private Theaters." Michael Shapiro also discusses the relationship in *Children of the Revels: The Boy Companies of Shakespeare's Time and Their Plays* (see particularly pages 68-90).

The success of a play at least partially depends on how audiences react to it. Jonson deftly encapsulates his audience in the world created by *Epicoene* by reflexively manipulating both setting and casting. He plays to the social enclave watching *Epicoene* to increase the chances of the play's success: "Narratives collect into recognizable bodies because *recognizable social groups* control them, not vice versa" (M. McGuire 224, emphasis my own). Jonson creates a scenario, another hall of mirrors, through which audiences watch a play taking part in their own neighborhood, essentially watching themselves and their acquaintances interact. The efficacy—and the recognizability—of *Epicoene*'s dramatic world is created by mimetic representations of a specific location, as well as ekphrastic descriptions of its residents. Because the audience intimately knows the play's minutia, they automatically enter into a caste of the initiated. Andrew Gurr argues that because patrons began spending money for better seats between the 1580s and 1590s, "What we see in the texts of plays composed between about 1590 and 1610 is very largely an exploration of the new possibilities seen in this direct relationship between poet and playgoer" (2). The possibility in *Epicoene* is that Jonson can persuade his audiences to recognize the danger latent in mimetic representations by staging the comeuppance of one of their own.

The play's setting and its characters reflect contemporary theories of knowledge attainment. Morose's audiophobia is his defining characteristic—both his clothing and his home are tailored to his constant demands for silence. Truewit describes Morose's accoutrements, developing a picture of an irritable old man "with a huge turban of nightcaps on his head, buckled over his ears"¹⁶ (1.1.139),¹⁶ deflecting sound from violating

¹⁶ Although Clerimont corrects the characterization, stating that Morose only wears the buckled-down nightcaps "when he walks abroad" (1.1.141), the image created by Truewit's description lingers.

Morose's ears. Truewit also illustrates Morose's bespoke architecture: "By now, by reason of the sickness, the perpetuity of ringing has made him devise a room with double walls and treble ceilings, the windows close shut and caulked, and there he lives by candlelight" (1.2.176-9). Even the architecture reinforces the idea that noise overwhelms Morose, causing him physical pain. Wright's philosophy of perception provides a physical explanation for how sound enters the mind and affects the body:

The very sound it selfe, which according to the best philosophie is nothing else but a certaine artificiall shaking, crispling, or tickling of the ayre...which passeth thorow the eares, and by them vnto the heart, and there beateth and tickleth it in such sort, as it is moued with semblable passions. (170)

Sound, then, is heard by the ears and interpreted by the heart, impacting passions. Sound, according to Wright, "affect[s] the eare, produceth a certaine spirituall qualitie in the soule, the which stirreth vp one or other passion" (169). That is, different sounds incite different passions, and it is how the hearer's heart interprets the sound that determines how the listener reacts or responds. For Morose, external sounds are interpreted as an affront against his internal sense of self. Physically, his demand for silence closes him off from the world around him. Metaphorically, the silence means that Morose cannot—or will not—listen to those around him. The external/internal signs and signifiers created by Morose's audiophobia reflects contemporary philosophy. When looking at the image of Morose in its totality, his particularity becomes absurdity: almost all communication between people and how they interact with the world around them is facilitated by sound. We hear noise and understand what that noise means; we talk to other people and imbibe

their knowledge. The auditory site of Morose's tyranny means that he can hardly function in the world at large.

Next to sight, hearing received the most attention in early modern philosophical and rhetorical texts. Peacham discusses how auditory systems operate:

From the hearing are diverse translations taken, not so much serving to signifie the powers of the mind, as to expresse the affections of the heart...He that is scornfull will not heare when he is reprov'd, in this translation refusing to heare signifieth disdain of correction, and hatred of doctrine. (5)

For both Peacham and Wright, external forces and internal interpretations are the same: Peacham's listener, if scornful, "will not hear when he is reprov'd," meaning that his understanding obfuscates external sounds. If any character in *Epicoene* is disdainful, surely it is Morose. He refuses to hear anything around him, and contemporary rhetoric suggests that his refusal to hear anything auditory is tantamount to him refusing to listen to his peers.

So much dialogue is devoted to describing Morose and his apartment that before he even appears on stage, he is the center of attention. Coupling the lines devoted to describing Morose with the explicit distaste other characters have for his behavior, Morose embodies antediluvian, antisocial behavior. Jonson describes what his audience already knows: a wealthy man living in the same neighborhood in which the play takes place and was staged. Jonson's deployment of *mimesis* is effective as a descriptive and persuasive tool because his narrative evokes the same sensory world as his audience's. Jonson makes it so that audiences could not help but imagine their own social milieu.

Truewit's ekphrastic descriptions create *phantasia*—it is easy to imagine an irascible old man confining himself in a room that is made claustrophobic by its layered floors and ceilings, and suffocating by its locked windows. In the early modern period, although such details were conveyed through dialogue, it is not likely that the scenery described matched actual stage settings. According to Gurr, in both Blackfriar's and the Globe, "staging was still Spartan by modern standards, more functional than ornate" (32). Understanding that the stage likely did not have double walls, treble ceilings, or caulked windows, modern readers can assume that Jonson expected his audience to create a mental picture of Morose's room.

By setting and staging *Epicoene* in Whitefriar's, Jonson's descriptions did not have to do as much work: audiences could use their own experiences to fill in the details. Even if audience members did not live in Whitefriar's, to attend the play, they at least had to walk through the neighborhood, making the theatrical realm an extension of their lived experience. They could fill in the reported details with what they witnessed outside the theater. *Mimesis* is persuasive here—everyone is convinced of Morose's intractability—because there is empirical evidence. Audiences simply had to walk outside to confirm descriptions of the landscape or buildings. When Morose walks onto stage, he immediately proves all of Truewit's descriptions true.

However, in *Epicoene*, when descriptions cannot be empirically verified, *mimesis* is not a persuasive technique. Truewit may have success describing something real (i.e. Morose), but when he attempts to describe a sight no one can see (i.e. the Gorgon), Truewit's persuasive language utterly fails. Bragging about his ekphrastic

accomplishment, Truewit states: ““If ever Gorgon¹⁷ were seen in the shape of a woman, he [Morose] hath seen her in my description” (2.2.15). Truewit is convinced that his language has the ekphrastic power to create *phantasia* in Morose’s mind. Yet the statement itself is contradictory—by setting up an if/then premise, *phantasia* can only exist in Morose’s mind *if* anyone has seen a Gorgon. Because the Gorgon is a mythical creature, she is the result of ornamental language manipulated in order to manifest the image of a thing that does not exist. Puttenham warns against the misguided use of ornament:

And this phantasie may be resembled to a glasse as hath been sayd,
whereof there by man tempers and manner of makinges, as the
perspectives doe acknowledge, for some be false glasses and shew thinges
otherwise than they be in deede, and other sight as they be in deede.
(2.7.19)

Puttenham’s warning recalls Plato’s admonition regarding the dangers of imitation. It applies as well to Truewit: the *phantasia* he attempts to create is like a false glass showing things other than they actually are—the only images it makes spring from faulty figurative speech. At its most basic level, Truewit’s argument is flawed by depending upon the mythical Gorgon actually existing—his words attempt to represent an image that does not exist; to do so, he depends upon ornament.

Like hearing, sight is discussed at length in theories of knowledge attainment.

Peacham argues that sight is the sensory organ with the most acuity:

¹⁷ “One of the three female monsters of classical legend; anyone who met their gaze was turned to stone” (47fn).

As the sight among the rest of the senses is most sharpe, and pierceth furthest, so is it proved most sure, and least deceived, and therefore is very high to the mind in the affinitie of nature, so farre fourth as an externall sense of the bodie may be compared to an internall virtue of the mind. (4)

Sight becomes commensurate with knowledge attainment, and external impressions blend with internal understanding (as in the phrase, “I see what you mean”). Peacham lauds sight as the “least deceived” of the senses, anticipating later philosophical arguments that evidentiary proof is required to make something true. Because of its relationship to external and internal stimuli, sight may be the “least deceived,” but it also requires proof in order to convince someone that what one sees is in fact real. Unlike his persuasive description of Morose, meant to convince audiences that the elusive aristocrat is a detestable representation of humanity, his description of women on the marriage market, intended to keep Morose a bachelor, has no success. Truewit conflates myths and stereotypes by comparing women on the marriage market to the Gorgon. Because there is no empirical evidence to confirm a myth, whatever Truewit attempts to describe in relationship to myth has no persuasive power.

After inundating Morose with the descriptions of eight types of English brides—including young, fecund, religious, noble, greedy, or wealthy women—Truewit notes that his descriptions have a physical effect on Morose: ““You begin to sweat, sir? But this is not half, i’ faith; you may do your pleasure notwithstanding, as I said before; I come not to persuade you—”” (2.2.80-84). But Truewit does, absolutely, mean to persuade Morose against marrying. The appearance of sweat on Morose’s body indicates that Truewit’s rhetoric affects him—Morose can picture the women described by Truewit in such detail

that he has a physical reaction. Even though Morose has a physical response, he does not concede to Truewit's argument. Instead, he rushes to his chamber, calls his servant Cutbeard to his side, and, believing that Truewit spoke as Dauphine's mouthpiece, tells Cutbeard he will marry immediately, as long as the woman offered to him is silent (2.4.59-61).

The two examples of *mimesis* already examined serve to set up a discussion of *Epicoene*'s central concern over the potential danger posed by a successful mimetic representation, namely, its potential to undo patrilineal patriarchal systems. Epicoene, a supposedly female character, is presented as such an ideal version of Morose's desires that she convinces every character (save Dauphine) of her sex. Her introduction initiates the play's main action and facilitates Jonson's expression of persuasive rhetoric. While Truewit based his *ekphrasis* on a myth, Dauphine does not make the same mistake. Dauphine's manipulation of Morose is emphatically mimetic. At the heart of *mimesis* is language—words come to act as signs, signifying the meaning of an object. When Morose first encounters Epicoene, she stands silently while he walks around her in a circle, giving voice to how he interprets her body:

Give aside now a little, and leave me to examine her condition and aptitude for my affection. (*He goes about her and views her*). She is exceeding fair and of a special good favour; a sweet composition or harmony of limbs; her temper of beauty has the true height of my blood. (2.5.15-19)

Perhaps it is because the audience can actually see Epicoene on stage that Jonson does not include specific details concerning her appearance. Or, perhaps, the details are left

vague to emphasize the fact that Morose is not actually concerned with Epicoene's external appearance. A third option also exists: Epicoene so exactly embodies Morose's *phantasia* that she is desire made corporeal. Epicoene is not a person with feelings or desires to Morose. Instead, she is the sign upon which Morose projects his own desires.¹⁸ Effectively, within the passage, sound substantiates sight. Epicoene does not say a word, yet her personhood and beauty are confirmed by language—language that is not her own. Contemporary rhetoric seems to favor the third option. Puttenham writes that “Utterance also and language is given by nature to man for perswasion of others, and aide of them selves, I mean the first abilitie to speak...For speech it selfe is artificiall and made by man, and the more pleasing it is, the more it prevaileth to such purpose as it is intended for” (1.4.8). Morose's purpose is to convince himself that Epicoene embodies his desire. The way he speaks about her suggests that his language reflects his inner desire. He is pleased because Epicoene is the exact imitation of everything he wants—a silent woman. She mimics desired behavior, persuading Morose that he sees a reflection of his demands.

What is more important is that Morose finally *sees* Epicoene. Peacham's assertion that sight is the “least deceived” of all the senses suggests that Morose understands who and what is before him. Morose's dialogue details her external appearance as his sight interprets it for him. Because neither Morose nor the audience know that Epicoene is a boy, the scene reinforces the connection between sight and understanding. Yet, for those in the know, Morose's sight is absolutely betrayed by Epicoene's biology.

Philosophically, sight is directly connected to the internal virtues of the mind; because

¹⁸ This reading is, admittedly, slightly anachronistic. In the eighteenth century, *Epicoene* was staged frequently, meaning that those capable of attending the theater likely knew the play's surprise reveal. My reading depends on a second reading and/or viewing of *Epicoene*, meaning that those with knowledge of Epicoene's sex are a fairly small group; access to the ending is not a global, cultural event.

Morose's sight is tricked, it suggests that his vision is corrupted by the internal corruption of his mind. It is also important to note that the audience is tricked as well—a universal delusion is staged in *Epicoene*. Audiences are implicated in Morose's inability to reflect on what is literally before his eyes. That Jonson continually focuses the audience's attention on Morose's audiophobia suggests that his understanding is negatively impacted by his distorted hearing and betrayed by his sight, ultimately leading to his humiliation. Because Morose puts his personal feelings above his understanding, he cannot be a reasonable and learned man. Dauphine dresses up a boy in the exact imitation of Morose's specifications, manipulating the play's action by presenting a man in drag as his uncle's potential wife.

Dauphine's plan works because the boy he hired successfully mimics female behavior.¹⁹ The play's denouement comes as a surprise for first-time viewers, because everything the characters previously stated about Epicoene—describing her body, her language, and her behavior—suggests that she is a woman. Epicoene's ability to successfully mimic female behavior facilitates Jonson's moral lesson: imitations are dangerous. The very language that describes Epicoene's femininity is the same language that falsifies her true sex. The hazard implied by Epicoene's successful mimicry is that a pretender can undo the patriarchal system around which early modern England was structured. If a simulacrum of a woman can successfully dupe a wealthy man into marriage, a system based on fecundity implodes: "Throughout the play, Morose acts on his belief that relations of blood are the foundation of his society's system of values"

¹⁹ Stephen Orgel's careful study of early modern laws concludes the following: "Standard history implies that until the Restoration women were banned from the stage, but in fact this is not the case; there were no statutes whatever relating to the matter" (72). However, traditional practices meant that a boy actor played the titular role, playing into the surprise Jonson intended with the reveal scene.

(Swann 299). Epicoene, the boy actor, cannot reproduce with Morose. If a valid marriage, Morose's bloodline comes to an end. But, of course, the marriage could never be valid. Dauphine's plan only needs to succeed so far as getting Morose to say vows, allowing Dauphine to set the final part of his plan in motion: Epicoene acting like the nagging spendthrift Morose believes all women to be, humiliating Morose and making him miserable.

While Dauphine may get what he wants from his mimetic representation of the female sex, his trick proves the undoing of all other men making claims based on misrepresentations of their interactions with Epicoene. Herein lies the lesson: false claims about one's superiority eventually leads to abasement. At the center of the claims, for all the men, is Epicoene. In attempts to prove their virility, two tertiary characters, Sir Daw and Sir La Foole, claim to have bedded Epicoene. Yet, once Epicoene's true sex is revealed, Truewit makes it clear that the men are liars:

Nay, Sir Daw and Sir La Foole, you see the gentlewoman that has done you the favours! We are all thankful to you, and so should womankind here, specially for lying on her, though not with her! [...] You are they that, when no merit or fortune can make you hope to enjoy their bodies, yet will lie with their reputations and make their fame suffer. Away, you common moths of these and all ladies' honours. (5.4.212-216, 220-224)

Daw and La Foole are banished from their enclave, forced out of society when their lies are exposed. The revelation proves that their names are not mimetic in the least, but

symbolic, as Daw acts like a man easily subdued and La Foole is an actual fool.²⁰ Both characters attempt to bolster their sexual reputations without any proof: they provide anecdotal evidence concerning their liaisons with Epicoene, and in a society moving toward empirical evidence as the standard of truth, unvalidated claims have no persuasive power. Ironically, the only real evidence provided within the play is Epicoene's sex, and that proof reveals the men's stories as falsehoods.

Once Epicoene is revealed to be a boy, Morose does not speak again. Truewit's chastisement of Daw and La Foole is the play's closing speech, and neither has the opportunity to respond. Yet, the lesson that successful imitations can have consequences to patriarchal authority remains. Throughout the play, Jonson challenges *mimesis*. Truewit's description of Morose's clothing is only true when Morose is out in public. His description of English brides is based on a stereotype conflated with a myth, making it a fallacious rhetorical conclusion. Epicoene's ability to imitate the female sex mocks marriage and banishes two men from their social enclave. It stands to reason that while *mimesis* and *ekphrasis* can achieve *phantasia*, the logical fallacy latent in Truewit's description does not develop the necessary *enargeia* to persuade Morose, and in turn, exposes bad rhetoric.

Epicoene is an important starting point for the forthcoming examination of the relationship between *ekphrasis*, philosophy, and descriptions of female characters. The drama calls attention to representations and imitations, begging the question: if mimetic representations can be employed to manipulate and deceive those in power, what form of description gets closest to the truth? The answer, I argue, is *ekphrasis*. In the next section,

²⁰ In 1631, Jonson uses the term "daw" to mean "to daunt, subdue, frighten" in *Divell is Asse*: "You daw him too much, in troth, Sir" (4.4.208).

I examine how Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* struggles with the same tension between idealism and materialism as Jonson's *Epicoene*. In the drama, a different mode of description is used to highlight problems intrinsic to existing social structures.

Statuesque Beauty: William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* and the Trouble with Imitations

Audiences can laugh at Morose's tyranny—his means of terror are low stakes, because the worst he can do is disinherit his nephew. In *Epicoene*, *mimesis* mocks hyperbolic iterations of wealthy men unable to see outside of their own desires. Two years later, William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* (1611) raises the stakes, asking what happens when a monarch's intractability is based on willful blindness? What happens when a king disinherits his public? As King of Sicilia, Leontes is capable of both killing family members and destabilizing Sicilia's economy. *Epicoene* employs comedic effects to make a fool of Morose and his attempts to play the tyrant; in *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes does not play a tyrant—he embodies despotic behavior when he refuses to believe that Hermione is faithful to him.

Disguise again comes into play, but rather than comedic cross-dressing, in *The Winter's Tale*, Hermione's body is presented as a statue, as an almost perfect mimetic representation of herself. Although the play does not make it clear whether Hermione pretends to be a statue or if there is a magical transformation, what is evident is that the statue does not have a material effect on the male onlookers, although her moving body

does.²¹ This, in turn, suggests that *mimesis* is limited in its effect as a persuasive tool. The different effects Hermione, as mimetic imitation and as living woman, has on Leontes shows that Shakespeare's *mimesis* draws on Sidney's classical defense of the technique as a mode of education. From Sidney, one can assume that the statue would be enough to facilitate *anagnorisis* in Leontes—the imitation would instruct and delight Leontes. Although the statue does impact Leontes, it does not make him recant his prior behavior. The statue may inspire awe in Leontes, but he only genuinely changes when Hermione begins moving. The person, the original, has authority; the copy, the statue, is simply an imitation. Leontes's behavior before Hermione embodies Shakespeare's lesson for how to control one's impulses—especially if one is inclined toward tyranny. The play is meant to develop understanding by providing audiences with empirical evidence concerning appropriate behavior; audiences watch Leontes act without reason, see the consequences of his actions, and finally learn how to amend aberrant behavior. The dialogue focuses on failed attempts to capture emotions, highlighting language's shortcomings. Ultimately, in the drama, to be persuasive, characters must present exact images to the listener's mind.

The Winter's Tale seems to affirm that Shakespeare contemplated the shortcomings of language. The play's final two scenes function in tandem to set up the play's denouement: the penultimate scene explicitly questions language's ability to describe emotions or sights unseen, while the final scene attempts to fill the gaps in language exposed in the previous scene. In *The Winter's Tale*, the relationship between *mimesis* and *ekphrasis* is central to major plot lines. Comparing the language used to

²¹ For a nuanced analysis of how materiality and magic function in *The Winter's Tale*, see Robert Appelbaum's "'Lawful as Eating': Art, Life, and Magic in *The Winter's Tale*." Jill Delsigne's chapter "Hermetic Miracles in *The Winter's Tale*" examines the transformation from a religious lens.

lament language's shortcomings leads to the conclusion that *ekphrasis* has the power to set up the mental and emotional landscapes necessary to create *phantasia* for both characters and for the audience. Shakespeare recognized that language could do more than imitate what people could reasonably be expected to know—by writing descriptions of the unknown, Shakespeare sought to elevate the effectiveness of language.

Juxtaposing the second and third scenes in Act V reveals just how unreliable *mimesis* is within *The Winter's Tale*. In Scene Two, it seems that *mimesis* facilitates successful description; yet, a close reading of the dialogue reveals that there is no such thing as efficacious *mimesis*. The dual employment of descriptive language (*ekphrasis*) and artistic representations (*mimesis*) facilitate much of the scene's action. Leontes and those he banished (including Polixenes, Camillo, and Perdita) reunite—yet the audience never actually witnesses the reunion. Instead, we learn about their behavior through secondhand narrative—a narrative that evacuates language of descriptive power:

THIRD GENTLEMAN. Did you see the meeting of the two kings?

SECOND GENTLEMAN. No.

THIRD GENTLEMAN. Then have you lost a sight which was to be seen, cannot be spoken of. There might you have beheld one joy crown another, so and in such a manner that it seemed sorrow wept to take leave of them, for their joy waded in tears. There was casting up of eyes, holding up of hands, with countenance of such distraction. That which you hear you'll swear you see, there is such unity in the proofs...I never heard of such another encounter,

which lames report to follow it, and undoes description to do it.

(5.2.36-52)

The Third Gentleman's declaration that "you lost a sight which was to be seen, cannot be spoken of" directly contradicts his later line, "That which you hear you'll swear you see." The initial statement declares that the sight *cannot* be relayed in language, yet a few lines later, he states that they will imagine what he saw because his language will provide proof. The final line makes some sense of the paradox: the Third Gentleman "never heard of such another encounter," which means he has no precedent from which to draw an imitation in his own words. Language loses access to mimetic descriptions, because there is no original to imitate. That he argues the sight "cannot be spoken of" at first suggests that he should not even bother trying. But he does try. Beginning with emotions, the Third Gentleman tries to depict joy with the aid of its antithesis: their joy is so great that even sorrow weeps at the sight. Audiences can almost see it, but the description is wanting. Just when the Third Gentleman's dialogue gets interesting, his language becomes lifeless. Instead of sorrow weeping, we get cast up eyes. Hands going into the air. Distracted faces. There is no detail in the Third Gentleman's language, only perfunctory bodily actions.

The gentleman enters uncharted territory—he attempts to do something never before done with descriptive language. By definition, there can be no sign or signifier because the reunion is the *first of its kind*. If there is no sign or signifier with which to represent the meeting, and no language to describe the moment, then there can be no description of the event. If mimetic description arises from imitation, the statement that he "never heard of such another before" means there is no precedent to imitate. It stands

to reason that *mimesis* is inaccessible as a rhetorical technique at this point. Because no person has ever seen such a sight before, perhaps ekphrastic description can create the mental images necessary to make the scene real for the Third Gentleman's peers. B.J. Sokol argues, "The reason I think for their flashy rhetoric, other than court manners, is that each courtier attempts to outbrave the fact that he does not actually possess much external information...yet each would like to appear knowing" (71). Contrary to Sokol's conclusion, however, is the simple fact that nothing about the rhetoric is flashy—the Third Gentleman's language reveals frustration that his words are *not* flashy, are not capable of aptly describing the reunion. Richard Meek presents a different interpretation, suggesting that the gentlemen "demonstrate the persuasiveness and vividness of narrative" (398). By claiming the sight lost, the courtier's yearning to verbalize that which "cannot be spoken of" makes his desire to create *enargeia* potent for Meek: "Yet the Third Gentleman then informs us that the telling will be as vivid as seeing the thing itself, explicitly using the figure of *enargeia*" (400). Meek refers to the line "That which you hear you'll swear you see." Herein lies the problem: the Third Gentleman claims "that which you hear you'll swear you see"—but in the next line, he also states, "I never heard of such another encounter, which lames report to follow it, and undoes description to do it." Logically, the Third Gentleman's dialogue cannot achieve *enargeia*, because no other encounter like the one he saw has ever been witnessed. Daniel Derrinmill notes that "an enargetic rhetoric first needs to evoke mental images before it can make persuasive use of them" (19). *Enargeia* depends upon the creation of a mental image that is so vivid, the listener comes to believe the image is real.

By contemporary definition, such as Peacham's and Puttenham's, the Third Gentleman fails to achieve *enargeia*, because he explicitly states that attempting to describe the reunion "undoes description." The Third Gentleman's words exhibit the inexpressibility topos, a conventional rhetorical move that typically creates a paradox. The irreconcilability between telling his companions that he is going to describe the reunion, but in doing so he will somehow undo the details, suggests that there are no words or rhetorical techniques that can effectively create an image in their minds. Description is undone, because the Third Gentleman cannot present his listeners with the *actual* sight—he can barely imitate the sight with words. There is no "glorious luster and light" (Puttenham 132) to his dialogue, because his lexicon is devoid of the words capable of giving his listeners "a goodly outward shew," and, therefore, *enargeia* cannot be achieved (Puttenham 132). It is as though language can get him close but is itself incapable of describing the reunion's emotional depth. This realization deserves a moment of contemplation: using a tertiary character, Shakespeare presents a scene focused not only on the off-stage reunion, but also on the courtier's inability to vividly describe the reunion. He cannot possibly describe the emotions seen, because language itself does not have the words. And the character is painfully aware of this. He has the words to state that he lacks the language he really needs. Even if audiences began picturing the scene, *phantasia* vanishes when he states that any personal experience upon which listeners could base their mimetic imaginings are undone by his attempts to describe the reunion.

Description becomes a snake eating its own tail: a continual cycle of creation and destruction. The courtier's ineffective description becomes proof that traditional modes

of description, like *mimesis*, no longer serve their rhetorical purpose. Something more is needed—language must evolve in order to access sights and emotions perhaps not before seen by audiences. Describing what people already know is no longer sufficient when adding description into a scene. Meek notes, almost comically, that the gentlemen “talk incessantly about the fact that they are only talking about it” (398). The language, however, forces audiences to recognize the relationship between image and *mimesis*, between language and imagination. Visual proof becomes both affirmative (the reunion actually happened) and destabilizing (we have no idea what it actually looked like). The absences and failed descriptions in the scene occur within a framework of anecdotal evidence. For all of their metadiscourse, the courtiers never actually achieve any sort of communication or persuasion—unless their purpose is to persuade one another that they do not have the language to describe the reunion. This happens because they cannot provide empirical evidence to validate their claims. The implication that there was joy and tears cannot be confirmed to anyone who did not witness the encounter.

In *The Winter's Tale*, *ekphrasis* is not about realism; instead it becomes a vehicle for hyper-intensive descriptions meant to defamiliarize audiences, to frustrate their expectations of a conventional outcome. The penultimate scene's reunion feels like the typical ending to a Romance play, with the characters coming together in a joyous meeting. It is a dramatic technique that audiences expected to happen at the play's conclusion. But there is another scene—and another reunion—still to come. The final two scenes act as foils to one another, revealing the difference between persuasive rhetoric and empty language. Jill Delsigne makes a similar connection between the scenes: “Shakespeare deploys this hermetic emblem to describe a Catholic miracle – the potential

of visual art, such as a statue or a play, to affect an audience both emotionally and spiritually. The narrated absent scenes – the account of the temple of Delphos and the reconciliation scene – prepare the audience to interpret the animated statue in spiritual and apocalyptic terms” (92). In Act Five, Scene Two, Paulina tells Leontes that she ordered the creation of a statue in Hermione’s likeness that “excels what ever yet you looked upon, / Or hand of man hath done” (5.2.16-17). On the surface, it seems that Paulina applauds the sculptor’s mimetic skills. Paulina entices Leontes and Perdita with promises of *mimesis*: “Prepare / to see the life as lively mocked as ever” (5.2.18-9). She plants the seed of art imitating life, prepping Leontes to treat the statue as an exact replica of Hermione—but there is *no* statue. Such contemporary ambivalence toward *mimesis* surfaces in Bacon’s philosophy: “For the originals cannot last, and the copies cannot but leese of the life and truth” (1.8.6). In its contemporary context, “leese” meant “to part with or be parted from by misadventure, through change in conditions, etc.; to be deprived of; to cease to possess; to fail to preserve, or maintain” (*OED*). Copies can only borrow from life, but even copies fail to maintain the essence of the original. While the original must exist in order for a copy to be made, the original will fade and the copy cannot maintain its essence. In *The Winter’s Tale*, the statue is but a representation, and if real, the idea that it cannot maintain “the life and truth” of Hermione means the connection between original and imitation must eventually falter. The final scene proves that mimetic *ekphrasis* must have physical confirmation in order to be persuasive. Throughout the final act, language’s inability to describe what characters see with their own eyes is a point of constant contention.

The way Leontes initially reacts to Hermione continues the anti-mimetic tone begun by the courtiers in the previous scene. While immobile and silent, Hermione creates a vacuum that Leontes desperately tries to fill with language. Pregnant with descriptions of his emotional response, Leontes's language anthropomorphizes the statue:

Does not the stone rebuke me
 For being more stone than it? O royal piece!
 There's magic in thy majesty, which has
 My evils conjured to remembrance. (5.3.37-40)

Each sentence contains a self-referential pronoun. When Leontes tries to interact with the statue, he can only engage it through personal references. The statue does not actually rebuke Leontes—it cannot. But his first reaction is to project his own feelings of shame onto the statue. The female form then becomes the sign upon which Leontes attempts to make meaning out of his feelings. Seeing an imitation of Hermione forces him to remember her death and the death of their son Mamilius. After Leontes imprisons Hermione, Mamilius falls ill, as Leontes describes:

To see his nobleness
 Conceiving the dishonor of his mother!
 He straight declined, dropped, took it deeply,
 Fastened and fixed the shame on't in himself,
 Threw off his spirit, his appetite, his sleep,
 And downright languished. (2.3.12-16)

The description Leontes provides gives details concerning Mamilius's declining health; though the passage is just six lines, the image is vivid nonetheless. Unlike the courtiers,

Leontes does not attempt to describe emotions—he details what is visible to the eye. He can see the external effects his tyranny has upon Mamilius—the son is emotionally distraught as a result of his father’s actions, and this internal feeling is so profound that it quickly kills him.

When Mamilius dies and Leontes believes Hermione dead as well, he immediately regrets his defamation of Apollo’s oracle and begs forgiveness. When audiences are reintroduced to Leontes in Act V, they learn that he has “‘performed / A saint-like sorrow’” and that “no fault could [he] make / Which [he has] not redeemed; indeed, paid down / More penitence than done trespass’” (5.1.1-4). What Leontes seems unable to do is forgive himself, to give himself permission to mourn his family and move forward. Indeed, as the oracle foretold, “*the king shall live / without an heir if that which is lost be not found*” (3.2.132-3). A few lines prior to the oracle’s words being read, Hermione hints at what is lost: “‘The crown and comfort of my life, your favour, / I do give lost, for I do feel it gone / But know not how it went’” (3.2.92-4). What Hermione lost is Leontes’s favor—favor she does not regain until the play’s end. The details provided in earlier scenes arise again in the final act, suggesting that the tension builds through the sixteen years that pass during the drama.

It is this tension that makes the statue scene vivid. Although Leontes has expressed regret and paid his penance, he is still unable to fully forgive himself; in being offended that the statue “rebukes” him, it seems that his shame is what he feels projected from Hermione.

His insecurity becomes evident when he names the feeling the statue evokes in him. It is a representation of his wife—his direct subordinate in the patriarchal system—that

coalesces his prior moments of self-doubt into a complete understanding that his behavior harmed those around him. The play's denouement approaches when Paulina releases Hermione from stasis: "'Tis time. Descend. Be stone no more. Approach. / Strike all that look upon with marvel'" (5.3.99-100). When Hermione moves, all the onlookers can do is call out her every move:

POLIXINES. She embraces him.

CAMILLO. She hangs about his neck.

If she pertain to life, let her speak too. (5.3.112-114)

That the statue is not a statue shocks each individual. Hermione's movement creates defamiliarization, as the male onlookers must reconstitute how they understand the female form placed before them. While perceiving Hermione as a statue, the men could project their own thoughts and feelings onto her likeness. But when they look upon her as a living woman, she is not an art object to be gazed upon or an empty vessel in which to store their own regrets. For Puttenham, speech acts are direct reflections of the speaker's internal state; he writes: "for man is but his minde, and as his minde is tempered and qualified, so are his speeches and language at large" (148). The short, narrative statements given by Polixenes and Camillo suggest that their minds are bewildered. Rather than crying out with joy or relief that Hermione lives, the men narrate her movements in a stilted manner. Camillo's command that Hermione speak implies disbelief: he sees her move, but he will not accept that she lives until she speaks. Each line calls for strong evidentiary proof: both sight and sound (the two most piercing senses) must be validated to be persuasive.

Hermione is alive. She breathes. She stores her own pain and regret. Even with her movement, however, the men are not convinced. It is as though they fear Hermione is some sort of automaton, moving as if alive, but without any evidence of sentience. Before she moves, verisimilitude is nearly complete in the eyes of the onlookers. Verisimilitude occurs because the thing before them is not a mimetic representation—it is Hermione herself. When requiring that she move, and once she move that she speak, the men confirm what Paulina already knew—that a story will not be believed without physical evidence:

PAULINA. That she is living,
 Were it but told you, should be hooted at
 Like an old tale. But it appears she lives,
 Though yet she speak not. (5.3.116-119)

Paulina argues that had she told Leontes that Hermione lived the entire time, she would be treated like a fool because her story would be “like an old tale.” Her revelation does two very important—and seemingly contradictory—things. On one hand, Paulina’s “old tale” reference recalls romance and fairy tales, genres in which it is not uncommon for seemingly magical events to occur. On the other, she confronts the characters (and the audience) with a surprise that shocks them out of their assumption that characters who are supposed to be dead remain dead. When Hermione moves, she dismantles audience expectations. Shakespeare writes a scene that defies convention by first adhering to reality: the drama tells audiences that Hermione is dead, and there is no reason to believe otherwise. In other words, Shakespeare deliberately subverts custom in order to defamiliarize his audience, a technique that is not unique to the stage. In “Idol of the

Theater,” Bacon, for instance, connects philosophical systems to conventional stage plays, stating that “all the received systems are but so many stage plays, representing the worlds of their own creation after an unreal and scenic fashion” (Aphorism 44). Plays represent the world created by the author, just as philosophical systems are the creation of their author, however much each aspires to an accurate representation of experience. Paulina’s revelation exposes the “unreal and scenic fashion” of meaning-making in *The Winter’s Tale*. After seeing the statue, the male characters can no longer rely on their accepted systems of knowledge. They must reevaluate how they perceive and understand the world, based on the evidence before them.

The revelation works much like a staged scene: Hermione is on a pedestal, the onlookers anticipating what comes next. As the mechanics of Bacon’s philosophy of perception states:

The human understanding is moved by those things most which strike and enter the mind simultaneously and suddenly, and so fill the imagination; and then it feigns and supposes all other things to be somehow, though it cannot see how, similar to those few things by which it is surrounded.

(Aphorism 47)

For Hermione to prove herself a person, and not some sort of automaton, she must substantiate herself by talking to the characters around her. In speaking, Hermione becomes “similar to those few things” that surround her. Hermione’s movement and language are so striking to the onlookers, because what she does is what they least expect. Her transformation destroys “all received systems,” proving that what the men

believe to be true is not. Hermione embodies the mechanics of perception, providing verifiable evidence that characters cannot believe everything they see.

With the visible revelation that Hermione lives, the final scene recalls the invisible actions so ineffectively described in the previous scene. While audiences may not immediately remember the dialogue between the courtiers, it is likely that their discussion primes audiences for the next scene's descriptions. Denouement occurs when Hermione speaks—her orality becomes the benchmark against which sentience is measured. Hermione does not answer when Polixenes and Camillo demand it; rather, she responds after Paulina states that Hermione does not need to speak in order to prove herself to the men. Hermione communicates, but only with her daughter, calling her “mine own” (5.3.124). Taking responsibility for Perdita, Hermione reconstitutes herself as a mother. In the final scene, the men seem to have no power over Hermione; although objectified and spectated by them, Hermione does not respond to their demands. Paulina, arguably, has more control over her, complicating the distinction between female objectification and male agency.

The contrast between an original and an imitation becomes the crux of the play's lesson: an imitation cannot facilitate *anagnorisis* in a patriarch—only the proof provided by the original is strong enough to change perceptions of absolutism in a patriarchal system. In the first act, Leontes condemned Hermione to life in prison because he suspected she had an affair with Polixenes. But there is no proof either way: Hermione cannot prove that the affair never occurred, and Leontes cannot prove that it actually did. The statue forces Leontes to visualize his wrongdoing, and, as a living woman, Hermione

catalyzes the development of Leontes's emotional capabilities.²² Bacon argues that the purpose of learning is "that it disposeth the constitution of the mind not to be fixed or settled in the defects thereof, but still to be capable and susceptible of growth and reformation" (*Advancement* 31). The statue may incite pangs of guilt, but the woman forces Leontes to learn from his mistakes. Leontes proves himself "capable and susceptible of growth and reformation" when he embraces Hermione, recognizing the abhorrence of his prior behavior. In his study of *The Winter's Tale*, Jean Hagstrum writes: "Art has not defeated nature; nature has defeated art. For this triumph of nature, the imagery of the entire play has prepared us... The joy of the final restoration comes from the fact that the ideal creature is not a statue after all but a living woman of flesh and blood" (87-8). Most modern interpretations of the scene either cite or echo Hagstrum's conclusion. However, more is at stake in *The Winter's Tale* than describing the "ideal creature" (emphasis my own) capable of triumphing over art. What is at stake is the ability for a living, breathing female character to incite anagnorises without speaking a word. Hermione is more than an ideal. As a character, she makes Leontes painfully aware that his actions are not acceptable. Nature may triumph over art, the living woman may persuade when a statue could not, but persuasion does not occur simply because Hermione becomes an ideal. Leontes changes because the contrast between a mimetic representation and the original forces him to reevaluate his entire world view.

²² It should be noted that Leontes realizes his tyranny after Mamilius's death, but the realization does not make him a better monarch.

Conclusion

In order to responsibly examine how *mimesis* and *ekphrasis* operate as theatrical devices in seventeenth-century drama, it is first necessary to understand how the terms were employed in their contemporary milieu. Incorporating rhetoricians like Peacham and Puttenham and philosophers like Wright and Bacon opens a fruitful dialogue between influential theoretical treatises and popular drama of the seventeenth century. For Puttenham, the ability to successfully imitate is a praiseworthy skill that endows writers with the ability to describe “the true and lively of every thing.” For Peacham, language is a science that proves nothing exists in the world that is “not onely counterfeited, and wonderfully imitated.” That is, *mimesis* is not entirely negative for either Puttenham or Peacham: imitations are “wonderfully” done, even if they are counterfeits. Peacham writes about *mimesis* in a manner that combines the skepticism of Plato with the conviction of Aristotle: the technique is confined to speech, much like it is in Book II and Book III of *The Republic*; however, unlike Plato in Book X, Peacham recognizes *mimesis* as an effective rhetorical and didactic tool.

When Bacon’s *Advancement of Learning* appeared in 1605, the philosophy of poesy did not alter dramatically, but he did make some subtle changes:

Poesy is a part of learning in measure of words, for the most part restrained, but in all other points extremely licensed, and doth truly refer to the imagination. And therefore, it [poesy] was ever thought to have some participation of divineness, because it doth raise and erect the mind, by submitting the shows of things to the desires of the mind. (44)

Peacham, Puttenham, and Bacon each associate poesy with the mind and its ability to create images for audiences. What changes with Bacon is that the imagination becomes the explicit source of poesy. Rather than the known things of Peacham, Bacon refers to “the shows of things.” The term change is not drastic, but it does indicate a shift toward relying on *ekphrasis* to describe the unknown. Known things lie directly within the purview of *mimesis*: what is known can be imitated. But the “show of things” reads more like a vivid description than a representation of what is known. To show something is to create *ekphrasis*—to form an image in the listener’s mind.

The works discussed in this chapter critique traditional patriarchy. They both include examples of toxic masculinity, of abuses of power that male characters do not realize are harmful to the female characters in the plays. While neither upends the system, they do teach audiences how to improve the existing system, albeit in different ways. Jonson’s antagonist Morose embodies the worst of pompous, upper-class behavior in a patriarch, intractable and incapable of change; Shakespeare’s Leontes begins in much the same manner, but over a sixteen-year span, he comes to recognize that he must heed material evidence suggesting necessary change in order for the patriarchal system to operate smoothly. By different means, both playwrights uphold fraternal patriarchy.

What is arguably more telling is that the male characters who embody tyrannical behavior are themselves tricked by false imitations and subsequently punished. Patrilineal patriarchy, it then seems, is detrimental to men as well as women. Descriptions of Epicoene’s clothing and behavior are mimetic: the unnamed character is made into an exact imitation of what Morose wants in a potential bride. But what is mimetically described is false: the character is *not* a woman. Morose does not interrogate what he

perceives, meaning that he does not imitate Wright's mechanical philosophy of perception. Within *Epicoene*, the only descriptions with any truth value are those that audiences can verify with sight, and they all relate to a patriarch abusing his power. More importantly, descriptions of Morose are ekphrastic; details are provided that allow audiences to imagine the character before he ever appears on stage. Dauphine triumphs over his uncle to secure his inheritance, and he does so with the approval of his male acquaintances. Morose embodies patrilineal patriarchy and is foiled because his plans are outdated and easily undermined. Dauphine represents fraternal patriarchy, because he is able to achieve his goals with the support of his male counterparts. *Epicoene* concludes by ushering in a different form of patriarchy, one that appears more appealing and sustainable because the ekphrastic descriptions that lead to the ending allow audiences to picture how fraternal patriarchy can function in their world.

The lesson concerning patriarchal succession—and the consequences for abusing one's social position—is clear in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*. The play opens with ekphrastic descriptions of Leontes's hysterical behavior: his refusal to listen to anyone around him, his accusations against Hermione and Polixenes, and his assertion that perhaps even his son Mamillius is not biologically his are all made without any proof. In the first act, his son dies and everyone believes Hermione dies as well. While his daughter Perdita lives on in exile, Leontes's bloodline ends. Yet, unbeknownst to everyone save Paulina, Hermione lives. Too old to reproduce, Hermione cannot possibly provide an heir. She can, however, serve a nonbiological function—facilitating the return of Leontes's humanity. The mimetic representation of Hermione cannot create the emotional state necessary for Leontes to change; it is only in human form, ekphrastically

described by the other characters on stage, that she promotes any positive development in Leontes.

In the plays discussed, ekphrastic descriptions of female characters occur just prior to denouement. Mimetic descriptions of the characters occur prior to the ekphrastic descriptions, but female characters as imitations of aesthetic objects have no persuasive power. It is only after female characters are described through ekphrastic language that male characters recognize their own aberrant behavior. The pattern of ekphrasis preceding denouement underscores ekphrastic descriptions as more powerful than mimetic imitations. At the center of these descriptions are female characters, subject to the toxic males who operate as the most powerful players within contemporary society. *Ekphrasis* intends to create *phantasia*, and if successful, those mental images are vivid enough to seem real. By writing descriptions that are capable of seeming real, even if audiences had never seen the like before, dramatists could engender new or revised versions of existing social structures, moving toward a more successful social order.

Chapter 2

In Their Own Image: Patriarchs and *Ekphrasis* in Aphra Behn's *The Forc'd Marriage, The Rover, and Oroonoko*

The political and social upheaval that occurred after the Restoration of the Stuart monarchy in 1660 provided an opportunity for female authors to confront the same issues as their male counterparts, due to Charles II's incorporation of French theatrical traditions onto the English stage. Although female actors and playwrights were not universally welcomed, the changes created a space for female playwrights to insert their voices into the theater. Authors, including Margaret Cavendish, Mary Pix, and Aphra Behn had the opportunity to examine issues interrogated by male authors (like Jonson or Shakespeare) from a female perspective. Of these, Aphra Behn reigned as the dominant female playwright after the Restoration. Her works exemplify the development of descriptive techniques in the later seventeenth century, as her influence can be traced in popular works of writers who published decades after her own (e.g. Delarivier Manley, Susanna Centlivre, Charlotte Lennox, Thomas Southerne).

Not surprisingly, the defects in patrilineal patriarchy that Jonson and Shakespeare criticized in the early seventeenth century remained problematic later in the century. Behn confronts similar issues, but she does so from a different gendered and political perspective. As I noted in the previous chapter, Jonson's *Epicoene* and Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* manipulated *mimesis* in order to expose the problems central to patrilineal patriarchy. Yet both ultimately uphold fraternal patriarchy as a viable replacement system. Behn presents a different perspective in texts like *The Forc'd Marriage* (1671), *The Rover* (1677), and *Oroonoko* (1688). These works manipulate *mimesis* in ways that undermine all forms of patriarchy, presenting tyrannical patriarchs whose actions directly

impact both male and female characters. In Behn's *oeuvre*, intractable monarchs often threaten the viability of their respective societies, much as Leontes did in *The Winter's Tale*. However, unlike Leontes, these male characters are exposed and punished early in the texts; there is no sixteen-year gap between the appearance of tyranny and the subsequent punishment of bad behavior. Central to Behn's critique of patriarchal systems is the myth of the body politic, heavily relied upon by the Stuart monarchs. The body politic situates the monarch as the head of the commonwealth's body, just as patriarchal systems place fathers at the head of their households. Obeying a monarch can thus contravene patriarchal certitude at the familial level. As a consequence, masculine authority is subject to a double-bind: the patriarch is in control of his family, but his monarch controls him; thus, male patriarchs cannot enjoy absolute power within their households because royal decrees supersede individual desires.

As several scholars have observed, the empirical nature of the stage prompted Charles II to rely on the theatrics inherent to drama in order to confront social and political changes.²³ Repeatedly, Restoration plays place male characters in situations that expose the struggle between familial patriarchy and a patriarchal monarchy, in terms of both philosophical and social practices—the more tenuous a grasp the patriarch held on his family, the more tenuous the monarchy's grasp on English citizens became. Recognizing the transitional nature of seventeenth-century English social hierarchy, Michael McKeon explains its impact on the subsequent period:

To generalize: before the civil wars there was a tacit identification of the public interest with the national interest, of the national interest with that

²³ See, for instance, Paula Backscheider's *Spectacular Politics* for a thorough discussion of the relationship between the restored monarch and the London stage.

of the sovereign, and of the sovereign with transcendental founts of authority...The separation of the king's natural from his political body in 1649 was the most important demystification of the king's aura on the level of symbolic action. (342-3)

McKeon describes the analogous nature of self-identification in seventeenth-century England. That is, husbands recognized themselves as the household authority because the monarch—their patriarchal equivalent—held the highest position of power. As citizens began questioning power structures, the social philosophy that arose during the period reflected the struggle patriarchal systems faced. Regicide, coupled with the Rump Parliament and the Interregnum, thoroughly destabilized traditional forms of authority.

Upon his restoration in 1660, Charles II met the challenge of reestablishing the monarchy with all the pomp and circumstance available to him—pageants, parades, public gatherings, architecture, and speeches all commenced for this sole purpose. Because Charles II wanted public performances to act as gripping political theater able to revive traditional modes of authority, the stage became a logical, visceral location to project the obedience he expected from his subjects. The reopening of the stages presented an opportunity for Charles “to inscribe his authority. Not only would that establish his own position, but, more essentially, the ancient authority of the monarchy, the Right of Kings and the rightness of his family's reign” (Backscheider 11). He maintained a measure of control by constraining the theater to two companies: Thomas Killigrew's King's Company and William Davenant's Duke's Company. Nevertheless, while the theaters and their content remained largely under the monarch's control, the subsequent innovations that occurred on the Restoration stage allowed playwrights to

challenge and critique patrilineal patriarchy in surprising (and often entertaining) manners. Many of the period's most successful plays reflect an uneasy reproduction of Caroline rationalizations of divine right, suggesting that ambivalence towards the Restoration was a common issue.

The destabilization of traditional social structures—and the attendant anxiety²⁴ experienced by English citizens—is apparent in Behn's work. A staunch supporter of the monarchy and a proto-feminist,²⁵ Behn's political views are frequently at odds with her portrayals of female characters.²⁶ The complex relationship between patriarchal figures and the impact they have on female characters in Behn's dramatic and fiction writing suggests that the theater, and later prose fiction, serves as an effective way to understand changing social, political, and gender constructs. In stark contrast to her male predecessors, Behn seeks no placation of traditional social structures in regard to patriarchal power structures within the home; she does, however, advocate for absolute sovereignty. Behn manipulates mimetic imitations of female bodies in order to expose bad actors, but the representations do not have the ability to facilitate change in tyrannical patriarchs. What does create change is the living female body; the living body is produced textually through ekphrastic descriptions; in this manner, *ekphrasis* describes female bodies in ways that reveal the flaws inherent to traditional social structures,

²⁴ By "anxiety," I refer to the "diffuse anxiety" elucidated by Patricia Meyer Spacks in *Privacy*: "Diffuse anxiety—the multiplied anxiety of individuals—accompanied what can be seen from a distance in time as an increasing focus on the individual in eighteenth-century England" (27).

²⁵ Here, proto-feminist means that Behn's writing advocated for women in a way that anticipated the feminist cause; it does not mean she was an actual feminist.

²⁶ See "The Authorial Ciphers of Aphra Behn" by Margaret Ferguson in *The Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1650-1740* (pp. 225-249) for a thorough examination of the relationship between Behn's private life, her politics, and her proto-feminism.

exposing abuses of power and aberrant male behavior while also offering corrections to aberrant male behavior.

Double Vision: *Ekphrasis* and Perception in *The Forc'd Marriage*

With the debut of *The Forc'd Marriage* on 20 September 1671, Behn proved that although the London stage may have been a man's world, it certainly had a place for a female playwright. Behn's *The Forc'd Marriage, or The Jealous Bridegroom* ran for six days,²⁷ closing only "for the staging of 'a greater, *The Tempest*'" (Todd *Secret Life* 144, quoting John Downes). Behn's play first appeared at Lincoln's Inn Fields, taking full advantage of the playhouse's moveable scenery (Hughes, "Aphra Behn" 37). The moveable scenery developed after the Restoration enhanced various aspects of the theater, for both audiences and playwrights. Ellen Donkin examines the impact staging devices had on Restoration drama:

The introduction on the public stage of moveable scenery around 1660 had a profound effect on the *writing* of plays. Practical considerations for a playwright might include the following: how quickly and in what sequences could the scenery be made to shift?...How many layers of activity could be simultaneously facilitated by scenic elements to create situations of multiple eavesdropping? (6)

Plots did not have to solely rely upon dialogue or irony to supplement the cast's portrayal of human actions or intentions. Also, time between scenes condensed, as "characters could, for example, pass from room to room, or from the house to the street, simply by

²⁷ *The Forc'd Marriage* also ran on 9 January 1671 for one night (Hughes, *The Theatre of Aphra Behn* 38-9).

leaving through one door and returning through another, without any change of scenery” (Hughes, “Aphra Behn” 37). The immediacy proffered by movable scenery had a profound effect on Restoration drama—especially in Aphra Behn’s first staged play. With the inclusion of movable scenery on stage, Behn relied on empirical evidence to provide visual confirmation for interactions not performed on the stage.

In *The Forc’d Marriage*, Behn appears to embrace the cliché that seeing is believing: in the drama, everything that is true or real is confirmed by both action and character dialogue, anticipating new demands for empirical proof. Second-hand stories and anecdotal evidence, in contrast, are not accepted as truth. As *mimesis* gradually loses its persuasive power over the course of the play, *ekphrasis* becomes the dominant descriptive mode. More specifically, attempts to create mimetic representations of female bodies fail to persuade male characters to end pernicious behavior. Ekphrastic descriptions of female characters precede denouement, in turn exposing flaws in patriarchal authority structures and prompting corrections to aberrant male behavior. It is only when ekphrastic descriptions are used for persuasion that *anagnorisis* occurs in previously unrepentant male characters.

The Forc’d Marriage opens with Alcippus returning as a war hero; in payment for his service, the king tells Alcippus that he can have anything he wants. What Alcippus wants is to marry Erminia. Although he knows Erminia is in love with Philander, the crown prince, Alcippus does not know that the two are secretly betrothed. Complicating the plot further, unknown to all characters is that Gallatea, the princess, is in love with Alcippus. Days after Erminia and Alcippus marry, his jealousy over Erminia’s relationship with Prince Philander drives all reason from his mind. In the midst of the

ensuing argument—Alcippus condemning Erminia, Erminia pleading her innocence—he violently attacks her, stating ““But I’ll destroy them while the Gods look down, / And smile upon my justice”” (4.6.82). Immediately following his words, the stage direction indicates that the actor playing Alcippus “*strangles her with a Garter, which he snatches from his Leg, or smothers her with a Pillow*” (4.6.82, stage direction). The grasping at nearby objects (either removing the garter from his pantleg or picking up a nearby pillow) suggests no premeditation on Alcippus’s part.²⁸ He justifies his act before the violence occurs, stating that the “Gods look down” on his actions, approving them before the attempted murder is complete. With this statement, Alcippus makes himself beholden only to ecclesiastical law, a law traditionally reserved for the sovereign. Alcippus’s triumph after the attempted murder highlights his conviction that his household power is beyond the laws of monarchs. It is this belief that positions him squarely in the center of the patriarchal paradox: Alcippus makes himself the arbiter of justice, ignoring civil laws that proscribe murder. He believes himself justified in murdering his wife, because she undermined his authority. By eschewing courtly justice, Alcippus undermines monarchical power: if he answers only to God, and not to his king, Alcippus operates outside the confines of patrilineal patriarchy.

What constituted the delineation of power within a monarchical and patriarchal society received much attention in the seventeenth century; Thomas Hobbes’s mechanical philosophy, for example, interrogates contemporary power structures, raising questions concerning the previously noted paradox attending patriarchy within a monarchical

²⁸ But it does suggest premeditation on Behn’s part. Janet Todd writes the following aside: “(The influence of *Othello* was here so strong that Behn even gave the option of suffocating in the first printed edition of the play)” (139).

system.²⁹ In *The Leviathan, or, The matter, forme, and power of a common wealth, ecclesiastical and civil* (1651), Hobbes explains a sovereign's purpose and position in social structures:

The OFFICE of the Sovereign, (be it a Monarch, or an Assembly,) consisteth in the end, for which he was trust with the Sovereign Power, namely the procuration of the *safety of the people*; to which he is obliged by the Law of Nature, and to render an account thereof to God, the Author of that Law, and to none but him. (175)

Hobbes defines the sovereign as a central power that “need not be a single person: a single will, even if it is the decision of an assembly of some kind, is all that is necessary” (Tuck 75). The sovereign's duty is to determine what constitutes danger in questionable situations, and within the parameters set by the sovereign, the “procuration of the *safety of the people*” should be secured. The sovereign's responsibility seems clear, but the authority of a central power is undermined by another basic tenant of Hobbesian philosophy, the argument that in a state of nature, men will always do what is right for *them*, in order to stay alive.

A consequence is that, if subjects perceive the sovereign to be the source of danger, people will naturally—and legitimately—rebel against that power. There is a gap between man's determination to survive and the sovereign's right to determine what is a threat to that survival. Alcippus's murderous attempt exposes this gap, revealing how a sovereign can abuse his position as common judge. He deems Erminia's behavior a threat

²⁹ It must be noted that Hobbes, especially contemporarily, was a very controversial figure. His religious and political contentiousness is clearly detailed in Richard Tuck's *Hobbes: A Very Short Introduction* (pp.35-48).

to his survival as a respected patriarch; in order for him to secure his position, Alcippus decides that Erminia must die. Yet his determination is made for personal gain—there is no common good benefitting from his attempted murder. Through Alcippus’s action, Behn complicates Hobbes’s ethical and political systems, because Alcippus believes himself justified; as the patriarch of his home, Alcippus is the central power. Securing his own safety over the safety of his subject (Erminia) coupled with his justification for his behavior, indicates that the social system promoted by Hobbes can be manipulated for a tyrant’s benefit, but that doing so problematically pits one form of sovereignty against another.

The basic struggle between heads of households and the head of state is dramatized on a microcosmic level, between Alcippus and Philander. In Act V, Alcippus draws his sword against Philander, an act in direct defiance of the crown. When the two first meet after both believe Erminia dead, the men goad one another, and the conversation quickly turns violent: *“They come to each others breast, and so draw”* (5.5.36, stage direction). Both men threaten one another, but they are unequal figures within the patriarchal power structure. After the incident, the king calls Alcippus to defend his actions. The king makes it clear to Alcippus that Philander does not answer to his subjects; instead, the prince only answers to God: *““But all his [Philander’s] evils ’tis the Gods must punish, / Who made no Laws for Princes”* (5.5.86-7). The king’s regard for Philander’s position in society parallels the position Alcippus creates for himself as head of his household. Both answer to God, not to men. And this is the crux of the paradox—both cannot be beholden only to ecclesiastical law, because if neither monarch nor subject must answer to one another, then the laws created by traditional power

structures are weakened. The tension between Behn's political viewpoints and her critique of patriarchy's subjugation of women surfaces in the power dynamics between Alcippus and his king. The king assumes he is in the right, employing the language of absolutism (much like James I does in *Basilikon Doron*). Alcippus applies the same philosophy to himself, determining that drawing upon the prince is necessary to his survival. What is interesting is that the king's language seems reasonable and like the product of reflection; Alcippus, on the other hand, speaks like a petulant child told he cannot have a treat. Monarchical absolutism seems validated as the king puts the intractable patriarch in his place. Yet at the center of both men's struggles is Erminia's (supposedly) dead body: both characters are more concerned with legitimizing their own authority, making Erminia's murder appear inconsequential.

But the murder does have significance—Erminia's body is at the center of almost every plot point in the drama. The importance of this is that audiences cannot forget about Alcippus's crime or the king's dismissal of the murder. The impact of the conversation between the king and Alcippus is that the monarchy's vulnerability comes to light. During the conversation, when the king dictates to whom the sovereign answers, he defines what it means to be a monarch. McKeon observes that the moment the Stuart kings attempted to exert autocratic rule by laying claim to divine right, their language signaled the beginning of their end: "To theorize about absolutism, however, is also to render it vulnerable—or to acknowledge its vulnerability" (5). The conversation between the king and Alcippus reveals the monarchy's vulnerability: by making men monarchs of their homes, the body politic does not account for men seeing themselves as equal to their own monarch. Indeed, as Janet Todd puts it, "Alcippus almost upset the state as well as

everyone around him by his tendency to vast rages leading to violence” (*Secret Life* 188). But it is not just his “vast rages leading to violence” that threaten the state. Alcippus’s justification seems a larger threat to the system, because his self-talk makes him a monarch on his own terms. Immediately after attempting to murder his wife, Alcippus justifies his actions by telling himself that the Gods “smile upon my justice”—or, that the Gods (and no one else) judge his actions. The king applies the same ecclesiastical law to Philander, stating that the “Gods must punish” any crime committed by a royal, because the monarchy is above the laws of men. If both Alcippus and Philander are rhetorical equals within ecclesiastical law, the patriarchal system upholding the body politic loses its singular power: the head cannot rule if equal to all the parts of the body.

Encounters with the king are not the only moments in which Behn critiques Alcippus’s usurpation of sovereign power. Another plot structure operates alongside Alcippus’s relationship to Philander and the king. Unbeknownst to Alcippus, Philander, and the king, Erminia is not dead. Gallatea, the king’s daughter and Philander’s sister, is one of very few characters aware that Erminia lives. On their own, Gallatea and Erminia devise a plot to persuade Alcippus to relinquish his claim on Erminia and instead marry Gallatea. Their plot pivots on Erminia appearing to Alcippus as a ghost, as an ephemeral imitation of herself. Examining how the scenes in which Erminia acts as a ghost set up the play’s climax, while also providing a contrast between *mimesis* and *ekphrasis* as descriptive methods able to persuade audiences.

When Erminia appears costumed as a ghost, she depends on the efficacy of mimetic representations in order to persuade Alcippus. Just as Alcippus’s interaction with the king presents a challenge to traditional power structures, his interactions with Erminia

challenge traditional methods of persuasion. Alcippus is again at the center of the plot, which is itself reminiscent of *The Winter's Tale* in that the play involves the supposed death of a female character who then reemerges through the process of gradual imitations involving artistic and representational figurations on the stage. In doing so, Behn teaches her audience how *mimesis* works on the Restoration stage: Alcippus's inability to persuade or to be persuaded by mimetic representations suggests that imitations are not rhetorically persuasive. Erminia and Gallatea attempt to use mimetic representations to force Alcippus to realize that his behavior toward Erminia is unjustifiable. However, they utterly fail in their early attempts at persuasion. Each time Alcippus's moral evolution is tested, he reverts back to tyrannical behavior. It is not until Erminia comes on the stage, without her costume, and begins talking to Alcippus, that he genuinely repents. By the play's end, ekphrastic descriptions of character behavior are validated by empirical proof and are the only form of description with any persuasive value.

Before Erminia appears to Alcippus, audiences learn—through hearsay—that Alcippus's grasp on reality may be slipping. Pisaro, a courtier with relationships to Erminia and Gallatea, sees Alcippus keening before a statue of Venus. Pisaro's retelling suggests that even before Alcippus sees Erminia costumed as a ghost, he has problems with representations of reality. Specifically, his ability to differentiate between an artistic representation and the original is suspect:

PISARO. The Marble Statue *Venus*, he mistook

For fair *Erminia*, and such things he spoke;

Such unheard passionate things as e'en would move,

The Marble Statue's self to fall in love. (5.1.19-22)

Alcippus cannot separate an artistic representation of the female form from his mental image of Erminia. To conflate Erminia and the statue of Venus is to suggest that a human being and a statue have the same sentience, the same capacity to feel. Derek Hughes connects the scene to the Pygmalion myth, stating: “There is obviously, however, an allusion to the myth of Pygmalion, who had fallen in love with a statue of his own creation... The name of Pygmalion’s statue was Gallatea—the name of the woman Alcippus eventually marries” (*The Theatre of Aphra Behn* 36). In the original story, Pygmalion’s prayer to Venus is answered: the statue comes to life. What he imagines becomes real through divine intervention. Behn’s reference to the Pygmalion myth is interesting in relationship to her complication of Hobbesian philosophy. Hobbes argues that all ideas and perceptions are caused by the senses: “The cause of Sense, is the Externall Body, or Object, which presseth the organ proper to each Sense... as we discern by Feeling. All which qualities are called *Sensible*, are in the object that causeth them” (3). Much like in Wright’s philosophy (discussed in Chapter One), knowledge and understanding are mechanical processes, impacted by external objects. Richard Tuck concisely distills Hobbes’s mechanical philosophy:

What he meant was simply that there is some mechanical system in the body whereby sense-perceptions are transmitted to the brain, and that they there cause perturbations to the ‘spirits’ which link the brain and the heart, and that the consequent perturbations in the heart affect the circulation of the blood... The different physiological changes during this process are describable in terms of the familiar language of perception and emotion:

thus the alterations in the make-up of the brain are *perceptions*, and the alterations in the behavior of the blood are *passions*. (64)

Mechanical philosophy understands perceptions as arising from changes in the brain, and the passions as developing from changes in the heart, and these changes are caused by the senses interpreting objects around the perceiver. Alcippus is clearly impacted by the statue: what his eyes sense impresses ideas on his mind and raises his emotions. Yet what he perceives is not real; his mind misinterprets the image before him.

Hobbes's philosophy is important to this study, because he makes a connection between the senses and morality. Within Hobbes's system, morals are developed within social systems that agree upon perceptions of what is good or bad in relation to survival. Tuck further notes that "it was reasonable for Hobbes to say on the basis of this theory (as he always did) that the description of something as 'good' must be broadly the same as the description of it as 'pleasurable'—for the feeling of moral approbation is in a way a feeling of pleasure at the action in question" (64). The correlation between the senses and morality is that whatever is perceived as good (relative to the perceiver) is likewise understood as pleasurable. What is potentially problematic about Hobbes's mechanical philosophy is that "what seemed good was what pleased any individual or was good *for* him" (Tuck 65). What Alcippus deems "good" for him, what pleases him, violates a seemingly universal idea—thou shalt not kill. In his myopic state, Alcippus seems to make a new moral code for himself, based on his perceptions of the world around him and his place in it. The scene describing Alcippus before the statue reads as a not-so-veiled critique of Hobbes—a critique that would align with Behn's politics.

Alcippus's sense perceptions are completely misguided—he believes the statue of Venus to *be* Erminia, a woman he thinks he killed. Alcippus's behavior suggests that he thinks that he can transfer his internal desires to the statue, and in doing so, transform the statue into Erminia. However, as Hobbes insists, objects press their own nature onto human perception. If so, the statue of Venus *cannot* transform into Erminia, because the object has no sense of *being* Erminia. The sign—the statue—cannot become the signifier Alcippus desires—Erminia—because there is no established correlation between the statue of Venus and Erminia. In his conversation with Erminia and Gallatea, Pisaro states that Alcippus's language (both spoken and somatic) is passionate enough to transform stone into a conscious being, capable of falling in love with him. But the statue remains a statue—there is no Pygmalion transformation. There is no Hermione coming to life.

Alcippus's desire is problematic, because imbuing the statue with his own yearning means that what Alcippus really wants is for Erminia to become the embodiment of his *phantasia*. If this were possible, Erminia would become *enargeia* in corporeal form. Beyond being a physical impossibility, it would mean that the entity created from Alcippus's mind is an empty vessel devoid of autonomy. The statue does not transform, but Pisaro's language suggests that Alcippus believes that what he imagines is actually before his eyes. Pisaro relates this information to Erminia and Gallatea in a *post facto* conversation; he witnessed Alcippus's actions, then thought it important to tell the women. From Pisaro's description, it seems that Alcippus, in his fragile mental state, believes that what he imagines (*phantasia*) is before his eyes, come to life (*enargeia*). The audience learns that Alcippus believes he can turn the statue into

Erminia. The statue's materiality becomes central to understanding Alcippus's mental state, and how he perceives his own desires as influencing material objects around him.

Behn manipulates Pisaro's dialogue in order to generate descriptions by employing ekphrastic techniques. Pisaro provides a top-down detailing of Alcippus's behavior before the statue:

Then from his almost frantick head he'd tear
 Whole handfuls of his well-becoming hair;
 [...]
 Then would he blush, and all asham'd become,
 His head declining, for a while be dumb;
 His arms upon his breast across would lay,
 Then sensibly and calmly walk away. (5.1.13-4, 25-30)

The picture begins at the top of Alcippus's head, moves to his cheeks, his mouth, his torso, and finally his legs. Audiences can picture Alcippus's posture: he transforms from a man with his hands raised above his head, to a man whose arms, then head, fall in quick succession. When Alcippus's arms cross his chest, it seems that his body closes in on itself, compacting him. Once Alcippus comes back to himself, he becomes ambulatory and moves away from the statue. Unlike Shakespeare's courtiers, Pisaro successfully retells actions he witnessed offstage. His dialogue relays Alcippus's external motions, but it does not attempt to decipher his internal state, meaning that the audience cannot extrapolate whether Alcippus truly repents. Also different from Leontes's courtiers, Pisaro is capable of developed language: his lines are in iambic pentameter, rhyming with an aabb pattern, and that holds throughout his conversation with Gallatea.

The way Behn orchestrates the dialogue and its poetic stylization suggests that she does not set out to evacuate language by calling attention to the empty space filled by inadequate words; instead, she makes her audience aware of language's self-conscious and constructed nature.³⁰ Each movement is described, in turn activating the audience's imagination. Once imaginations are activated, once audiences can picture Alcippus before the statue, the play turns to its didactic purpose—positioning representations of the female body as capable of correcting undesirable male behavior.

As the play continues, more explicit critiques of *mimesis* as an effective persuasive tool occur. Immediately following Pisaro and Gallatea's conversation, audiences see Alcippus lying on a couch in his chamber. Alcippus wakes and "*drops a Picture with a glass on the Reverse*" (5.2.5, stage direction). Struck by the image, he expostulates, "'But why, dear Picture, art thou still so gay, / Since she is gone from whom those charms were borrow'd'" (5.2.10-11). Alcippus's words almost directly mimic the statement by Bacon so applicable in *The Winter's Tale*: "For the originals cannot last, and the copies can but leese of the life and truth" (1.8.6). His question links to Bacon's assertion that copies cannot retain the original—and Alcippus demands to know why the artistic representation of Erminia no longer reflects her current condition. Like the statue of Venus, the picture in Alcippus's hand will not bend to his desires; in other words, he laments that an artistic representation is not beholden to male desires. Turning over the

³⁰ Other reasons may explain the inclusion of heroic couplets. Their inclusion (not limited to Pisaro—Erminia and Gallatea also speak in heroic couplets) also suggests that Behn either expected or hoped for the King's presence at her plays. Nancy Klein McGuire traces the history of rhymed verse common to many Restoration tragicomedies: "The most partisan member of the audience, of course, was the young King himself who frequently attended plays; he acted as arbiter and, according to Thomas Morrice, Orrery's chaplain and biographer, he 'commanded his lordship' to write a play in rhyme, thus introducing the trend of heroic couplets" (17).

picture to gaze into the mirror, Alcippus continues: ““And thou blest mirror, that has of’t beheld / That face, which nature never made a fairer”” (5.2.17-8). Behn’s contrast of the picture and the mirror recalls Platonic *mimesis*, in that reflections or artistic representations are not “the things themselves in their own being.” More contemporarily, Bacon’s observations concerning the attainment of knowledge is reflected in the scene: “Declaring not obscurely that God hath framed the mind of man *as a mirror or glass*, capable of the image of the universal worlds, and joyful to receive the impression thereof, as the eye joyeth to receive light” (Bacon 6, emphasis my own). That is, just as the eye receives impressions from the external world and there is sight, so the mind obtains understanding by interpreting impressions that the eye sees. The picture is thrice removed from Erminia herself: it is a representation of an artist’s interpretation of her person. Here, Erminia is interpreted both by an artist and by Alcippus. When the picture is turned over, and Alcippus looks at his own reflection—while thinking of Erminia’s face previously shown in that mirror—her image is interpreted through the male gaze, while simultaneously replaced by a male face. The moment Alcippus turns over the mirror, he may state that the mirror “of’t beheld” a reflection of Erminia’s face, but currently, the mirror reflects Alcippus’s face, superimposing his face over the memory of Erminia.

Behn’s repeated placement of Alcippus before representations of female bodies—combined with his inability to differentiate between his imagination and reality—begs the question: What happens when a character’s sight or impressions of the world around them are misrepresentations? For Hobbes, each time a person moves through the world, looks at a mirror, speaks to a person—basically does anything—the new experience supersedes past impressions; a person cannot give equal weight and consideration to

every sensory impression, “because to observe by experience, and remember all circumstances that may alter the success, is impossible” (22). Experiential learning cannot stand as the purveyor of truth, because experience provides too much information and memory is selective. All sights, sounds, smells, tastes, or touches ever experienced in a person’s lifetime do not retain the same mental presence. The most recent impression is the one with the most influence, as all other impressions remembered are nothing but fading images. The force of Alcippus’s reflection presses itself on his mind, meaning that his reflection takes precedence over Erminia’s, suggesting that Alcippus now interprets the world through his own understanding, rather than trying to see the world as others do. Every image of the female body is appropriated by Alcippus’s imagination. He sees his face in the mirror, making his reflection the most recent sensory input available to him. Alcippus’s impression of the world is shaped by his own image, and therefore by his own understanding. Alcippus sees himself, the image is impressed in his mind and becomes a sign, thereby shaping his understanding. Extrapolating the occurrence to the external world, Alcippus’s understanding, at this point, is utterly myopic—Alcippus is the creator of his own perceptions concerning past and future events.

The lesson that *mimesis* cannot facilitate persuasion progresses when Gallatea’s plan is put into action: Erminia will appear to Alcippus dressed as a ghost and persuade him to marry Gallatea, the woman who actually loves him. When Erminia arrives on stage in costume, she stands behind Alcippus as he holds the mirror: “*He looks in the glass, Erminia steals behind him, and looks into it over his shoulder; he is frightened*” (5.2.55, stage direction). When Erminia appears in the mirror dressed as an artistic representation of herself, it should facilitate an ideal mimetic moment. If capable of

persuasion, the mimetic representation will convince Alcippus to follow Gallatea's plan. Like Polixenes to Hermione, Alcippus demands that Erminia speak: "'What art thou?—speak—What art thou?'" (5.2.56). Unlike Hermione, however, Erminia responds, commanding him to "'Sit down and hear me----- / To disobey, thy punishment shall be: / To live in endless torments, but ne're die'" (5.2.64-6). Alcippus sits. He is persuaded—for the first time—to listen to his wife. Hughes interprets Erminia's position behind Alcippus in the mirror as signaling "that women have a separate and autonomous significance" (36). If separate, if given any sort of autonomy, Erminia's appearance in Alcippus's mirror would incite *anagnorisis*, catalyzing the realization that his actions were in fact immoral. In other words, if woman-as-mimetic-representation held any sort of persuasive power, Alcippus would repent. By definition, *mimesis* is the external representation of an internal thought, and Erminia's appearance, to the best of Alcippus's knowledge, is a perfect mimetic imitation: she appears exactly as he remembers her. With this in mind, Hobbesian philosophy suggests that Erminia's image now supplants Alcippus's in his understanding. Costumed as a ghost, Erminia presents a tableau for his viewing:

Enter [,] the Princess goes over the Stage as a Spirit, bows a little to Alcippus, and goes off.

ALCIPPUS. The Princess!

ERMINIA. *Be still; 'tis she you must possess*

'Tis she must make your happiness. (5.2.97-100)

Other women of the court walk in front of Alcippus, and with each successive representation, Erminia tells Alcippus what he must do. When the women exit the stage,

Alcippus “*remains immoveable for a while*” (5.2.134, stage direction). Pisaro enters the scene, and Alcippus tells him, “methinks I give / A strange and sudden credit to this Spirit” (5.2.172-4). It seems, for the moment, that the representation of Erminia is capable of changing Alcippus’s mind. During his conversation with Pisaro, he wants to “give...credit” to Erminia’s words.

However, imagination and understanding are malleable. As previously noted, Hobbes argues that more recent sensory impressions replace older ones. Applied to a person’s understanding, it means that imagination can affect understanding. Likewise, a person’s ability to retain images affects the reliability of memory:

For after the object is removed, or the eye shut, we still retain an image of the thing seen, though more obscure than when we see it. And this is it, the Latines call *Imagination*, from the image made in seeing; and apply the same, though improperly, to all the other senses. But the Greeks call it *Fancy*; which signified *appearance*, and is as proper to one sense, as to another. IMAGINATION is therefore nothing but *decaying sense*...From whence it followeth, that the longer the time is, after the sight, or Sense of any object, the weaker is the Imagination. (5)

That is, as Leijenhorst writes, “If, having perceived an object one subsequently closes one’s eyes, the image lingers. As Hobbes puts it, the motion involved in this perception slowly ‘decays’, and he calls this after-effect imagination” (95). Imagination is the remembrance of a perceived object. The further Erminia recedes in Alcippus’s imagination, the more obscure her image becomes, causing his memory of her to decay.

Although her appearance in the mirror seems to mitigate the decay, the moment Alcippus is confronted with the source of his rage—Philander—he immediately reverts to tyrannical behavior: “How, the Prince! / How suddenly my grief submits to rage” (5.5.8-9). In his rage, Alcippus draws his sword against Philander. Pisaro tries to calm the situation by reminding Alcippus of Erminia’s ghost: “Have you forgot your apparition, Sir?” (5.5.55). Pisaro, it seems, believed that Alcippus indeed meant to change. Alcippus’s immediate dismissal of Pisaro’s reprimand proves otherwise: “Oh ’twas an idle lying one, *Pisaro*, / And came but to entrap me” (5.5.56-7). Just as Erminia’s ghost is a temporary apparition, so too is her influence on Alcippus’s behavior. Descriptions of Erminia’s appearance in the glass, the detailing of the tableau performed for Alcippus, and even Alcippus’s belief that the phantom Erminia before him is a product of his imagination only generates temporary changes in Alcippus.

It is the revelation that Erminia survived that serves as the play’s denouement, facilitating the comedic ending. Her appearance as a living woman, not as a picture or reflection in a mirror, makes Alcippus recognize his transgressions. The change is immediate. Stage directions tell the audience that “*She goes a little back, as afraid, he kneels*” (5.5.170). The stage direction is doubled by Alcippus’s dialogue: “Ah Madam do not fear me in this posture” (5.5.172). Audiences can both see and hear that Alcippus kneels to the ground, making himself prostrate before Erminia. The moment works on two levels: first, the dialogue reinforces the image before them; second, the action proves the dialogue true—an act must be witnessed firsthand and confirmed by language to be real. Alcippus acknowledges his inability to repent, admitting he tried to kill Erminia out of pure frustration: “Was that I could not well repent the Crime; / But like a surly sinner

fac'd it out'" (5.5.177-8). He continues, revealing that he knew his violence against Erminia was also a crime against the monarchy the entire time: "'But, Madam, you were Wife to my Prince, / And that was all my sin: / Alas, in vain I hop'd for some return, / And grew impatient of th' unkind delay'" (5.5.177-8, 184-5). He admits that his actions arose from impatience, and by acknowledging Erminia's previous betrothal to Philander, he positions himself as the wrongdoer. Quickly, the play finds its ending, with Alcippus married to Gallatea and Philander married to Erminia. It seems that all characters find their happy ending, married to the person of their choosing—except Alcippus.

Herein lies the consequences of enacting tyrannical patriarchy. As the most strident proponent of paternal patriarchalism, Alcippus does not seem to appreciate being given away in marriage to a woman not of his own choosing (even if that character is a princess). Operating in the background is the king. Marrying Alcippus to Erminia is within his right as monarch. But once the king is confronted with the negative outcomes of the marriage, he tells Gallatea that, had he been informed of the relationship between Erminia and Philander, as well as Gallatea's love for Alcippus, he would never have condoned the marriage. The king—unlike Morose or Leontes—is willing to listen to perspectives other than his own. The play ends not with reminders that Alcippus is a war hero but with him on display as the husband of the princess. He becomes the object gazed upon by the other characters, rather than the one controlling the gaze. Philander's character is closer to fraternal patriarchy than any other form of social order, and in the end, he marries the woman he loves. The king recognizes that his will offends all other persons in the court and threatens to destabilize his community, and with that recognition, he becomes an ideal monarch. Alcippus, however, only laments his behavior when it

becomes clear he has no other course of action. In the act of relinquishing his marriage tie to Erminia, he cannot act like the autocratic patriarch he envisions himself.

The parallels between *The Winter's Tale* and *The Forc'd Marriage* are too numerous to ignore. In the first act of both plays, men with patriarchal power accept that they caused their wives' deaths: Leontes believes his intractability killed Hermione, while Alcippus thinks he strangled his wife Erminia to death. Act V of *The Forc'd Marriage* opens with a scene reminiscent of Act V in *The Winter's Tale*: a visceral encounter takes place offstage and is related back through hearsay. In the final act of each play, both men are confronted with the fact that their wives live—but only after Hermione and Erminia first appear to their husbands as artistic representations of themselves. In *Epicoe*, *mimesis* functions to criticize Morose's tyranny; in *The Winter's Tale* *mimesis* is ineffective and only ekphrastic descriptions convey truth when traditional modes of authority become implacable. *The Forc'd Marriage* problematizes familial and political authority by requiring ekphrastic descriptions and material evidence.

In *The Forc'd Marriage*, as the title implies, the union that occurs at the drama's outset is not one of mutual consent. It is a marriage forced upon Erminia, and it upsets all the major characters within the play, save the king. Alcippus's mental state and the actions arising from his inner turmoil are described ekphrastically, with precise details that can create *phantasia*. When Erminia appears in costume, she is described as a mimetic representation of a ghost, and within this liminal space, she creates a tableau featuring the other female characters costumed as imitations of goddesses in order to persuade Alcippus to annul their marriage. As with Jonson's and Shakespeare's plays, mimetic representations have limited persuasive power. Alcippus is momentarily

persuaded, but by the following scene, he denies that he ever changed his mind. When Erminia appears on stage and reveals that she lives, the female characters obtain their goals: Erminia marries Philander, Gallatea marries Alcippus.

Mimetic imitations do not convince any character to change; yet ekphrastic descriptions, ones that can be proven by sight, do promote development. Nonetheless, patrilineal and fraternal patriarchy are severely critiqued in Behn's play. Had Gallatea's claim that Philander wanted to hurt himself out of sorrow over Erminia actually come true, the royal bloodline would have ended without a successor. The consequence of the king's unilateral decision could potentially have been the undoing of his lineage. Fraternal patriarchy is critiqued in the sense that no male character is ideal. Alcippus, the patriarch of his family, is murderous and prone to rage. Philander is equally emotional, albeit not as explicitly violent. The female characters recognize a manner in which peace can be restored, and they successfully stage interventions against abuses of patriarchal power. *Mimesis* fails once female characters appear on stage as artistic representations of themselves, only to be revealed as living, breathing human beings. *Ekphrasis* becomes the handmaiden of didacticism: empirical proof is required in order to determine truth.

A Portrait Come to Life: *Ekphrasis* and Its Potential Hazards in *The Rover*

In this chapter, *The Rover* operates as a developmental link in Behn's representation of the connection between *mimesis*, *ekphrasis*, and descriptions of female characters' bodies. Her incorporation of portraits as key elements in the plot provides an important link between how descriptions operate in her early versus her later works.

Within the play, two female characters, Florinda and Angellica Bianca, circulate portraits

of themselves. Florinda gives her portrait to Belvile as a sign of her devotion; Angellica displays her portrait outside an inn as a sign of her availability for purchase. What is interesting is that the two female characters with portraits are the only ones that male characters perceive as sexual beings: Florinda is threatened with rape on three separate occasions, and Angellica is a known courtesan. Given their strikingly different social positions, it is not surprising that the two characters are treated differently within the drama. Florinda escapes a seemingly inevitable gang rape by producing the diamond ring given to her by Belvile, “the signifier that identifies her as under male protection” (Pacheco 334). Choosing Belvile for her husband—an act done expressly against her brother Don Pedro’s preference that she marry Antonio—should disrupt patriarchal order. Yet, as Anita Pacheco argues, the near-rape “makes it clear just how little has been changed by Florinda’s rebellion against forced marriage...The moment when she re-enters a world where the word ‘rape’ has meaning is the moment when she presents herself as the property of Belvile” (334). In other words, patriarchal order is precisely what saves Florinda from the lecherous men threatening rape. Having recourse to her noble birth and virgin status, Florinda’s rebellion stabilizes, rather than upsets, fraternal patriarchy.

Angellica, on the other hand, has no such protection. Her price (1,000 crowns to have her four nights a week for one month) means that she makes her own living. Although she does not operate on the market in a way that threatens merchants, her price makes the British cavaliers painfully aware of their social and economic dispossession. Because she advertises herself by placing her portrait outside an inn, Angellica becomes known to the male characters first as a simulacrum. Indeed, as Anne F. Widmayer argues,

“Angellica herself does not wield the power to determine how she or her images are used by her admirers” (“Aphra Behn’s *Rover*” 64). Angellica and her portrait are empty vessels that male characters (particularly Willmore, the drama’s libertine hero) use to define themselves. The mimetic imitation that Angellica uses to ply her wares is appropriated by the male characters. The interactions they have in front of the portrait tells audiences far more about the men than about Angellica herself. Janet Todd argues persuasively that Behn identified with Angellica perhaps more than any other character she created: “The identification of the two women indicates that Behn’s professional literary concern is with the portrait, with the social construction of woman, the woman in business, in activity, in story, and in history, the female persona not the unknowable person” (*Sign* 1). The contrast between Angellica and characters like Florinda or her sister Hellena reveals the “social construction of women”—indeed, Angellica is a character constructed almost solely out of the male characters’ imaginations. Widmayer observes that “Angellica and her portraits are merely the repositories of the men’s fantasies and the mirrors of their identities” (64). She is fantasy come to life, no more real than her portrait hanging outside the inn.

The Rover provides an important development in Behn’s ability to make connections between *mimesis* and persuasion: by the play’s end, it becomes clear that artistic imitations, no matter how well done, can affect only temporary persuasion. What is more important is how Behn manipulates the relationship between Angellica, her profession, and the portrait. While there is no physical mirror as in *The Forc’d Marriage*, it is clear that Angellica and her portrait serve to reflect how the male characters understand themselves and their tenuous position after losing the civil war. Her portrait,

although an important set device, receives no descriptive attention: if not physically at the play, audiences have no idea what the picture looks like. The dialogue also offers no physical details for Angellica's person or her personality. She is as flat as the portrait. The use of her portrait as a public declaration of her trade has the effect that, while she is highly desired by the male characters, she is desired as an idea, not as a real woman. Her humanity seems like a tertiary attribute: men desire her for her beauty, but her true selling point is that she is a commodified object; men can make their superiority public by purchasing her out from other men.

Before seeing the portrait, male characters construct idealized versions of Angellica from rumors of her beauty and knowledge of her profession. Willmore, the character that Hellena and Angellica both attempt to win, expresses the *phantasia* his mind generates about Angellica: ““Oh, for my arms full of soft, white, kind—woman! such as I fancy Angellica”” (2.1.8). Willmore imagines Angellica as a repository for his insatiable sexual desire, an object he deserves in payment for his previous sacrifices. Contrasted with Willmore is Antonio, Don Pedro's choice of husband for Florinda. When Antonio sees the portrait for the first time, he does not believe that the woman can equal the portrait's beauty: ““A thousand crowns! had not the painter flattered her, I should not think it dear”” (2.1.77). Standing next to Antonio is Don Pedro, but the characters remain unknown to one another because both wear masks. The use of masks throughout the play is noteworthy because of their apposite relationship to costumes, mirrors, and portraits. The purpose of a mask is to project an image that hides a person's true face, much as a costume can conceal a character's identity or a portrait can gloss over imperfections. Mirrors, on the other hand, present direct reflections of a person. Yet each of these things

is connected to projections of external attributes and how characters are perceived by and interact with one another. Following Antonio's exclamation, Don Pedro responds:

Flattered her! by Heaven he cannot, I have seen the original, nor is there
one charm here more than adorns her face and eyes; all this soft and sweet,
with a certain languishing air, that no artist can represent. (2.1.78-9)

According to Don Pedro, a character with first-hand knowledge of Angellica's beauty, the picture appropriately represents the woman; there is nothing misleading or exaggerated in the painted likeness. Yet, the picture does fall short in one instance: it cannot capture the "certain languishing air" that exudes from the original. From Don Pedro's statement, audiences can infer that, regardless of how skillfully a portrait is painted, the representation never fully captures the original. The combined power of the portrait and his companion's words inflame Antonio's emotions, persuading him that what he sees aligns with what he imagines: "'What I heard of her beauty before had fired my soul, but this confirmation of it has blown it to a flame'" (2.1.80). Although Antonio does not qualify whether it is the portrait or Don Pedro's words that "confirm" his passion, it is clear that the portrait has an effect on Antonio.

The picture of Angellica inflames the admirers' desires, but it does not convince any to pay her fee. Like earlier mimetic imitations, i.e. Hermione and Erminia, her image has a temporary persuasive effect, but this effect does not persuade the male admirers to do what she wants. The moment Angellica appears on stage, however, they fight to be the first to pay her price. Antonio and Don Pedro, moments before companionable onlookers, immediately threaten to duel one another, drawing their swords. While the two fight,

Willmore steals one of the miniature portraits:

This posture's loose and negligent,
 The sight on't would beget a warm desire,
 In souls whom impotence and age had chilled.
 —This must along with me. (2.1.126-9)

Willmore claims that the picture is powerful enough to ignite sexual passion in impotent men. The claim to impotence seems absurd, given Willmore's upcoming liaison with Angellica and his attempt to rape Florinda. Olivier offers a productive explanation: "Clearly, Willmore views his poverty as producing impotence as well as justifying his behavior" (60). The impotence Willmore claims, then, may be more symbolic than physical. Because he literally cannot pay Angellica's price, he is (theoretically) unable to have her body. The context in which Willmore's claim is made offers validation for the symbolic impotence; Antonio and Don Pedro fight over who will have Angellica first, broadcasting access to an economy Willmore is denied entrance.

Willmore justifies stealing one of the smaller portraits by making himself the victim of Angellica's beauty. When Angellica confronts him, Willmore transfers the blame to her:

I saw your charming picture and was wounded; quite through my soul
 each pointed beauty ran; and wanting a thousand crowns to procure my
 remedy—I laid this little picture to my bosom—which if you cannot allow
 me, I'll resign. (2.1.147-50)

His dialogue suggests that he is physically wounded from desiring Angellica so strongly, doubly so because he cannot pay her price. Pacheco finds Willmore's words utterly

manipulative, because he implies that Angellica is the one who first did wrong: “The theft of the portrait, with its aggressive assertion of the right to sexual gratification, is an affirmation of his manliness in a context that diminishes it” (338). Admitting his poverty indeed diminishes Willmore’s manliness, but the ploy is successful. By pretending to worship Angellica, and obtaining her without paying her fee, he manipulates himself into a position of power: he does not need Antonio’s money, because he can get what he wants by imitating the language of love.

It is Angellica’s susceptibility to Willmore’s imitation of Petrarchan love that places her in a submissive position. Introduced through the male admirer’s words, “Angellica and her portraits are merely the repositories of the men’s fantasies and the mirrors of their identities” (Widmayer 64). Angellica, therefore, is a character created out of masculine desires, rather than an autonomous being with her own sense of self. Alone with Willmore, she attempts “to transform herself into the innocent virgin that Willmore clearly desires her to be” (Lockey 167). In becoming what Willmore wants, Angellica relinquishes any agency she previously held. To play the role of the idealized virgin, in Angellica’s case, is to lose her sense of self. Pacheco argues that Angellica’s “beauty and its proportionately exalted price come close to recreating the physical unattainability of the chaste Petrarchan lady” (336). She may “come close,” but Angellica’s sexual relationship with Willmore means that she is not the physically unattainable Petrarchan lady. Instead, she is exactly what Willmore wants her to be that night: he gets the illusion of an aristocratic woman without the confines of a marriage bond. He can feel superior by making Angellica his conquest, because he obtains what the wealthy and landed Spaniards do not.

The relationship between the constructed nature of women and male insecurity regarding their patriarchal position is made explicit in Behn's manipulation of Angellica's portrait. Janet Todd observes that in Behn's works, "a constant theme is the power of love and the need for it to exist between people for its own sake and not be transformed into a commodity, an item to be exchanged for money, influence or selfish gratification" (*Sign* 70). Angellica cannot be anything but a commodity, because her portrait signals to the world that she is available for purchase. Further, Angellica's portrait is the original sign that the male admirers use to imagine what she is like; she is, in other words, nothing but a warm body that exists to fulfill male desire. As such, she cannot have access to love, no matter how deeply she desires it or how much she sacrifices to facilitate a companionate relationship. Angellica's fate plays out this theme by highlighting the precarious position of women not protected within patriarchal power structures. Her punishment reveals the hypocrisy latent to late-seventeenth-century social structures: there is no place for a reformed woman in a society that adores the reformed rake. In her negotiation with Willmore, Angellica attempts to barter love as a currency equal to her monetary fee: "The pay, I mean, is but thy love for mine. / — Can you give that?" (2.2.121-2). A woman without protection, she has no access to the marriage market and no power to ensure Willmore's constancy. As a woman operating in a patriarchal system, Angellica does not stand a chance. She is subject to the whims of powerful men—men who conflate the woman and her portrait, failing to make a distinction between the original and the imitation. The effect is that the portrait, an inherently mimetic art object, dehumanizes and commodifies Angellica.

The scene is important as a link between *The Forc'd Marriage* and *Oroonoko*, because Behn makes clear how *mimesis* functions in relation to female characters. The relationship between Angellica and her portrait makes the constructed nature of women clear. The male admirers imagine who and what they want Angellica to be; her interactions with Willmore show that she becomes exactly that—pliable, available, and, most importantly, without any power in a patriarchal system. Her distinct lack of power is clear in Angellica's final appearance on stage; she threatens Willmore with a gun, becoming a pantomime of the hysterical woman. She is quickly chased off the stage by Antonio, who threatens her with his sword. Willmore is united with Hellena, thus retaining his position as the ideal cavalier. At Angellica's expense, Willmore's actions are condoned. A man without a home, money, or country is able to deprive Antonio of his desire for Angellica and thwart Don Pedro's plan to send Hellena to a nunnery.

Behn's sacrifice of Angellica in the name of retaining Willmore's social status is one of the clearest examples of the seemingly contradictory themes in Behn's *oeuvre*: balancing the dual roles of royalist apologist and proto-feminist. Angellica, a female character without protection or wealth, is humiliated in order for Willmore to succeed. It is the woman as art object that serves as an empty vessel male characters can manipulate to define and characterize themselves. The mimetic representation of a female character is the object that defines the male characters and facilitates the drama's plot. Both *The Forc'd Marriage* and *The Rover* form direct connections between mimetic representations and women as idealized objects used to reflect male desire.

“The Beautiful and the Constant Imoinda”: *Ekphrasis* and Patriarchal Order in *Oroonoko*

When Behn published *Oroonoko* in 1688, it marked her introduction to the British reading public as a writer of short prose fiction. Although new to such writing, her experience as a dramatist had already established her as an inventive storyteller.

Numerous critics, including Janet Todd, Paula Backscheider, and Anne F. Widmayer, note the interconnectedness between Behn’s dramatic and prose writing. In *Oroonoko*, Behn writes characters, scenes, and settings that are vivid enough to seem real, or to create *enargeia*. The combination of her involvement with the stage and her personal experience working with the monarchy³¹ influences the details; close reading of the imagery reveals how much Behn relied on empirical evidence to vividly render characters and the consequences of tyrannical behavior. Her prose is pointedly anti-mimetic; Behn does not simply produce imitations of what her audiences have seen or read before. Instead, by employing ekphrastic descriptions, Behn repositions critiques of patriarchal power structures through a female perspective: as with *The Forc’d Marriage* and *The Rover*, female characters are at the heart of the story’s plot. But *Oroonoko* is different because it does not rely on mimetic imitations—there are no portraits or mirrors to amplify descriptions of characters, scenes, or actions. Behn provides her audience with

³¹ I concur with Janet Todd’s seminal biography of Behn, which argues that Behn worked as a spy for the monarchy. Citing textual evidence from *Oroonoko* and other works by Behn, Todd concludes: “What she wrote may of course have taken details directly from Warren or from the Deputy Governor of Surinam, William Byam, whose observations were circulating in London in the 1660s. But why should she bother? When she set a story in Spain, she made little effort to provide local colour beyond reference to Spanish honour and the Prado; when she put it in the South of France the characters might as well be picnicking in Tunbridge Wells” (*Secret Life* 38). Todd concludes that “it seems most plausible, then, that Aphra Behn went to Surinam as she would go to Antwerp and had probably been to Ghent, as a spy or agent” (*Secret Life* 41). Behn’s prior espionage activity arguably provided her with the skills to successfully observe everyday life in Surinam.

novel ideas, reconstituting the creation of persuasive descriptions in ekphrastic terms. In the texts, Behn critiques a form of masculinity that endangers the lives of female characters. Behn develops ekphrastic images of a female character in order to confront patriarchal systems of authority, questioning the absolute power of a monarch.

In *Oroonoko*, the king's tyranny is more explicitly described than in *The Forc'd Marriage*; the outcome is that, by breaking the social contract with his grandson and his subjects, the King of Coramantien is left without a successor. Descriptions of Imoinda's body precipitate moments that expose tyrannical or aberrant behavior in the king, undermining the sovereignty of patriarchal systems by occurring just prior to major plot shifts. Although the plots focus on male characters, these characters are described in relationship to Imoinda: without Imoinda as the sign that creates meaning, the most vivid scenes within *Oroonoko* would lose their dramatic impact. By reading the responses and reactions of male characters in relationship to vivid descriptions of Imoinda, it becomes clear that, for Behn, disenfranchising or ignoring the impact of androcentrism on Imoinda imperils patriarchal systems in toto.

From the first pages of the paratext, Behn begins training her reader to recognize the precarious position into which society places marginalized characters, male or female. Conforming to contemporary practices, Behn includes a dedication to *Oroonoko*. As often happens with skilled seventeenth- and eighteenth-century authors, Behn's dedication is more than a simple begging of support. Recognizing the androcentric nature of British society, Behn asks for the protection of her male titular character, rather than for the text or for herself. It seems that Oroonoko is more important than *Oroonoko*. Yet, without the author, there is no text. Nor is there the protagonist in need of protection.

Behn cleverly subsumes her own identity into that of the work and of Oroonoko, allowing herself to seem secondary (or tertiary) to the character and the fiction. By removing herself from explicit recognition, Behn affords herself a certain freedom from critique: the dedication frames *Oroonoko* as separate from Behn as an author, revealing the space between authorial autonomy and Behn's astute manipulation of consumer culture.

To teach her readers the gravity with which they should treat her protagonist, Behn engages aesthetic theories of art by addressing the dedication to a patron known for his power and for his work as a painter. By emphasizing that her audience "will needs be judging the book by the wit of the patron," she chooses Lord Maitland, "a picture drawer," as the dedicatee in order to parallel painting and writing, stating: "A poet is a painter in his way; he draws to the life, but in another kind; we draw the nobler part, the soul and mind; the pictures of the pen shall outlast those of the pencil, and even worlds themselves" (3). According to Behn, both painting and writing aim to imbue a work with life. But painters draw "to the life," producing an imitation of what they see. What Behn seeks to write in *Oroonoko* is not simply what the eye can see; instead, she intends to draw out "the soul and mind" of her protagonist, a feat requiring more sophisticated tools. There is a sense of life, of imagined realness, to Behn's character Oroonoko, and that sense of embodiment is what makes her writing more noble, and ultimately more lasting, than Maitland's paintings. Behn critiques painting as a medium able to mimic what already exists but unable to create the unseen. In his *Essay of Dramatick Poesy*, Dryden's character Neander critiques French poesy in the same manner that Behn critiques painting:

For the lively imitation of Nature being in the definition of a Play, those which best fulfil that law ought to be esteem'd superior to the others. 'Tis true, those beauties of the French-poesie are such as will raise perfection higher where it is, but are not sufficient to give it where it is not. (37)

In rhetorical terms, painters and French poesy have mastered *mimesis*. But Behn and Dryden recognize that perfect imitations are not sufficient: they are neither sophisticated nor new.

In *Oroonoko*, Behn develops descriptions that can “raise perfection” without relying on images that can be assumed universal to her audience. Imoinda is first introduced as the female aesthetic equivalent to Oroonoko. Both are “beyond all report,” or, sights that must be seen to be fully comprehended (11). When Imoinda appears in the text, readers learn that she is “a beauty that, to describe her truly, one need say only, she was female to the noble male; the beautiful black Venus, to our young Mars; as charming in her person as he, and of delicate virtues” (12). Readers need only turn to the previous page to acquaint themselves with Imoinda’s appearance; there, Oroonoko is described feature-by-feature, following the method taught in Classical *Progymnasmata*.³² The narrator describes Oroonoko as follows:

He was pretty tall, but of a shape the most exact that can be fancied; the most famous statuary could not form the figure of a man more admirably turned from head to foot. His face was not of that brown, rusty black

³² According to Webb, students were taught how to organize ekphrastic descriptions within persuasive arguments: “In terms of organization, the authors recommend starting from first things and working through to the last, so that in the case of a figure one should move methodically from head to toe” (56). Webb cites the following sources: Aphthonios, *Progymnasmata*, p. 37; cf. Nikolaos, *Progymnasmata*, p.69, II. 12-17 (on figures in art) (56fn).

which most of their nation are, but a perfect ebony, or polished jet. His eyes were the most awful that could be seen, and very piercing; the white of them being like snow, as were his teeth. His nose was rising and Roman, instead of African and flat. His mouth, the finest shaped that could be seen; far from those great turned lips, which are so natural to the rest of the Negroes. (11-12)

Though the description virtually white-washes Oroonoko into a man who appears European in every aspect “bating his colour,” the description is nonetheless fully ekphrastic in its construction (12). It begins by providing the general shape of his body, then moves to detailing the features of his face. Behn’s lengthy description creates an ekphrastic moment, as she gives her reader the details to picture his appearance. From this description, readers can also picture Imoinda’s shape, her features, and her carriage. It seems that the two are reflections of one another.

Before the protagonists appear in the story, Behn describes them in such detail that readers await their introduction. The ekphrastic description provides *phantasia* that readers anticipate being made into something real. The creation of anticipation is something Dryden acknowledges is “almost as a Rule” in fictional work: “when he has any Character or humour wherein he would show a *Coup de Maistre*, or his highest skill; he recommends it to your observation by a pleasant description of it before the person first appears” (54). The purpose in doing so, according to Dryden, is “so that before they come upon the Stage you have a longing expectation of them, which prepares you to receive them favourably; and when they are there, even from their first appearance you are so far acquainted with them, that nothing of their humour is lost to you” (54-5). That

is, when authors employ actors or narrators to introduce a character not yet present in the story's action, they do so in order to create expectation; readers await the character's appearance with bated breath, ready to accept and admire the character once he or she appears in the story. The created anticipation implicitly relies upon *phantasia*—readers desire to engage with characters they already picture in their minds.

Oroonoko and Imoinda serve as models of what ideal actors in a patriarchal society could be, not recapitulations of what already is. The king of Coramantien, Oroonoko's grandfather, acts as a foil against the two protagonists. He is what readers can be expected to know—an intractable monarch who treats his desires as more important than the contract between monarch and subject, patriarch and kin. Although he breaks multiple facets of these contracts, the most explicit transgression occurs when the king gives the royal veil to Imoinda, Oroonoko's betrothed. By Coramantien law, when the king gives the veil to a woman, "she is covered and secured for the king's use; and 'tis death to disobey" (15). Despite Imoinda's pleas that she is to wed Oroonoko, the king ignores the contract between Imoinda and Oroonoko for his personal gain. Lest readers overlook the action as simply part-and-parcel of a different culture, the narrator provides the king's internal debate: "This gave the old king some affliction, but he salved it with this, that the obedience the people pay their king, was not at all inferior to what they paid their gods" (15). By placing himself on the same level as a god, the king explicitly refers to patrilineal patriarchy and the idea of divine right: as the head of the bloodline, he is Oroonoko's patriarch; as the monarch, he can order Imoinda to do whatever he wants because he is ordained by the gods themselves.

The interactions Oroonoko and the king have with Imoinda highlight different forms of patriarchy, with Oroonoko representing fraternal patriarchy, and the king embodying patrilineal patriarchy. The characters act as vanguards of the new and the old. The difference between the new model and the old becomes clear in *Oroonoko*'s first ekphrastic scene, when the women dance at the otan. There, Oroonoko finds that "the whole company was taken up in beholding the dancing and antic postures the women royal made" (22). To set up the internal differences between Oroonoko and his grandfather, Behn writes a scene that resembles a play's set description. Readers first learn that "the king, laid on a carpet, with a great deal of pleasure, was beholding [the dancers], especially Imoinda" (23). The next sentence positions Oroonoko in contrast to the king: "The prince was laid on another carpet, at the other end of the room, with his eyes fixed on the object of his soul" (23). Let us take a moment to picture the postures of the characters: readers know that, if on stage, the two men would appear on opposite sides, likely both just inside the curtains. When describing the dance scene, Widmayer notes: "Behn's description of this scene, in which the king and Oroonoko lie at opposite ends of the room where Imoinda dances, echoes Restoration dramatists' tendency to place enemies upon opposite sides of the forestage" (*The Theater and the Novel* 34). The scene facilitates the novel's ekphrastic nature by setting up the characters (at this point Oroonoko as the protagonist and the king as the antagonist) as a playwright would with a stage direction. Their positions are clearly detailed, allowing readers to imagine the tableau. What is important to note is that their positions are dependent upon Imoinda's place in the dance. Behn plays with verticality by contrasting the prone men against the upright dancers.

Ekphrasis and *phantasia*, when successful, develop *enargeia*, and within the dance scene, *enargeia* is created. The focal point for both Oroonoko and his grandfather is Imoinda; both men position their bodies so that she is the sole focus of their attention. When detailing the scene, Behn confines the reader's attention to just two characters. Readers can imagine Oroonoko and Imoinda only, as if the characters exist within a vacuum, devoid of any external players. We learn that "as she [Imoinda] turned, or moved, so did they [Oroonoko's eyes]; and she alone gave his eyes and soul their motions" (24). Imoinda concentrates on Oroonoko in much the same way a ballerina uses a spot to keep her focus while pirouetting. Just as Imoinda looks only at Oroonoko, the readers imagine only the two characters and their eyes meeting as she dances. Tension builds as the text becomes increasingly narrowed, culminating in a near disaster for the two characters: "But while she was more regarding him than the steps she took, she chanced to fall, and so near him as that leaping with extreme force from the carpet, he caught her in his arms as she fell" (24). Yet, before she collapses—a fall that would take mere seconds—Oroonoko moves so quickly that he goes from prostrate on the floor to catching her mid-fall. The language is vivid in a way that captures the "extreme force" of his leap. Behn shapes the action much as a playwright might move actors on a stage. *Enargeia* occurs when audiences can picture the alacrity of Oroonoko's leap, relieved when Imoinda is caught in his arms. Most importantly, the dance scene prepares readers for later ekphrastic descriptions. By teaching her readers to imagine the scenes before them, Behn can fully capitalize on the *bathos* she later appeals to after Imoinda dies.

Immediately following the dance scene, the plot shifts dramatically and geographically. In his anger, the king sells Imoinda into slavery. Without her, Oroonoko

falls into a crippling depression, is deceived by a man who kidnaps him, and is ultimately sold to the same plantation in the West Indies where Imoinda is enslaved. The two reunite and Imoinda becomes pregnant. Realizing that remaining means the perpetuation of a dehumanizing cycle, Oroonoko persuades Imoinda into a murder/suicide pact. But Imoinda's death has such a profound impact on Oroonoko that he cannot follow through with the plan—he is too distraught to kill himself. The narrator's pivotal description of Oroonoko after Imoinda's death is a formulaic iteration of *ekphrasis*. The passage is organized in a linear manner, meaning that audiences should be able to follow the description from a distinct beginning to end point, clearly imagining its wholeness by the description's conclusion. In perhaps the most by-the-book example of *ekphrasis* studied thus far, the narrator describes Oroonoko's physical condition post-uxoricide:

He remained in this deploring condition for two days, and never rose from the ground where he had made his sacrifice...But, offering to rise, he found his strength so decayed that he reeled to and fro like boughs assailed by contrary winds, so that he was forced to lie down again, and try to summon all his courage to his aid. He found his brains turn round and his eyes were dizzy, and objects appeared not the same to him they were wont to do; his breath was short, and all his limbs surprised with a faintness he had never felt before. (69)

The description is ekphrastic in both content and organization because readers know the timeframe and that Oroonoko has not moved in those two days. Readers see his first movement, his “offering to rise”—but the gesture is nothing more than an attempt. Too weak to stand upright, he instead “reel[s] to and fro like boughs assailed by contrary

winds.” Temporally, he makes moves to stand, cannot, and sways until he “lies down again.” Audiences observe the action from beginning to end. The next line begins a description of his body that moves from top to bottom: beginning at the “brain,” it is understood that his mind is disordered; shifting slightly down, readers also see that his “eyes were dizzy”; moving from his mouth and chest, readers hear that “his breath was short,” and finally, with the inclusion of “all his limbs,” the remainder of his body comes into view. Throughout, audiences are reminded of the powerful odor of decay arising from both his body and Imoinda’s. Invoking several senses at once, the scene is not only ekphrastic but synesthetic as well.

Imoinda’s death causes Oroonoko’s despondency, manifested in his inability to move his body. The aftereffects of his understanding can be understood by readers because the passage is vividly written: readers know Oroonoko lay next to Imoinda’s dead body for two days and can easily surmise that he feels dizzy and disoriented upon rising, that his limbs are numb, tingling with the sensation of fresh blood moving through his veins and exhausted from his mental and emotional turmoil. At the center of Oroonoko’s grief is Imoinda; although dead, her body is present. Looking at her decaying body is what creates the feelings of immobility, of grief and despair, in Oroonoko. Even in death, Imoinda remains his only reason to live. He measures the worth of his own life against his mental and emotional ties to Imoinda. It is, therefore, the image of Imoinda’s body that remains the sign giving meaning to Oroonoko’s life.

In these two critical scenes, one at the beginning and the other at the end of their romantic plot, Behn’s writing follows a pattern similar to that in *The Forc’d Marriage*, *The Winter’s Tale*, and *Epicoene*: ekphrasis immediately precedes denouement. What is

different with *Oroonoko* is that *ekphrasis* is not used in tandem with *mimesis*. Behn writes a world so foreign that exact, thorough descriptions are required to fully translate her story to the reader. On a didactic level, the text criticizes male characters who embody tyranny. The king refuses to honor Oroonoko and Imoinda's betrothal, and in doing so, he violates the contract between sovereign and subject. The king's act of giving Imoinda the ceremonial marriage veil vacates the pledge made between the two protagonists. The implication is that, if a sovereign can impede contracts made by his subjects, contracts do not have value. In Surinam, neither Oroonoko nor Imoinda are deemed human; they have no recourse to contracts or traditional power structures. They are sold, quite literally, into a society that deprives them of any legal power. It seems, then, that although Behn critiques tyrannical abuses of power, she does not suggest a society without any form of solidified power as the answer.

The character most harmed by the voided contract is Imoinda: she is banished from her home, abused by the impotent king, and, when the king pretends she violated his contract with her, sold her into slavery.^{33,34} Imoinda becomes the embodiment of the

³³ For important discussions concerning the role of slavery in *Oroonoko*, see Catherine Gallagher's chapter "Oroonoko's Blackness" in *Aphra Behn Studies*, pp. 235-58. Catherine Ingrassia's article "Aphra Behn, Captivity, and *Emperor of the Moon*" is a recent analysis of slavery in Behn's fiction, including its place in *Oroonoko*.

³⁴ My method can also be applied to different iterations of the Other in early modern literature, specifically in regard to black bodies and England's colonial impulse. For example, the passage detailing Belinda's cosmetics and accessories in *The Rape of the Lock* depends upon foreign goods. Oroonoko and Imoinda are described in explicit detail, and although the description is of something new, Behn still relies on imitations of whiteness to make their blackness apparent. Novels like Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719) include descriptions of black bodies, such as the description of Friday, that are so vivid that readers remember his character—who is only introduced near the novel's end—as though he exists throughout the entire text. *Ekphrasis* is also evident in narratives written by former slaves, such as *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano; or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (1789). Therefore, the idea of cumulative *ekphrasis* as a descriptive technique that can elicit emotions from readers and teach them how to interrogate their own emotions to develop their understanding of human nature is a manner of explication that can be applied not to simply male or female characters, but to complicated issues of race and class as well.

dangers women face when they are perceived as subordinate subjects. She cannot challenge being sold into slavery; her legal position within Coramantien is as one of the king's wives, and in that position, she has no legal recourse against the king's demands. In situations involving Imoinda in which the king is autocratic and unrelenting, Oroonoko presents a different form of masculinity. The protagonists meet as equals, both in the narrator's descriptions of them and within their personal relationship. Using Imoinda as a constant against which to measure masculine behavior, the king is tyrannical, while Oroonoko is caring. The two relationships teach readers how to behave in a more egalitarian manner toward women, with Oroonoko modelling ideal masculine behavior. But ideal behavior cannot be understood or described without ekphrastic descriptions of Imoinda that shape the story's plot and action.

Conclusion

The three works examined in this chapter show the development of *ekphrasis* as a descriptive technique that is most effective when the author wants to depict an image, object, or character that she cannot assume her audience has first-hand knowledge of. Understanding Behn's attitude toward the relationship between *mimesis* and *ekphrasis* reveals that, for her, *mimesis* remains a useful rhetorical tool in regard to description but does not have a persuasive effect. Unlike Jonson and Shakespeare, she concludes with a radical exclusion of female instrumentality. In *Epicoene* and *The Winter's Tale*, a facsimile of the female body is central to plot development and how patriarchs are perceived in both dramas. But in both dramas, how female characters are impacted by the patriarchal impositions placed on them is secondary to how male characters are affected.

Behn's works, on the other hand, rely on female characters as more than repositories for male desire. In *The Forc'd Marriage*, *The Rover*, and *Oroonoko*, male patriarchs may be at the center of the works, but how tyrannical behavior directly impacts female characters is as significant and rarely as ameliorating.

Female characters are still described in mimetic terms, as imitations of what Behn's readers could be expected to know. Yet they are continuously proven to have more depth, intellectually and emotionally, than the female characters in Jonson's and Shakespeare's dramas. The political climate had changed considerably since the time of Jonson and Shakespeare. With the regicide of Charles I and the Restoration of Charles II, those in power had to redefine traditional social structures in order to account for the failure of the Stuart monarchy to maintain absolute power. This meant securing masculinity as the signifier of power and stability, routinely by subjugating female characters in ways that highlight a privileged male identity. This is nowhere more evident than in *The Rover*—Willmore and his companions are carefully juxtaposed with female characters like Angellica. It is their manipulation of female characters that defines the male characters. Angellica is no more real than her portrait; what comes to signify the real is Willmore and his ability to assert his dominance over wealthier and more advantaged men. In these instances, the use of *ekphrasis* to describe both male and female characters—as well as their behavior—creates increasingly vivid scenes that convey new ideas about the nature of perception, gender, and representation.

Chapter 3

A Mirror for Patriarchs: *Ekphrasis* and the Development of Self in William Congreve's *Incognita*, *The Mourning Bride*, and *The Way of the World*

The publication of John Locke's *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1689) had a profound impact on British culture. Many facets of life, including legal codes, definitions of personhood, knowledge attainment, perception, art, and the imagination, were affected. By 1712, just twenty-three years after its publication, in Issue 412 of *The Spectator*, Joseph Addison could point to Locke's treatise almost in passing, suggesting that he could assume his readers were either familiar with the work or had easy access to the publication:

I have here supposed that my Reader is acquainted with that great Modern Discovery, which is at present universally acknowledged by all the Enquirers into Natural Philosophy: Namely, that Light and Colours, as apprehended by the Imagination, are only Ideas in the mind, and not Qualities that have any Existence in Matter...if the *English* Reader would see the Notion explained at large, he may find it in the Eight Chapter of the second Book of Mr. *Locke's* Essay on Human Understanding. (284)

The reference to Locke—and the assumed widespread knowledge of his argument—makes the treatise’s contemporary influence clear. Referring specifically to Locke’s claims, Addison observes that “Whatsoever the Mind perceives in it self, or is the immediate object of Perception, Thought, or Understanding, that I call *Idea*; and the power to produce any *Idea* in our mind, I call *Quality* of the Subject wherein that power is” (2.8.55). In perhaps his most famous statement, Locke asserts that the mind is “white Paper, void of all Characters, without any *Ideas*” and it is only “from *Experience*” that “all our Knowledge is founded” (2.1.2). In other words, all ideas spring from experience, which shapes how people perceive and understand the world around them.

Locke’s treatise influenced ideas of personhood and how people relate to one another. While Locke’s impact was not solidified until the end of the eighteenth century, many critics recognize that significant circulation of his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* occurred throughout the first half of the century.³⁵ The treatise also precipitated a renegotiation of selfhood, according to the contractual theories of Locke. On an basic level, contracts serve to produce a dispassionate agreement between two or more parties; a predetermined value is assigned to what is exchanged, be it goods, currency, or services. Both parties, ostensibly, agree to the contract because both believe that what is gained outweighs what is given. Locke’s *Two Treatises on Government* (1689) challenges Filmer’s *Patriarcha*, arguing that what Filmer asserts—namely that “all Government is absolute Monarchy, and the ground he builds on this is, That no Man is born free” (3)—is a fallacy. *Patriarcha* is dependent upon the assumption that by being

³⁵ See, for example, Paula Backscheider’s “The Verse Essay, Locke, and Defoe’s *Jure Divino*”; Gordon Schochet, “Models of Politics and the Place of Women in Locke’s Political Thought”; and Mark Blackwell’s “The People Things Make: Locke’s *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and the Properties of the Self.”

born into an established system of rule, people consent to be governed by the existing power. For Locke, this is problematic:

But we cannot say, that it is the common consent of Mankind; for that hath never been asked, nor Actually given, and if common tacit Consent had Establish'd it, it would make but a positive and not natural Right of Children, to Inherit the Goods of their Parents. (1.88.114)

In his *Two Treatises*, Locke asserts that Filmer's version of divine right is based on a fiction that English people consented to an elusive original moment of contract, and he rejects the argument that tradition is enough to bind England's citizens without any evidence of the contract being entered into willingly. To carry Filmer's version of patriarchy to its logical conclusion means that "no man is born free," because Filmer's patriarchy does not ask for, but instead assumes, consent.

This notion of the basic social contract between monarch and people in regard to patriarchal systems also impacts how citizens themselves operate in terms of power relationships. Filmer's *Patriarcha* defined not only the relationship between monarch and citizen, but it also conscripted women into subjugated positions deemed "natural" because the husband is the sovereign of the home. The imbalance of power is perhaps nowhere more evident than in the marriage contract, an agreement entered into by two ostensibly equal parties. England's particular brand of patriarchy at the time meant that men and women could not enter into marriage as equal parties under the law, a topic I will examine in detail in the next chapter. Suffice it to say, late seventeenth-century patriarchy did not consider women part of the social contract.

The renegotiation of personhood and power structures that Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and his *Two Treatises* prompted is apparent in the works of Congreve, an author popular both on stage and in fictional prose. Examining Locke's influence on Congreve shows how, along with realigning ways in which people understood one another socially, economically, and relationally, Congreve sought to develop descriptive language that was not predicated on universal understanding. Central to Congreve's descriptions is *ekphrasis*; as discussed in the previous chapter, *ekphrasis* is particularly useful when authors want to describe objects or people that readers cannot be expected to know. In passages that question the efficacy of *mimesis*, across genres, Congreve employs *ekphrasis* to make the writing vivid for his audience. This occurs in his prose fiction, tragic drama, and comedic drama. Congreve uses description for ekphrastic moments, creating images vivid enough for readers and audiences to imagine new forms of self-understanding and how individuals can imagine the persona they wish to present to the world. In *Incognita* (1692), *The Mourning Bride* (1697), and *The Way of the World* (1700), the female characters become increasingly nuanced, exhibiting the evolution of notions of personhood developed in previous centuries. The relationship between personhood and Lockean contractual systems, arguably, plays a role in this development.

Because *ekphrasis* is not predicated on previous knowledge, it develops descriptions that do not require a model in nature from which to draw inspiration. *Ekphrasis*, unlike *mimesis*, does not assume that there is universal knowledge or understanding. Like Locke's philosophy of knowledge, it problematizes traditional modes of meaning making, and this complication of knowledge can be traced in

particularly significant ways through descriptions of female characters. What may be surprising is the relationship between descriptions of female characters, contracts, and mirrors that is discussed in this chapter. As I will argue, Congreve exploited the odd association between contracts and mirrors to create ekphrastic moments in which universals and notions of personhood collapse.

The correlation between contracts and mirrors made here is supported by Locke's theories of contractualism and knowledge, along with the historical influence of Boccaccio's *De casibus viororum illustrium* (ca. 1358).³⁶ Taking a transhistorical perspective, the relationship between contracts, mirrors, and notions of selfhood dates back to the fourteenth century; the tradition continued in the sixteenth century, when the publisher John Wyland sought to put forward a text emulating Boccaccio's *De casibus*, and *A Mirror for Magistrates* appeared in 1559 as a compilation of anonymous texts edited by William Baldwin.

In the dedicatory epistle, Baldwin makes the collection's didactic purpose clear: "For here as in a loking glas, you shall see (if vice be in you) how the like hath bene punished in other heretofore, whereby admonished, I trust will be a good occasion to move you to the soner amendement. This is the cheifest ende, whye it is set furth, which God graunt it may attayne" (C:iii-iv). Although the purpose of *A Mirror for Magistrates* is widely contested, the careful study done by Scott Lucas suggests a didactic purpose, with the poems serving as models for readers to emulate. The didactic purpose is not

³⁶ Boccaccio's text was translated into French by Laurent de Premierfait, called *Des cas des nobles hommes et femmes* (ca. 1409), which became the basis of John Lydgate's *Fall of Princes* (ca. 1431-39) (Winston 382). In the sixteenth century, publisher John Wayland sought to reprint Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*, but the book was "hyndred by the Lorde Chauncellour that then was" (Baldwin C:iii).

unlike Hamlet's account of the purpose of playing, which describes a model of mirroring that is often associated with *mimesis*:

...for any thing so overdone is
 From the purpose of playing, whose end, both at the
 First and now, was and is, to hold, as 'twere, the
 Mirror up to nature; to show virtue her own feature,
 Scorn her own image, and the very age and body of
 The time his form and pressure. (3.2.20-26)

The players are told to perform in the most natural way possible, imitating how a person would speak, move, or emote. Hamlet wants the play to provide verisimilitude, recalling forgotten memories in audience members. *A Mirror for Magistrates* aims at a similar purpose, employing the poems as reflections of the subjects' natural behavior in order to teach readers ideal behavior. Both sources rely upon the inherently mimetic nature of mirrors and the stage to make their points. *Mimesis*, then, can operate as a technique meant to develop a mental image that can be formulated from known objects or places.

Pointing to his close reading of the poem "The Tragedie of Edmund Duke of Somerset," one of the poems in *The Mirror for Magistrates*, Lucas observes:

Through their moralization of those narrated events (that is, in their causal and moral explanations of how and why those tragic events occurred), they provide models for interpreting the tragedies of Seymour's last years in ways that could free the late protector from the widespread charges of sinfulness and divine disfavor that so pained his partisans. (48)

For Lucas, poesy had the express purpose of teaching readers by interpreting historical events through a moral lens; he notes that the poem works to defend Seymour against his detractors and how it presents a particular version of his life narrative to further particular ideological ends. Indeed, as Paul Budra observes, “For the early *Mirror* contributors, then, the past should not, perhaps could not, be separated from the practical and political concerns of the present” (4). It is this correlation between past and present, poesy and didacticism, mirrors and personhood, that makes *A Mirror for Magistrates* particularly pertinent to this study.

Authors like Congreve sought to teach their readers by creating vivid characters within texts. *A Mirror for Magistrates* serves as an appropriate guide for this type of writing, both for its popularity³⁷ and for its transformation of the *de casibus* tradition, because its contributors “turned a kind of writing designed to speak *to* power into one that depicted and fostered a conversation *about* power” (Winston 382). Mirrors, in the *de casibus* tradition, were intended to hold up images of persons in power, reflecting both the good and the bad (although, in *A Mirror for Magistrates*, the mirrors only seem to see the bad) in order to teach those with power how to avoid tyrannical behavior. Mirrors serve a similar purpose in Congreve’s texts, operating as reflectors of autocratic behavior and loci for meaning making in regard to understanding the attainment of knowledge. The connection between the *de casibus* tradition, Locke, and Congreve is, indeed, a complex one. From the *de casibus* tradition, mirrors operate as a poetic device that signals the reflection of a character’s nature. Traditionally, reflections in a mirror (real or

³⁷ For a discussion of the rise and fall of *A Mirror for Magistrates*, see Paul Budra, “The Mirror for Magistrates and the Politics of Readership.” See also Louis B. Wright’s *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England* for circulation numbers (pp.297-298).

metaphorical) were assumed to provide a true imitation of the subject before them. In Locke's philosophy of knowledge, all meaning comes from external sources—the mind is born a blank slate. Allowing mirrors to operate as an external source of meaning making means that characters who look in mirrors can have new access to their own interiority. They can reframe how they perceive themselves, because the new source of information comes from an external source, not from their own internal assumptions.

Rather than characters believing whatever their thoughts immediately perceive as true or real, in Congreve's works, characters can interrogate their perceptions by examining how they see themselves in the world. Examining the relationship between female characters, contract negotiations, and mirrors in the three texts shows that although contracts and mirrors are assumed to exactly reflect their subjects (albeit in very different ways—contracts reflect a transaction or agreement between parties; mirrors provide an image of whatever is before them), ekphrastic descriptions affirm authorial skepticism concerning the impartiality of either. *Ekphrasis* becomes a tool for complicating methods of both creating and destabilizing knowledge.

Ekphrasis serves a particularly effective means of substantiating how authors questioned the emotional detachment assumed inherent in contractual language. In Congreve's works, ekphrastic descriptions introduce models of behavior that highlight how *pathos* is manipulated by characters with nefarious intentions. Further, contract negotiations and mirrors impact female characters differently than they did in the previous works examined. Rather than *ekphrasis* operating as a rhetorical device that uncovers and corrects aberrant masculine behavior, it becomes a tool capable of revealing how emotional manipulations can occur under the guise of altruism. In this chapter, I

examine how Congreve's fictional prose³⁸ and drama published between 1692 and 1700 adopted and transformed dramatic techniques in order to articulate the shifting nature of representing female characters. I begin with William Congreve's short prose fiction *Incognita* (1692). Comparing the preface and the main text of *Incognita* emphasizes Congreve's intention to write fictional prose that reads like drama, and he does this through ekphrastic descriptions of characters and settings; Congreve appeals to the cognitive process of developing *phantasia* through narrational explications of the gap between experience and description. Congreve's *The Mourning Bride* (1697) highlights the development of his theories of knowledge attainment, with mirrors as a central tenant in developing understanding. The chapter closes with *The Way of the World* (1700). In the drama, mirrors operate as dramatic devices, prompting ekphrastic descriptions of female characters engaged in marriage contract negotiations. *Ekphrasis* becomes a tool manipulated by bad actors, employed in tandem with threats to divulge secret affairs. These texts suggest that, in the late seventeenth century, *ekphrasis* became a means for producing characters capable of reimagining the world around them, providing models for their readers to emulate.

Ekphrasis and Hidden Identities in Incognita

William Congreve's *Incognita* (1692) is a short prose piece that blends fraternal and patrilineal patriarchy to achieve a comedic ending. The etymology of *incognita* serves as an interesting starting point for the discussion of Congreve's work and the *mise*

³⁸ Within this chapter, the phrase "fictional prose" is used to designate texts that are longer than a short story but shorter than a novel. Although the texts align with what is now commonly referred to as a novella, that term was not applied to these texts contemporarily.

en abyme its descriptions create. Incognito (the masculine form of incognita) derives from the Latin prefix *in-* and *cognitus*, the past participle of *cognōscere* (to get to know), to mean one whose identity is concealed under a disguised or assumed character. In 1671, John Dryden coined the term *incognita*, meaning a woman whose identity is disguised.³⁹ What is interesting about Congreve's story is that although much of it centers on the male protagonist Aurelian (for whom incognito certainly applies, because he spends most of the text in disguise), Congreve chose to title the story *Incognita*, focusing instead on Aurelian's female counterpart, Juliana. The effect is that although readers spend most of their time with the male protagonist, the title makes *Incognita* central to the plot.

In the story, Aurelian is the son of Don Fabio, a "Principal Gentleman of Florence" (3). Don Fabio tells Aurelian that he must marry a woman named Juliana; in an act of rebellion, Aurelian and his companion Hippolito, currently residing in Siena, travel to Florence in disguise in order to elude Don Fabio's orders. While there, the two characters attend the wedding celebration of the Duke of Florence's kinswoman, Donna Catharina. In short, while at a masquerade ball, Aurelian falls in love with a disguised woman who calls herself Incognita—but who is actually Juliana. The plot revolves around mistaken identities and intrigues, concluding with Aurelian defying his father by stating that he will marry Incognita, not his father's chosen bride. Yet the rebellion is seemingly pointless, as the revelation scene shows that Incognita and Juliana are one and the same. Patrilineal patriarchy, represented by Don Fabio, prevails when Aurelian and

³⁹ The first recorded use of the word is in Dryden's *Evening's Love*: "Being thus incognita, I shall discover if he make Love to any of you" (3.42).

Juliana agree to marry. Fraternal patriarchy, represented by Aurelian and Hippolito, also succeeds, because Aurelian marries the woman of his choice.

What seems like a fortunate coincidence actually serves to uphold patrilineal patriarchy, with the assertion that the father knows best. Here is not the place to speculate what may have happened had Juliana and Incognita not been the same character. What deserves attention is that they *are* the same character, and more so, that they are the titular figure. Although the plot mainly focuses on Aurelian and Hippolito's adventures, the story is named after the main female character. Her disguise and her role in the story are pivotal to the story's seemingly natural conclusion that patrilineal and fraternal patriarchy are two sides of the same coin. For patrilineal patriarchy to appear to function in tandem with fraternal patriarchy, Incognita and Juliana have to be the same character, and that character must appear as the feminine ideal. She is the basis of the resolution—although masked through nearly the entire story, her identity hidden or her person disguised, the dual figure of Incognita and Juliana is necessary to the story as a mute agent of the female ideal.

The reader's only access to her is through the narrator, who playfully refuses to provide any detailed descriptions of her. The narrator claims that he cannot describe her dress in a manner that would align with objective truth, making a connection between language and materiality: "I should by right now describe her Dress, which was extremely agreeable and rich, but 'tis possible I might err in some material Pin or other, in the sticking of which may be the whole grace of the Drapery depended" (19). To "err in some material Pin or other" suggests that the words the narrator would use to describe the accoutrements cannot do justice to the image before him. The line is also humorous—

the narrator intimates that the misrepresentation of a single pin within the “extremely agreeable and rich” costume could raise a point of contention that would ruin the relationship between reader and narrator. The narrator’s reluctance to provide specific details suggests that readers must do the mental work to imagine her clothing. There is, then, an indelible link between the narratorial digressions and how Incognita/Juliana is described within the text.

Channeling Locke, Congreve offers an implicit social contract between the narrator and the reader. Because the character Incognita is left mostly open to interpretation by readers, she is, in a sense, a blank slate they fill out in their imaginations. Here, Congreve uses a technique that critics have noted in general within the period, as Catherine Gallagher observes: “Because they were conjectural, suppositional identities belonging to no one, they could be universally appropriated. A story about nobody was nobody's story and hence could be entered, occupied, identified with by anybody” (168). According to Patrick Riley, Locke’s social contract depends upon the “notion of the *willing*”—“societies all began from a voluntary union, and the mutual agreement of men freely acting in the choice of their governors” (348, 353). The reader, in other words, is the subject governed by the author; the mutual agreement is that authors will entertain their readers, and readers will thoughtfully engage with the text. The universality of characters noted by Gallagher suggests that there is an attempt, on the author’s part, to create a fictional space in which readers can enter, occupy, and identify with the characters.

Congreve's orchestration of the reader begins in the Preface and then continues in the narrative digressions that follow. In the Preface, Congreve first explains his narrative method:

If there be any thing more in particular resembling the Copy which I imitate (as the Curious Reader will soon perceive) I leave it to show itself, being very well satisfy'd how much more than for me to prepossess him with an Opinion of something extraordinary. (7)

The original that *Incognita* imitates is “*Dramatick Writing*.” Congreve intends to write the prose fiction as if it were a drama being acted out on the stage. When Congreve states that “I have not observed it before in a Novel,” the wording suggests that *Incognita* is, itself, an original. It is a new form developed from the imitation of the dramatic tradition. The narrative digressions in *Incognita* call attention to the fact that traditional modes of description—in particular, *mimesis*—depend upon readers having shared experiences. Congreve's interest in Lockean perception does sometimes lend an anti-mimetic tone to the text, but that is not to suggest that Congreve (or Locke) are wholly against *mimesis*. Instead, it seems that *mimesis* can function effectively as a descriptive mode when Congreve wants to describe a person or an object that he can expect his readers to know. The point is that *mimesis* can only get authors so far—and *Incognita* highlights the shortcomings of *mimesis* in regard to describing new or unknown objects. The relationship between the Preface and the narrative digressions, thus, opens a space for a new form of description to take hold: readers learn to question universal descriptions, as the narrator continually refuses to provide any specific details, stating that he may erroneously influence readers. The narrator removes any possibility of a fixed contract

between signs and meaning, limiting the persuasive scope of *mimesis*, as the narrator allows no common experience between himself, the reader, or the characters.

Contemporary developments in the philosophy of knowledge concur with Congreve's claim that something new is happening with *Incognita* in terms of how people are convinced of an idea's veracity. For Congreve, new truths come about when dramatic writing techniques are incorporated into prose fiction. Kristiaan P. Aercke notes that while Congreve was not the first to transfer dramatic techniques into prose writing, he "was the first to state openly in a preface that it is the natural way for all traditions (in casu, history and fictional narrative) to give way to drama, because a presentation *vive voce* to a reader who becomes a spectator seems more real and natural than a merely *told* account of events" ("Theatrical Background" 129). Congreve's intention to conflate dramatic and prose writing means that he intends to write a story so vivid that readers believe they are attending a play. Necessary to Congreve's goal is engaging his reader's imagination. As noted earlier, Addison references Locke when he states that all perceptions are created within the individual's imagination: how people interpret what they see is influenced by how they picture it in their mind's eye. The qualities are not innate to the object; instead, the qualities are determined by how a person interprets the sight. The conclusion is that no two people imagine objects in the same way, because no two people have identical experiences. Yet, as Locke notes, "Words, being but empty sounds, any farther than they are signs of our *Idea*'s, we cannot but assent to them, as they correspond to those *Idea*'s we have, but no farther than that" (1.2.23). That is, words have meaning because they are repeatedly attached to the same idea or object. But words themselves cannot be assumed to mean the same thing for all people. Congreve will not

simply imitate what audiences can be expected to know, because, as Locke and Addison point out, how people interpret the sight of any object depends upon their personal experiences. In order to write a story so real that audiences can imagine they are watching a play, Congreve requires a different form of descriptive writing.

There are many examples of this novel approach to description in *Incognita*, but one particularly pivotal instance occurs in the masquerade scene, the first real interaction the protagonists have in Florence. In the scene, the narrator digresses to discuss the effect of costuming on those in attendance: “however Nature had been partial in bestowing on some better Faces than others, Art was alike indulgent to all, and industriously supplied those Defects she had left, giving some Addition also to her greatest Excellencies” (14). Just as romance and the novel are pitted against one another in the Preface, Nature and Art are immediately set against one another in the text proper. Costuming has the ability to artificially improve all persons, with the effect that “Every body appear’d well shap’d as it is to be suppos’d, none who were conscious to themselves of any visible Deformity would presume to come thither. Their Apparel was equally glorious, though each differing in fancy” (14). At the masquerade, as the narrator notes, the accoutrements donned by participants shade all imperfections from the eye, the sensory function that leads directly to understanding. For Locke, sight is the center of perception:

For in bare naked *Perception*, the Mind is, for the most part, only passive; and what it perceives, it cannot avoid perceiving...But this is not, I think, usual in any of our *Ideas*, but those received by *Sight*: Because Sight, the most comprehensive of all our Senses, conveying to our Minds the far

different *Ideas* of Light and Colours, which are peculiar only to that Sense.

(2.9.1, 9)

That is, seeing an object conveys an image into the mind, which the mind can then interpret. Correlations between clothing and understanding or truth, as Terry Castle observes, have “always been a primary trope for the deceitfulness of the material world—a mutable, shimmering tissue that everywhere veils the truth from human eyes” (56). Congreve manipulates his reader’s experiences with masques: just as attendees use costume to “veil the truth” of their external appearances, the narrator veils his didacticism under the guise of a playful moment between narrator and reader. The lesson seems to be that when pertinent facts are hidden from sight, readers must pay extra attention to those characters and descriptive moments. Costumes, in other words, are a sign of deceit, of hiding information.

What is interesting about *Incognita*’s narrator is that his digressions anticipate what will shortly become a requirement by eighteenth-century readers: passages of detailed description, ekphrastic in their vividness. The sparsity of details in *Incognita* is typical of prose fiction at this time. This is because “early eighteenth-century readers were able to see—to fill out, expand on, rehydrate—the local, immediate signs of a shared culture, a shared visual landscape of meaningful, referential detail,” according to Cynthia S. Wall (9). From a historical perspective, then, it seems that the narrator’s refusals are not unique; they occur within a time period that expected readers to “fill out” missing details. But it does not seem as though Congreve’s narrator simply adheres to tradition for tradition’s sake—far too much attention is paid to the absent details. Instead, it appears that Congreve ushers in a new descriptive mode, one that does not rely on

universals to make details known to readers. Wall concludes that “the rhetoric shifts markedly: from talking about description as itself a sort of object, generally getting in the way of (or providing relief from) narrative (a sort of *res non grata*), to talking about description as achieving primacy of perception, an essential of particularity, as the culture shifts from an emphasis on the universal to a celebration of the particular” (10-11).

Incognita dwells on description as an “object,” as narrative interruption, but the narrator’s metadiscourse regarding descriptions suggests an anticipation that universal descriptions will soon not be enough to convince or even entertain readers. The external appearance of those at the masquerade influences how the narrator introduces them to the reader—paradoxically, by not describing them at all. Instead, the reader’s mind is left to fill in the details through his or her own experiences—how he or she imagines those at the masque appear.

That *Incognita/Juliana* wears a mask when she and Aurelian first meet focuses the scope of Congreve’s dramatic descriptions. Rather than thinking about every participant at the masquerade, Congreve narrows the reader’s focus to what Aurelian sees. Much like the narrowed focus between Oroonoko and Imoinda, the reader’s mental gaze is restricted to two characters in the midst of a dance. The text implies that because Aurelian cannot see *Incognita/Juliana*’s face, he cannot fully understand her. Nor can readers comprehend the pivotal role she plays within the narrative. Upon first meeting *Incognita/Juliana*, Aurelian’s internal reflections receive a typically vague interpretation from the narrator: “and for her Face, which he had not seen, he bestowed upon her the best his *Imagination could furnish* him with” (18, emphasis my own). Having not seen her face, Aurelian is forced to supply the details from his own experience. Just as readers do not have access

to Aurelian's imagination, they also are denied a detailed description of her dress, something ostensibly seen by both character and narrator. Taking Incognita/Juliana's face and her dress to be two parts of one whole, the narrator becomes not so much negligent in his description as careful to avoid an abuse of language. To refuse explicit details is to give the reader the agency to picture Incognita/Juliana in their own way, while somewhat paradoxically making readers aware that they may be picturing her incorrectly. Aurelian has a mental image of her (as, arguably, does the reader), but that image could be vastly different from what she actually looks like. As Congreve's narrator makes clear, it is not responsible to assume that everyone reading *Incognita* (or even Congreve himself) has access to the same pool of knowledge. Instead, returning to Wall, readers can "rehydrate" the text, much like Aurelian fills in the details concerning Incognita/Juliana's face. By following Aurelian's example, readers learn how to supply missing details in their own imaginations.

Confirmation that no one—not the narrator, not Aurelian as a character, not the reader—pictures the same thing in the exact same manner occurs when Aurelian finally sees Incognita/Juliana's face. Given the choice between knowing her name (a choice that would remove much of the plot's intrigue) and seeing her face, Aurelian "greedily embraced the latter" (28). The narrator steps into the scene, posing the rhetorical question: "Well, what follow'd?" (28). In a typical conversation, presenting an audience with the question "what followed" suggests that the speaker is preparing, even anticipating, the provision of a clear answer. Instead, Congreve's narrator tells readers that Incognita/Juliana removes her mask...and again tells us nothing. Rather, he asks, "But who can tell the astonishment *Aurelian* felt?" (28). The answer seems to be, simply,

no one. Certainly not the narrator, who, rather than describing her face, presents Aurelian's reaction: "He was for a time senseless; Admiration had suppress'd his Speech, and his Eyes were entangled in Light" (28). Here, the text parallels Locke's philosophy of knowledge by combining the act of sight with how images are perceived in the mind. How Aurelian perceives Incognita's/Juliana's face is a passive experience; in other words, he is not in control of how his mind interprets the sight before him. Aurelian has no speech because what he perceives has no equal in the language available to him. The light that perplexes Aurelian's eyes directly points to Locke's theories concerning light and color; readers can know that Aurelian attempts to make sense out of the image in his brain, but the narrator cannot convey the thoughts, because knowledge is not universal, it is experiential, and therefore "entangled."

As the scene continues, it becomes apparent that second-hand stories are not effective at conveying the emotional depth attendant to certain meetings between characters. By bringing the reader into a conversation (prompted by the questions posed to the reader), the narrator eliminates the possibility that the story can rely solely on mimetic imitations, because the reader is not given a model upon which to base their imagination. The basic premise of *mimesis* is that audiences are provided with words acting as signifiers, the understanding of which allows them to imagine what is being imitated. It seems that the narrator recognizes that a new mode of description is required, and by including dramatic techniques to shape the narrative's progression, the narrator makes it clear that imitations are not the most effective descriptive mode in this instance. In words that almost mirror the courtier's in *A Winter's Tale*, the narrator excuses his lack of detail by proclaiming that he is unable to accurately describe a sight not seen by the

reader: “In short, to be made sensible of his condition, we must conceive some Idea of what he beheld, which is not to be imagined till seen, nor then to be express’d” (28). That is, in order to picture—to comprehend—Aurelian’s reaction, readers must know what ideas play within his mind; yet readers cannot imagine that until they see Aurelian (an impossible demand, as Aurelian is a fictional character in a story), and even if they saw Aurelian’s reaction, it cannot be “express’d,” because expressing his thoughts requires words that describe his thoughts, and that mode of expression is not available to Aurelian, the narrator, or the reader.

Incognita differs from *A Winter’s Tale*, however, in important ways. The two most obvious differences are the author (Congreve, not Shakespeare) and form (prose, not drama). Unlike drama, fictional prose does not put actors before the audience’s eyes; there is no person on stage, pantomiming the deep impression left on him by the reunion. Instead, readers have only their imaginations to create mental pictures of the masquerade scene. The digressions, rather than encroach on the reader’s suspended disbelief, serve to pull the reader further into the story, something Aerccke observes is not possible when *mimesis* is the descriptive technique employed: “Thus, to digress is to contradict the laws of the universal and the general that mimetic systems require. Digressions also destroy the illusion of mimetic realism by pulling the narratee/spectator into the extra-diegetic frame” (“Congreve’s *Incognita*” 300). As Aerccke argues, there is limited mimetic realism in *Incognita*, because the narrator’s digressions prevent the suspension of disbelief. Indeed, as Paul Dawson observes, “It is clear that the chief criticism of digressions in the eighteenth century was that they performed a retardatory function, preventing the flow of the narrative” (157). It seems that this “retardatory function” is exactly Congreve’s

purpose—he intentionally draws the readers attention to the digressions in order to control how readers interpret the text. The digressions also remind readers that they are, in fact, reading, especially when the narrator calls upon audiences to imagine the scenes from their own perspective.⁴⁰ Constant conversation with the reader suggests that the narrator attempts to build an *ethos* of trust between himself and the reader, creating an unspoken contract between the two: the narrator will not lie about details or attempt to provide images the reader may not understand, and the reader agrees to imagine the text through his or her own experiences.

Aurelian is pleased with Incognita's face because it coincides with his mental rendering of those details, a combination Addison recognizes as necessary for the "Pleasure of the Understanding": "Here we are not only delighted with *comparing* the Representation with the Original, but are highly pleased with the Original it self" (297). Because Juliana's face is a delightful comparison with how Aurelian represents it in his mind, she is the object of his pleasure. And as the object of his pleasure, Juliana is the aesthetic embodiment of the woman Aurelian wants to marry. It just so happens—as Congreve's drama of coincidence would have audiences believe—that what the son wants is also exactly what the father wants. Don Fabio wishes for the marriage on financial terms; he wants his son married to a woman of appropriate social and economic standing. Juxtaposed with his father, Aurelian wishes for the marriage because he is attracted to Juliana and enjoys their conversations. In each case, descriptions of a

⁴⁰ Jonathan Swift's narrator in *The Tale of a Tub* (1704) creates a similar argument for narratorial digressions: "The necessity of this digression will easily excuse the length, and I have chosen for it as proper a place as I could readily find. If the judicious reader can assign a fitter, I do here empower him to remove it into any other corner he please. And so I return with great alacrity, to pursue a more important concern" (72). Both Congreve's and Swift's narrators engage with digressions in order to complicate the narrative provided in their respective main stories.

particular female body play a key role in facilitating patriarchal systems of order. Even if descriptions of Incognita/Juliana are not highly individualized, the character becomes the crux in the relationship between father and son.

As the title suggests, *Incognita* is a text centered on impersonation. Juliana embodies an alternate persona, calling herself Incognita. Aurelian wears another man's cape, dressing like Juliana's cousin. The narrator impersonates an omniscient, omnipresent being. Moving outward from the characters, Congreve's prose fiction masquerades as a drama. In short, at every level, *Incognita* is a fabrication, a lesson in reading cleverly disguised as entertaining fiction. The moment Aurelian sees Incognita's face, the fiction's didactic purpose is revealed. The narrator digresses: "Nature seem'd here to have play'd the Plagiary, and to have molded into Substance the most refined Thoughts of inspired Poets" (28). Here, the language seems to engage the rhetorical techniques *phantasia* and *enargeia* in an embodied manner: what poets *imagine* is made into the "Substance" before them, the substance being Incognita's face. Her face is not an imitation of what naturally occurs, but instead is what poets imagine to be the perfection of physical beauty. The *phantasia* of poets is brought before Aurelian's eyes. That nature seems to steal what exists in the poet's mind complicates Locke's philosophy of knowledge, because if the images created by poets can work as originals in nature, then the mind is not a pure *tabula rasa*. The narrator has already shown that it is impossible for one person's words to mirror another's and invites us to question even his reliability. The passage implies that, rather than accepting a statement's truth value simply because an author claims that the observation is natural or poetical, readers must learn to interrogate texts for meaning and truth based upon their own experiences. *Incognita*, in

other words, teaches audiences how to reconfigure their perspectives in a post-Lockean world by making it clear that readers must engage their own imagination in order to picture a scene that they cannot see firsthand. And it is through the narrator's digressions about Incognita/Juliana that this lesson is possible, as the digressions create an unspoken contract between narrator and reader. Congreve openly states his intention to create a novel written *à la manière de* drama. To write a prose piece with dramatic intention—the intention to write a story that readers can imagine so clearly it is as though they are attending a play—is to write prose fiction that depends upon *ekphrasis* to describe images vividly enough that *phantasia* arises.

“The Liveliness of a feign’d Representation”: *Ekphrasis* and *The Mourning Bride*

The dedication to *The Mourning Bride* directly addresses imitation and its place in Congreve's philosophy of human behavior. Addressed to Princess Anne, Congreve tells the princess: “’Tis from the Example of Princes, that Vertue becomes a Fashion in the People, For even they who are averse to Instruction, will yet be fond of Imitation” (1). Congreve's assertion that fashionable behavior arises from imitation—and that there is a fondness in the imitation—recalls Aristotle's observation that “it is also natural for all to delight in works of imitation” (*Poetics* 1, 1448b6). Yet what Congreve asserts is not exactly the same; for Aristotle, people delight in “works of imitation”—that is, objects or things. In *The Mourning Bride*, a person—the princess herself—is proffered as a model for British citizens to imitate, something Congreve believes they will enjoy. He acknowledges that access to monarchs is beyond the “means” and “Opportunities” of

most, but the intervention of tragedy “may be of Use and Information” to bridge the gap: “For they who are at that distance from Original Greatness, as to be depriv’d of the Happiness of Contemplating the Perfections and real Excellencies of Your Royal Highness’s Person, in Your Court; may yet behold some small Sketches and Imagings of the Vertues of your Mind, abstracted, and represented in the Theatre” (1). If, as Congreve believes it can, *The Mourning Bride* presents ideal behavior in “the Liveliness of a feign’d Representation of Great and Good Persons and their actions,” then the delight derived from the experience will instruct audiences, because “Delight is interwoven with Instruction” (1). The liveliness Congreve seeks to represent sounds very much like a description developed with *ekphrasis*: he wants ideal behavior to manifest itself. Yet Congreve specifically describes this in terms of imitation: the instruction is based on a model of the princess, but because most citizens did not have access to her as the original, he must describe those behaviors in vivid detail, suggesting that *ekphrasis* is required to fill in the details when viewers may not have direct access to witnessing the original. What was previously hidden in *Incognita* becomes more visible in *The Mourning Bride*, managed through explicit references to mirrors. Using them as a reference point, Congreve teaches his readers about contemporary philosophies of meaning making. The lesson is not dependent upon direct, mimetic representations; instead, *ekphrasis* is used to develop images and behavior vivid enough for audiences to emulate.

The Mourning Bride is typical of its period in that the plot revolves around hidden identities that are manipulated to bring about the protagonists’ ideal conclusion. The play opens with Almeria, the mourning bride herself, despairing the loss of her secret husband, Alphonso. Sent by her father Manuel, the King of Granada, as a bridal offering to

Anselmo, the King of Valentia, Almeria falls in love with his son, Alphonso. While she is in Valentia, Manuel incites war with Anselmo. Almeria and Alphonso flee by boat, are secretly married, and when the boat crashes, both husband and wife believe the other dead. Alphonso washes ashore in Africa and is taken in by Zara, a queen. Hiding under the name Osmyn, Alphonso manipulates Zara's feelings for him and, through her, wages his own war against Manuel. Granada is victorious, Alphonso (as Osmyn) and Zara are taken captive, and Almeria is ordered to marry Garcia, a war hero and son to Gonzalez, Manuel's favorite.

In the second act, Osmyn makes explicit reference to contemporary philosophies of knowledge, especially Hobbes' mechanical philosophy of perception:

O, impotence of Sight!
 Mechanick Sense, which to exterior Objects,
 Owest thy Faculty---
 Not seeing of Election, but Necessity. (2.292-5)

Sight is at the center of his speech. The first four lines make it clear that sight is involuntary: objects come before the eyes, and the eyes see them. Sight is dependent upon external objects and what they show to the eye—the eyes see what is presented before them without examining further into the sight. In Osmyn's words, sight is impotent, suggesting that those relying solely on it can be misled. Because the eyes have no cognitive ability, they can be deceived. Viewers must take the time to examine and deliberate upon what is before them in order to reach the truth, as Osmyn recognizes:

Thus, do our Eyes, like common Mirrours
 Successively reflect succeeding Images;

Not what they would, but must; a Star, a Toad:

Just as the Hand of Chance administers.

Not so the Mind, whose undetermin'd View

Revolves, and to the present adds the past. (2.296-301)

Sight, operating like a mirror, becomes a reflective tool, not an interrogative sense. This distinction recalls Locke's criticism of the unthinking mind:

To think often, and never to retain it so much as one moment, is a very useless sort of thinking: and the Soul in such a state of thinking, does very little, if at all, excel that of a Looking-glass, which constantly receives variety of Images, or Ideas, but retains none...the Looking-glass is never the better for such Ideas, nor the soul for such Thoughts (Essay 41).

Osmyn's lament that the eyes see too many images to retain all of them, as well as the fact that the eyes do not interrogate what they see, aligns with Locke's assertion that mirrors constantly reflect what is before them, but the images "disappear and vanish, and there remains no footsteps of them" (41). Osmyn insists that a thinking mind is capable of retaining images and building increasingly complex ideas from this retention; sight becomes an almost mimetic physical function, reflecting what it sees into the mind. If sight is like a mirror, reflecting what it sees, it is akin to *mimesis*. Sight presents *prima facie* evidence—evidence that the mind must then examine in order to get to the truth. If sight can be deceived, because all it can do is reflect what is before it, mimetic imitations must also be interrogated. *Mimesis* serves a function—bringing images to the eye—but it is reflection upon these images that proves a man capable of critical thought.

Alphonso makes these statements while successfully imitating a different persona. His appearance and behavior reflect what he believes Zara finds most appealing; in other words, the persona “Osmyn” is a projection of Zara’s imagined ideal (as interpreted by Alphonso). Osmyn is not a mirror image of Alphonso, but rather a persona adapted to secure Alphonso’s safety. Before his reunion with Almeria, his deception is successful: Zara goes to war for him, believing that with her husband dead, Osmyn will marry her, suggesting that he successfully imitates her desires. All his manipulations, however, lose their efficacy after he sees Almeria. When Zara first sees Osmyn after the war, she complains that he “Disdains to listen now, or look on *Zara*” (2.325) and that he looks upon her “with such dumb, and thankless Eyes...Better I was unseen, than seen thus coldly” (2.331-2). Zara’s language centers on her sight, criticizing the way she perceives Osmyn looking upon her. She is immediately suspicious, because Osmyn does not mirror his previous behavior. Zara tells him that if he does not return her love, then he is more reprehensible than words can describe:

I know
Thee not, for what thou art, yet wants a Name:
But something so unworthy, and so vile,
That to have lov’d thee, makes me yet more lost
Than all the Malice of my other Fate. (2.408-12)

In the guise of Osmyn, Alphonso becomes not simply a character with two names—he becomes, to Zara’s sight, an entity “so unworthy, and so vile” that it “yet wants a Name”—in other words, he becomes a thing without a name. Language cannot describe what his body and persona present to the world. But even with his deception, Alphonso

understands the necessity of examining evidence brought before the eyes, declaring “for Thought / Precedes the Will to think; and Error lives / Ere Reason can be born: Reason, the Power / To guess at Right and Wrong” (3.30-3). One cannot simply accept the first thought that comes to mind. That is where “Error lives.” Instead, to discern between “Right and Wrong,” one must be willing to examine thoughts, and from this examination comes reason—the goal of human understanding.

The danger of believing one’s eyes rather than mentally interrogating images is nowhere clearer than in Manuel’s fate. Throughout the play, the king abuses his power as monarch and patriarch. He does not metamorphose into a tyrant—he is a tyrant from the outset. While he may be successful in war, the king’s deceptions lead to his untimely death, leaving Granada without a monarch or a male heir. As an instance of his autocratic behavior, for example, Manuel requires filial piety from Almeria: ““Yet something is due to me, who gave / That Life, which Heav’n preser’vd”” (1.269-70). The king asserts that Almeria owes him “something” because he gave her life, a life that Heaven preserved—suggesting that the king and god are on equal standing when it comes to Almeria’s life. Upon seeing Almeria crying, the king is outraged that she is sad, because he believes she should be jubilant over his victory: ““It doubly wounds my sight...By Heav’n, / It looks as thou didst mourn for him”” (277-8). The king, thinking only of himself and not asking why Almeria cries, unabashedly embodies egocentrism. Implicitly subjecting the king’s language to Alphonso’s principles of rationality, the play suggests the following conclusions: first, the king sees Almeria crying. The sight is recognized by his mind and interpreted as an assault against the king himself. The thought does not revolve in his mind, examined against all possible contexts. Instead, an error occurs, because the king

does not examine the sight before him. Almeria cries for the death of her husband, not for the defeat of Valentia, as the king assumes.

In the final act, Alphonso (still acting as Osmyn) is imprisoned and sentenced to die so that the king can take Zara for himself. The king devises a scheme in which his servant Perez will kill Alphonso in secret. When Perez does not immediately acquiesce, the king becomes enraged:

What's thy whole Life, thy Soul, thy All, to my
One moment's Ease? Hear my Command; and look
That thou obey, or Horrour on thy Head. (3.63-5)

The king demands capitulation from all his subjects, regardless of how the orders make others feel and without regard to others' own ethical systems. His command has the intended effect, and the king then continues his orders:

When thou hast ended him, bring me his Robe;
And let the Cell where she'll [Zara] expect to see him,
Be dark'ned, so as to amuze the Sight.
I'll be conducted thither. (5.73-6)

Perez's hesitation to murder another man has no impact on Manuel. Rather than recognizing the potential political fallout from murdering Alphonso, Manuel myopically focuses on his intent to hurt Zara as deeply as possible. The king's plan depends upon deceiving Zara's sight: he believes that putting on another man's robe and being in the room where Osmyn is expected will be enough to confuse Zara. His plan centers on imitation and the sight's ability to be deceived.

What is important to note is that the king's most tyrannical moments occur in relation to female characters: he is enraged when his daughter does not react appropriately to his victory; he is vindictive and manipulative when Zara does not immediately return his affections. Because Manuel believes that the eyes are like mirrors, he seems to rely on what he sees, rather than what is actually happening. He feels threatened by what he interprets as Almeria's disloyalty, and he is jealous of Zara's attraction to Osmyn. At the center of both women's affections is Alphonso and Osmyn. Yet rather than confronting him, Manuel blames his anger on Almeria and Zara. Rebecca Merrens argues that Congreve "thus obscures what might have been a social critique of patriarchy by scapegoating women for the problems that patrilineal economies themselves inevitably produce" (41). Merrens's conclusion implies that Congreve condoned the scapegoating of female characters, an assertion that is problematic, as the male characters who blame women for their ills are tyrants (and they perish in the final act). Male patriarchs do rationalize traditional power structures at the expense of female characters, but the rationalizations do not occur without consequences.

While the king develops his plan, Alphonso escapes, unbeknownst to the king. Conducted to the prison and dressed in Osmyn's clothing, the king lies in wait. In a quick series of events, Gonzalez beheads the king (believing him Osmyn). When Garcia tells him that Osmyn fled, Gonzaelez rebukes his son: "'Enter that Chamber, and convince your Eyes, / How much report has wrong'd your easie Faith'" (5.166-7). Garcia examines the body in the chamber, relying on reason rather than only sight, and confirms the king's death, proclaiming: "'Blasted my Eyes, and speechless my Tongue, / Rather than or to see, or to relate / This Deed'" (5.173-5). Garcia would prefer to be blind or mute rather

than to explain what reason confirms from his sight. Unlike the reunion scene in *The Winter's Tale* or the narrator's evasions in *Incognita*, the sight that cannot be described in *The Mourning Bride* is an image all the characters—and the audience members—can behold, because Manuel's dead body is displayed on the stage. The sight is not related through mimetic language, described as an imitation of something else. Instead, each character walks to the chamber and sees the king's body. Reason allows Garcia to connect the plot points, confirming that Osmyn's escape preceded the king's entrance to the chamber. Nor is the scene ekphrastic: Manuel's body is not described in terms that seem to bring the image before the listener's eyes. Instead, the actual sight itself is provided to confirm that it is a combination of sight and willing contemplation that leads to reason.

The Mourning Bride provides connective tissue between *Incognita* and *The Way of the World* because it teaches audiences how to achieve reason. In the drama, when characters accept what they see—without interrogation—the consequences are deadly. Imitations also lead to confusion and unintentional (even if deserved) deaths. Alphonso does escape the fate of all other imitators within the drama, but he arguably does so because he displays Locke's philosophy of knowledge and meaning making. If the eyes are nothing but mirrors, reflecting what is seen, then, as the handmaiden of *mimesis*, images that are reflections or imitations cannot be accepted as truthful until one examines all the evidence and context concerning the situation. The imitation performed by the king is meant to upset Zara; the imitation committed by Alphonso (as Osmyn) is for the purpose of survival and manipulating Zara. She is the motivation for both men's disguises, and she is a queen whose behavior is anything but ideal: Zara is vindictive,

jealous, insecure, and highly emotional. Alphonso describes her as ““the Reverse”” of Almeria, and the source of his ““Unhappiness”” (2.276). She is, in other words, the opposite of Princess Anne, the drama’s dedicatee. From Almeria, audiences can observe ideal behavior. She remains faithful to her husband Alphonso because he, like his father, is an ideal monarch. *The Mourning Bride*, with its questioning of imitation as trustworthy, and its examples of bad behavior from two different monarchs, teaches audiences how to recognize and contemplate desirable behavior.

Mirror, Mirror on the Wall: Reflection and *Ekphrasis* in *The Way of the World*

Although *Incognita* and *The Mourning Bride* suggest that universal descriptions cannot be relied upon, *mimesis* still has a persuasive function in the texts. In *The Way of the World*, *mimesis* is manipulated by characters to describe both themselves and their situations in ways that highlight outmoded or inappropriate behaviors, calling attention to the precarious position of women upon becoming *femes covert*. In particular, Millamant and Lady Wishfort embody the struggle between patriarchal constructions of the perfect wife and their own desires. Interestingly, both characters discuss how women are perceived in society by drawing comparisons between a woman’s external appearance and how she interprets that appearance in front of a mirror. Millamant rejects mimetic representations of herself as unreliable and as images created without her permission. Lady Wishfort serves as a foil to Millamant: she is an aged, pompous aristocrat who insists upon making herself into an imitation of her younger self. For the two female characters, mirrors complicate their social positions, because both male and female characters manipulate a mirror’s reflective surface as a vehicle for conveying internal

thoughts or understanding. In *The Way of the World*, mirrors operate as stage devices that expose patriarchal constructions of ideal femininity. The text also shows that mimetic and literal representations are potentially misleading. An image in a mirror is not a perfect representation of the subject before it; mirrors reverse images, meaning that even what a subject sees before the mirror is not how others see that subject.

Throughout the drama, ekphrastic descriptions of women before mirrors develop images that continually redirect and double upon themselves. Mirrors create cyclical ideations of identity by complicating how characters perceive themselves, how others perceive them, and how external influencers redirect original perceptions. Like mirrors, contracts influence how characters present themselves to the world, how they interpret themselves, and how others influence this perception. Contracts and mirrors become tools of deceit, belying the supposedly objective *ethos* of both. *Ekphrasis* is manipulated by bad actors who describe potential disasters with such detail that unknowing characters becomes susceptible to manipulation. *The Way of the World* continually asks its audience members to interpret events, characters, and plot devices. Congreve's use of *ekphrasis* calls attention to the potential danger that accompanies blind acceptance of social constructions (i.e., contracts are egalitarian, external appearances are reliable) and creates *phantasia* vivid enough for audience members to question offerings of determinative, objective knowledge.

In the drama, Lady Wishfort's interactions with her mirror confirm contemporary social biases against unmarried women—that they are shallow, imperfect imitations of what men desire in women. She indicates more than any other character that mirrors can be deceiving, given the right type of imagination and internal dialogue. The correlation

between mirrors and paintings—both mimetic representations in the Platonic sense—becomes evident in the interactions between Lady Wishfort and her maidservant, Foible. Lady Wishfort wants two things: to remarry and to have revenge on Mirabell for rejecting her overtures. When she learns that Mirabell’s uncle Sir Rowland (a man with the power to disinherit his nephew) is coming to visit, Lady Wishfort believes she can obtain both her goals with one act: marry Sir Rowland and disinherit Mirabell. Unknown to her, Mirabell has his own scheme in place. He dresses his servant Waitwell like an aristocrat and has him pretend to be Sir Rowland. Foible is in on the deception, and she lies to Lady Wishfort, pretending that Waitwell is Sir Rowland. As part of the scheme, Foible claims that she showed “Sir Rowland” Lady Wishfort’s portrait:

FOIBLE. Well, if worshipping of pictures be a sin, poor Sir Rowland, I say.

LADY WISHFORT. The miniature has been counted like. (3.68-70)

The conversation intimates that Waitwell’s “Sir Rowland” has fallen in love with Lady Wishfort by looking at her picture. Yet the picture is a relic. Because she has aged, Lady Wishfort no longer resembles the miniature. The two characters then begin a discussion of Lady Wishfort’s face:

LADY WISHFORT. I shall never recompose my features to receive Sir Rowland with any economy of face. This wretch has fretted me that I am absolutely decayed. Look, Foible.

FOIBLE. Your ladyship has frowned a little too rashly, indeed, madam. There are some cracks discernable in the white varnish. (3.125-131)

While looking in the mirror, Lady Wishfort laments that she cannot “recompose [her] features...with any economy of face.” She desires to imitate her younger face, a face she believes is more appealing to a potential suitor. Anthony Kaufman suggests that “here she appears at once comic and pathetic: she is quite vulnerable” (415). Lady Wishfort is indeed vulnerable: to the chasm between her desires and social norms, to the conflict between the traditional authority of her now-deceased husband and the new authority espoused by Mirabell, and to the loss of financial independence provided her in widowhood if she remarries.

Even in her vulnerable position—for she is nothing if not scared and insecure in front of her mirror and Foible—Lady Wishfort is not a character to imitate. She attempts to manipulate her face into a reflection of her younger self, meaning that her cosmetically enhanced features belie her true appearance. Lady Wishfort embodies Hobbes’s mental decay in physical form, as quoted above: ““This wretch [Mirabell] has fretted me that I am absolutely decayed”” (3.126). Lady Wishfort rails against Mirabell’s comment that she is akin to obsolete clothing, once treasured for its newness, now discarded because of time (3.104, 114). Although aware that her youth is inescapably faded, she yearns to outsmart nature by artificially enhancing her external appearance. The picture prevents the image of her youthful face from fading; by manipulating her makeup and hair, Lady Wishfort acts out Mirabell’s belief that women are nothing but a reflection of how men see them. Her language implies that she sees herself as a reflection of male desire—her image is seen through the male gaze, interpreted (and decried) as Lady Wishfort believes a man would perceive her face.

The connection between Lady Wishfort and the male gaze opens a larger conversation about traditional patriarchal social structures. Multiple critics note the direct connection between Lady Wishfort's face, her home, and contemporary anxiety concerning traditional forms of authority. Kevin J. Gardner interprets her "peeling face paint as a symbol of collapsing authority," concluding that "Congreve renders ludicrous her attempts to sustain authority and exposes her tendency to mask anxieties behind cracking facades of continuity and stability" (53). In other words, the slipping of Lady Wishfort's makeup metonymically reproduces the "cracking facades" of authority. Yet Gardner's conclusion is problematic, because it assumes that Lady Wishfort holds the same authority as a patriarch. Technically, she is a complicated version of the *feme sole* as a widow, but in her pliancy toward a potential husband, she acts more like a *feme covert*, and despite her blustering, has no actual authority. What is even more problematic for Gardner's argument is her blatant desperation to remarry, to place herself within a traditional social structure. There is no façade of continuity and stability, there is only insecurity and anxiety. Robert A. Erickson argues that Lady Wishfort "belongs to the fools' world of striving for formulation and definition, of presenting oneself to the world at what one perceives to be one's best" (340). While Erickson is correct in his assessment, he fails to observe that the idea of "one's best" is itself a notion constructed out of patriarchal ideals, especially for female characters. Lady Wishfort yearns to define herself in terms of what a potential husband believes is "best," and it is this desire that makes her into a fool. If Lady Wishfort is indeed a fool, she is a fool of man's making.

The scene continues with an attack on deceitful forms of imitation, and the language becomes ekphrastic when describing what Lady Wishfort wants done to her face. She tells Foible:

LADY WISHFORT. Let me see the glass. Cracks, say'st thou? Why I am arrantly flayed; I look like an old peeled wall. Thou must repair me, Foible, before Sir Rowland comes, or I shall never keep up to my picture.

FOIBLE. I warrant you, madam, a little art once made your picture like you; and now a little of the same art must make you like your picture. Your picture must sit for you, madam. (3.132-138)

Original and representation are reversed in Foible's manipulation, just as a mirror image is itself an inversion. Lady Wishfort must sit still to be painted in imitation of her picture. The scene creates a hall of mirrors: Lady Wishfort looks at her reversed image, rejects that image for a painter's imperfect representation of her younger face, then returns to her mirror to find the face she desires—a mirror that can never reflect her actual image. Foible becomes the painter, but Lady Wishfort can never reverse the natural aging process. What is real and what is imitation becomes lost in a series of image making. Further, the makeup itself affirms the unnaturalness of her internal desires, as what cracks is the artificial paint meant to shellac the natural wrinkles that appear on her face. When the makeup cracks and looks like wrinkles, there is then a layer of artificial wrinkles atop the natural wrinkles—and Lady Wishfort wants more makeup to fill in the artificial wrinkles in order to make her skin appear naturally young. And it seems as though the process will be continued *ad nauseum*. Her wrinkles, and her insecurity, will always

exist, making the interaction between Lady Wishfort and Foible one of many such moments, likely to continue in perpetuity.

The dialogue between Lady Wishfort and Foible extends to the point of becoming a tableau. It is not hard to picture each iteration of Lady Wishfort: there is a miniature, showing the character with no wrinkles; this image is succeeded by the current Lady Wishfort, whose makeup cracks and peels from her face; finally, audiences can see the post-spackling Lady Wishfort, whose face is reinforced with cosmetics by Foible in much the same way a carpenter uses bricks and lumber to reinforce sagging walls. Kaufman argues that within this scene, audiences realize that her “grotesque daydreams reveal her dissolving into ‘art’” (416). But Lady Wishfort does not dissolve into an aesthetic representation of her younger self. She leaves her toilet and shamelessly flirts with Sir Rowland, only to be mocked by her peers.⁴¹ She may believe herself an art object, but every character in the drama sees through her vain attempts to appear young. Understanding Lady Wishfort in the context of her social situation makes it seem less absurd that as she feels her authority slip, she reverts to the only period in which she experienced a modicum of power—her time on the marriage market. By attempting to woo Sir Rowland, Lady Wishfort does more than play out the stereotype of the lusty widow. She showcases the limited roles women were allowed to perform: Lady Wishfort is a fool because she attempts to act like a much younger woman, but no amount of makeup or costuming can conceal the ravages of time. It seems that what Lady Wishfort wants is to remain relevant and important. The only time in her life that she had these

⁴¹ Her own nephew joins in the fray, telling Mirabell: “‘Look up, man, I’ll stand by you; ’sbud an she do frown, she can’t kill you; besides—harkee, she dare not frown desperately, because her face is none of her own. ’Sheart, an she should, her forehead would wrinkle like the coat of a cream cheese” (5.334-7).

attributes was during courtship; her actions can be explained as those of a woman desperately trying to retain social caché in order to exert some form of agency. Yet, because she is a widow and an older woman, Lady Wishfort does not have access to the marriage market in the same way she did while a young woman. Courtship appears grotesque as practiced by Lady Wishfort. Indeed, as Ashley Brookner Bender argues, “Lady Wishfort is a farce. In her efforts to make herself essential to the romantic economy of the play, she establishes all the more that she is too old...At the same time that the widow is mocked for her inability to see the threat that marriage poses, she is ever more emphatically mocked for having that desire in the first place” (8). Whether Congreve intended Lady Wishfort’s actions to prime readers for Millamant’s own marriage negotiation is beyond the scope of this examination. What does become clear, however, is the performative nature of courtship and its intensely specific requirements for entrance.

Operating in stark contrast to Lady Wishfort is Millamant, who begins the play as an outspoken, determined *feme sole*. Like most of the texts examined thus far, *The Way of the World* continually anticipates the heroine’s appearance long before she arrives on stage. Notably, Millamant does not walk onto the stage until partway through Act II, yet Act I directly refers to her by name twelve times and devotes twenty-six lines of dialogue to describing her actions and comportment. About her, Fainall admits: “for, to give her her due, she has wit” (1.138). Mirabell responds that “She has beauty enough to make any man think so, and complaisance enough not to contradict him who shall tell her so” (1.139-40). Witwoud admits that he finds her “handsome; but she’s a sort of an uncertain woman...she’s a woman and a kind of a humorist” (1.422, 441-2). Like Witwoud,

modern critics cannot seem to describe Millamant succinctly. Kaufman writes that “her attitude, then, is a delicate balance: neither too self-satisfied, nor too tediously self-deprecating; neither too serious, nor too blatantly frivolous; neither too complaisant toward her suitors, nor too contemptuous” (424). Brian Corman also notes the dual roles she plays: “While Millamant uses her artifice to transcend the petty and unpleasant power struggles of the other characters, she is, nevertheless, a consistently realistic character who is always aware of what is happening around her and is able to cope with any unpleasantness that may arise” (205). This inability to precisely describe Millamant mirrors the precarious situation in which eighteenth-century women on the marriage market found themselves: aware that as a *feme sole*, they only had the legal power to sign a contract, while simultaneously aware that in becoming a *feme covert*, in enacting their only legal power, they lose all sense of (or opportunity for) autonomy.

The dialogue devoted to Millamant’s character—at once laudatory and critical—is reflected in the character herself when she appears on stage. Pat Gill empathizes with Millamant: “A social position maintained by ever-vigilant linguistic self-awareness may seem uncomfortable, not to mention untenable, but it is the only arena of feminine power available in the play—one might argue, one of the few accessible to women of this class in Restoration life—and Millamant declares her intention to keep it” (166-7). Millamant tests the boundaries of feminine niceties with her witty language, showing that she fully understands what is and is not acceptable for a woman in her position to do or say. The dual nature of Millamant’s character manifests the dual roles contemporaries expected young women to enact: both subject and object, coquette and wife, eloquent and silent. Laura J. Rosenthal notes that “In the seventeenth century women had achieved equality

neither in theory nor in practice. The transition from Filmerian patriarchalism to Lockean contract, then, trades one form of patriarchy for another” (206). Close reading of Millamant’s dialogue—and her eventual near silence—shows the impact of trading “one form of patriarchy for another,” of trading having marriage forced upon her by a male figure for having a male figure’s view of marriage forced upon her.

What Millamant seems to fight is the imbalance of power between men and women in a world negotiated by contracts. The disparity between Mirabell and Millamant is a gradual revelation. The first interaction between the protagonists at St. James’ Park makes it clear that Millamant can meet Mirabell as his intellectual equal—which perhaps explains critical consensus that the two are an ideal pairing. But close inspection of their dialogue makes it clear that Millamant cannot possibly enter into the marriage contract negotiations on equal footing. Although not a Restoration rake or a Lothario,⁴² Mirabell nevertheless exhibits absolutist ideology in relation to how he perceives women’s behavior when he mocks Millamant’s assertion that she has power during courtship:

Nay, ’tis true: you are no longer handsome when you’ve lost your lover;
 your beauty dies upon the instant. For beauty is the lover’s gift; ’tis he
 bestows your charms, your glass is all a cheat. The ugly and the old,
 whom the looking glass mortifies, yet after commendation can be flattered
 by it, and discover beauties in it; for that reflects our praises, rather than
 your face. (2.1.351-360)

With these lines, Mirabell asserts that even mirrors cannot be trusted when a woman is being wooed. Rather than seeing an accurate reflection in the mirror, women see what

⁴² A term recently included in the Londoner’s lexicon in reference to the character Lothario in Nicholas Rowe’s *The Fair Penitent* (staged 1702, published 1703).

their lovers tell them to see. A mirror is no more accurate a representation than a painting, because imperfections can be imagined away or ignored with the aid of flattery.

Mirabell's dialogue anticipates Lady Wishfort's laments in front of her mirror during the third scene: what Mirabell claims is true about women is authenticated. Scott. R.

MacKenzie observes that in the scene, Mirabell positions himself as Millamant's monarch: "The subject is the recipient or mirror of the King's radiant majesty, just as Mirabell calls Millamant away from her literal mirror to become a reflecting surface that depends upon his donation of aesthetic value" (263). From Mirabell's perspective, then, Millamant (and all women) only have value because men deign to provide it. The scene problematizes mimetic representations, as the layering of arguments concerning mirrors and visual representations becomes muddled in varying opinions concerning image, representation, and understanding. Lady Wishfort is indeed both mortified and falsely flattered by her mirror, just as she is mortified and falsely flattered by her peers. The play depends upon the audience understanding the nuances of Congreve's dialectical constructions, asking audiences to interpret and contemplate the impacts of Mirabell's arguments.

Yet Millamant does not retreat; her response further complicates how to understand images and reflections. She pointedly rejects the idea that a woman's self-worth derives from men's compliments: "One no more owes one's beauty to a lover than one's wit to an echo. They can but reflect what we look and say; vain empty things if we are silent or unseen, and want a being" (2.1.370-2). According to Millamant, male compliments are shaped out of the public-facing persona created by women. The two are then playfully pitted against one another philosophically. Her response echoes the

Hobbesian philosophy that “The cause of Sense...[is] in the object that causeth them” (3). Mirabell’s statement, in contrast, reflects Locke’s argument that “*Men* would not be thought to talk *barely* of their own Imaginations, but of Things as they really are; therefore they *often suppose their Words to stand also for the Reality of Things*” (3.2.188). When Mirabell states that men determine what does or does not constitute beauty, he makes it clear that he supposes his “words to stand also for the reality of things”—or, that how a man understands the world around him is how the world actually is.

Millamant also deftly critiques how men interpret female behavior; having already been chastised by Mirabell for being coy and using language ineffectively, her exasperation is almost palpable when she states that if women remain silent (exhibiting the opposite behavior for which she was just upbraided), they are interpreted as “vain empty things”—in other words, no matter what women do or say, they are perceived as blank canvases upon which male perceptions are painted. Millamant’s rejoinder recalls *Epicoene*, in which the character Epicoene is literally created out of one man’s imagination. The character is at first silent, interpreted by Morose as his ideal—he imagines her exactly how he wants. Then, the character displays audacious behavior, indicating that the initial behavior was nothing but a façade. The drama suggests that all behavior is a construction based upon social expectations. In her conversation with Mirabell, Millamant similarly exposes the double-bind patriarchal constructs of the feminine ideal women must confront—if silent, she is interpreted through a male perspective; if verbal, she is criticized for betraying the feminine ideal. Millamant asserts that the ideal is a silent woman, a woman who exists only to reflect what men want to

see. More potentially detrimental to a woman's self-worth is that if women are silent, they "want a being," essentially becoming voids men are all but too happy to fill. "Being" should also recall women's legal status as *femes covert*—a person without an independent being. Dialogue between the two becomes a battlefield between mid-seventeenth-century Hobbesian theories and late-seventeenth-century Lockean theories. Mirabell argues that women are an imitation of what men tell them is attractive, while Millamant contends that women's external appearances are shaped by how they imagine themselves.

In a distinct and different way, Millamant is drawn into the same issues that Lady Wishfort experiences in front of her mirror. The most basic difference between the two scenes is that Millamant is confronted with a metaphysical mirror, while Lady Wishfort complains in front of a physical mirror. And though both characters criticize male expectations regarding feminine beauty, they do so from very different positions. Millamant's argument is based on her autonomy; by insisting that women create their own beauty, she suggests that women have a modicum of power over how men perceive them. Lady Wishfort, on the other hand, despairs that because of the natural aging process, she no longer embodies male desires. Lady Wishfort sees herself through the male gaze; Millamant sees herself from her own perspective.

Perhaps the most important distinction between Millamant and Lady Wishfort is how they react to contract negotiations. In the proviso scene, Millamant begins the tongue-in-cheek negotiations by stating her desires. With the exception of two items, everything Millamant asks for relates to how she wants to behave after the contract is signed. Just two items relate to Mirabell's behavior: that they do not call each other by pet names or display physical affection publicly. What is interesting is that the two

restrictions she places on Mirabell are likely things he wants anyway. When Mirabell responds with his desires, everything he requires relates to how *he* wants *her* to behave. Mirabell may not be the perfect patriarch, but he is positioned as the ideal patriarch. Yet his demands are autocratic at best: he verbally constructs how Millamant will operate in the world after they marry. As Vivian Davis observes, “Law, in the form of an impromptu marriage contract, becomes a means of asserting control over a volatile female subject” (523). Mirabell proves himself a patriarch happy to dominate Millamant through socially acceptable means. The marriage contract serves as the ideal document through which to legally restrict and control his future wife’s behavior.

Mirabell’s dubious use of contracts to manipulate Languish (later Mrs. Fainall) confirms a pattern of behavior meant to manipulate and control the female characters in the drama. Strictly in terms of practical dealings, Mirabell is not as different from Fainall as most modern critics believe.⁴³ Before her marriage, Mrs. Fainall *nee* Languish had an illicit affair with Mirabell. When Mirabell tires of the relationship, he insists that she marry Fainall to hide their own affair. Under the guise of protecting Ms. Languish from Fainall’s “inconstancy and tyranny of temper,” Mirabell manipulates her into signing over her estate to him (5.498). The subsequent contract is then subversive on multiple levels—it is a product of Mirabell’s manipulating Mrs. Fainall *nee* Languish into marriage, and it also undermines the patriarchal position of Fainall as her new husband. The contract stays hidden in a black box, produced only when Mirabell himself is

⁴³ Jean Gagen suggests that “Mirabell is an embodiment of the ideal of the gentleman which prevailed in Congreve’s lifetime” (422). Anthony Kaufman observes that while Mirabell “must of necessity promote his pleasure and safeguard his interests in a hardheaded manner, he is the basically benevolent man who attempts, as far as it is in his power, to act honorably” (418). Kevin J. Gardner tempers condoning Mirabell’s behavior, while still arguing that “It is clear Mirabell is different. He is the new social and sexual authority rising in the wake of the collapse of aristocratic authority at the end of the Stuart era” (69).

threatened by Fainall's devious plans. The explosive contract not only prevents Fainall's plot from succeeding, but it also suggests that Mirabell is no better than Fainall himself. Mrs. Fainall's story is a tragedy under a different name.

Although Fainall does not know about the contract signing his wife's property over to Mirabell, he *does* know about the affair. Mrs. Marwood, the character with whom Fainall currently is having a sexual liaison, tells him. The two devise a plan to obtain all of Lady Wishfort's property, including Millamant's inheritance. Mrs. Marwood tells Lady Wishfort of the affair between her daughter and Mirabell, threatening to expose the affair unless Lady Wishfort agrees to Fainall's contract. When Lady Wishfort demands proof, the drama's most ekphrastic description occurs, immediately preceding a pivotal plot point. Marwood's language is vivid, focusing on the relationship between the female body and public perceptions. She states:

Prove it, Madam? What, and have your name prostituted in a public court!
Yours and your daughter's reputation worried at the bar by a pack of
bawling lawyers! To be ushered in with an *Oyez* of scandal, and have your
case opened by an old fumbling lecher in a quoif like a man midwife.
(5.193-97)

Although Marwood's description continues, this passage serves as a prime example of the *ekphrasis* she employs to demoralize Lady Wishfort. Marwood first sets the scene, drawing Lady Wishfort's imagination to picture a public court. Next, she directs Lady Wishfort to imagine the "bawling lawyers": men yelling at one another, each proclaiming about Mrs. Fainall's adultery. The scene contracts to a detailed description of Lady Wishfort's imaginary lawyer. He is described as "old," something about which Lady

Wishfort is clearly sensitive. He is next depicted as a “fumbling lecher,” words that make him into yet another spectator relishing in the scandalous tales. Finally, Marwood details him as a “man midwife.” The intimation concerning the male gaze’s ability to violate the sanctity of the female body is present when Mrs. Marwood calls the lawyer a midwife. *Ekphrasis* is achieved because Lady Wishfort can picture the scene as though it were before her eyes. Her proclamation that she will agree to anything Fainall demands in order to keep her daughter’s secret confirms that the *phantasia* developed from Mrs. Marwood’s description is potent enough to make the images seem real—they achieve *enargeia*.

Contrasting the contracts created by Mirabell and Fainall makes clear how a patriarchal system can prey upon female characters. Because legal systems are inaccessible to women after marriage, male characters like Mirabell and Fainall know that if they can get the contract signed, it does not matter how they behave afterward. *Ekphrasis* plays an interesting role in the exposure of bad actors in *The Way of the World*. In previous chapters, my argument rested on the common use of *ekphrasis* as a means of leading male characters who are capable of redemption to *anagnorisis*; in *The Way of the World*, *ekphrasis* serves as a device that unmasking tyranny and reprehensible behavior in both male and female characters. It is Mrs. Marwood’s ekphrastic description of the courtroom that precipitates Lady Wishfort’s agreement to anything Fainall wants. Fainall’s victory spells Mirabell’s defeat—until Mirabell produces his earlier contract with Mrs. Fainall. That one moment of vivid description facilitates the play’s denouement and conclusion.

The plot points involving mirrors and contracts, as well as how female characters are talked about in these scenes, are described using *ekphrasis*. While *ekphrasis* does not necessarily produce a correctional outcome, it does ultimately facilitate a climactic moment. *Ekphrasis* may be the handmaiden of patriarchal manipulations of female characters, but the plot twists engendered by ekphrastic descriptions expose agreements made in bad faith. It becomes a descriptive tool that allows contracts made in good faith to overrule those made under duress. The effect is that *ekphrasis* creates the *kairotic* moment that persuades Lady Wishfort to be coerced into an untenable situation, created by the contract Fainall forces upon her. In the hands of patriarchs, contracts, like mirrors, become tools of mortification. By the play's end, both *mimesis* and *ekphrasis* are, in the Platonic sense, falsifications of the real.

The epilogue to *The Way of the World* closes the play with a thoroughly anti-mimetic tone, employing language that questions the validity of accepted representations and signals the play's intention to reject disingenuous behavior. Spoken by Anne Bracegirdle, the actress who first played Millamant, the epilogue confirms that imitations and representations cannot be done without some falsification:

For, as when painters form a matchless face,
 They from each fair one catch some different grace;
 And shining features in one portrait blend,
 To which no single beauty must pretend. (31-4)

The epilogue deliberately aligns the art of painting with how women present themselves to the world. Painting creates an ideal by blending features from different persons, suggesting that no one woman embodies the ideal. The ideal itself becomes an imitation,

a fiction produced with the consequence that no person can become the ideal, because the ideal herself does not exist. The purpose for creating multiple fallible characters is didactic: “So poets oft do in one piece expose / Whole *belles assemblées* of coquettes and beaux” (35-6). The purpose is exposure. Just as contracts and mirrors facilitate the revelation of secrets within the play, *The Way of the World* itself, on a metacognitive level, is meant to lay open the veneer of objectivity assumed inherent to the aristocracy, to the beautiful assembly of *feme soles* and single men present. Beyond producing characters capable of embodying distasteful behavior, exhibiting the moral and social consequences attendant to persuasion based in *pathos*, the play itself is a lesson to its audiences, with the epilogue teaching them how to interpret the actions just witnessed on stage. If *Incognita* relies on the universality of Juliana’s character, *The Way of the World* upholds patriarchal systems by exploiting the singularity of its central female character, Millamant. In Congreve’s drama, fraternal patriarchy becomes another iteration of paternal patriarchy: an outsider to the family inserts himself just as a standard patriarch would. What changes is that through Millamant, Congreve introduces language that describes how to maintain a sense of self, even within a shifting social structure.

Conclusion

Each of Congreve’s works, the prose fiction and the dramas, revolve around the manipulation of women as aesthetic objects in order to secure different forms of patriarchy. *Incognita* presents a world in which fraternal patriarchy and patrilineal patriarchy function in a successful, symbiotic manner. Congreve creates a space in which experience so completely shapes perception that no two characters or readers can be

assumed to interpret the same sight in identical manners. The narrator's continual digressions concerning his inability to accurately describe anything suggests anxiety regarding language's ability to create persuasive, understandable descriptions. The ideal world formulated by Congreve's narrator (one in which patriarchy functions successfully) presents a relationship between patrilineal and fraternal patriarchy that simply does not exist. It seems, then, that Congreve not only sets out to write a new genre, he also intends to create a new social structure. There is no common example available of fraternal and patrilineal patriarchy co-existing, leaving Congreve without a model to imitate. In contrast, *The Way of the World* employs vivid descriptions, creating mental images potent enough to seem real. The text that is descriptive presents a warning to tyrants and those seeking to create contracts in bad faith. Perhaps it is because Fainall's manipulations and the precarious situation of women in a male-dominated society is a world easily known, thereby allowing Congreve to take what his audience can be expected to know and make the descriptions so vivid, so real, that audiences cannot help but be repulsed by Fainall and Marwood. *Ekphrasis* is effective as a descriptive device because Congreve can present a known entity in a detailed and vivid way, detailing a situation that is paradoxically familiar yet completely new. In Congreve's *oeuvre*, *ekphrasis* defamiliarizes known behavioral patterns: the patriarchal tyrant is exposed, yet it is the description of women's bodies, employed in bad faith, that ultimately leads to Fainall's humiliation. Though the plots of all three texts essentially focus on the male characters and their personal intentions, it is through descriptions of female characters that ideas of selfhood and personal desire become clear.

There is a marked shift in how female characters are presented in fictional texts, be it drama or prose, during the first quarter of the eighteenth century. In *Epicoene*, *The Winter's Tale*, and *The Forc'd Marriage*, female characters are presented as imitations of themselves. Epicoene is a male actor pretending to be the ideal woman. Hermione reenters the drama as an inanimate aesthetic rendering of herself, only to be proven a living woman. Erminia chooses her costume, appearing to Alcippus dressed as a ghost, an imitation she believes will change his tyrannical behavior. Yet each rendering of female likeness is ineffective at persuading male characters to change their behavior or their perspective. It is only when they are revealed as real people—revelations precipitated by ekphrastic moments of description—that male characters come to recognize the consequences of their aberrant behavior. It is as though the female characters operate as mirrors for their patriarchs: they become embodied imitations, displaying the effects of tyrannical behavior. If the *de casibus* tradition changes with Baldwin's *Mirror for Magistrates*, shifting the message to a conversation *about* power, Congreve's female characters develop the lesson further, talking about power *to* power.

Congreve writes female characters capable of imagining themselves as the figures they wish to present to the world. And it is through these imaginings that Juliana, Almeria, and Millamant express their desires. *Ekphrasis* is the tool that presents these images to readers and audiences, allowing onlookers to imagine the interiority of the characters, as well as making them capable of enacting their own interiority. These moments echo Locke's claims in *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and the *Two Treatises of Government*, there is an understanding that there is no innate knowledge and that all knowledge derives from experience. His *Two Treatises* rejects Filmer's

assertion that patriarchal systems are natural, exposing them as constructed by those in power to ensure they remain in power. The fortunate coincidence that concludes *Incognita* mirrors the Filmerian adherence to patriarchal systems as just—the ending is as artfully contrived as the system ultimately upheld by the work’s conclusion. *Ekphrasis* both puts bad behavior on display and incites positive change. Readers and audience members leave the texts with the language necessary to do the same in their own lives. By creating *phantasia* in characters, and in turn doing the same for their audiences, Congreve provides the language and the models for his audiences to emulate.

Chapter 4

The Price of Morality: *Ekphrasis* and Contracts in Eliza Haywood’s *A Wife to be Lett*, *Fantomina*, and *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*

When modern critics examine the power imbalance between men and women in regard to contracts and marriage in the eighteenth century, they customarily turn to William Blackstone’s *Commentaries on the Laws of England* (1765-69), a widely cited authority in the period that defines marriage as follows:

By marriage, the husband and wife are one person in law: that is, the very being or legal existence of the woman is suspended during the marriage,

or at least is incorporated and consolidated into that of the husband: under whose wing, protection, and *cover*, she performs every thing; and is therefore called in our law-french a *feme-covert*; is said to be *covert-baron*, or under the protection and influence of her husband, her *baron*, or lord; and her condition during her marriage is called her *coverature*. (441)

This oft-cited passage is interpreted by modern critics as a comment that condones coverture law.⁴⁴ In the passage, the power imbalance is clear: the *feme covert* is devoid of “being or legal existence”—she essentially disappears in every sense once she signs the marriage contract. Blackstone himself states that in order for a contract to be legally binding, “it is [first] an *agreement*, a mutual bargain or convention; and therefore there must at least be two contracting parties, of sufficient ability to make a contract” (442).

In his discussion of a *feme covert*'s legal status, Blackstone notes that, legally, “all persons are able to contract themselves in marriage, unless they labour under some particular disabilities, and incapacities” (434). By disabilities and incapacities, Blackstone refers only to someone's mental state, not the marginalized position women occupy in patriarchal social structures. Blackstone writes: “It was formerly adjudged, that the issue of an idiot was legitimate, and consequently that his marriage was valid. A strange determination! Since consent is absolutely requisite to matrimony, and neither idiots or lunatics are capable of consenting to any thing” (438). The idea of consent is integral to contracts, including marriage contracts, because they are “a civil contract” and

⁴⁴ See, for example, Katherine R. King's *The Political Biography of Eliza Haywood* and Amy Louise Erickson's *Women and Property in Early Modern England*. Erickson observes that legal writers like Blackstone “never tired of claiming that women were ‘a favorite of the law’...despite the fact that the legal restrictions placed on English women...were exceptionally severe even by the standards of other early modern European countries” (3). Susan Pateman's seminal work *The Sexual Contract* also engages Blackstone, concluding that “commentaries on the texts gloss over the fact that the classic theorists contract a patriarchal account of masculinity and femininity, of what it is to be men and women” (5).

are valid only when “the parties at the time of making it were, in the first place, *willing* to contract; secondly, *able* to contract; and, lastly, actually *did* contract, in the proper forms and solemnities required by law” (433). Blackstone’s chapter closes with a line that is frequently remarked upon when modern critics examine what is now understood as misogyny:

These are the chief legal effects of marriage during the coverature; upon which we may observe, that even the disabilities, which the wife lies under, are for the most part intended for her protection and benefit. So great a favourite is the female sex of the laws of England. (445)

Even while Blackstone proclaims that women are “so great a favourite” in English law, in the same sentence, the words “for the most part” blur the meaning of what is and what is not “intended for her protection and benefit.”

Significantly, Blackstone attaches a lengthy addendum to his chapter on marriage that is largely ignored by modern scholars. In it, he explicitly critiques how English law treats women, and he seems to address what is meant by “for the most part.” In the commentary that follows, Blackstone acknowledges the power disparity naturalized under the law: “I am not so much in love with my subject as to be inclined to leave it in possession of a glory which it may not justly deserve...I shall here state some of the principal differences in the English law, respecting the two sexes; I shall leave it to the reader to determine on which side is the balance” (445). Blackstone then notes several unfair differences between how English law treats men and women.⁴⁵ The addendum

⁴⁵ Blackstone takes issue with the titles given men and women in marriage: “Husband and wife, in the language of the law, are stiled *baron* and *feme*: the word baron, or lord, attributes to the husband not a very courteous superiority...if the baron kills his feme, it is the same as if he had killed a stranger...but if the feme kills her baron, it is regarded by the laws as a much more atrocious crime...And therefore the law

closes with language suggesting that Blackstone himself did not condone the legal status of women: “From this impartial statement of the account, I fear there is little reason to pay a compliment to our laws for their respect and favour to the female sex” (445).⁴⁶

Thus, even from a contemporary perspective, women’s legal status, in regards to marriage, positions them in a precarious position that denies their very existence. When the addendum is recognized as a response to Blackstone’s comments in the main body text, it seems that there is a gap between what the law claims is an equal agreement between men and women and what women actually experienced in marriage. The perception of marriage contract law that patriarchal systems want to convey is that men and women enter marriage contracts as equally willing and capable parties. Yet this is not the experience described in Blackstone’s addendum—there, it does not seem that women can consent to marriage on equal terms with men.

The gap between experience and custom that Blackstone criticizes in the addendum is recognized by contemporary philosophers, although there, the focus is on the connection between philosophies of perception and the senses. Joseph Addison, paraphrasing Locke’s philosophy of perception in *The Spectator*, Numbers 411-421,

denominates her crimes a species of treason, and condemns her to the same punishment as if she had killed a king” (445). Regarding property, Blackstone notes that “by marriage, the husband is absolutely master of the profits of his wife’s lands during the coverture...but if the wife is entitled only to dower, or one-third, if she survives, out of the husband’s estates of inheritance” (445). Further, “But a husband can be tenant by the curtesy of the trust estates of the wife, though the wife cannot be endowed of the trust estates of the husband” (445). Women also had no protection against slander: “Female virtue, by the temporal law, is perfectly exposed to the slanders of malignity and falsehood; for any one may proclaim in conversation, that the purest maid, or the chastest matron, is the most meretricious and incontinent of women, with impunity, or free from the animadversions of the temporal courts” (445).

⁴⁶ Blackstone even goes so far as to question women’s voting rights: “With regard to the property of women, there is taxation without representation; for they pay no taxes without having the liberty of voting for representatives; and indeed there seems at present no substantial reason why single women should be denied this privilege” (445).

urges readers to reflect deliberately on their senses.⁴⁷ Like Locke, Addison asserts that “Our Sight is the most perfect and most delightful of all our Senses” and sight is the “Sense which furnished the Imagination with its Ideas... We cannot indeed have a single Image in the Fancy that did not make its first Entrance through the Sight” (276-7). Addison asserts that sight is the progenitor of all ideas, extending Locke’s concepts into a philosophy seeking to shape public perception. There is more than a connection between sense and understanding in Addison’s *Spectator* series: the senses function as a means to progress modes of knowledge attainment. Addison adopts Locke’s philosophy of perception, reflecting the natural give and take of public intellectuals. What is different is that Addison’s discussion of the senses takes place in a serialized distribution meant to reach a far broader audience than Locke’s philosophical treatise.

The insistence upon the link between experience and understanding provides fruitful ground for *ekphrasis* to operate as a persuasive rhetorical technique. Addison observes that readers “love to see the Subject unfolding it self by just Degrees” (302) and that “Nothing is more pleasant to the Fancy, than to enlarge it self, by Degrees, in its Contemplation of the various Proportions which its several Objects bear to each other” (303). His suggestion that learning is most delightful when information is produced by

⁴⁷ Locke’s famous blank page metaphor attempts to expose innate knowledge as a myth, arguing that “to imprint any thing on the Mind without the Mind’s perceiving it, seems to me hardly intelligible” (1.2.5). For Locke, ideas are built upon experience, and the contemplation of ideas produces an active mind:

The Senses at first let in particular *Idea’s*, and furnish the yet empty Cabinet: and the Mind by degrees growing familiar with some of them, they are lodged in the Memory, and Names got to them. Afterwards the Mind proceeding further, abstracts them, and by Degrees learns the use of general Names. By this manner the Mind comes to be furnish’d with *Idea’s* and Language, the Materials about which to exercise its discursive Faculty. (2.15.8)

People must develop their own understanding “from Experience: In that, all our Knowledge is founded” (2.1.2). What people experience from their senses must be reflected upon, “and the Operations of our Minds within, as the Objects of *REFLECTION*, are, to me, the only Originals, from whence all our *Idea’s* take their beginnings” (2.1.4).

degrees suggests that one method for developing vivid images in the mind is to layer descriptions, in turn building a complete picture. In Locke's and Addison's philosophies of perception, knowledge develops from repeated contemplation. That is, something is perceived, contemplated, and then full ideas can form. For Locke, understanding is a scaffolded system that layers initial ideas onto one another until sufficient knowledge is developed. Addison proffers a similar system when discussing the pleasure of gaining new knowledge. His philosophy relates to *ekphrasis* because both require the imagination to enlarge the understanding—especially when considering how *ekphrasis* operates in mid-eighteenth-century literary works.

The idea that understanding comes from the repeated interrogation of sensory inputs is reflected in mid eighteenth-century literary works by Eliza Haywood. In works that span three literary genres, Haywood's descriptive techniques parallel Locke's and Addison's philosophies of perception. A writer known for her fiction, drama, and serial publications, Haywood's *oeuvre* encapsulates the social and political changes she and her contemporaries experienced, written from a female perspective. Tracing the correlation between methods of description and critiques of patriarchal absolutism in her works reveals a distinct connection between contemporary philosophies of perception and how characters achieve *anagnorisis* within Haywood's works. Paula Backscheider comments that "Haywood relentlessly and creatively hammered away at the danger and abuses of power" seen in those who flout civic and sexual ethics simply because they believe their patriarchal privilege excuses it ("The Shadow" 94). *Ekphrasis* serves as a means to expose "the danger and abuses of power" perpetrated by tyrannical patriarchs in all three works examined in this chapter. In *A Wife to be Lett* (1724), Haywood offers her

audience an alternative to *mimesis* as a reliable mode of description, one that depends upon defamiliarization and is achieved through *ekphrasis* and engaging the imagination. *Fantomina, or, Love in a Maze* (1725) centers on a female character whose interior life shapes the prose fiction's action; through her imagination (*phantasia*), Fantomina creates her own ideal world, influencing and manipulating the object of her desire. The chapter closes with an examination of *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* (1751). In *Betsy Thoughtless*, Haywood employs ekphrastic descriptions in service of developing vivid images for the reader that occur just prior to major plot developments or *anagnorisis*. Throughout these works, Haywood repeatedly layers scenes describing images or objects that are vivid, but not quite ekphrastic on their own. Like Locke's and Addison's additive and interactive conception of human understanding, Haywood's descriptions typically build upon one another to form a complete picture. The repeated technique suggests that Haywood prepares her reader for scenes that achieve *enargeia* and produce *anagnorisis* in previously unreachable characters. Within each work, images build in vividness each time they appear, aggregating into what I call cumulative *ekphrasis*. When the scenes are fully ekphrastic, they coincide with pivotal plot points that change the direction of the narrative.

Let Me Be: Ekphrasis and Personhood in *A Wife to be Lett*

In *A Wife to be Lett* (1724), the play's central plot focuses on the character Mr. Graspall writing a contract that sells his wife to Beaumont, a character with whom his wife, Mrs. Graspall, is (not so) secretly in love. Unknown to all the characters is that Beaumont is secretly married to Amadea, who he abandoned in London. Linked by their

relationship to Beaumont, Amadea and Mrs. Graspall are central to the drama's intrigue. Although both female characters manipulate their male counterparts, they almost immediately reveal their deceptions; more important is the contrast between how male and female characters manipulate one another in the drama. Male characters never unmask, never stop playing at the male ideal. It becomes evident that male iterations of playacting are dangerous for female characters; yet it is through deceptions played out by female characters that the masculine ideal is achieved. *A Wife to be Lett* hinges on female characters imitating the male ideal in order to correct undesirable male behavior. The outcome is that imitations have a purpose, as long as they are done for the benefit of the entire group, not just to serve one character.

The idea of playacting and the potential disasters that can (and do) arise from various forms of costuming facilitate the drama's plot. By the play's end, it becomes clear that women's legal position does not provide them with any protection; it is up to husbands to behave civilly in order to prevent women under coverture from compromising their personal moral systems. The manipulations set in motion by Mrs. Graspall and Amadea highlight the fact that most of the male characters simply mimic ideal behavior, without actually believing what they say. The drama does not include fully ekphrastic descriptions, but it does provide evidence that Haywood was suspicious of imitations and the role they play in meaning-making. As Haywood knew, drama is less indebted to *ekphrasis*, because it is a naturally mimetic genre. Her later fiction capitalizes on drama's reliance on the physical presence of actors in costume to manifest what prose must convey through extended description. Haywood's prose fiction compensates for this by layering key descriptions, a technique that lends believability to the characters.

Haywood parlays the effect of vivid descriptions of female characters into teachable moments, seamlessly incorporating philosophical insights into her fiction.

The first hint of tension between how characters perceive the world and how they imagine it occurs when Mrs. Graspall is alone in her room, reading a novel. Mrs. Graspall's private musings while reading a book in her toilet succinctly outline the drama's didactic purpose, which is that the imagination can be deceived by sight. This realization is important, because it is how Mrs. Graspall later plots against her husband. The scene is metafictional in a way, as audiences can recognize that characters in books—much like the characters on stage—are creations of the author, meant to entertain and teach audiences. The scene is layered, as the play itself and the fictive novel Mrs. Graspall reads are capable of creating the same effects on audiences:

How small a Relief can Books afford us when the Mind's perplex'd?—
The Subject that our Thoughts are bent upon, forms Characters more
capital and swelling than any these useless Pages can produce-----And 'tis
no matter on what Theme the Author treats; we read it our own way, and
see but with our Passions Eyes. -----*Beaumont* is here in ev'ry
Line...I'll look no more on't-----These Opticks too are Traytors, and
conspire with Fancy to undo me. (2.4.1-8)

For Mrs. Graspall, books provide no relief when the reader's mind is occupied by the abstracted idea of a concrete character. In other words, books are not the escape from reality contemporary critics make them out to be. Instead, as Mrs. Graspall understands it, readers turn the pages into a sort of palimpsest: their imagination shapes how they picture characters and settings within a text. This recognition is not singular to Haywood;

in *The Spectator* No. 416, Addison writes that “Words, when well chosen, have so great a Force in them, that a Description often gives us more lively Ideas than the Sight of Things themselves” (292). Mrs. Graspall’s imagination, influencing her perception of the descriptions in her novel, creates “more lively Ideas” than the book itself. She imagines herself and Beaumont acting as the characters in her novel and is frustrated that their interactions are not like the ones of her fictional characters. That she can picture herself and Beaumont in the text suggests that the characters imitate real people. Yet the imitations are not vivid enough that Mrs. Graspall can picture them as real people. There is no *enargeia* created by the text, because it does not seem as though the characters appear before her eyes. Any didacticism in Mrs. Graspall’s novel is not conveyed through appropriate descriptions that can develop *phantasia* in her mind, which would in turn generate the *enargeia* necessary to make the characters seem real.

Rather than reinforcing contemporary arguments against women reading,⁴⁸ Haywood provides her audience with a model for the ideal female reader—one who questions the implications of her own imagination when it is superimposed on another’s words. According to Locke, mental faculties are developed by sensing an idea, remembering the idea, being able to abstract that idea, and, finally, from the abstraction, being able to understand language and universals. Within fictional texts, a reader’s ability to abstract—to correctly interpret the words describing how a character behaves or moves—is quintessential to understanding. Mrs. Graspall’s interrogation of her own

⁴⁸ In *The Spectator*, No. 37, Addison writes: “When I think how oddly this Lady is improved by Learning, I look upon her with a mixture of Admiration and Pity... What improvements would a Woman have made, who so Susceptible of Impressions from what she reads, had she been guided to such Books as have a tendency to enlighten the Understanding and rectify the Passions?” (153).

reading plays out this process for Haywood's audience. In the drama, spectators witness responsible reading, learning a behavior they can later emulate.

Mrs. Graspall's dialogue recalls Locke's theory concerning impediments to understanding, specifically how he defines confusion. According to Locke, "*Confusion*, making it a difficulty to separate two Things that should be separated, *concerns always two Ideas*; and those most, which most approach one another" (2.11.166). Because Mrs. Graspall conflates Beaumont with the heroes in her books, she exemplifies Locke's confusion, as she muddles together two separate things "which most approach one another"—here, two men playing the part of the lover. That a character in a book can be confused with a character she knows exposes the constructed behavior espoused by men attempting to seduce women. Realizing her mind is perturbed, Mrs. Graspall follows Locke's prescription for remedying confusion: "Whenever therefore we suspect any *Idea* to be confused, we must examine what other it is in danger to be confounded with, or which it cannot easily be separated from" (2.11.166). By asking "'To what shall I have recourse?'" (2.4.9), Mrs. Graspall examines her situation, seeking out how reading can influence her life if she approaches a text from her "passion's eye."

Mrs. Graspall's lament approaches Locke's reason for why language continually evolves: the images created by romance novels are too well known, are too easily understood, and therefore no longer provide any escape. Locke argues that language evolves out of social and scientific changes: "hence we may see the Reason, why *Languages constantly Change*, take up new, and lay by old terms. Because change of Customs and Opinions bringing with them new Combinations of *Ideas*, which it is necessary frequently to think on, and talk about" (1.22.133). A common consequence of

evolving social and philosophical systems is that language must similarly develop. The paradox is that whatever requires new language must occur before one can recognize that there is no language to adequately describe it.

A similar paradox occurred in *The Winter's Tale*, *The Forc'd Marriage*, and *Oroonoko*. Language is by nature reactionary: the creation of meaning through a sign is not required until a signifier requiring meaning-making arises or new combinations of ideas require new language. The consequence, as happens in numerous eighteenth-century texts, is the acknowledgement that language cannot produce universal images. Mrs. Graspall's toilette scene is not fully ekphrastic; it contains no vivid, specific details (unlike Belinda's in *The Rape of the Lock*). What is represented, however, is an exemplification of responsible reading habits. The showcasing of Mrs. Graspall's ability to interrogate what she reads provides a model that readers can emulate. In her analysis of Haywood's insertion of contemporary philosophy into her literary works, Rebecca Tierney-Hynes observes that Haywood "wants to insist on her theorization of the authorial role as interpretive, or readerly, rather than creative—the reader's role is uniquely, simultaneously, that of producer and consumer of texts" (156). Elaborating on this idea, Tierney-Hynes states that Haywood "demands instead that we turn our critical eye inward...She demands that we know ourselves" (168). Mrs. Graspall's private reading describes how the character turns her "critical eye inward," teaching readers how to interrogate their own perceptions. Reflecting upon how one interprets perceptions is crucial to Haywood's later use of *ekphrasis*—her readers must first be able to effectively understand the world around them in order to develop the vivid images that relate to the didactic intentions of Haywood's literary works.

When Haywood reframes the same question writers and philosophers had been asking for centuries—how to make an ekphrastic, vivid image—she seeks to create new meaning-making through defamiliarization. A new mode of describing people, events, and situations is required for a reader as discerning as Mrs. Graspall. Indeed, as Tierney-Hynes argues, “Haywood’s fiction functions as a forum for narrative explications of philosophic ideas, but more importantly, it demands that we understand fiction and philosophy to be engaged in the same epistemological quest to define the self” (155). Mrs. Graspall’s philosophic ponderings in relationship to her private reading enact Tierney-Hynes’s argument that only through a deep interrogation of reading can audiences come to understand themselves. Mrs. Graspall’s capacity to create characters in her imagination outdoes that of the author she reads—her lament is a call to writers to elevate the stories they tell.

A character like Mrs. Graspall, in Restoration and eighteenth-century dramas, typically serves as the subject of moral derision. A married woman whose loyalty is not to her husband but to her beau, is typically exposed, shamed, and eventually reformed. Mrs. Graspall is introduced much like Mrs. Fainall in *The Way of the World*: she is married to a noxious man and in love with a man of fashion. She is the wife husbands fear will make them cuckolds. Yet she is not the vapid, immoral character her precursors turned out to be. As her private reading reveals, Mrs. Graspall indeed “grasps it all” intellectually, as she is able to think critically about language and its implications. Therefore, when her husband requires that she engage in a contract she finds morally reprehensible, she has the linguistic skill to question his motives.

Upon discovering her flirtation with Beaumont from a letter, Mr. Graspall writes a return, setting up a private meeting, unbeknownst to his wife. He arrives at the meeting, surprising Beaumont with an offer: pay him an agreed upon sum, and Beaumont can have unencumbered access to his wife. When Mr. and Mrs. Graspall next meet, he attempts to manipulate her into acquiescence, with language developed from patriarchal norms and contemporary coverture laws. Before telling her about the deal struck between himself and Beaumont, Mr. Graspall opens with the basic agreement made between a husband and wife: ““You know, Spouse, the Duty of a Husband is to love, and provide for, his Wife; and, in return, the Wife is obliged to obey the Commands, and study the Interest of her Husband”” (3.5.1-2). Notably, Mr. Graspall begins by stating his own duties, a move that both recognizes his own obligations and puts them first. His only obligations are to love and provide; in return, she must obey his commands and serve her husband’s interests. His language mirrors Reverend John Spirit’s in “The Bride-Womans Counsellor” (1699), a preamble to a marriage ceremony, wherein he states: “In the same Chapter [of the Bible], where the Wife is commanded to be subject to her Husband, as the Church is to Christ, the Husband is also commanded to love his Wife, as Christ loved the Church” (15). Spirit’s language attempts to enforce patriarchal ideals by referencing the hierarchal power structure depended upon by the system: wives are subject to their husbands, legally and spiritually, relinquishing their personhood upon marriage.

Once Mrs. Graspall acknowledges the truth of her husband’s statement, he continues: ““But that it being fresh in thy Memory, thou might’nt not boggle at any thing which tends to the enriching thy Husband”” (3.5.5). Under the guise of innocently reminding his wife of the legal agreement made by signing their marriage contract, Mr.

Graspall attempts to manipulate his wife into capitulation. His language recalls Locke's philosophy of perception, particularly how memory functions: "*The Pictures drawn in our Minds, are laid in fading Colours; and if not sometimes refreshed, vanish and disappear*" (2.11.66). Locke argues that even the most well-understood ideas must be refreshed, or their clarity fades with time. Mr. Graspall manipulates such philosophy, pretending to remind his wife of her marital obligation, even as he is breaking the spirit of the law that contracts them, for his own ulterior purposes. Always an interrogative character, Mrs. Graspall asks *why* she must be reminded; in response, Mr. Graspall's language becomes stilted and cumbersome:

Well, well, I ha' done-----I ha' done-----But remember that Obedience
to a Husband ought to be the *Premium Mobile* in a Woman. (3.5.12)

He does not expect to be questioned, and his assumption of success is obvious. He espouses the patriarchal behavior condoned in Filmer's *Patriarcha*, positioning himself as someone to be obeyed. When Mrs. Graspall probes her husband's intentions, she does not play the role of obedient wife, and he does not know how to respond. The effect is comedic—his stumbling over words was likely meant to elicit laughter from the audience. But his response is important for more than its comedic effect; the humor exposes the absurdity inherent to patriarchal assumptions of superiority. A simple question is enough to turn Mr. Graspall into a bumbling fool, drawing further attention to the fact that what he assumes is a foregone conclusion actually highlights the incoherence of patriarchal order.

The contract agreed upon by Mr. Graspall and Beaumont stipulates that for £2,000, Beaumont has "the Liberty to-----visit thee now and then, that's all" (3.5.55). In

Mr. Graspall's mind, his wife's body is indelibly linked to his economic prosperity, meaning that if she refuses to agree, "it is as bad as robbing me" (3.5.57). It becomes a crime for her to refuse her husband's demand, recalling the absolutism of tyrannical patriarchs in previous texts. The manipulation occurs when Mr. Graspall states that if she has any love for him (notably, not one of her duties), she will agree to the arrangement. To deny him is to be in dereliction of her wifely duties.

The normalizing of patriarchal autocracy offered in Mr. Graspall's dialogue and Spirit's sermon demean characters like Mrs. Graspall. She refuses the agreement, stating that selling her body is immoral:

Is it possible you can have so mean a Spirit?-----Or do you believe, if you have so sordid and groveling a Soul, that I can, regardless of my Fame, and loss to Virtue, yield to such a detested Bargain? (3.5.60)

Mrs. Graspall's assertion that her husband asks her to do something unethical highlights a central problem dogging patriarchal systems: the idea that patriarchs are infallible simply because they hold a higher social position. If one grants that patriarchs are morally superior, having a better sense of right and wrong than their subordinates, it is a logical conclusion that they cannot ask for something that is "wrong." Yet this basic assumption repeatedly proves false: holding a position of power does not indemnify patriarchs from having immoral tendencies. Spirit's sermon seeks to mollify this seeming contradiction:

Obj. But what if an Husband commands the Wife to do that which is sinful?

Ans. By Every thing in the Text,⁴⁹ is meant all that comes within the compass of his Authority to command; and certainly God never gave to any Man Authority to command that which is contradictory to his own Laws. (13)

According to Spirit, a husband cannot ask anything of his wife that is illegal or immoral, because God would never include anything “contradictory to his own Laws” in free will. The falseness of this claim aside (e.g., evidentiary proof of a man committing murder, incest, theft, etc.), Mr. Graspall sells her against her will, which he salves with the expectation of a wife’s obedience. Blindsided by the bargain, Mrs. Graspall puts aside her reputation and her virtue to lament the realization that she means nothing more to her husband than monetary gain. She has become a product, with a set value, appreciated only for the money she can bring to her husband.

The Graspalls are not the only couple subject to renegotiating the husband/wife relationship. Beaumont’s abandoned wife Amadea has hidden in plain sight throughout the play, costumed as a man. Her behavior upon reuniting with Beaumont provides a contrast to Mr. Graspall’s behavior, highlighting the performative nature of masculinity, and in turn exposing bad behavior. The play’s climax—the exposure of Mr. Graspall—is possible because his inability to emulate ideal male behavior (i.e. prostituting his wife for monetary gain rather than guarding her reputation) is exposed by Amadea’s ability to emulate male behavior in service of drawing out ideal behavior in her lawful husband. It is no longer enough to imitate ideal male behavior in public. Instead, male characters

⁴⁹ The text Spirit refers to is Ephesians 5:22, 24: “Wives submit to your Husbands, as unto the Lord...Therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ, so should the Wives be to their Husbands, in Every thing” (cited in Spirit 13).

must reflect upon and understand ideal behavior, and these reflections are prompted by female characters enacting ideal behavior.

In a conversation between Mrs. Graspall and Beaumont (after she learns Amadea's true identity), Mrs. Graspall gets him to admit the basis of a well-functioning relationship: ““Sir *Harry*; I know with how much Ease you Men absolve your selves the Breach of Vows in an Affair of this Nature-----But since you have confest that Constancy's the only Proof of true Affection, answer me. Did you ne'er love before?”” (4.4.52-55). Unbeknownst to Beaumont, Mrs. Graspall knows the answer to his question: she sets up a rhetorical proposition to which she knows if he answers in the negative, he lies; if he answers positively, he admits previous faults. What is important is that constancy is the litmus test for true feelings. Constancy is quantifiable; a person can measure the length of time another has made their feelings known. Mrs. Graspall requires proof; she insists that Beaumont answer to something measurable in order to validate the truth value of his statements:

WIFE. But one thing more...Since so belov'd, and so deserving, why are
you disunited? Grew she unkind?

BEAUMONT. I am so confounded. I know not what to say. O *Amadea*!
now thy Image rises to my View, and brings my broken Vows to
my Remembrance.

WIFE. What say you, Sir? Did she prove false? or is she dead?

BEAUMONT. Neither, Madam. (4.4.80-91)

With her questions, Mrs. Graspall attempts to refresh Beaumont's mind—much like her husband did to her earlier in the drama. Mrs. Graspall may use a similar technique to

recall images to Beaumont's mind, but the outcome is very different. Before, Mrs. Graspall was not persuaded to agree to Mr. Graspall's prostituting of her because she believed his request immoral. In her conversation with Beaumont, Mrs. Graspall asks questions that require Beaumont to recognize the immorality of his previous behavior. When her questions are not enough to dissuade his desire for her, Mrs. Graspall produces Beaumont's abandoned wife, Amadea:

WIFE. I'll hear no more-----nor is it my Business to judge either your past
or present Actions----Come forth, *Amadea*.

BEAUMONT. *Amadea!* (4.4.100-103)

Walking on stage, costume discarded, Amadea presents Beaumont with blanket forgiveness:

BEAUMONT. 'Tis she indeed!

AMADEA. Turn not away confus'd; I shall believe you never knew the
Force of Love, if you can doubt my Readiness to pardon----You
wrong me more by this unkind Delay to meet my stretch'd-out
Arms, than e'er you did in your Addresses there.

BEAUMONT. Can there be so much Generosity in Nature! (4.5.3-6)

Beaumont's recognition of Amadea is his moment of *anagnorisis*: seeing his wife makes him realize his deplorable behavior in the context of a philosophical and rhetorical engagement with another woman about the value of constancy. Amadea embodies the constancy recently offered as evidence of one's affections. Beaumont admits to all his wrongdoings and exclaims that her presence "“here in this Scene of guilty Wishes, so strangely, so unexpectedly, fills me at once with Shame, and Joy, and Wonder”" (4.5.18).

Like Leontes and Alcippus before him, Beaumont crumbles at the sight of his wife, standing before him, in the flesh.

But, for the first time in this study, a drama presents audiences with a male character claiming to change in the penultimate act: there is still time for him to return to his old behavior. Audiences have the opportunity to witness Beaumont's changed moral system in action during the final act. By comparing Amadea's pardon with natural behavior, Beaumont positions her as the ideal against which all behavior should be measured. Through Amadea, audiences learn that disguises can be used to produce positive results, but dissembling must be discarded to achieve actual change. Beaumont states that Amadea's "unexampled Tenderness and Generosity has charm'd my very Soul-----nor will we ever be divided more" (4.5.31). The word "unexampled" makes it clear that imitation cannot be the basis of her behavior. Amadea does not model her language or choices upon a previous example; instead, Amadea is the new model against which desirable behavior is measured.

Because Amadea's costume facilitates *anagnorisis* efficiently, Mrs. Graspall—always reflecting on the situations before her—develops a plot to test her husband. Her design manipulates male perceptions of external appearances in order to trick her husband into voiding his contract with Beaumont. When, during the initial argument about selling her to Beaumont, Mr. Graspall tells her he cares not what others think of him if he gets a large sum of money, Mrs. Graspall knows that he is disingenuous. Her continual references to morality recall what Locke terms the "*Moral Relations*" between people, relationships that signify "the Conformity, or Disagreement, Mens voluntary Actions have to a Rule, to which they are referred, and by which they are judged of"

(2.27.157). Moral Relations create “*Moral Rules*, or Laws, to which Men generally refer, and by which they judge of the Rectitude or Pravity of their Actions” (2.27.157). Mrs. Graspall’s vehement objections arise from her husband breaking a moral rule, and she is not the only one to denounce his behavior; once Beaumont’s anagnorisis occurs and he repents his treatment of Amadea, he recognizes the depravity of his contract with Mr. Graspall.

The three characters devise a scheme meant to expose Mr. Graspall to the universal derision of his peers. Their agreement highlights Locke’s argument that morality is singular to groups of people:

If therefore we examine it right, we shall find, that the measure of what is every-where called and esteemed *Vertue* and *Vice*, is this approbation or dislike, praise or blame, which, by a secret and tacit Consent, establishes it self in the several Societies, Tribes, or Clubs of Men in the World: whereby several Actions come to find Credit or Disgrace amongst them, according to the Judgement, Maxims, or Fashions of that Place. (2.27.158)

For Locke, morality and immorality are agreed upon by groups of people and are determined by the norms adapted within a social enclave. Virtue and vice, therefore, are not universal, but subjective. In a bold statement concerning just how this tacit agreement arises, Locke proffers public shame as the central motivator for people’s willing acceptance of social moral codes:

Nor is there one in ten thousand, who is stiff and insensible enough, to hold up under the constant Dislike, and Condemnation of his own Club...But no Body, that has the least Thoughts, or Sense of a Man about

him, can live in Society, under the constant Dislike, and ill Opinion of his Familiars, and those he converses with. (2.27.159-60)

This argument is precisely what Mrs. Graspall depends upon to facilitate *anagnorisis* in her husband. She knows that her own protestations are not enough to persuade Mr. Graspall against his base scheme. However, she does believe that once his peer group publicly condemns him, he will break the contract with Beaumont.

The scheme is simple: Beaumont chases Mrs. Graspall and Amadea (in drag) into a room full of their guests, bemoaning that he caught the two in a compromising position. The immediate reaction of the peers confirms Mrs. Graspall's earlier statement that reputation does have value and impacts how characters are perceived:

COURTLY. I'm amazed!

FAIRMAN. She that was esteem'd so virtuous!

TOYWELL. They are all so till caught.

GRASPALL. And hast thou done this? Hast thou made a Cuckold of thy old Hubby?-----Ah, Cockatrice! (5.4.80-85)

The men immediately turn against Mrs. Graspall. Their sensory perceptions seem to provide incontrovertible evidence of her illicit affair; they *see* her in a compromising situation. Their sight, however, is deceived. The moment Mrs. Graspall lays out her husband's scheme for everyone present, any pity the characters felt for Mr. Graspall quickly turns to anger and accusation:

WIFE. Did you not sell me? lett me out to Hire, and forc'd my trembling

Virtue to obey?—Did I not knell, and weep, and beg?---but you

had receiv'd the Price you set me at, and I must yield, or be turn'd
out a Beggar?

FAIRMAN. What! lett his Wife for Hire!

COURTLY. Agree for Money to his own Dishonour! (5.4.95-101)

The condemnation is immediate. Courtly's exclamation suggests that he cannot imagine a sum of money that could make him part with his reputation. The drama's denouement perfectly sets up the demise of Mr. Graspall's malevolent plan. As in *The Way of the World*, there is a black box in *A Wife to be Lett*. This black box is different, however, because while Mirabell holds deeds to an estate, this black box contains Beaumont's payment of £2,000. And rather than the secret being held in one man's hands, the information of the box's contents is available to all major players in Haywood's drama.

Throughout the dialogue thus far, Mr. Graspall shows no signs of shame or repentance. And that is the craftiness of Mrs. Graspall's plan: she waits to layer evidence of his lies, revealing his reprehensible behavior by degrees. While the supposed affair and the condemnation of his peers is not enough to alter Mr. Graspall's behavior, monetary loss is:

WIFE. But do not imagine you shall ever reap any Advantage from my
Crimes----I have broke open your Closet, and the 2000*l*. Sir *Harry*
paid you for seducing me, I have bestow'd on this dear Man.

GRASPALL. Oh! Oh! the Money gone too!

WIFE. You shall find what 'tis to have a vicious Wife—Do you not now
repent what you have done, and wish I cou'd resume my Virtue—

tho' it shou'd cost you twice as much as you receiv'd for my
renouncing it?

GRASPALL. I do indeed; I see my Error now 'tis too late-----Oh
damn'd, damn'd Avarice!

WIFE. You wou'd not tempt me then, were it again to do?

GRASPALL. No.

WIFE. Not for the greatest Consideration?

GRASPALL. Not for the Universe-----But do not plague me, I shall not
live to endure it long. (5.107-121)

The change seems almost too swift to be believed. When the plot is revealed, Mr. Graspall asks: ““Can I believe my Eyes?”” (5.135). Although not necessarily reformed, Mr. Graspall has at least learned to interrogate what he sees, much like his wife did in Act One. Beaumont’s response confirms that Mr. Graspall is developing a sense of understanding:

They do not deceive you, Sir---

This Plot was laid on purpose to cure you, if 'twas possible, of that
covetous, sordid Disposition, which has ever been the Blot of your
Character. (5.136-8)

Mr. Graspall asks if his sight is deceived, and because he takes the time to interrogate his perception, he is rewarded with the truth: no affair took place and his money is safe. Quickly asking for his wife’s forgiveness, Mr. Graspall seems to evolve into the same kind of reformed tyrant as Beaumont.

A series of pretendings—of women acting a part other than their true selves—brings about Mr. Graspall’s change. First, Amadea successfully dresses like a man, convincing everyone that (like Epicoene), she is a he. Second, Mrs. Graspall plays the part of the trifling coquette: she convinces everyone that she is indeed having an affair (and even worse, that she is paying for the pleasure). Yet, even with his exposure, Mr. Graspall does not evolve. He does not apologize for prostituting his wife. When Mrs. Graspall removes monetary gain, she knows that her husband now has everything to lose: respect from his peers, a sizeable sum, and any pretense that he can be trusted within the rules of social decorum. Admittedly, it is the money that forces him to realize that perhaps selling his wife is not the most productive move. Yet, without the costuming and play-acting by Mrs. Graspall and Amadea, there is no chance that the change ever occurs. Although *ekphrasis* is not fully developed in the drama, *A Wife to be Lett* functions as an important baseline for the remainder of this chapter. From the imitations successfully enacted by Mrs. Graspall and Amadea, Haywood teaches her audience that the senses—particularly sight—can be deceived. In order to develop one’s understanding, one must interrogate and reflect upon the ideas formed in the mind and how those ideas are influenced by sight.

Creating Desire: *Ekphrasis* and Self-Creation in *Fantomina*

Haywood’s *Fantomina, or, Love in a Maze* (1725) presents her readers with a female character who fully realizes the capacity of her imagination to influence how her peers perceive her. *Fantomina* centers on a young woman who is “a Stranger to the World, and consequently to the Dangers of it,” travelling throughout England in various

disguises in order to maintain a sexual relationship with the character Beauplaisir (41). She remains unnamed throughout the text, suggesting that her mistakes could be those of any well-born woman. Abandoning her role as a “Lady of Distinguished Birth,” she dresses as a street worker, a servant, a widow, and finally as a masked aristocrat (41). In each persona, she adapts herself—clothing, language, and mien—to mimic the behavior expected from each class of woman she imitates. It is her ability to successfully imitate female archetypes that both secures her sexual objective and catalyzes her downfall. The story dramatically exposes the dangers inherent in play-acting. These dangers become apparent from ekphrastic descriptions of Fantomina’s clothing and behavior. One reason that *ekphrasis* appears frequently and with persuasive effect in the fiction is that much of *Fantomina* takes place in the protagonist’s imagination. Fantomina imaginatively adopts different female archetypes traditionally free from the confines of polite society.⁵⁰ Because her passions are restrained by social expectations concerning a woman of her social status, the only recourse she can perceive is separating herself—both her physical body and her social identity—from its known identification.

By way of *phantasia*, Fantomina imagines a space for herself in the world that is unencumbered by rules and expectations. Addison, writing of the imagination in *The Spectator* No. 412, notes that the “Mind of Man naturally hates every thing that looks like a Restraint upon it, and is apt to fancy it self under a sort of Confinement, when the Sight is pent up in a narrow Compass” (279). That is, the perception of confinement is enough to make people feel restrained. That Fantomina understands her social position and feels restricted by it is clear from the text’s opening. Although it is not clear how much she

⁵⁰ Fantomina’s relative freedom is apparent in the missing details: her father is never mentioned, and her mother does not appear until the story’s conclusion.

actually knows about the ways of the world, Fantomina believes she knows herself and how polite society operates. Young and frequently unaccompanied, her behavior is often that of a petulant child, acting out against the social structures that she perceives as unnecessary hindrances. Fantomina's desire to interact with Beauplaisir on her own terms arises from the strictures she experiences while operating in polite society. Only by imagining a space completely under her control can Fantomina enact her desires. She must, in other words, create *enargeia* from her own *phantasia*. She does this by self-authoring ekphrastic images of herself in various disguises, operating in a space of relative freedom, a freedom she cannot imagine were she to adhere to the confines of her social position. Haywood teaches her readers the art of self-making, and the process is described with details that build upon one another, developing images of Fantomina's different identities for Haywood's audience. I call this mode of description cumulative *ekphrasis*, as the ekphrastic moment occurs once multiple descriptions have successfully developed a complete image. Haywood is careful to include the hazards women may encounter while developing their identities, thereby providing her readers with the tools necessary to create their own self-image and project that image into the world. Her didactic intention is intertwined with vivid images, expanding the reader's imagination, understanding, and critical reading ability.

Imitation is at the heart of *Fantomina*, much as it was in *Epicoene*. The process is quite different, however, in Haywood's prose fiction. In two instances, Fantomina adapts the clothing and behavior of lower-class women, effectively eschewing her upper-class status in lieu of her personal desire. She wants to converse with Beauplaisir in a less restrained environment, in a setting where he may act more naturally. Ironically, given

her need for authenticity, the story opens at a playhouse, a setting rife with disguise and pretense. After watching the women around her at a previous play, Fantomina dresses both her body and how she carries herself to perfectly imitate working women; men flock to her, offering to outbid one another: “and practising as much as she had observ’d, at that Distance, the Behaviour of that Woman, [it] was not long before she found her Disguise had answer’d the Ends she wore it for” (42). Observation is key to Fantomina’s success. Only by reflecting upon the images her sight perceives can she effectively mimic the sex-worker archetype. Her “ends” are, initially, innocent; she wants to relate to Beauplaisir outside the rigid structures of courtship, because she “had discover’d something in him, which had made her often think she shou’d not be displeas’d, if he wou’d abate some Part of his Reserve” (42). To be successful, Fantomina must play her part without being discovered. For Emily Hodgson Anderson, Fantomina’s costuming “establishes the moment of performance as a moment of expression—a chance for the woman to achieve an external representation of an internal emotion” (3). As Anderson stresses, “Haywood links the actress and her role: the emotion she has planned to display is not feigned” (3). It is peculiar, if not uncommon, that secrecy leads to truth.

In *Fantomina*, there is no truthful exchange, nor even a truthful appearance, performed by either Fantomina or Beauplaisir, but the emotions displayed by Fantomina are her true feelings. In *Privacy*, Patricia Meyer Spacks observes that female characters were expected to espouse chastity, noting that “given the enormous social danger of female self-revelation, the woman must learn to play an actress’s part, realizing the omnipresence of a critical audience” (67).⁵¹ Because Fantomina cannot express her

⁵¹ While Spacks implies that only women perform, the existence of male stereotypes such as the rake, the fop, or the cavalier prove that men (and male characters) play roles as well.

interest in Beauplaisir—regardless of its initial innocence—she becomes an actress, hiding her identity in order to avoid the “social danger of female self-revelation.” She yearns to have a candid conversation with Beauplaisir, hidden from the watchful eyes of their peers. She achieves her goal through costume, and the description of her experience at the theater relies on short, vivid descriptions. Although a complete picture may not be formed by the details Haywood provides, the description of Fantomina’s ability to learn from her environment suggests that the scene is meant to evoke descriptive particularity.

Fantomina’s costume is a performance, a *mise en abyme*, in that she plays a sex worker in a playhouse while a play is simultaneously staged. The character “Fantomina” works just as hard as any actress on stage to submerge her actual identity in the constructed role she currently plays. She acts the part of a woman who is paid for her (sexual) performance, opposite actresses on stage being paid for their (theatrical) performances. Terry Castle insists that “costume ideally represented an inversion of one’s nature. At its most piquant it expressed a violation of cultural categories” (5). To appear as a sex worker in a public forum is a clear “violation of cultural categories.” The costume frees Fantomina to speak and act far differently than she could otherwise. She perceives that constructing a role adapted from the sex workers she imitates is her only recourse for expressing her desires. Both the sex workers and the actresses put on performances, albeit while playing very different roles.⁵² By studying the women around her, Fantomina learns how to become an actress herself.

⁵² For a detailed analysis of the relationship between actress and mistress, including the historical practice of actresses becoming royal mistresses, see Ellen Donkin’s *Getting Into the Act: Women Playwrights in London 1776-1829*, pp. 25-28. See also Nora Nachumi’s *Acting Like a Lady: British Women Novelists and the Eighteenth-Century Theater* (pp. 11-19). Patricia Howell Michaelson’s *Speaking Volumes: Women, Reading, and Speech in the Age of Austen* (pp. 98-134) examines the fine line actresses like Sarah Siddons had to tread in order to avoid deleterious rumors about her from spreading.

Although Fantomina plays the sex worker part well, immediately attracting potential buyers, her first disguise receives very little descriptive attention. It seems that Haywood assumes her audience can easily picture the archetypal sex worker. When Fantomina dons her second disguise (calling herself Celia) with the intent to rekindle Beauplaisir's desire, the writing is not fully ekphrastic, but it does suggest that close observation, one of the tenets central to Enlightenment doctrine, is an important skill to develop:

The Dress she was in, was a round-ear'd Cap, a short Red Petticoat, and a little Jacket of Grey Stuff; all the rest of her Accoutrements were answerable to these, and join'd with a broad Country Dialect, a rude unpolish'd Air, which she, having been bred in these Parts, knew very well how to imitate, with her Hair and Eye-brows black'd, made it impossible for her to be known, or taken for any other than what she seem'd. Thus disguis'd did she offer herself to Service in the House where *Beauplaisir* lodg'd. (52)

The description begins with her clothing, the most immediately identifiable part of her costume. It is also the simplest part of a costume to detail because it is visible. But, as Haywood's description continues, Celia's disguise becomes increasingly vivid: her tone of voice and language change, and she goes so far as to change her hair and eyebrow color. Every part of her is costumed as she prepares for the second deception of Beauplaisir. As in *The Way of the World*, ekphrastic descriptions are employed by a character with the intention to deceive in order to avoid exposure. She mimics a lower-class archetype in service of preventing her true identity from becoming known to

Beauplaisir—because his knowledge of her identity would inevitably expose her as a desiring woman to society.

The description of Celia evokes *ekphrasis*, although its conciseness means that it is not fully ekphrastic. There are specific details, but the image does not quite “produce a viewing subject” (Goldhill 2). That far more attention is given to Celia’s costume than Fantomina’s suggests that the second costume requires more explication than the first. In the second iteration, readers enter into Fantomina’s internal thought process which reveals her motivations and intentions. Unlike *Incognita*’s narrator, *Fantomina*’s narrator has access to her internal thoughts. Due to this access, the narrator confidently provides explicit details. By spending time on Celia, describing her costume and her movements, as well as her motivations, Haywood has the time to develop a more complete sketch of Celia.

What quickly becomes apparent is that even with all of her attention to detail, Celia cannot hold Beauplaisir’s attention for long. It is as if Fantomina’s *personae* can only borrow from life, recalling Hobbes and Locke. Her ability to deceive Beauplaisir is successful, but the efficacy of each iteration produces diminishing returns. In her third costume, Fantomina disguises herself as the Widow Bloomer. The details of her clothing and mien are similar to the details provided concerning Fantomina at the play. Her clothing is simply “such as Widows wear in their first Mourning,” and her demeanor is “the most afflicted and penitential Countenance that ever was seen” (54). Again, it seems, the archetype of the widow is common enough that Haywood does not need to provide explicit details regarding her outfit. While performing as the Widow Bloomer, Fantomina is able to create *enargeia* in Beauplaisir’s mind:

From that she pass'd to a Description of the Happiness of mutual Affection;—the unspeakable Extasy of those who meet with equal Ardency; and represented it in Colours so lively, and disclos'd by the Gestures with which her Words were accompany'd, and the Accent of her Voice so true a Feeling of what she said, that *Beauplaisir*, without being stupid...could not avoid perceiving there were Seeds of Fire, not yet extinguish'd, in this fair Widow's Soul. (56)

In this passage, Haywood strives to actuate a picture in the reader's mind. Although readers do not have access to Fantomina's language, what they do have access to is the *effect* of her language. Her words and her body language detail the fictive relationship in "Colours" that are "lively," suggesting that the description is vivid. Further, her story is conveyed with "so true a Feeling" that *Beauplaisir* believes her. *Beauplaisir* is enraptured in Fantomina's description, a consequence of effective *enargeia* that Longinus examines:

What then is the effect of rhetorical visualization? There is much it can do to bring urgency and passion into our words; but it is when it is closely involved with factual arguments that as well as persuading the listener, it enslaves him. (4, quoted in Goldhill)

During their carriage ride, *Beauplaisir* becomes enslaved by Fantomina's story—a story she tells so well that he recognizes her desire and begins to return it. She is confident that *Beauplaisir* will create mental pictures based on her words and her demeanor, and she shapes her words and gestures to create vivid mental images within *Beauplaisir*, making him believe that what he imagines is real. There is enough truth in her story to make it believable. In her guise as the widow, Fantomina manipulates stereotypes of widows as

lusty, insatiable women to achieve her personal end. The passage itself is not ekphrastic—there is almost no vivid description provided. But the absence is important: readers can infer that Beauplaisir is the one developing *phantasia* from Fantomina’s *ekphrasis*, even if the language is omitted from the prose fiction. There is a blurring of lines between the fictional and the real when audiences are asked to create vivid pictures in their own minds; just as with *Incognita*, the fictional world is created from the reader’s imagination. The effect is a movement of ideas from the reader’s world into the fictional world, based on how the reader imagines the text, and there is a reciprocal eliding and returning of material from the fictional world into the reader’s world. By understanding that Fantomina adopts disguises and molds her language to seductive ends, readers can come to understand how language and appearance impact how they are perceived by others. More importantly, Haywood’s readers learn that they can control how others understand them. Women can imagine how they want to appear and be perceived. It is by embodying their *phantasia* that women project their imagined selves to the world.

Once Fantomina and Beauplaisir return to London, he writes letters to the Widow Bloomer and Fantomina. The letters between him and her *personae* suggest that, as far as Fantomina is concerned, the two effectively have a gentleman’s agreement concerning their arrangement. After she receives the letters, she is appalled when Beauplaisir lies to Fantomina in order to meet with the Widow Bloomer: “Traytor! (*cry’d she,*) as soon as she had read them, ’tis thus our silly, fond, believing Sex are serv’d when they put Faith in Man” (59). Her reaction is hyperbolic—after all, Beauplaisir has already proven himself a rover. The *naiveite* readers may have suspected at the work’s beginning is proven by her reaction to the letters—she knows that he sleeps with her different

personae, meaning she knows he is not faithful to any one in particular. Yet, it seems that his showing preference to one *persona* over another is deeply upsetting for Fantomina—however nonsensical it might seem to the reader. She believes herself innocent in the relationship, because she sleeps with no one else—she only pretends to be other women. At the same time, Fantomina also perceives herself as different from the sighing, pining women that Haywood upbraids in the *Female Spectator*.⁵³ And it is this belief that placates her ego: “But I have outwitted even the more Subtle of the deceiving Kind, and while he thinks to fool me, is himself the only beguiled Person” (59). Fantomina’s *personae* give her a sense of power, of having something to hold over Beauplaisir. She distances herself from other women cast aside after a sexual affair, telling herself that she is smarter than the rest because she has devised a system to continually renew Beauplaisir’s interest.

Power structures—and how characters react within and against them—seem to lie at the heart of Haywood’s novella. In the final tryst between Beauplaisir and Incognita, his true personality emerges. Happy to take advantage of women who cannot hope to participate in their sexual relationship from a position of equal power, Beauplaisir believes himself in complete control. He embodies the male privilege underlying patriarchal structures, both patrilineal and fraternal. There is no concern about leaving

⁵³ Haywood writes: “How fatal, how pernicious to a young and inexperienced Mind must be such Maxims, especially when dressed up in all the Pomp of Words!...But what is yet more preposterous, and more evidently shews the ill Effects of writing in this manner is, that we often see Girls too young, either to be addressed to on the Score of Love, or even to know what is meant by the Passion, affect the Languishment they read of,—roll their Eyes, sigh, fold their Arms, neglect every useful Learning, and attend to nothing but acquiring the Reputation of being enough a Woman to know all the Pains and Delicacies of Love” (12).

disenfranchised women in the lurch, because they have no possible recourse against Beauplaisir, no ability to shame him in front of his peers.

However, in her final guise, that of Incognita, Fantomina meets Beauplaisir on his own social footing, returning to who she was at the outset. There is a circularity to the personae Fantomina adopts: she believed that if she approached Beauplaisir as herself, she would not have access to his real self; in her final persona, Fantomina does access Beauplaisir's true personality—although, in the end, she may have preferred to not know. She pretends to be a woman of equal status who refuses to reveal her identity—ironically, something she has been doing all along. Anderson argues that as Incognita, “she can act out her desires without ceasing to perform, and Beauplaisir feels, for the first time, dissatisfied, even angry...Beauplaisir has maintained a false sense of control linked to his own ability to dissemble. Once she reveals the fact of female performance, he can no longer maintain his illusion” (7). For Anderson, Beauplaisir's irritation arises from his comprehension that a woman can perform better than he can. The interaction recalls the theatricality of the novella's opening, making the performances of both characters obvious. In the scene, Beauplaisir reveals that he is unworthy of the nameless heroine: when confronted by a woman of equal status who refuses to acquiesce, Beauplaisir becomes petulant and irritable. What he rails against is his perception that Incognita's refusal defies his expectations of male/female relationships within a patriarchal system. He cannot accept that a woman (especially one who he believes his social equal) can deny his desires. Beauplaisir reveals that everything Fantomina perceived to be agreeable about his behavior was an act, a performance he cannot maintain as well as she can.

Incognita, however, does have the potential power to undermine Beauplaisir's carefully crafted aristocratic *ethos*, because her lodgings and her costume suggest she is a peer. With the character Incognita, Fantomina arguably achieves the ultimate goal: her imagined persona becomes real to Beauplaisir. What is surprising is that the only persona who wears a mask—who wears the external sign that her identity is hidden—is the persona that becomes the most real to Beauplaisir. The *enargeia* Fantomina created in her own mind concerning the character Incognita transfers to Beauplaisir. Arguably, this is achieved because Beauplaisir has empirical proof before him: he can see, smell, and touch Incognita. Her body—aesthetic object that it is—becomes the vehicle through which Fantomina's *phantasia* becomes *enargeia*. She is not the ghost of Erminia or the statue of Hermione, costumed characters meant to be seen and not touched. She is, in every sense, tactile. In fact, Incognita is all body and no head; in a sense, she is a universal woman. The final iteration of Fantomina's imagination becomes corporeal *enargeia* because the imagined character is real for her audience.

With *Fantomina*, Haywood creates a female character fully capable of realizing her physical desires. It is through her imagination and ability to embody her *phantasia* that Fantomina does so. The character mimics female stereotypes, but those imitations are not what receive the most descriptive attention. Instead, Haywood evokes cumulative *ekphrasis* in order to describe how Fantomina behaves and how she is capable of creating *phantasia* within Beauplaisir. It is only when Fantomina adopts the Incognita disguise that Beauplaisir's undesirable behavior is fully realized. By calling the final iteration Incognita, Haywood wants to remind readers of Congreve's text: a masked female character playfully engages with the male lead. Fantomina is in Juliana's position, using

her mask to prevent exposure. Yet there is nothing ideal about Beauplaisir's behavior in *Fantomina*. He is not Aurelian, happy to engage his imaginative capabilities to picture his ideal partner. Instead, he is petulant and puerile, all but throwing a tantrum before exiting the rooms. Haywood seems to suggest that the idyllic world created by Congreve is not tenable in contemporary England. All men are not Aurelian, blissfully happy to let situations resolve themselves without direct intervention. Beauplaisir, put forth as a desirable husband, is exposed as exactly the *wrong* kind of suitor for a female character with depth and self-awareness.

With each costume, *Fantomina*'s deceptions becomes increasingly complex—as do the details provided. The different *personae* fill out her internal sense of self, suggesting that Haywood wants to give her readers access to the inner workings of her heroine's mind. As readers move from one disguise to the next, each identity rises in social class, getting closer and closer to *Fantomina*'s true status as a woman whose identity is dictated by patriarchal society. Even the conclusion suggests that *Fantomina* cannot operate outside the strictures of patriarchal society: her options are to marry Beauplaisir (an option not given to her or desired by her or her mother) or become a nun. Becoming a *feme covert* means operating under the rule of her husband; becoming a nun means becoming part of a fundamentally mediated system under male control. Although *Fantomina* concludes with the titular character's confinement in a nunnery, her previous activities allow her a modicum of passionate expression—expression created by her own imagination, enacted throughout the story.

Yet, to suggest that Haywood's didactic purpose is to highlight ideal behavior by describing promiscuous behavior is reductive. The novella's ending hints that, more than

appropriate public behavior, Haywood wants to teach her female readers how to recognize why a potential husband is an ill-suited match—and in order to do so, women must first be able to construct their own individual identity. Readers are told Beauplaisir is “accomplished” (42), has “all the Charms” (44), and that “nothing cou’d be more tender than the Manner in which he accosted her” (45). Although readers may quickly realize that Beauplaisir is a shallow, womanizing product of his culture, what is clear is that Fantomina believes him to be one of the best. In her political biography of Haywood, Kathryn R. King observes that:

More than any other writer of her time she explores the effects of power-seeking on the powerless (and it should be noted that women in her analysis could be numbered among the power-hungry as well...). In seduction-driven plots featuring the heterosexual pair, she lays bare abuses of power on one side (the chronically inconstant male) and thoughtless credulity and susceptibility to fantasy on the other (the too-credulous female). (9)

Fantomina is power-hungry, at least in the sexual sense, continually costuming herself in order to deceive Beauplaisir. But the costumes she chooses reveal more about androcentric power structures than they do about Fantomina herself. The *personae* adopted by Fantomina place Beauplaisir in a superior position as the patron, the hero, or the rescuer—all images that appeal to the patriarchal system’s desire for male dominance. Fantomina is successful in seducing Beauplaisir in a way that leaves him satiated and desiring more (if only temporarily), because she allows him to believe he acts as the masculine ideal.

“Can only be known by its effects”: Material Objects and Imitations in *Betsy Thoughtless*

In Haywood’s *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, the titular character is a young woman of fortune whose ingenuousness and need for excitement frequently place her in compromising (if not physically dangerous) situations. Between her schoolmate Miss Forward, and the false Frederick Fineer, Betsy’s thoughtlessness mars her reputation to the point that Mr. Truworth—the only male character truly worthy of her—removes himself as one of her many suitors. Nervous about her reputation as a single woman on the town, the Thoughtless brothers force Betsy to marry Mr. Munden, the most seemingly eligible bachelor available to her. In the marriage negotiation scene, readers are introduced to a miniature portrait of Truworth that Betsy’s brother sees in a shop. The miniature is intended as a gift for Miss Harriet, the woman Truworth is engaged to marry. Betsy manages to purchase the miniature, and the object becomes a talisman that she keeps to remind her of him, as she faces the prospect of marriage to a mundane alternative.

But Truworth’s portrait is not the first object that mediates the complex relationship between himself and Betsy. Early in their courtship, Truworth gifts Betsy a pet squirrel. The squirrel acts as an object that both characters can project their feelings onto, suggesting that the gift is also a means of establishing a bond with one another. The squirrel and the portrait, both procured by Truworth as gifts for women he courts, activate Betsy’s sensibility and feelings of obligation, while also operating as external signs onto which she can project her internal feelings. The squirrel and the miniature

become stand-ins for complex social relations, and both are subjects of short, vivid descriptions that culminate into later, fully ekphrastic scenes.

The squirrel and the portrait are loosely described in various passages, although each instance on its own is not enough to qualify as *ekphrasis*. However, because the objects are subject to repeated descriptive moments, each instance builds upon the last, culminating in a fully ekphrastic presentation, much like Pope's description of the shield of Achielles. Addison's insistence that understanding is most pleasurable when information is provided by "degrees" is evident throughout *Betsy Thoughtless*, especially in the final descriptions of the squirrel and Truworth's miniature. Both elicit moments of *anagnorisis* in Betsy, and her moments of recognition are highly charged with emotion. In *Betsy Thoughtless*, *ekphrasis* is a mode for describing emotions, of describing the indescribable, and therefore becomes a technique that highlights human understanding and development.

At the point when Truworth first gives Betsy the pet, his servant brings the animal, along with a letter explaining that the first time they met, Truworth noticed that Betsy took "a great deal of pleasure" in another woman's pet squirrel (137). He writes that he "take[s] the liberty of presenting him" to Betsy in hopes that the pet will "give [her] such diversion as is in his power" (137). His letter uses the word "liberty" twice, although in different ways. The liberty he takes with Betsy is the liberty allowed a person in a superior position—he assumes that Betsy will happily accept his gift. But in order for the gift to exist, the squirrel must necessarily lose its own liberty: "Were the little denizen of the woods endued with any share of human reason, how happy would he think himself in the loss of his liberty, and how hug those chains which entitle him to so glorious a

servitude” (137). Truworth’s gift highlights his position of power, in that he is able to take liberty *with* Betsy and *from* the squirrel.

Truworth recognizes that he takes a “liberty” in giving Betsy the present, as if in recognition that gifts carry with them a sense of obligation between giver and receiver. The act places him in a dominant position, as Charles H. Hinnant’s examination of exchange in the eighteenth century confirms: “Where the disinterested gift is opposed to interested exchange in the eighteenth century, it is the choice-making individual...who is the dominant figure” (4). Truworth places himself in a dominant position, as the squirrel is meant to remind Betsy of Truworth: the squirrel’s loss of physical liberty parallels Truworth’s willingness to marry. But the exchange is complicated, because, Hinnant observes, “in novels and plays [of the period], this ideology [of the pure gift] is aristocratic and emerges most explicitly in an atmosphere steeped in a sentimental eroticism, where it is set off against a narrowly conceived self-interest” (9). Truworth’s gift is conceived from his own self-interest, in that he is emotionally and sexually interested in Betsy. The squirrel functions as an object capable of mediating his feelings for her.

From its introduction in the novel, the squirrel is the subject of periodic descriptions. Initially, the narrator provides enough details in the passages concerning the animal that is likely that they are meant to activate the reader’s imagination. Once Betsy claims the squirrel, the narrator describes the moment in detail:

All the ladies began to examine the squirrel, which was, doubtless, the most beautiful creature of its kind, that could be purchased: the chain which fastened it to its habitation was gold, the links very thick, and

curiously wrought.—Everyone admired the elegance of the donor’s taste.
(138)⁵⁴

The passage is as much about Truworth as it is about the squirrel: the women comment on Truworth’s taste, and the luxuriousness of the squirrel’s accessories receives more descriptive attention than the squirrel itself. The leash holding the squirrel to its cage is gold, made of thick, ornate chains. Just as two types of liberty were referenced in Truworth’s letter, two connotative meanings of “chain” appear: the squirrel’s physical chain and its metaphorical dependence upon Betsy. The literal chain may be ornate and interesting to view, but it also highlights the power relationships implicit in the act of giving and receiving a gift.

The next day, Truworth visits Betsy’s home and makes explicit the implicit link between himself and the squirrel. Finding Betsy alone and playing with the squirrel “so much elated him, that it brightened his whole aspect, and gave a double share of vivacity to his eyes” (143). The use of “vivacity” connects to Truworth’s perception of the scene, directly referencing how the sight before him impresses itself on his mind, recalling Addison’s philosophy that sight is the progenitor of all ideas, and that the “Primary Pleasures of the Imagination...entirely proceed from such Objects as are before our Eyes” (277). When Truworth sees Betsy playing with his gift, it brings pleasure to his imagination, because the sight confirms his hope that Betsy returns his feelings. When Betsy tells him that she loves the squirrel “excessively,” Truworth cannot contain the feelings incited by what he sees: ““What think you, madam, of an adoring and

⁵⁴ Kelly McGuire provides an astute examination of the role of taste, luxury, and excess in the passage: “The passage offers an index of attributes by which apologists for ‘luxury’ attempted to establish a standard of taste, and unequivocally identifies the squirrel as an extravagant and wholly unnecessary expenditure” (298, f.62)

passionately devoted heart?” (143). Betsy’s response is playful, almost mocking Truworth’s sentimentality:

“A heart!” rejoined she, “oh dear, a heart may be a pretty thing for ought I know to the contrary; but there is such an enclosure of flesh and bone about it, that it is utterly impossible for one to see into it, and consequently to know whether one likes it or not.” (143)

Betsy offers a literal answer, one that implies an understanding of contemporary philosophies of perception. Because she cannot *see* Truworth’s heart—either the literal or metaphorical one—she cannot know if she “likes it or not.” Her response is humorous, but it also reflects the language of empiricism and the need to examine evidence in order to verify one’s perception. Truworth tells her that by “heart” he means his “soul,” and because the soul is “a spirit and invisible,” it “can only be known by its effects” (144). That is, from Truworth’s position, Betsy must reflect on his actions in order to understand what he feels. Betsy’s response suggests that she is very aware that the acceptance of his gift—and his heart—would make her obligated to him.

Unfortunately for Betsy, the clarity of mind she shows in this scene does not extend to the marriage she enters into with Munden, although Truworth’s image is present during the marriage-contract negotiation scene. Prior to the marriage, Betsy’s eldest brother entices her by mentioning a portrait of Truworth he saw at an artist’s studio. He is late to the marriage negotiation because he became enthralled with the artist’s skill: “I must do him [the artist] the justice to say, that I never saw life imitated to more perfection” (443). Mr. Thoughtless tells his siblings that he saw a miniature of Mr. Truworth done so well, that “never was there a more perfect likeness...I looked on it

through my magnifier, and thought I saw his very self before me” (443). In the scene, Truworth’s portrait is praised for its *vraisemblance*, even under the magnified lens of Mr. Thoughtless’s inspection. The likeness is so astute that Mr. Thoughtless can imagine Truworth actually standing before him—a portent for a pivotal scene later in the novel. The miniature is an imitation, but it is an imitation that seems as close to the original as a painter can get. When she first learns of the portrait, Betsy acknowledges that she has an “obligation” to Truworth, and she fears she “might forget it else” without the portrait to remind her (445). Hobbes’s philosophy of perception, which asserts that memories fade as new impressions are made, shapes Betsy’s musings. Although she justifies her personal desires, she seems more aware of how her mind operates than at any other time in the novel thus far. In deciding how to obtain a portrait of Truworth, she considers having the artist make a copy, but she dismisses this idea because “a copy taken from a copy is still farther from the original” (445). Plato rejected copies because they were three times removed from the original; Betsy decides against the copy of a copy, because it is too distant from the original. In order to remember her obligation, Betsy cannot be so far removed from Truworth.

A few days after Betsy secretly purchases the portrait, she sits alone in her room, reflecting on marriage and the promise made to her brothers. Meanwhile, the Thoughtless brothers, Lord Trusty, and Munden negotiate her marriage in another part of the house. Her demeanor is described “like one quite stupid and dead to all sensations, of every kind,” as she imagines her future as a married woman: “I see I am at the end of all my happiness,” said she, ‘and that my whole future life is condemned to be a scene of disquiet;—but there is no resisting destiny;—they will have it so:—I have promised, and

must submit” (489). Betsy’s mournful language conveys her recognition that whatever agency she had as a *feme sole* is already gone. In the midst of her musings, Betsy opens her cabinet to prepare for the day, and “the picture of Mr. Truworth stared her in the face” (489). The picture causes Betsy to recognize that she “had not considered the value I ought to have set upon his love,” but she still believes that “it is likely too I should have yielded with the same reluctance” (489). The miniature, then, can cause her to reflect, but it is not enough to bring her to a full recognition concerning her feelings.

Moments after the marriage contract is negotiated, Munden’s inability to act with any semblance of generosity is exposed, positioning him in stark contrast to Truworth. Admittedly, the gift of the squirrel placed Betsy in an inferior position as the receiver, but Truworth seems willing to negotiate with Betsy. Munden, on the other hand, is not. When Munden comes into Betsy’s chamber to tell her that the marriage contract is complete, he takes hold of her “with a pretty warm embrace” (490). Betsy is offended, stating that he takes too much freedom. Munden immediately adopts the language of a penitent suitor, begging her to allow him an embrace. During his performance, Betsy interrupts him, asking if he intends to provide her with a coach after their marriage (490). When Munden recoils at Betsy’s request, his language becomes that of a tyrant, making it clear that from the marriage-contract negotiation forward, he expects complete capitulation from her: “Mr. Munden could not now contain his temper;—he told her, he could not have expected such treatment after his long services, and her favourable acceptance of them” (491). For Munden, it seems that whatever Betsy wants is of no consequence; whatever her brothers settled for in the marriage contract is all he is obligated to provide.

Before Betsy and Munden marry, the power imbalance between the two is clear. In his reflections on British law, Blackstone notes that “The husband is bound to provide his wife with necessaries by law, he is obliged to pay for them; but, for any thing besides necessaries, he is not chargeable” (442). Forced to retrench after their post-nuptial profligacy, Munden manipulates his position as patriarch by allocating Betsy’s pin-money to pay for daily household expenses he deems luxuries (500). Munden’s refusal to pay for coffee, tea, or chocolate reveals that he is as parsimonious after marriage as before it, when he refused the coach because of the cost. He echoes Filmer’s insistence in *Patriarcha* that “the Father of a Family Governs by no other Law than by his own Will” (3.1.78) in order to satisfy his own veniality (he will later try to sell Betsy to a friend and eventually maintain a French mistress named Mademoiselle Roquelair). Ros Ballaster observes that “Haywood produces a powerful critique of women’s vulnerability to domestic tyranny both before and after marriage...Betsy hastily agrees to pressure from her brothers and family to marry another suitor, the outwardly respectable Mr. Munden, who appears to offer her domestic stability. Munden later proves a tyrant” (“Contexts” 355). His propensity for despotic behavior is exemplified in the couple’s discussion of pin-money, signaling her economic discipline over his profligacy.⁵⁵

At Lady Trusty’s behest, Betsy keeps detailed accounts of all her expenditures in order to justify the couple’s expenses, only to have the documents ripped up and thrown in her face (506).⁵⁶ During the argument, Betsy comes to recognize that the power she believed she had during courtship was false:

⁵⁵ See Susan Staves’s *Married Women’s Separate Property in England, 1660-1833* for a thorough examination of the legal and social tensions that arose in relation to pin money (pp. 131-161).

⁵⁶ Aleksandra Hultquist makes an interesting connection between Lady Trusty’s advice and conduct book behavior, critiquing contemporary expectations regarding proper female behavior: “As Haywood’s later

What usage was this for a young lady, scarce yet three months married...by the very man who now seemed to take pride in the power he had obtained of thwarting her humour, and dejecting that spirit and vivacity he had so lately pretended to adore. (506)

Munden's post-nuptial behavior makes it clear to Betsy that everything said to her during courtship was a performance intended to trick her into believing him sincere. The moment Betsy realizes that Munden is disingenuous, she turns to the marriage contract—a supposedly neutral document—to make it clear that “she would never be prevailed upon to recede from any part of what was her due by contract” (507). Shea Stuart observes that “Haywood...seem[s] to be arguing not for the abolishment of patriarchy but for a contract theory version in which women and men enter the marital state with mutual consent and free will” (562). There is no hint in the novel that Betsy and Munden entered their marriage with “mutual consent,” and the consequences for Betsy are intense. Betsy's recourse to a legal document is too much for Munden. For Betsy to claim any sort of legal power is to undermine his belief that “a wife [is] no more than an upper servant, bound to study and obey, in all things, the will of him to whom she had given her hand” (507). His personal belief aligns with Filmer's statement concerning the parallel positions of wives and servants. Filmer acknowledges that some of his contemporaries believe that wives and servants are different because: “The Intention of Nature by Conjunction of Male and Female, is Generation; but the Scope of Master and Servant, is

work in *The Female Spectator* and indeed *Betsy Thoughtless* itself underscores, conduct book behavior, often prescribed by male authors, was not always a reasonable expectation. Haywood emphasizes that the perfection of the domestic heroine depends on her living in nearly ideal circumstances...[Betsy's] attempts at using conduct book behavior (under the tutelage of Lady Trusty) seem only to highlight the impossibility of acting submissively and obediently in the face of blatant disrespect and cruelty” (156).

Preservation” (2.3.35-6). From Filmer’s statement, it seems that the accepted difference between a wife and a servant is that wives are intended to generate children, servants to preserve the master’s chosen lifestyle. But Filmer does not accept this distinction, insisting:

And as this Argument comes not home to our Point...for if it should be granted (which yet is false) that *Generation* and *Preservation* differ about the *Individuum*, yet they agree in the General, and serve both for the Conservation of Mankind. (2.3.36).

Because both wives and servants help the master (e.g., the patriarch), both serve the same sort of function, meaning that there is no true distinction between the two, as far as their general purpose is concerned. Munden’s perception that a wife is no more than an upper servant, duty bound to obey her husband, certainly aligns with Filmer’s form of patriarchy.

In the midst of the couple’s argument over Betsy’s pin-money, the squirrel reappears in the story for the first time. Although it is not mentioned for almost four hundred pages, the narrator tells the reader that Betsy “had still retained this first token of love, and always cherished it with an uncommon care” (507). The narrator’s reminder serves to inform readers that just because the squirrel has been absent from the story, it does not mean that it has been absent from Betsy’s daily life. On this particular afternoon, the couple fights over how many servants they retain, with Munden wanting to dismiss some and Betsy insisting that they remain. During the conversation, “the little creature was sitting on the ridge of its cell cracking nuts, which his indulgent mistress had bestowed upon him” (507). The scene is set: Munden rails at Betsy, while she sits,

attempting to distract herself with her cherished pet (a pet that reminds her of the sweeter, more generous male-female relationship with Truworth). As Betsy dotes on her pet squirrel, “the fondness she had always shewn of him put a sudden thought into Mr. Munden’s head” (507). Munden’s selfishness takes over, and the ensuing action is an example of cumulative *ekphrasis*:

He started from his chair, saying to his wife, with a revengeful sneer,—
“Here is one domestic, at least, that may be spared.”

With these words he flew to the poor harmless animal, seized it by the neck, and throwing it with his whole force against the carved work of the marble chimney, its tender frame dashed to pieces. (507)

Munden’s action is depicted from beginning to end, developing into a complete picture. Readers are given enough information to imagine the rage and speed with which Munden rises from his chair, grabs the squirrel, and hurls it at the chimney. Between the squirrel’s introduction and the narrator’s comments concerning how attached Betsy is to the squirrel, the image of its body “dashed to pieces” has a visceral impact; the cumulative effect of the descriptive passages is that a complete, ekphrastic moment occurs when Munden murders the squirrel, even though the description of the murder is brief. By bringing his movements before the reader’s imagination through small, descriptive passages that build upon one another, Haywood makes readers bystanders to the action. It is as though readers witness the argument between Munden and Betsy, feeling the tension and horror as the action unfolds. The argument ends when Betsy, too proud to cry in front of Munden, tells him she “would never eat, or sleep with him again,” and goes to her rooms (508).

Munden's action incites contemplation in Betsy, leading to a moment of recognition. The accumulation of his mean-spirited remarks and behavior coalesce into an action that, for Betsy, is unforgivable. Betsy is no longer a *feme sole*, alone in her rooms, despairing that she must submit to patriarchal demands. Instead, her statement makes it clear that by attempting to violate the terms of their marriage contract, on both legal and religious terms, Munden cannot expect Betsy to act as the dutiful *feme covert*. Stuart insists that "Haywood's portrait of marital discord is vivid enough to convince readers of Betsy's position" as a woman who sees no option but to physically separate herself from her despotic husband (572). Alone in her room, Betsy finally understands that nothing will make Munden into an agreeable husband:

The bloody and inhuman deed being perpetrated by this injurious husband, merely in opposition to his wife, and because he knew it would give her some sort of affliction, was sufficient to convince her, that he took pleasure in giving pain to her, and also made her not doubt that he would stop at nothing for that purpose, provided it were safe, and came within the letter of the law. (509)

Betsy's reflection allows her to realize that Munden will do anything "within the letter of the law" to bring her pain. As Blackstone's commentaries make clear, especially in the addendum, there is much a vengeful husband like Munden can do, without fear of repercussion, to make Betsy miserable.

Betsy, with the help of her brother and her lawyer, eventually escapes to a country house an hour outside London (604). In his final act of tyranny, Munden presents Betsy with an ultimatum: return within twenty-four hours on her own or be forcibly brought

back to him (603). In another fortunate coincidence (although as yet unknown by Betsy), the house she escapes to is next door to a house rented by Truworth. One morning, Betsy sits in the garden, commenting that her surroundings are ““delightful”” and ““heavenly,”” wondering ““what Mr. Truworth would say if he knew the change that a little time has wrought in me!”” (606). In the midst of her reflection, Betsy takes out Truworth’s portrait. Like the squirrel, Truworth’s portrait is reintroduced at a critical moment, this time one of reunion rather than separation. The portrait functions as a mediating object leading to *anagnorisis*. In the garden, with the portrait, Betsy seems to retain the same feelings she had toward the miniature before her disastrous marriage to Munden. The narrator provides details concerning Betsy’s behavior with the miniature:

At this instant, a thousand proofs of love given her by the original of the copy in her hand occurring all at once to her remembrance, tears filled her eyes, and her breast swelled with involuntary sighs. (606)

Looking at the miniature recalls forgotten memories to Betsy’s mind. Within her more developed and mature understanding, the images are subjected to interrogation, and this reflection forces her to realize that Truworth’s actions were those of a kind and generous man. Her regarding of the portrait turns into an ekphrastic scene when she is confronted with the original object portrayed in the portrait:

But where are the words that can express the surprize, the wild confusion she was in, when the first glance of her eyes presented her with the sight of the real object, whose image she had been thus tenderly contemplating:—she shrieked, the picture dropped from her hand, the use of all her faculties forsook her, she sunk from the seat where she was

sitting, and had certainly fainted quite away, but for the immediate assistance of the person, who had caused these extraordinary emotions.

(607)

The narrator asks “where are the words” when Betsy’s emotions run so high that she nearly faints. Being unable to express the emotions in words, Haywood’s narrator calls upon the reader to supplement the garden scene with their own experiences of love. In her examination of the reunion, Karin Kukkonen observes the role *adynaton* plays in *Betsy Thoughtless*: “When Haywood invites her readers to imagine what happens in the minds and bodies of lovers through embodied simulations, she implies that they (also) know what love feels like...Haywood’s fiction, in those moments of *adynaton*, itself becomes a test of the emotional integrity of her readers” (212-3). The narrator’s language implicitly references the rhetorical strategy *adynaton*, which is “Greek for ‘unable’ or ‘impossible’” and is a “figure of pathos, of the emotional involvement of listeners...It reveals the intense emotions of the narrator, which exceed the bounds of what can be expressed in words” (Kukkonen 211). That the scene exceeds the “bounds of what can be expressed in words” is confirmed when Betsy falls into a faint: her emotions are more than she can process, and the narrator describes how she succumbs to overwhelming feelings. The passage appears intended to develop *phantasia* in the reader’s mind, through a dramatic modeling of it in the heroine. Relying on previous references to Truworth’s portrait and Betsy’s emotional reactions to it, the passage is an example of cumulative *ekphrasis*. It builds from details and emotions offered at different points within the novel. In the passage, Betsy is so overwhelmed by her *phantasia*—her mental images—that she screams, drops the picture, cannot speak, and almost faints, only to be saved from falling

by Truworth's quick assistance. The previous passages that described Betsy's interactions with the miniature build upon one another to create a situation in which the reading audience acts like spectators at a theater. The details are vivid, and the characters perform much like actors upon a stage. The effect is that *ekphrasis* is effective in revealing Betsy's emotions both to herself and to the reader.

Betsy's emotions are not given in explicit detail, but her actions and movements are. Positioning the sighting of Truworth as the beginning of the action and his assisting her as the end, every necessary detail concerning how the first led to the last is provided, adhering to classical *ekphrasis*. The narrator acknowledges that Betsy's "fancy...strong as it was, had formed no visionary appearance"—the original is before her, interacting with her on a physical level (607). Kukkonen persuasively argues:

In Haywood's prose Betsy's emotional reaction is presented in strongly embodied and experiential terms, but it comes into effect only through a beautifully constructed recognition...Haywood employs classical recognition through the portrait (in which one might realize the true family relation to another character or that one is the true heir to a fortune) in order to bring about a more modern recognition (in which one realizes the true state of one's feelings). (298)

Kukkonen recognizes, in effect, that the portrait enables the moment of *anagnorisis*, because it produces such strong emotions in Betsy, but she fails to address the fact that while Betsy has owned the portrait for most of the novel, she does not realize her true feelings until much later. Part of this is, clearly, to allow Haywood time to present her moral lessons and critiques of contemporary patriarchal social structures. But what is also

important to consider is that the mimetic imitation of Truworth on its own does not facilitate recognition. Instead, Betsy must mature, and she must also have the imitation and the original in front of her in order to name her emotions.

The first test of Betsy's development and understanding occurs when Truworth begs to continue their acquaintance, and "in speaking this, he threw his arms about her waist, not regarding the efforts she made to hinder him, and clasp'd her to his breast" (609). When he embraces her, she rejects his advances:

"Forbear, sir," said she; "you know I am not at liberty to be entertained with discourses, nor with actions of this nature; —loose me this moment, or be assured all the kind thoughts I had of you, and on which you have too much presumed, will be converted into the extremest hatred and detestation." (609)

She speaks with such conviction that Truworth immediately releases her. Betsy rejects Truworth's embrace in much the same way she pushed Munden away following the marriage contract negotiation, though for radically different reasons.

It is the combined appearance of the original and its representation that facilitates *anagnorisis* in Betsy. On its own, separate from the man himself, the miniature incites moments of contemplation, but the feelings incited by looking at the imitation do not persuade Betsy that she loves Truworth. After they see one another in the garden, Betsy experiences *anagnorisis* when looking at the portrait alone in her room:

The accident, which had betrayed the secret of her heart to him, had also discovered it to herself.—She was now convinced, that it was something

more than esteem,—than friendship,—than gratitude, his merits had inspired her with. (612)

She discovers that she loves—and this discovery is made possible by the combined forces of imitation and original, an image developed through cumulative *ekphrasis*. However, the moment he appears before her and the two are reunited, she cannot deny what her feelings tell her anymore. Soon after Betsy and Truworth meet in the garden, Munden falls deathly ill. Although Betsy and her companions at first assume it is a manipulation to get Betsy back into his house, multiple sources confirm that Munden is, indeed, in danger of dying. Betsy goes to his bedside, promising him that as long as he endeavors to be a better husband, she will not leave his side (614-15). Betsy's transformation into a sensible, thinking, and mature character is fully realized in the deathbed scene. There is proof that she “had not affected any thing more in this interview than what she really felt;—her virtue and her compassion had all the effect on her that love has in most others of her sex” (615). The narrator implies that while Betsy does not feel love for Munden, her virtue and compassion make her aware that he needs her now.

In what is sometimes interpreted as an overly convenient *deus ex machina*,⁵⁷ Munden dies, leaving Betsy a young widow. Truworth's wife Harriet has also died (although her death occurred much earlier). There is a graceful symmetry in Betsy's and Truworth's marital timelines. As noted earlier, the pin-money fight that culminates in her pet squirrel's death happens just three months into the marriage between Betsy and Munden. Although Munden does not die until much later, Betsy sleeps in a separate bed

⁵⁷ For examples, see Kelly McGuire “Mourning and Material Culture in Eliza Haywood's *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*” (1-2), Helen Thompson's “Betsy Thoughtless and the Persistence of Coquettish Volition” (112), and Ros Ballaster's “Contexts, Intertexts, Metatexts: Eighteenth-Century Prose by Women” (355).

(and eventually in a different house), distancing herself from the relationship both physically and emotionally. Truworth's wife Harriet dies just three months into their marriage (564). David Oakleaf argues that the parallel plotlines make for "narrative doubling" that allows Haywood to "explore male as well as female entanglement in the double standard" (123). Kristine Jennings notes that "women in this novel are almost exclusively and entirely defined by their relation to men" (40). The narrative doubling between Betsy and Truworth suggests that readers are meant to understand that, finally, Betsy is developed enough to be capable of entering a marriage on equal footing. When the two meet in the garden, both are single, without any legal or social restrictions on them. Even with the approval of her closest friends, however, Betsy insists upon spending the first year of her widowhood in the country, away from Truworth. While there, the two correspond by letter, always maintaining the strictest decorum. When the two finally reunite, they both have had time to reflect upon their emotions and perceptions, which fulfills Haywood's expressed didactic intention: "Thus were the virtues of our heroine (those follies that had defaced them being fully corrected) at length rewarded with a happiness, retarded only still she had render'd herself wholly worthy of receiving it" (634). A sense of Betsy's agency attends the final line: "*she* had render'd herself." By making Betsy the arbiter of her own fate, Haywood writes a heroine capable of reflection and mental development. It is Betsy's decision to distance herself from Truworth that marks her as "wholly worthy" of experiencing happiness. The ekphrastic descriptions of Betsy's emotional and intellectual journey progress into scenes that model ideal behavior for readers. The cumulative effect of the vivid descriptions is that readers can learn how

to develop their own understanding, because they can picture the model provided for them in Haywood's works.

Conclusion

Haywood's technique of cumulative *ekphrasis* is different from other examples of *ekphrasis* in the works previously examined. She seems to be aware that by building descriptions throughout the novel, objects can function as mediators for complex emotions—emotions that lie outside the bounds of language to effectively describe. Anderson argues that Haywood uses “her fiction to explore a strategy of what I term self-conscious performance—women acting roles that they have independently conceived for themselves—to achieve an effective expression of female passions which would, in another setting, be disastrous and unavailing” (1). Haywood, then, provides a model for positive emotion. Her works do the same kind of labor for the advancement of emotions as many philosophical works do for the advancement of learning. By teaching her readers how to rethink their emotional reactions by interrogating them against experiences, Haywood's works suggest that emotions are an effective means of persuasion—in the classical sense, to persuade is to move, and by teaching her readers the responsible use of emotions, Haywood simultaneously teaches her readers persuasive techniques.

Like Haywood, Edmund Burke also interrogated emotions and their potential positive effect. In *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas on the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757), Burke observes that: “Whatever is fitted in any sort to excite the ideas of pain, and danger, that is to say, whatever is in any sort terrible...is a source of the sublime; that is, it is productive of the strongest emotion which the mind is capable of

feeling” (36). Burke’s idea of the sublime can be read as *ekphrasis* taken to its furthest limit—the effect on the reader is strong enough that they have an emotional reaction to the material. The sublime occurs in a descriptive passage when the language is vivid, causing readers to experience strong emotions. What Haywood develops through her descriptions—intense emotional reactions in her readers—emerges in the treatises of philosophers like Burke. For both Haywood and Burke, it seems that the imagination plays an intense role in enacting emotions. Burke asserts that “the imagination is the most extensive province of pleasure and pain, as it is the region of our fears and our hopes, and of all our passions that are connected with them” (17). By teaching her readers to develop their imaginative capabilities, Haywood in turn leads her readers to treat their emotions in a far more positive manner than many contemporary conduct books, which decry female emotions as hysterical and unproductive.

Tracing Haywood’s increasingly sophisticated descriptive method reveals not only her development as an author, but also how descriptions themselves evolve alongside contemporary philosophies of perception. In *A Wife to be Lett*, the successful imitations performed by Mrs. Graspall and Amadea show that the senses can be deceived, in turn exposing tyrannical patriarchs. In *Fantomina*, the character’s increasingly complex manipulations of Beauplaisir’s senses leads to the narrator’s awareness that vivid verbal descriptions can shape another person’s perception. In *Fantomina*, her *personae* layer upon one another like a palimpsest, adding mental and emotional depth to the character as a whole. By the work’s end, *ekphrasis* is achieved, and it proves to be a tool capable of exposing undesirable behavior in both male and female characters. Finally, in *Betsy Thoughtless*, Haywood perfects cumulative *ekphrasis*, gracefully

building the repeated descriptions of mediating objects onto one another, revealing how characters develop their own understanding. The images of the squirrel and of Truworth's portrait are both vivid enough that they elicit recognition in Betsy, forcing her to confront and understand her own emotional state. In each work, male characters abuse their roles as patriarchs, showing little to no concern over the ethics of their behavior. Blackstone's observation that women are "so great a favorite" in English law may be a tongue-in-cheek commentary on the dispossessed position of *femes covert*—being one with their husbands, and therefore without personal, legal identities, the *actual* favorite would be the patriarch.

Contemporary anxieties concerning methods for developing descriptions in longer prose texts is abundant in various publications throughout the eighteenth century.⁵⁸ Terms themselves undergo change in the second half of the eighteenth century, a development discussed in the next chapter, as philosophers like Hugh Blair go so far as to coin a new term for *ekphrasis*—vision. Blair's language recalls Addison's observation that the sight is the "most perfect" of the senses, and that everything within the imagination develops from it. What James A.W. Heffernan will term postmodern *ekphrasis* is, by his definition, "*the verbal representation of visual representation*" (3). With that caveat, Heffernan still points to the dramatic undertone key to successful postmodern *ekphrasis*:

Ekphrasis speaks not only *about* works of art but also *to* and *for* them. In so doing, it stages—within the theater of language itself—a revolution of the image against the world. (7)

⁵⁸ Examples include Daniel Defoe's *Roxana* (1724), Mary Davy's *The Reform'd Coquette* (1724), Samuel Richardson's *Clarissa* (1747-8), Oliver Goldsmith's *The Vicar of Wakefield* (1766), and Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* (1768).

Heffernan's assertion that postmodern *ekphrasis* speaks "to and for" works of art recalls Behn's and Congreve's argument that vividly descriptive prose brings life and a soul to the characters created on the page. While the mimetic force of drama remains a crucial touchstone in discussions of description (from the eighteenth to the twentieth century), the fact that it does not require explicit descriptions for audiences to picture a character—the character performs in front of their eyes—means that prose fiction had to develop language that could evoke the vivid object world that the theater produced. In the eighteenth century, it was the ability of prose fiction writers to modify theatrical techniques for the page that made certain prose works come alive for readers. Descriptive techniques lauded by Burke also become more commonplace, highlighting the increasing reliance of the novel on *ekphrasis* to develop vivid descriptions that impact readers. As I show in the following chapter, Henry Fielding, forced from a successful career as a dramatist, joins in this effort with *Tom Jones*, a novel whose narrator echoes Congreve's in *Incognita*.

Chapter 5

“Such are mirrors and statues”: Materiality, *Cathexis*, and *Ekphrasis* in *Tom Jones* and *A Simple Story*

In 1759, Hugh Blair began a series of lectures on rhetoric at the University of Edinburgh; by 1763, George III appointed him as the first Regius Professor of Rhetoric at the same university (Corbett 98). Over the course of twenty-four years, Blair “delivered his lectures to packed classrooms,” eventually publishing his lectures in 1783, because “he had discovered his lectures circulating freely in manuscript copies that his students had made in class” (98). His *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* (1783) were so popular that, before 1835, “over fifty editions...complete or abridged” were published, and new copies were still appearing as late as 1873 (98). Blair’s approach to rhetoric followed that of his classical predecessors, in which one substitutes literary models for oratorical models: “Blair’s appropriation of literary discourse into the province of rhetoric reflects his attempt to restore the force of classical rhetoric through applying its principles to the changing cultural conditions that surrounded him,” and his “position as an educator in the late eighteenth century made him aware of the changes that were taking place and prompted him to explore the potential for strengthening rhetorical training through the use of printed texts” (Agnew 27). The intersection of Blair’s classical interests and his approach to literature as a means for “strengthening rhetorical training” makes his *Lecture on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* the ideal place from which to begin analyzing the rhetorical shifts that appear in mid- to late-eighteenth century fiction.

One of the philosophical changes Blair confronted in his lectures was the increasing importance of connecting rhetorical studies to empirical evaluation. The

Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres reflect the development of rhetorical discussions concerning the imagination in the eighteenth century. Blair's purpose, as stated in the introduction, is to "apply the principles of good sense to composition and discourse," with the intention that doing so "must certainly improve us not a little in the most valuable part of all philosophy, the philosophy of human nature" (13). Integral to improving the understanding is the ability to "reflect on the operations of the imagination, and the movements of the heart" (13). For Blair, concepts of the mind and the soul are inextricably linked: to "reflect" on their alliance is to "increase our acquaintance with some of the most refined feelings which belong to our nature" (13). Although the imagination is important in his prior treatises, Blair expands its role in the philosophical understanding of knowledge attainment by making thoughts and feelings methods for verifying one's perception.

The link between the imagination, human nature, and the senses becomes clear as Blair defines the terms specific to his philosophy. The most telling is his definition of *vision*: it is when "in place of relating something that is past, we use the present tense, and describe it as actually passing before our eyes" (190). Blair's *vision* is close to classical *ekphrasis*, in regard to what the techniques attempt to achieve. Although he does not use the term *ekphrasis*, his comments about *vision* suggest he chose the term to convey the same technique that classical rhetorical texts define as *ekphrasis*. *Vision* recalls Hobbes and Locke, who maintain that sight is the most perceptive of all senses and is the source of meaning-making. To name the technique that relates things as though they are "actually passing before our eyes" after the sense most closely linked to

perception and meaning-making is to solidify the correlation between physical sensory perceptions and the internal processing of these sensory inputs.

In developing this new linguistic code to account for how language functions, Blair's *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres* makes it clear that while he was influenced by classical rhetoric, he also perceived a need to reallocate the techniques into a vernacular his students could understand. For example, how Blair treats the traditional relationship between *ekphrasis*, *phantasia*, and *enargeia* showcases his ability to refine classical techniques for his contemporaries:

This manner of description supposes a sort of enthusiasm which carries the person who describes it in some measure out of himself; and when well executed, must needs *impress the reader or hearer strongly*, by the force of that sympathy which I have before explained. But, in order to a successful execution, it requires an *uncommonly warm imagination*, and such a happy selection of circumstances, as *shall make us think we see before our eyes the scene that is described*. (190-1, emphasis my own)

The italicized portions of this extended quote indicate references to classical rhetorical techniques. Blair begins by framing *vision* as a “manner of description,” much as *ekphrasis* is a descriptive technique. *Vision* is “well executed” when two parameters are met: first, there must be an “uncommonly warm imagination,” suggesting that both the speaker and the audience must be especially attuned to the relationship between language and the images created in the mind, or *phantasia*. If successful, the description “shall make us think we see before our eyes the scene that is described”—a clear reference to classical *enargeia*.

Blair's definition of *vision* relies upon the senses. The use of sensory organs as names for rhetorical techniques recalls the philosophies of perception discussed in earlier chapters. Approximately a decade before Blair began his lectures on rhetoric in Scotland, his fellow Scotsman David Hume published his *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding* (1748). Hume is important in this chapter, as his philosophy of human understanding bridges the gap between philosophy, rhetoric, and poesis. Like Sidney, Hume praises poetry for its didactic potential. For Hume, poetry (especially epic poetry) is the medium most capable of exciting vivid images in the reader's mind: "The imagination, both of writer and reader, is more enlivened, and the passions more inflamed than in history, biography, or any species of narration, which confine themselves to strict truth and reality" (22-3). Poetry's ability to appeal to the imagination and excite the passions makes the medium "a species of painting" for Hume (23). It also "brings us nearer to the objects than any other species of narration, throws a stronger light upon them, and delineates more distinctly those minute circumstances, which, though to the historian they seem superfluous, serve mightily to enliven the imagery, and gratify the fancy" (Hume 23). The imagination "becomes central in Hume's ideal of intellectual character" (Lloyd 65). If poetry is able to bring readers "nearer to the objects," it is because its attention to "minute circumstances" engages the audience's imagination.

Yet, even with its power to create mental images, poetry is unable to make readers believe the images are real, because a copy "never can entirely reach the force and vivacity of the original sentiment" (Hume 14). Hume's assertion recalls Hobbes's notion of mental decay or Locke's argument that copies cannot maintain the life of the original.

He similarly asserts that “the utmost we can say of them,⁵⁹ even when they operate with greatest vigour, is that they represent the object in so lively a manner, that we could *almost* say we feel or see it” (14). That is, *phantasia* can create vivid images that “*almost*” seem real. For Hume, “All the colours of poetry, however splendid, can never paint natural objects in such a manner as to make the description be taken for a real landscape,” leading to the conclusion that “the most lively thought is still inferior to the dullest sensation” (14). Hume’s clarification means that an original—say a woman’s living body versus a statue of the same woman—is always superior to an imitation. Mid eighteenth-century philosophy solidifies what literature has argued for over a century: the real outperforms the artificial.

Hume replaces the traditional words for mental workings—“*thoughts* or *ideas*”—with the term “*impressions*,” defined as follows: “all our more lively perceptions, when we hear, or see, or feel, or love, or hate, or desire, or will” (15). Impressions differ from ideas in that ideas are “the less lively perceptions,” only brought about when contemplating the original perception of a thing or the impression of that thing (15). An idea is made by a thought, which is a “faithful mirror, and copies its objects truly” (14-15); that is, perception is the original sensation, and by reflecting on that sensation—or, to use Plato’s terminology, create a mimetic representation of the original sensation—ideas are “copies of our impressions” (16). Ideas, then, are “naturally faint and obscured” because they are created by reflection, and by necessity, are solidified by making connections to what is already known. Impressions, encompassing “all sensations, either outward or inward, are *strong and vivid*” (18, emphasis my own). In one sense, Hume

⁵⁹ The “them” Hume refers to is a perception that is “recall[ed] to his memory...or anticipate[d] by his imagination” (14).

affirms Plato's critique of *mimesis*: for Plato, any idea or perception is itself a copy of what the Creator (a god-like figure) originally made; for Plato, ideas are naturally mimetic. Hume, however, as a humanist, replaces the divine being with human perception; now, the first impression formed by the mind is the original. Impressions are what lead to ideas, ideas being a copy of the first impression. As such, all ideas are necessarily copies, or faint imitations, distant from the original impression. All this begs the question: How does one, then, create an original image, if all ideas are themselves faint copies of original impressions?

Mid- and late-eighteenth-century fiction sought to answer this question by grounding descriptions in the language of tangible objects or sights, prompting readers to reflect upon their first impressions and how these initial ideas develop after contemplation. Works such as Henry Fielding's *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling* (1749) and Elizabeth Inchbald's *A Simple Story* (1791) exemplify the translation of philosophical ideas concerning human nature into fiction writing. In both novels, the respective narrators refuse to provide details in moments of high emotion. Yet, somewhat paradoxically, detailed descriptions quickly follow assertions that there are no words to describe these feelings. Concerning character descriptions, both novels include artistic representations of the characters who receive the most ekphrastic detailing. These artistic representations and their attending ekphrastic details build complete pictures of the characters, making them vivid. The effect is that these characters operate as models of behavior that are either advantageous (Sophia) or detrimental (Lord Elmwood) to their peers, and these lessons often arise in emotionally charged scenes.

In *Tom Jones*, Sophia is described in more detail than any other character, and she is compared to the statue of Venus. Fielding teaches his reader how to best interrogate one's perceptions, and his argument is based in experiential learning, aligning the text with empiricist philosophy. The novel's final scene places Tom and Sophia in front of a mirror—an object traditionally associated with *mimesis*. In *Tom Jones*, ekphrastic descriptions are more reliable than mimetic imitations, and *ekphrasis* exposes the fact that traditional notions concerning the affinity between one's external appearance and internal morality are assumptions made without first testing the thesis—only through conversation (an act that Fielding considers gathering empirical data) can a person's true nature be known.

In *A Simple Story*, Mr. Dorriforth/Lord Elmwood is described in the most detail, and his likeness is later represented in a life-size portrait. As a character, he is described by way of ekphrastic detail; his actions and manners throughout the novel—especially after his return from India—come to shade his demeanor so strongly that his tyranny becomes written on his face. Inchbald tells readers, from the first description of Dorriforth, that he embodies his emotions; Dorriforth's external appearance, then, becomes an imitation of his internal self. In *A Simple Story*, *ekphrasis* exposes tyrannical patriarchal behavior and its negative impact on female characters, destabilizing the language of patriarchal certitude and suggesting that truly tyrannical patriarchs can never fully reform.

Comparing how Fielding and Inchbald engage with objects to describe characters adds a layer of materiality to vivid descriptions. As will be shown, the descriptions rely upon objects such as a mirror, a painting, a muff, and a hat. *Mimesis* plays a role in aiding

the development of fully ekphrastic scenes, because it provides a concrete image for readers to picture. As has been shown in previous chapters, *mimesis* operates as a helpmate, but it is not entirely persuasive on its own. In his teachings on imitation, Blair makes an explicit distinction between imitation and description:

Imitation is performed by means of a somewhat that has a natural likeness and resemblance to the thing imitated, and of consequence is understood by all: such are statues and pictures. Description, again, is the raising in the mind the conception of an object by means of some arbitrary or instituted symbols, understood only by those who agree in the institution of them; such are words and writing. Words have no natural resemblance to the ideas or objects which they are employed to signify; but a statue or a picture has a natural likeness to the original. And therefore imitation and description differ considerably in their nature from one another. (56-7)

Imitation derives from materiality: the statue or picture has a resemblance to something that already exists in the world. But the words for them, such as “statue” or “picture,” are arbitrary, assigned meaning according to the linguistic system of a specific culture.

Description requires that the conception—or impression—of an object is raised in the reader’s mind. The distinction between imitation and description is present in both novels examined in this chapter. Fielding and Inchbald both pepper their works with scenes that are vivid, although not entirely ekphrastic. The accumulation of vivid descriptions builds toward the fully ekphrastic scene, a scene that reveals modes of understanding humanity. Combined scenes that develop into cumulative *ekphrasis* render characters and their

emotions in vivid detail, providing the empirical information necessary to understand human nature.

“Imitation here will not do”: *Ekphrasis* and Human Nature in *Tom Jones*

A year before *Tom Jones* appeared in print, Fielding wrote a letter to Samuel Richardson that clarified the link between poetry and painting in Fielding’s philosophy of fiction. In the 1748 letter, Fielding directly references a passage in *Clarissa*: “What shall I say of holding up the Licence? I will say a finer Picture was never imagined. He must be a glorious Painter who can do it Justice on Canvas, and a most wretched one indeed who could not do much on such a Subject” (70). Fielding refers to the following lines, taken from a letter Lovelace writes to Belford: “For, entering her apartment after Dorcas; and endeavouring to soothe and pacify her disordered mind; in the midst of my blandishments, she held up to Heaven, in a speechless agony, the innocent license (which she had in her own power); as the poor distressed Catalans held up their English treaty, on an occasion that keeps the worst of my actions in countenance” (Richardson 887). The reference to the Catalans is a historical one, specifically to England’s abandonment of Catalonia after signing the Treaty of Utrecht (1713). Lovelace creates an analogy between himself and Clarissa, England and Catalonia, likening himself to a mercenary England and positioning Clarissa as the helpless and ill-treated Catalans who begged for England to honor their agreement. The line likely references one of two pamphlets that circulated in London in 1714, “The Case of the Catalans Consider’d,” or “The Deplorable History of the Catalans.” It is more probable that Richardson alludes to the latter, which was more popular and narrates the Spanish War of Succession. The image referenced by

Fielding is, then, a multilayered one, requiring readers to be aware of historical and political events in order to fully grasp Lovelace's reference. Fielding recognizes Richardson's ability to gracefully layer the references together into a complete image, praising the passage's economy of writing, as it is able to recall social memory by pointing to a specific historical moment. What Fielding's letter suggests is that the image of Clarissa's physical motion, combined with the cultural memory of the British abandonment of the Catalans, is a well-developed description, allowing him to picture the scene—as well as its attendant emotional depth—vividly. The bond developed between language and painting is not to suggest that the passage from *Clarissa* is ekphrastic on its own. The passage allows a skilled reader to imagine the ekphrastic object, an image likely drawn from the pamphlets that circulated in 1714. Fielding praises Richardson's descriptive adeptness, a skill seen in few other writers during the time.⁶⁰

What Fielding seems to appreciate is that Richardson is particularly attentive to elements beyond the primary scenes. Perhaps Fielding so admires Richardson's incorporation of layered images because he uses this technique in his own writing.⁶¹ In Fielding's own work, the affiliation between painting and poetry is apparent, as Martin C. Battestin notes: "If...Fielding could see the possibilities of a reciprocal relationship between the two art forms, he well understood the limits of the analogy: that one cannot

⁶⁰ See Ian Watt's *The Rise of the Novel* for a thorough examination of descriptions and realism in Fielding's and Richardson's respective *oeuvres*, specifically pages 252-53 for a discussion of Fielding's integration of verisimilitude into the novel. Jürgen Habermas observes that in Richardson's novels, "the domestic novel" is "the psychological description in autobiographical form" (49). J. Paul Hunter notes that Fielding's "'history' represents a significant step in the cultural conception of what we have come to call the novel, but the cultural guardians and moral doubters did not immediately run for cover. It took, in fact, nearly a hundred years for the novel to achieve the respectability Fielding sought for it, although the forces that produced that respectability were set in motion by Fielding and the rival Richardson" (18-19).

⁶¹ This is not to suggest that Fielding modeled his writing from Richardson's. Instead, it is to suggest that what Fielding so admires is a technique he himself incorporates.

do in prose what the artist can do graphically, and vice versa” (502). Within *Tom Jones*, examples include Bridget Allworthy’s sitting for Hogarth (58), the comparison of Sophia to the statue of Venus (134), and the use of foils by jewelers and painters to describe how women adorn themselves to appear more beautiful (183).

Fielding’s particular descriptive mode is at once vivid and didactic, teaching readers how to understand the world around them. As Jane Elizabeth Lewis notes, “Fielding’s ‘Description’ legitimates and tutors literary imagination as a form of expressive cognition” (313). Within *Tom Jones*, there are multiple scenes that are intensely descriptive, and the repetition of details teaches readers to engage with the text, creating their own vivid images. He impresses the relationship between prose writing and painting on his audience, using ekphrastic descriptions to promote vivid images in the reader’s mind; by destabilizing mimetic imitations, Fielding exposes the constructed nature of the contemporary system for analyzing human nature. He teaches his readers a system that subjects traditional interpretations of perceptions to empirical examination, based on information collected from experiential investigations.

Ekphrasis is key to these scenes, because imitation can only get writers so far. According to Fielding’s narrator, “by reflecting that the theatrical stage is nothing more than a representation, or, as Aristotle calls it, an imitation of what really exists,” when a writer succeeds in having “their pictures in a manner confounded with, or mistaken for, the originals” they deserve praise (283). Fielding’s narrator highlights the mimetic nature of the stage, noting that what appears on stage is “an imitation of what really exists.” But the imitation is only successful when what is on stage can be mistaken for something

real—a statement that sounds very much like *enargeia*, developed from ekphrastic descriptions.

But Fielding is not working in the dramatic form in *Tom Jones*—he writes long-form prose fiction, divorcing his writing from the mimetic nature of the stage. He, quite literally, does not have actors pantomiming his words on stage. Further, for writers to develop prose that is “capable of imitating life,” they cannot simply draw from what is already done (283). Fielding criticizes the copying of existing characters in Platonic language: “such characters are only the faint copy of a copy, and can have neither the justness nor spirit of an original” (426). He is able to develop original characters capable of imitating life because he does not write characters or dialogue that simply arrive on the page fully formed; instead, Fielding’s characters are created through continued and laborious efforts, with multiple descriptive passages scaffolded onto one another, developing complete and nuanced pictures of the characters.

Because a large part of Fielding’s purpose in *Tom Jones* is to explore human nature, it is necessary that his characters successfully imitate the behaviors and language of real people. That Fielding intends to write long-prose fiction capable of teaching his readers about both themselves and the world is explicit in the first prologue. Fielding’s narrator asserts that what the text provides is “no other than HUMAN NATURE,” in all its varied forms (30). Although the narrator reflexively notes that he will describe “such prodigious variety that a cook will have sooner gone through all the several species of animal and vegetable food in the world than an author will be able to exhaust so extensive a subject,” this chapter is concerned with a particular aspect of human nature described in great detail throughout *Tom Jones*: the ability to know one’s nature through

experiential knowledge, knowledge that Fielding argues is only gained through conversation. The narrator asserts that “a true knowledge of the world is gained only by conversation” (648-9). That is, only by engaging with others and learning various perspectives can people truly understand their peers. Experiencing how others interpret the world around them is the method the narrator provides for best developing one’s understanding.

What Fielding’s narrator terms “conversation” is similar to Plato’s dialectic philosophical method. In *Phaedrus*, Plato provides a working example of his dialectic in the dialogue between Socrates and Phaedrus:

SOCRATES. When someone says the word ‘iron’ or ‘silver’, don’t we all think of the same thing?

PHAEDRUS. Of course.

SOCRATES. But what about when someone says ‘right’ or ‘good’? Isn’t it the case that we all go off in different directions, and we disagree with one another and with ourselves?

PHAEDRUS: Yes, that’s right.

SOCRATES. So we agree in some cases, but not in others.

PHAEDRUS. Yes. (263a-b.51)

In this passage, Socrates asks Phaedrus questions that lead to a predetermined answer: that people agree in some things, disagree in others. Plato’s dialectic is a philosophical method that relies on questions and answers to point out inconsistencies, eventually leading to understanding. Socrates tells Phaedrus, “I want to be good at speaking and thinking, and if I think anyone else is capable of discerning a natural unity and plurality, I

follow ‘hard on his heels, as if he were a god’. Moreover, I call those who are capable of doing this—only the gods know whether or not this is the right term, but so far I’ve been calling them ‘dialecticians’” (263b.56). Robin Waterfield notes that dialectic “is related, etymologically, with the Greek word for ‘conversation,’ because (as portrayed in Plato’s earliest dialogues) his mentor, Socrates, practised philosophy through talking to other people” (fn. 263b, 101). Dialectic, then, is a form of philosophical conversation, meant to reveal inconsistencies or faulty logic, and through this philosophical conversation, lead to the correct conclusion.

What Fielding’s narrator terms “conversation” seems very close to Plato’s dialectic philosophical method, as Fielding intends the novel to teach readers about human nature. Philosophical conversation may be a more appropriate moniker for the narrator’s assertion that “true knowledge” can only be discerned from “conversation.” A thorough interrogation of philosophical conversation within *Tom Jones* is the litmus test for proving his characters have a developed sense of understanding. Roger Maioli argues that, given Fielding’s didactic purpose, “Everything that is probable in *Tom Jones* has to be empirically possible as well” (218). That is, for Fielding to create characters that are probable in the text, they must also be “empirically possible”—meaning that the characters must seem realistic after being subjected to empirical verification. Empirical verification comes in the form of conversation within *Tom Jones*, meaning that readers have a way to collect data and analyze the correlation between a character’s words and their actions, giving them insight into methods of meaning making. *Tom Jones*, then, is a novel at the intersection of the old and the new, of tradition and modernity, and, in that

position, the novel opens a space to critique traditional philosophies of human nature, teaching its audience how to perceive others and negotiate the world around them.

To perform an experiment that yields empirical results requires a data set for examination that is tested against a hypothesis. When Fielding offers the premise that “Imitation here will not do the business,” (648) the statement begs the question, what, then, will “do the business”? Imitation cannot create vivid, believable characters in Fielding’s novel. *Ekphrasis* (similar to Blair’s *vision*) can. As previously noted, Blair’s *vision* is defined as: “In place of relating something that is past, we use the present tense, and describe it as actually passing before our eyes” (190). Fielding develops characters that seem to pass before the reader’s eyes: they are not simply imitations of what is known or can be expected to be known; instead, his characters become pictures that are original enough in themselves to be mistaken for people that exist in the world. A large part of the realistic nature of Fielding’s characters, particularly Tom and Sophia, is that their dialogue can often be categorized as dialectical. Both strive to better understand themselves and each other during their talks by interrogating one another’s motivations and moral systems. *Ekphrasis* becomes a powerful tool for Fielding, because description is amplified within the text through dialogue and conversation, suggesting that his approach to *ekphrasis* is about conversation’s ability to capitalize on ekphrastic moments.

In the first chapter of *Tom Jones*, Fielding teaches his reader how to understand the interrelationship between conversation and experiential learning by comparing conversation to occupations, including law, farming, planting, and gardening—each a profession that requires people to learn not only from theory and past practices, but also from experience: people “must perfect by experience what he hath acquired the rudiments

of by reading” (425). The narrator’s statement echoes Fielding’s own in his 1744 letter to James Harris: “In a Word, you first awakened an Idea in me that true Philosophy consisted in Habit only” (47).⁶² Habit is key, because it forms experiences that lead to understanding. Conversation becomes an experiential tool, able to produce a data set against which to analyze human nature. If *Tom Jones* provides only what can be seen in the world, then philosophical conversation is the means by which readers can examine whether the narrator’s claim is valid. The notion that something subjective (such as how to interpret another’s words) can be tested against empirical evidence is not singular to Fielding; as Adela Pinch has noted, Hume argues for the same approach when discussing feelings as a form of empirical evidence:

The writings of the empiricists shifted feeling from the realm of volition to the realm of understanding... This movement brings feeling closer to epistemological matters: *empiricism allows emotion to be a way of knowing*. Almost all eighteenth-century thinking about feeling, including Hume’s, concerns the relationship between its epistemological and ontological status, and its social character. (18-19, emphasis my own)

Hume, and other contemporary empiricists, transformed feelings from a product of the will to a product of understanding. This shift meant that feelings could be a “way of knowing”—a way to verify how one perceives the world. Feelings become a means of verification, a method to gather empirical evidence. The correlation between feelings as a way of knowing and conversation as an evidence-gathering method both contribute to

⁶² Harris, “whose family was related to the Earls of Shaftesbury... became Fielding’s closest friend” while in school; Harris also wrote an unpublished biography of Fielding in the late 1750s, titled “Essay on the Life and Genius of Henry Fielding, Esq.,” which was included in the 1762 *Works* (Bree 5, 8, 15fn.).

Fielding's methodology for examining human nature in *Tom Jones*. Conversation becomes collected data, and feelings (as a response to the evidence) can be a unit to measure how well one understands others.

On a philosophic level, the first chapter of *Tom Jones* provides its audience with a way to interrogate the world around them in a more empirical way, validating the use of emotion—as long as reflection is part of the process for understanding human nature. As Bill Wandless argues, “The techniques of Fielding, Smollett, and Sterne rely less on sentimental response than on rational assessment. The sympathies elicited by their fictions serve as prompts for reflection, not imitation; the sentiments operate as fully as ever, but emphasis falls on their edification and refinement” (65). That is, while feelings are valid measurements of one's knowledge, those reactions must be thought over rationally in order to come to a complete understanding. Fielding's narrative technique in *Tom Jones* is to first provide the lesson (for example, the breakdown of evidence-gathering methods in Chapter One), then follow the lesson with an example upon which the technique can be applied (i.e., the ekphrastic description of Sophia in Chapter Two).

When Sophia is first introduced to readers, the description of her intends to convey both her external appearance and her nature. Readers, it seems, need to apply what they learned in Chapter One regarding conversation, experience, and knowledge attainment to the next chapter. In the preface to Chapter Two, the narrator informs readers that “we have taken every occasion of interspersing through the whole sundry similes, descriptions, and other kind of poetical embellishments” in order to “refresh the mind” and engage readers (131-2). Unlike Congreve's narrator, Fielding's narrator quickly delivers on the promise made during the preface. Noting that “here, therefore, we

have thought proper to prepare the mind of the reader for her reception,” the narrator creates a sense of anticipation (132). The anticipation develops a desire to become acquainted with a character who, the narrator promises, will ignite the passions:

Indeed we would, for certain causes, advise those of our male readers who have any hearts to read no farther, were we not well assured that how amiable soever the picture of our heroine will appear, as it is really a copy from nature, many of our fair countrywomen will be found worthy to satisfy any passion, and to answer any idea of female perfection which our pencil will be able to raise. (133)

The narrator suggests that the picture of Sophia will be so vivid that male readers will imagine her as a real person—as an idea without a counterpart in the physical world. Yet, in the same breath, the narrator acknowledges that “many of our fair countrywomen will be found worthy,” suggesting that although Sophia may seem like an unparalleled creation, she is in fact a character meant to perfectly complement the protagonist, Tom Jones. For Blair, a similar feeling arises when in the presence of beauty: “For beauty is always conceived by us, as something residing in the object which raises the pleasant sensation; a sort of glory which dwell upon, and invests it” (52-3). The reason the passions are raised when reading is that “new and strange objects rouse the mind from its dormant state by giving it a quick and pleasing impulse. Hence, in a great measure, the entertainment afforded us by fiction and romance” (55). The narrator’s preparation of the reader for Sophia’s appearance relies upon both beauty and novelty, thereby holding the reader’s attention.

Sophia is first described in comparison to the statue of Venus, casting her as an art image and recalling *The Forc'd Marriage*. About her the narrator states: "Reader, perhaps thou hast seen the statue of the *Venus de Medici*," and informs the reader that if "thou hast seen all these without knowing what beauty is, thou hast no eyes; if without feeling its power, thou hast no heart" (134).⁶³ The eyes, ever the site of understanding, and the heart, the center of emotions, become external and internal determinations of a person's ability to comprehend the world around them. Philosophy and emotion became indelibly linked in Fielding's construction of beauty. At the end of the descriptive passage, the narrator again mentions the statue of Venus in relation to Sophia: "If I was not afraid of offending her delicacy, I might justly say the highest beauties of *Venus de Medici* were outdone" (136). By bookending the description with references to the same statue, Fielding wants his reader to imagine Sophia with the same mental power that it takes to view the statue of Venus in person, albeit with the understanding that the statue is a pale imitation of true beauty.

The narrator's description of Sophia is the most ekphrastic description of a character's outward appearance to occur in *Tom Jones*. Following the classical ekphrastic method, the description begins with Sophia's basic size and shape: "Sophia...was a middle-sized woman, but rather inclining to tall" (135). Her "shape was not only exact, but extremely delicate," both "proportional" and symmetrical (135). From these two lines, readers learn that Sophia is taller than average, thin, and her limbs are in proportion

⁶³ Hogarth, mentioned frequently in *Tom Jones*, asks a rhetorical question similar to Fielding's statement in *The Analysis of Beauty*: "Who but a bigot, even to the antiques, will say that he has not seen faces and necks, hands and arms in living women, that even the Grecian Venus doth but coarsely imitate?" (59). The description of Sophia—coupled with her direct comparison to Venus, suggests that her character is purposefully created with Hogarth's philosophy of beauty in mind. Hogarth insists that real women are more beautiful than the statue of Venus, a claim similar to Fielding's about Sophia.

to her height. Next the narrator moves to the top of Sophia's head, describing her face in a linear fashion (not unlike that of Oroonoko and Imoinda). Then, her hair is described: "Her hair, which was black...was now curled so gracefully in her neck that few would believe it her own" (135). Sophia's hair follows the serpentine line that Hogarth insists is the marker of beauty: "Intricacy in form, therefore, I shall define to be that peculiarity in the lines, which compose it, that *leads the eye a wanton kind of chace* [*sic*], and from the pleasure that gives the mind, intitles it to the name of beautiful" (33). About hair particularly, Hogarth notes: "The most amiable in itself is the flowing curl; and the many waving and contrasted turns of naturally intermingling locks ravish the eye with the pleasure of the pursuit" (34). Sophia's hair, then, follows the line of beauty with a curl so graceful and intricate that it can "ravish" the reader's mind. Her forehead "might have been higher without prejudice to her," meaning that it is average; her "eyebrows were full, even, and arched beyond the power of art to imitate" (135). If her eyebrows are "beyond the power of art to imitate," the suggestion is that they are natural—not plucked or shaped other than how they naturally grow. Readers learn that her "black eyes" have a natural shine and are soft, suggesting that kindness emanates from them (135). Her "nose was exactly regular," her mouth contains "two rows of ivory," her cheeks are "oval, and in her right she had a dimple," and her chin is neither large nor small, but "perhaps was rather the former kind" (135). There is, then, nothing extraordinary or unnatural about Sophia's appearance. The narrator seems vindicated in his assertion that male readers can find Sophia's equal in the real world; she does "not exactly resemble" any one woman, meaning she is comprised of natural and normal parts.⁶⁴

⁶⁴ John Bender and Simon Sterne note that Sophia's description is likely predicated on the image of "Charlotte Craddock, Fielding's first wife, who died in 1744" (881, 135fn.).

The transhistorical skepticism concerning the power of description to create an exact image at least partially explains Fielding's inclusion of the statue of Venus when describing Sophia. If readers can transpose the details that they read about Sophia onto their mental image of the statue, the art object provides a concrete base upon which to imagine Sophia. Fielding's practice again mirrors Hogarth's, who argues for the necessity of including artworks against which to compare his philosophy of beauty and art:

At first, perhaps, the whole design, as well as the prints, may seem rather intended to trifle and confound, than to entertain and inform: but I am persuaded that when the examples in nature, referr'd to in this essay, are duly thought worthy of a careful and attentive perusal: and the prints themselves too will, I make no doubt, be examined as attentively, when it is found, that almost every figure in them...is referr'd to singly in the essay, *in order to assist the reader's imagination*, when the original examples in art, or nature, are not themselves before him. (17, emphasis my own)

Like Hogarth, it seems that Fielding intends to activate the reader's imagination by compounding the relationship between art and prose. Mentioning the statue of Venus is a means "to assist the reader's imagination." The narrator's comments surrounding the description of Sophia suggests that the passage is meant to create *phantasia*, or mental images. The idea that a character can come close to seeming real, without actually being imagined as so, aligns with Hume's philosophy that poetry cannot be mistaken for something real (14).

The ability to engage readers through their imagination is an important part of *Tom Jones*; beyond using vivid descriptions, Fielding also keeps his readers interested by having secondary characters and objects reappear throughout the novel at key points. Although characters like Black George return and seem to appear by complete coincidence, they serve to develop important plot points. One object in particular receives attention throughout the novel, and that is Sophia's muff. The muff materializes Hume's argument that "in narrative compositions, the events or actions, which the writer relates, must be connected together, by some bond or tie: They must be related to each other in the imagination, and form a kind of *unity*" (21). The muff becomes this "bond or tie"—and it also becomes an object of *cathexis*. Tom's feelings (both romantic and sexual) are concentrated onto the muff, an object that becomes a metonym for Sophia. Only thirty pages after Sophia is introduced, her muff is brought to the reader's attention. It is a totem that provides Tom with an opportunity to transfer his sexual desire for Sophia to an inanimate object. Her maid, Mrs. Honour, tells Sophia that one afternoon, Tom came into her room, and upon seeing Sophia's muff on a chair, "put his hands into it...then he kissed it...he kissed it again and again, and said it was the prettiest muff in the world" (179). By the time *Tom Jones* is published, "muff" was also slang for "The female pubic hair. Hence also: the vulva, the vagina" ("muff, n.1.").⁶⁵ The scene must, then, also be understood as sexual innuendo: when Tom kisses and puts his hands inside the muff, it is safe to assume that Fielding meant for his readers to recognize the sexual fetishism latent

⁶⁵ About Sophia's physical description, Alison Conway notes that the description of Sophia is "intensely detailed and eroticized" (141), providing further evidence that Fielding intended his reader to recognize the sexual innuendo latent in the passage.

in Tom's actions. Sophia's reaction to Mrs. Honour's story suggests that she, too, recognizes that her muff is a fetishized sexual object.

When Sophia learns about Tom's interaction with the muff, the narrator notes: "Till something of a more beautiful red than vermillion be found out, I shall *say nothing* of Sophia's colour on this occasion" (179, emphasis my own). The narrator alludes to the natural world (vermillion) and in the same breath asserts that Sophia's color outdoes what is traditionally the most beautiful red hue available in nature. Because the narrator does not have access to Sophia's internal thoughts, he describes her physical reaction instead. This practice was common to eighteenth-century fiction, as Wandless observes: "Faced with the impossibility of expressing fully those inexpressible aspects of the human condition, yet unwilling to forfeit their power to engage audience sympathies, writers sought out methods of using the body to reveal the inner lives of characters and to manipulate the moral implications of their behavior" (57). Without knowing Sophia's mind, the narrator cannot tell readers exactly what she thinks; instead, he provides enough detail to guide readers to a predetermined conclusion, suggesting that the narrator and the reader are restricted by their own dialectical situation.

The narrator further defends himself by claiming that he "say[s] nothing" because to do so would violate the terms set out by Horace in *Ars Poetica*: "I shall adhere to a rule of Horace, by not attempting to describe it, from despair of success" (179). The narrator refers to Horace's assertion that "what he [the orator] fears he cannot make attractive with his touch he abandons" (Bender and Stern 884). But, much like Congreve's narrator in *Incognita*, the narrator belies his first statement with another when he states that "most of my readers will suggest it easily to themselves" (180). Significantly, the narrator

acknowledges that readers “will...easily” imagine Sophia’s blush—the imperative *will* is used, rather than the conditional *may* or *can*—meaning that the narrator believes he has provided enough detail for the reader to picture the image. This means that the onus for imagining Sophia is placed on the reader, who must do the mental work to picture her blush. Lewis argues that:

No sentence of *Tom Jones* allows us to forget that we are “in” a fiction; precisely by denying the transparency of language and insisting on its mediating role as a condition of our experience of reality, the novel might be said to have created a more complete—and in some sense even more realistic—possibility of immersion than those who pretend that language can achieve immediacy. (314)

It is precisely the *inability* of language to “achieve immediacy” that allows readers to become immersed in *Tom Jones*; Fielding never claims that language can transcend authorial mediation. In fact, Fielding embraces the fact that fiction writing is an essentially mediated form. By providing the color, and then forcing the reader to develop *phantasia*, Fielding’s narrator somewhat paradoxically makes the image that much more vivid. In his refusal to give details, the narrator exposes exactly how Sophia reacts.

Although the muff travels the same paths as the protagonists, it is noticeably absent in the climactic scene between Tom and Sophia. The scene occurs after Tom’s parentage is revealed, and he has matured enough to end dalliances with various female characters. Sophia asks Tom, ““After what is past, sir, can you expect I should take you upon your word?”” (862). The reader’s mind—so impressed with the travails of the muff—very likely anticipates the object making a final appearance as material proof of

Tom's constancy. When Tom replies that his word is not enough, that he has "a better security, a pledge for my constancy, which it is impossible to see and to doubt," it seems that he will prove his constancy by producing the muff, the metonym for Sophia, and all will be resolved (862). Yet the muff is not produced. It is not even mentioned. Instead, Tom walks Sophia to a mirror. As the characters look at their reflections together, Tom declares: "You could not doubt it, if you could see yourself with any eyes but your own" (862)—and in that moment, that prose rendering of a visual posture, Sophia can see herself exactly as Tom sees her.

Posed in front of a mirror, the characters themselves reverse what a mimetic image comes to represent. No longer imitations of people, Tom's language turns Sophia's reflection into an original image. She is seen, as though for the first time. Sophia is forced to reimagine herself through Tom's eyes, while she stands before the image of herself. She is not a faint copy or a fading image called back from long ago memory. Instead, the passage employs descriptive language to reveal that people make their own meaning by how they interpret and perceive the world around them.

In front of the mirror, positioned as a verbal representation of a visual representation, Sophia comes to know both herself and Tom. The scene hints at the modern definition of *ekphrasis*. But, to align with the modern definition, Sophia would have to be an art object, which Tom's dialogue makes clear she is not. The mirror reflects their images in the same way, providing both with the same perspective. She can *see* how Tom sees her: as a living, breathing woman, not some abstract idea of her or a story he tells himself about her that does not reflect the real woman. She is not an imagined ideal. Her body, her "shape, those eyes, that mind which shines through those eyes" are cast in

front of both characters (862). The scene becomes a hall of mirrors, as readers first picture the protagonists in front of the mirror, then imagine Sophia as Tom sees her, and then ponder Tom's injunction that Sophia see herself through another's eyes, meaning that readers also need to imagine Sophia picturing herself, and then picture her reframing her own perspective through Tom's vision.

With one mirror, Fielding creates a dizzying array of images. Their reflection is, seemingly, mimetic, in the Platonic sense: they are literally described in front of a mirror. Yet this is not traditional *mimesis*. The characters, Sophia in particular, having previously been ekphrastically described, can be pictured by the reader exactly how Fielding wants them to be perceived—and, notably, Fielding does not want her pictured as an exact imitation of any one person that exists in the world. Readers, therefore, are not presented with dull and faded images. What is exposed is how to *see* another person—or oneself—as more than their external appearance, as more than what is described by others, as more than a flat character, incapable of development. Tom's mental development becomes clear in his ability to teach Sophia how to understand his own feelings. In front of the mirror, the two are equally represented, exactly as they are. Yet what they are, in a literal sense, is an inverted image. What is brought before the reader's eyes is not simply a picture of characters created through imitation. Instead, the mirror scene teaches readers how to interpret their impressions and recognize the totality of a person, rather than relying on a first impression. If mirrors themselves present a reversed image of what is in front of them, Fielding interrogates what it means to reflect, to dwell upon what is before readers.

Painted into Existence: Male Tyranny and Portraits in *A Simple Story*

What Fielding does for *mimesis* with a mirror and a muff, Elizabeth Inchbald's *A Simple Story* (1798) does with a painting and a hat. Like the muff in *Tom Jones*, Lord Elmwood's hat is an object of *cathexis* for his daughter Matilda that prompts her to concentrate an unhealthy level of mental and emotional energy on a person who refuses to validate her existence. Within the novel, Inchbald employs ekphrastic descriptions to develop tableau-like scenes that promote vivid pictures in the reader's mind. Perhaps part of the novel's success in developing characters and scenes with verisimilitude is due to Inchbald's previous experience in the theater, in which, particularly by the late eighteenth century, props had become an integral part of a drama's plot development.⁶⁶ A noted playwright and actress, Inchbald's familiarity with the London stage influenced her debut novel, especially in regard to her vivid descriptions and use of objects.⁶⁷ Her experience with one play in particular is of interest, and that is *The Winter's Tale*. In his 1833 memoir of Inchbald, James Boaden notes that during her time as an actress, Inchbald "had probably acted both the Mother and the Daughter of that romantic drama" (277).⁶⁸ Considering the reclamation of daughters, tyrannical fathers, and dead mothers in *A*

⁶⁶ Examples include (but are not limited to) the black boxes in *The Way of the World* and *A Wife to be Lett*, the banknote in Henry Fielding's *The Modern Husband* (1732), Constance's jewels in Oliver Goldsmith's *She Stoops to Conquer* (1773), the portrait of Sir Oliver in Richard Brinsley Sheridan's *The School for Scandal* (1777), and Frederick's birth certificate in Inchbald's *The Lover's Vows* (1798).

⁶⁷ Paula Backscheider offers a tally of Inchbald's stage successes: "Fourteen of her twenty-one surviving plays ran ten or more nights in their first season, and six ran twenty or more. *Such Things Are* (1787) played twenty-two nights, *Every One Has His Faults* (1793) thirty-two nights, and *Lovers' Vows* (1798) forty-two...The 1788-89 season alone saw six of her plays performed" (*Plays* xi).

⁶⁸ Terry Castle also notes the correlation, acknowledging in a footnote: "The interplay, in this passage and elsewhere, between fathers, father surrogates, and daughters is Shakespearean in resonance...The complex relations between Miss Milner, Matilda, and Dorriforth certainly resemble those of Hermione, Perdita, and Leontes in several respects." It must be noted that Castle finds a stronger affiliation with *King Lear*, "particularly in the painful image here of the father's blindness to his daughter" (fn. 313). However, neither Castle nor Boaden dwell on the reference. To Castle's list, the addition of Rushbrook and Florizel is necessary, because both fall in love with dispossessed daughters.

Simple Story, it appears that Inchbald remediates *The Winter's Tale* into a modern version.

Yet Inchbald's telling darkens the tale. Even after Lord Elmwood⁶⁹ reclaims Matilda, an air of fatalism pervades the novel's conclusion, suggesting that Inchbald is skeptical that a tyrant can genuinely reform. As Amy J. Pawl observes: "In this version of *The Winter's Tale*, then, while Perdita is restored to her father, her mother remains unrevived" (124). There is no hint that Lord Elmwood's perception of Lady Elmwood alters after her death or the restoration of their daughter. He may eventually perform his fatherly duties, but the ending does not suggest that his intractability has faded. Rather than fully reform Lord Elmwood, Inchbald manipulates his character to expose the social acceptance of male authoritarianism as natural, implying that those inclined to tyranny can never truly change.

A Simple Story identifies patterns of tyrannical behavior in Lord Elmwood through Matilda's mental obsession with his belongings, in particular his hat and his portrait. Repeated appearances of the two objects provides multiple, related descriptions that supplement descriptions of Matilda's suffering. The layering of descriptions renders Matilda's emotional pain so vividly that it seems likely that Inchbald intended to elicit an emotional response from her reader. The result is cumulative *ekphrasis*, or a final scene that is rendered with enough detail to prompt a feeling of *enargeia* in the reader. Matilda's *cathexis* is projected onto Lord Elmwood's portrait more than any other object in the novel. The painting is not simply an artistic representation of Lord Elmwood's

⁶⁹ When discussing Dorriforth/Lord Elmwood, I refer to the character as Dorriforth before his status change, Lord Elmwood after. Similarly, Miss Milner/Lady Elmwood is referenced by her married state (Miss Milner when single, Lady Elmwood when married).

external appearance. It also reflects the impact his internal state has on his external appearance, suggesting that the painting is more than a likeness—it is a reflection of Lord Elmwood. Like a gothic portrait, or an inversion of Tom and Sophia’s happy mirror, it objectifies paternal dominance, creating an object that in turn fixates the daughter. By layering vivid descriptions of Dorriforth/Lord Elmwood throughout the novel, Inchbald employs *ekphrasis* to detail the creation of a despot, in turn destabilizing patriarchal certitude and exposing the social structures that permit abuses within the system.

The link between male tyranny and the loss of female independence is clear in both halves of the novel. Yet, what is most interesting, as well as subversive, about *A Simple Story* is that, although Lady Elmwood is an adulteress, she remains a sympathetic character. Terry Castle observes that “*A Simple Story* is a story of law and its violation... Each half of the novel is structured as a chain of violations. The pattern of rebellion is linked to the struggle for power between men and women: the law is masculine, the will that opposes feminine” (294). Inchbald writes a heroine who defies the social norms prescribed for women and who is not entirely free from blame yet is preferable to her husband. Dorriforth/Elmwood appears implacable, tyrannical, and mean-spirited. His off-putting personality is compounded in the novel’s second half, when his intractability is contrasted with Matilda’s capacity for sensibility. Matilda’s position as the willing captive means she “is on hand to receive every slight her father’s behavior can possibly offer her” (Pawl 118). Haggerty notes that “Inchbald’s double narrative insists, moreover, on abjection as implicit in the position of the female in a patriarchal culture” (656). Considering Pawl’s and Haggerty’s analyses, it seems that Lord Elmwood punishes Matilda for the sins of her mother, resulting in Matilda’s

abjection and trapping her in an environment that promotes patriarchal certitude over female comfort. Janet Todd argues that the novel offers “by implication—a biting attack on authoritarian patriarchy” (228). Close reading of vividly descriptive passages reveals, however, that the assault on authoritarianism is not implied; close reading of vividly descriptive passages reveals that tyrannical behavior carried out in the name of patriarchal traditions is visibly criticized. Inchbald is willing to sneer at the standard moral line, manipulating different forms of description in order to criticize traditional social structures created by patriarchal norms.

Both halves of the novel include pointed references to the correlation between painting and Dorriforth/Lord Elmwood’s intractable nature, a through-line that ties the novel together. Many attempts by modern critics to suture the first and second halves of *A Simple Story* together focus on the final line in the first volume, when the narrator points out that Miss Milner becomes Lady Elmwood with a mourning ring, not a wedding ring. It has been read as a heavy-handed portent, meant to prepare readers for the seventeen-year gap between parts Two and Three and segue between Miss Milner’s elevation to Lady Elmwood and her death.⁷⁰ However, a far more prophetic scene, one that links the two halves together gracefully, occurs earlier: when Miss Milner reveals her romantic feelings about Dorriforth to Miss Woodley. Discovering that Miss Milner is in love with Mr. Dorriforth, who, at this point, is still a priest, Miss Woodley refuses to condone Miss Milner’s desires. Unused to being told no, Miss Milner rebukes her, prompting Miss

⁷⁰ Eun Kyung Min observes that “symbolically, the mourning-wedding ring collapses the distinction between loving and mourning...The ring suggests that, symbolically, Elmwood confuses the marriage promise with a promise of deathlike constancy, or a constancy unto death” (120). Sharon L. Decker interprets the ring as proof that “the joyous, rebellious, finicky Miss Milner no longer exists...The old Miss Milner, and all her energetic challenges, is to be mourned” (p. 73). Marcie Frank calls the ring “portentous and heavily symbolic,” signaling the “collapse of affective extremes—the joy of marriage and the horror of death” (722).

Woodley to call upon Miss Milner to imagine the ills that would befall them all should her feelings become known: ““Think what a task I undertake for your sake and his, when I condemn myself to explain to him your weakness—what astonishment! what confusion! what remorse, *do I foresee painted upon his face!*”” (89, emphasis my own). Miss Woodley details the drastic consequences she imagines: ““I hear him call you by the harshest names, and behold him fly from your sight for ever, as an object of his detestation”” (89). Miss Woodley’s fear stems from social moral codes that prohibit the expression of women’s desires. Women, in other words, were meant to *be* desired, not to *be desiring*—to desire is to assert oneself as an agent, as a subject. Mary Poovey examines the double bind the social expectations concerning female sexuality place women in: “Thus women were encouraged to display no vanity, no passion, no assertive ‘self’ at all...All of this self-effacing behavior was included in the general category of ‘modesty.’ But even modesty perpetuates the paradoxical formulation of female sexuality” (21). To express her love for Dorriforth is to expose her passion and assert her self—two attributes readers know Dorriforth would immediately disapprove. Miss Milner—and readers—are prompted to imagine what Dorriforth’s face will look like if it is colored by detestation.

Though Miss Woodley’s words are not descriptive in themselves, they effectively capture Dorriforth’s nature, and Miss Milner can only respond: ““Oh spare the dreadful picture”” (89). Miss Milner’s response suggests that her mind has created *phantasiai* vivid enough to make her imagine his response. Miss Woodley’s language paints a “dreadful” picture, persuading Miss Milner to ““consent to any thing”” (89)—words that should recall Lady Wishfort’s panicked agreement to Mr. Fainall’s terrible contract. The

verb employed by Miss Woodley, “painted,” develops a direct link between art objects and the imagination. Art, not life, is the medium through which the descriptions become vivid for the female characters. Inchbald makes it clear, in the novel’s first half, that art is a means for interrogating the human condition.

It is precisely the “dreadful picture” of Lord Elmwood that readers meet in the novel’s third and fourth parts. In the novel’s second half, life is very different for the protagonists. Lady Elmwood dies shortly into the action,⁷¹ and Lord Elmwood is as intractable and tyrannical as Leontes in *The Winter’s Tale*. Paula Backscheider notes that Lord Elmwood is typical of Inchbald’s patriarchs: “Inchbald seems to have been fascinated by the stern, nearly tyrannical, father figure...Acting out a sense of personal betrayal rather than an understanding of human frailty, they punish and cut off those closest to them” (*Plays* xxii). This image of the “stern, nearly tyrannical, father figure” confronts readers in the novel’s second half. About Lord Elmwood, his former tutor and later advisor, Sandford observes: “His temper is a great deal altered from what it once was” (223). Matilda, much like her mother before her, is both enraptured and terrified by Lord Elmwood. George E. Haggerty argues that what is unique about *A Simple Story* is “the easy equation it assumes between female desire and pain” (657). Haggerty finds that Inchbald “eroticizes the relation between father and daughter,” and that the relationship is masochistic (664); he explains Matilda’s devotion as “an attempt at survival” (664). Concluding that “the symbolic Law of the Father is represented here by a father who

⁷¹ The decline of Miss Milner is presented as potentially shocking to readers: “To begin with the first female object of this story.—The beautiful, the beloved Miss Milner—she is no longer beautiful—no longer beloved—no longer—tremble while you read it!—no longer—virtuous” (194). Having had an affair with Sir Frederick, Miss Milner/Lady Elmwood banishes herself from Lord Elmwood’s home, leaving their daughter Matilda behind.

makes his own laws and enforces them peremptorily,” Haggerty points to the latent patriarchal tyranny embodied by Lord Elmwood (668). Indeed, Lord Elmwood perceives his position as head of the household with more security in his own divine right than any other patriarch in this study (excepting Leontes, an actual monarch).

In the novel’s second half, Lord Elmwood’s portrait reflects of his physical likeness and his domineering demeanor. According to Platonic theory, the painting should be an imitation of the man but is not the *actual* man. Yet, between descriptions of Lord Elmwood’s behavior and his changed physical appearance, it seems that even his closest companions cannot separate the tyrant from his imposing portrait. By the time Matilda receives permission to live at his estate (with the caveat that he neither sees nor hears her), Lord Elmwood is memorialized. Matilda has no direct, physical contact with her father; the closest she can get is gazing upon a simulacrum of him, and she sits “for hours to look at it” (220). Although the portrait does not receive much descriptive attention, Matilda’s reflections in front of the painting are described in detail, with narrative additions that reveal a link between portraits and perception. When looking at Lord Elmwood’s portrait, Matilda believes that her father’s features are the “exact moulds in which her own appeared to have been modelled” (220). But the narrator quickly corrects Matilda’s deceived eyes: “yet Matilda’s person, shape, and complexion [*sic*] were so extremely like what her mother’s once were, that at the first glance she appeared to have a still greater resemblance of her, than of her father” (220). Her mind perceives what her eyes see, and her mind shades those sensory inputs to align with Matilda’s internal desires, much like Thomas Wright’s green shades, discussed in Chapter One. Matilda sees herself as an imitation of her father, because perceiving

herself that way brings her pleasure. About the imagination, Blair writes: “In children, the rudiments of taste discover themselves very early in a thousand instances; in their fondness for regular bodies, *their admiration of pictures and statues, and imitations of all kinds*; and their strong attachment to whatever is new or marvelous” (17). Matilda, at least mentally, is akin to an infant in regard to her understanding of her father. She is newly in his home, seeing him (without him seeing her) for the first time. Admiring his picture reflects her developing understanding, even if the information she processes is inaccurate. Blair notes that “the imagination may be strongly affected, and in fact, often is so, by objects of which we have no clear conception” (34). Matilda’s imagination is strongly affected by her viewing of the portrait, because she has “no clear conception” of Lord Elmwood. Matilda sees herself as a copy of her father, but her imagination cannot create a complete image of Lord Elmwood, because she has no experience of him. Instead, her sight, it seems, is deceived by her mind’s manipulation of the images, because, as the narrator reveals, Matilda actually looks like her mother.

Much like her mother would sigh and pine after Mr. Dorriforth, Matilda “would sigh and weep” in front of Lord Elmwood’s portrait (220). When Matilda first sees the portrait, it engenders painful emotions in her: “when it was first pointed out to her, she shrunk back with fear, and it was some time before she dared venture to cast her eyes completely on it” (220). If the portrait, “esteemed a very capital picture, and a great likeness” (20), is an accurate imitation of her father, and Matilda stands before it for hours, sighing and weeping—signaling that she longs for her father—what, then, is the cause of a fear so intense that she could not look upon it for “some time”? The simple answer is that Matilda’s fear is the fear of naïveté, a young woman afraid that she will

never see her father in the flesh and that this portrait is the closest she will ever come to knowing Lord Elmwood. However, this is too incomplete—too simple—a reading. A few pages after the portrait is introduced into the text, Sandford confesses to Matilda and Miss Woodley:

I believe I am grown afraid of your father.—His temper is a great deal altered from what it once was—he exalts his voice, and uses harsh expressions upon the least provocation—his eyes flash lightning, and his face is distorted with anger on the slightest motives. (223)

Sandford's words are descriptive, if not entirely ekphrastic. His dialogue recalls the account of Mr. Dorriforth provided at the beginning of the novel. Early on, the narrator makes note of Dorriforth's "pair of dark bright eyes" (8). Those eyes no longer soothe with their kindness; now, they "flash lightening" (223). The things that made Dorriforth appealing, the "gleam of sensibility diffused over each" feature, "the charm" that originally drew in Miss Milner, have vanished (8). Now, Lord Elmwood is easily provoked and difficult to be around. Earlier, his features appear to reflect a man of sensibility: "on this countenance his thoughts were pictured...so was his honest face adorned with every emblem of those virtues" (8-9). Lord Elmwood's thoughts still shade his face, but rather than giving "a lustre to his aspect [that] added a harmonious sound to all he uttered," now he "exalts his voice" and his face is "distorted" by anger (8-9, 223). Given Sandford's words, it is no wonder that both Matilda and Miss Woodley "each saw the other turn pale, at this description" (223). Their "looks and manner" express their internal dread. Although not directly ekphrastic, the passage strategically uses a short description to stage a later, ekphrastic moment. Inchbald laces the novel with short, vivid

descriptions, preparing her reader for the fully ekphrastic descriptions that express moments of patriarchal tyranny.

Even with her knowledge of Lord Elmwood's intractability and warnings about his temper, he remains a source of *cathexis* for Matilda. She is obsessed with gleanng new information about her father, and she is also deeply impacted by his personal belongings. When Lord Elmwood is absent, Matilda wanders the house, touching anything she believes he touched during his stay. During one wandering in particular, Matilda fixates on a hat left lying in his study—much in the same way Tom fetishized Sophia's muff:

But a hat, lying on one of the tables, gave her a sensation beyond any other she experienced on this occasion—in that trifling article of his dress, *she thought she saw himself*, and held it in her hand with *pious reverence*.

(246, emphasis my own)

When holding his hat, Matilda seems to feel like she holds her father. The object impresses itself on her senses so strongly that she can picture Lord Elmwood wearing the hat. She holds the “trifling article...with pious reverence,” perhaps without the sexual innuendo of Tom's kissing the muff, but with a sense of reverie and of knowing. She holds an object that stands in for her father. The scene prepares readers to understand the emotional link Matilda feels with Lord Elmwood. Blair recognizes the impact objects can have on the senses and the imagination, particularly when objects elicit an emotional reaction: “It is not easy to describe, in words, the precise impression which great and sublime objects make upon us, when we behold them...It produces a sort of internal elevation and expansion; it raises the mind much above its ordinary state, and fills it with

a degree of wonder and astonishment” (32). The depth of Matilda’s emotional reaction to Lord Elmwood’s hat suggests that, for Matilda, the hat is a sublime object. The hat—both a stand-in for Lord Elmwood and the object of Matilda’s *cathexis*—overwhelms Matilda’s senses, even when Lord Elmwood is not physically present.

The hat is a metonym for Lord Elmwood, eliciting intense emotion from Matilda when she touches it. As far as Matilda knows, holding an object her father once held may be the closest she comes to physical contact with him. Shortly after Matilda picks up her father’s hat, she comes face-to-face with its owner, seeming to confirm the object’s totemic power. During their first encounter, Matilda and Lord Elmwood have intense physical reactions to one another. Matilda, struck with fear, faints—but he catches her before she touches the ground. Much has been made of this scene, but critical analyses examining the affiliation between Lord Elmwood and his portrait are typically subordinated to discussions of sensibility and plot.⁷² Spending time examining the resemblance between Lord Elmwood and his portrait explains some of Matilda’s reaction upon meeting him. Prior to the moment of fainting, Inchbald writes another short, descriptive passage that contributes to the ekphrastic scene. The narrator provides a moment-by-moment account of Matilda’s movements: “seeing Miss Woodley walking on the lawn before the house, she hastily took her hat to join her; and not waiting to put it on, went nimbly down the great staircase with it hanging on her arm” (273). The

⁷² For discussions of sensibility, see Nora Nachumi’s “‘Those Simple Signs’: The Performance of Emotion in Elizabeth Inchbald’s *A Simple Story*” (335); Candace Ward’s “Inordinate Desire: Schooling the Senses in Elizabeth Inchbald’s *A Simple Story*” (14); and Marcie Frank’s “Melodrama and the Politics of Literary Form in Elizabeth Inchbald’s Works” (710). Terry Castle’s *Masquerade and Civilization* examines the “violation of patriarchal taboo” the meeting incites (324-5). Jo Alyson Parker’s “Complicating *A Simple Story*: Inchbald’s Two Versions of Female Power” observes that this scene “forces us to regard Matilda’s ‘wrong’ as a right. It is Lord Elmwood who is wrong in imposing the rules that separate him from his daughter” (263).

narrative depicts Matilda excitedly grabbing her hat, looping it onto her arm, and bounding down the stairs. After a few bounds, “she heard a footstep walking slowly up,” causing her to “[stop] short, half resolved to turn back” (273). Yet, knowing that her father is meant to be miles away, she calms herself, and in “a single instant...went a few steps farther” (273). The passage depicts Matilda’s moment of hesitation, her foot hovering over the next step, perhaps shaking her head in admonition before she bounds down the stairs. The scene is a pointed descriptive aside, proving specific details that suggest Inchbald intends to activate the reader’s imagination. Matilda’s movements are described with more attention to detail than most scenes in the novel, and this is because it occurs just prior to an ekphrastic description.

The language surrounding the pivotal plot point draws readers in, working like a magnet. The descriptions layer upon one another, helping to build tension and stage the ekphrastic moment. As Matilda turns the corner at the second landing, she sees that “Lord Elmwood—was immediately before her!” (323). It is the narrator who knows that the man on the stairs is Lord Elmwood; Matilda has not yet made the connection. But the narrator describes Matilda’s moment of recognition, portraying the events in language that resembles philosophies of perception. Matilda interrogates what her senses impress on her mind, quickly deducing the stranger’s identity: the man has “an air of authority in his looks as well as in the sound of his steps; a resemblance to the portrait she had seen of him”—so much so that “her *fears* confirmed her it was him” (273). Matilda recognizes her father, because the emotion she feels upon seeing him—fear—mirrors the emotion she felt when looking upon his portrait. The visual and verbal representations she heard concerning Lord Elmwood are confirmed when he appears before her eyes. Classical

ekphrasis is employed: the picture of Lord Elmwood is literally brought before her eyes. Matilda's vision confirms the *vision* (in a very Blairian sense) that her mind conjured from the portrait of Lord Elmwood and the verbal descriptions of his personality.⁷³

For Matilda, confirmation that the man before her is the same man represented in the portrait overwhelms her: "she gave a scream of terror—put out her trembling hands to catch the balustrades on the stairs for support—missed them—and fell motionless into her father's arms" (273-4). The punctuation Inchbald includes between each motion draws attention to each movement as a singular event that must be pictured before moving to the next. The time between Matilda's scream and her fall must be just seconds, yet the grammatically-enforced pauses force readers to slow down. It is also an invocation of the Gothic.⁷⁴ The saturated descriptive moment is meant to induce terror, as the language is detailed enough for readers to share in Matilda's fear. The passage becomes intensely vivid, conscripting the reader into the text.

The moment Matilda faints and Lord Elmwood's subsequent reaction imply that several things are happening at once in the scene. That Matilda is overwhelmed by her emotions signals her sentimental capacity, and the same emotions simultaneously render her body passive, making her open to exploitation. Emily Hodgson Anderson argues that in *A Simple Story*, Inchbald "repeatedly suggests that multiple emotions may be experienced and expressed all at once" (6). The accidental meeting on the staircase describes an instance in which "multiple emotions" are expressed vividly, exposing the

⁷³ The scene is not quite indicative of modern *ekphrasis* because the portrait itself does not receive much attention. Instead, there is attention paid to the effect the portrait has on Matilda.

⁷⁴ For a particularly interesting examination the intersection between saturated descriptions, the Gothic novel, and philosophy (specifically Adam Smith's *Theory of Moral Sentiments*), see Stefan Andriopoulos, "The Invisible Hand: Supernatural Agency in Political Economy and the Gothic Novel."

sentimental capacities of both Matilda and Lord Elmwood. While unconscious, Matilda becomes much like a statue or a painting; that is, she becomes an aesthetic object, open to interpretation. Anderson insists that “the swoon, like the blush, is an involuntary, physiological response to internal emotion, yet it remains open to multiple interpretations: as Matilda’s terrified faint recalls a swoon of desire, it highlights the uncertain origins of all such physiological reactions” (22-3). In other words, Lord Elmwood can interpret Matilda’s fainting how he wants to because she is not conscious and able to explain her emotional state. His sex allows him to dictate what is real. Also important to note is that Matilda does not reach for her father; she reaches for the balustrade. It is Lord Elmwood who reaches for her.

Inchbald, ever the dramatist, also provides Lord Elmwood’s perspective intermingled with Matilda’s. Upon seeing his daughter, he gives “a start of astonishment,” likely triggered by the surprise of seeing his daughter, as well as her striking resemblance to her mother (273). Although the catch is amended with the caveat that he did so “as by that impulse he would have caught any other person falling for want of aid,” his next move reveals that her presence restores his former sentimentalism, even if only for a moment: “he still held her there—gazed on her attentively—and once again pressed her to his bosom” (274). Lord Elmwood holds her there “at length,” and moving to set her on the ground, is stopped when “her eyes opened and she uttered, ‘Save me’” (274). The entire passage, from Matilda’s first steps down the hallway to Lord Elmwood’s embrace, create a tableau. Matilda’s first words to him in years—much like Hermione’s first words to Leontes—incite an immediate emotional reaction from the patriarchal figure: “Her voice unmanned him.—His long-restrained tears now burst

forth—and seeing her relapse into a swoon again, he cried out eagerly to recall her” (274). The outpouring of emotion suggests that his sensibility is restored—he feels and has empathy for the young woman before him.

Lord Elmwood may recognize his daughter, but when he tries to “recall her,” he unwittingly mistakes Matilda for her mother, calling out: ““Miss Milner—Dear Miss Milner”” (274). With his silent, unresponsive daughter in his arms, Lord Elmwood projects his mental desires onto his daughter. The scene suggests that if he could see his wife one last time, he would have an emotional, rather than a stoic, response. Pressing Matilda to his body, Lord Elmwood transfers his emotions onto the lifeless form before him in a strange sort of *cathexis*. Focusing his mental and emotional energy on her “senseless” form, Lord Elmwood transforms Matilda into a vessel for his sentimentality (274). G. A. Starr asserts that for the man of feeling, “all that is required of him is that he react with an appropriate degree of sympathy to distressed innocence and of abhorrence to vice” (515). In this moment, Lord Elmwood is appropriately sympathetic, but he seems more concerned with his own feelings than with the distress of his innocent daughter. She is rendered a passive figure, and Lord Elmwood takes advantage of her passive state to express his repressed emotions. Nora Nachumi observes that “The variety and violence of Elmwood’s gestures...dramatize his inner turmoil. The heroines’ bodies, then, and the sympathetic reactions they invoke in Lord Elmwood, help reawaken Elmwood’s capacity to love” (335). Lord Elmwood’s reaction to Matilda may be what he would have done for “any other person falling for want of aid,” but it is also an indication that he is not entirely devoid of a sentimental capacity: his actions and his tears reveal his capacity to love, for however short a time. Calling Matilda by her mother’s proper name suggests

that he interprets her fall more as a “swoon of desire” than a “terrified faint.”⁷⁵ The unresponsive body becomes a mirror image of the dead mother in Lord Elmwood’s mind, recalling Leontes’s reaction to the “statue” of Hermione.

Mother and daughter are conflated with one another, confused in Lord Elmwood’s disordered mind. The confusion of daughter for mother prompts a *mise en abyme*, brought about by ekphrastic descriptions. However, as his ensuing behavior quickly shows, this is not a simple scene of *anagnorisis*; this is not the moment the penitent father begs forgiveness. When Lord Elmwood’s servants see him holding Matilda, Lord Elmwood “delivered his apparently dead child” into their hands (274). Further complicating the scene is the remembrance that Miss Milner—not Lady Elmwood—previously mitigated Dorriforth’s intractability when he reclaimed Rushbrook as his nephew. Rushbrook holds Miss Milner’s previous position as advocate for the abandoned child, with Matilda in Rushbrook’s initial position. Dorriforth, now Lord Elmwood, however, remains changed only in name. Throughout, he is the wielder of fates, the eternal patriarch beholden to nothing, excepting tradition.

Just as Hermione, in her pre-verbal, pre-movement phase, could not elicit actual change in Leontes, neither can Matilda, in her unconscious state, alter Lord Elmwood. In a somewhat perplexing examination of masculinity in *A Simple Story*, Caroline Breashears argues that Lord Elmwood only acts like a tyrant because, “afraid of becoming effeminate, he asserts his authority in a series of tactless orders and threats”

⁷⁵ Lord Elmwood’s conflation of identity is read differently by critics. Castle notes a “charged Oedipal attachment between Dorriforth/Elmwood and his daughter” (297), while Patricia Meyer Spacks sees a “an emotional identity between filial and romantic relationship” when Lord Elmwood holds Matilda (*Desire* 200). Along with Anderson, I argue that “these readers gloss over Matilda’s very obvious fear,” failing to recognize that in the scene, both Matilda and Lord Elmwood express multiple emotions simultaneously (fn.15).

(458). But Lord Elmwood's patriarchal authority is *never* questioned. Breashears dismisses the obvious pain Lord Elmwood causes to everyone around him, not recognizing that every character in the novel's second half experiences his tyranny: Sandford, Rushbrook, Miss Woodley, the servants Lord Elmwood "turns away...at a moment's warning, and no concession can make their peace," all suffer at different turns (Inchbald 223). To read Lord Elmwood as a pitiable character is to ignore how he impacts those closest to him. Breashears does correctly note, however, that "contemporary masculine ideals failed to alleviate such anxieties because they linked male honour with female virtue" (453); indeed, female virtue is Lord Elmwood's moral fixation, and he cannot seem to separate himself—or his daughter—from Lady Elmwood's act. Lady Elmwood's affair with Lord Frederick Lawnly precipitated Matilda's current situation. Although Lady Elmwood violated the bonds of marriage (a marriage she entered without saying a word), the blame for Matilda's situation rests entirely on Lord Elmwood.

In a novel rife with cyclical occurrences, it is precisely the threat of another sexual encounter, this time unwanted, that unites father and daughter. When a neighboring lord⁷⁶ kidnaps Matilda with the intent to rape her, Matilda, arguably for the first time, publicly enacts behavior resembling her father's imposing demeanor. It seems that the narrator's previous statement that Matilda believes that "her mind and manners were all Lord Elmwood's" is confirmed (220). When Margrave enters her room after the

⁷⁶ Lord Margrave appears a few times before the kidnapping, and every time he encounters Matilda, he attempts to manipulate her into a relationship with him. Before she is turned out of Lord Elmwood's house, Margrave does not entertain the idea of kidnapping and raping her, believing her father would challenge him in the courts or in a physical duel. However, after she is completely abandoned, Margrave believes he has *carte blanche* to treat her however he desires.

kidnapping, where she resides in the “torn disordered habit in which she had been dragged away,” refusing food and drink, rather than capitulate to his offers, Matilda becomes a force to be reckoned with:

The extreme disgust and horror his presence inspired, caused Matilda for a moment to forget all her weakness, her want of health, her want of power; and rising from the place where she sat, she cried, with her voice elevated, ‘Leave me, my lord, or I’ll die in spite of all your care; I’ll instantly expire with grief, if you do not leave me.’ (327)

When Matilda refuses Margrave, offering to die in an explicitly Clarissa Harlowe-like fashion, her modesty, her morality, and her worthiness, are proven.⁷⁷ Jo Alyson Parker observes: “In effect, within Matilda’s very victimization—her inability to fight against adverse external circumstances except in a purely passive way—lies her particular power” (263). Matilda does not threaten Margrave with legal repercussions or her father’s vengeance. She does not have access to these resources as a discarded child. Instead, she threatens Margrave with her life. From her mother’s behavior—and her father’s reaction—Matilda has learned one lesson her mother did not: the inviolability of the female body.

Somewhat coarsely (to modern audiences), it is the threat to Matilda’s body that provides Lord Elmwood with a strong enough excuse to reclaim his daughter and rescue her. Eun Kyung Min gracefully acknowledges the discomfort modern readers may experience when reading the scene, while deftly analyzing Lord Elmwood’s moment of self-recognition:

⁷⁷ Matilda’s words recall Clarissa’s own in her frenzied letter to Lovelace: “For what purpose should I eat? For what end should I wish to live?...I will neither eat nor drink. I cannot be worse than I am” (895).

Trite as this resolution of plot may seem, and though it may seem demeaning to women in that it makes Matilda's near rape the narrative condition for her reunion with her father (the reader at this point is surely a little bored with Elmwood proving his masculinity once more with pistols), it shows that Elmwood has finally awoken to the fact that his responsibility is not limited to his own intended actions but also the unintended consequences of those actions. (124)

Lord Elmwood's "awakening" is textbook *anagnorisis*. He, indeed, has a moment of self-recognition and a reversal in his actions. Rather than refusing Matilda as his daughter, he fully welcomes her back into his life. His passionate anger turns to paternal love, and, as Alan T. McKenzie argues, "Passions, like other episodes, are preceded by events that help determine their nature. In addition, passions have consequences" (4). Lord Elmwood recognizes that his rejection of Matilda may satiate his passionate anger, but his actions placed her in immediate physical danger. It is Matilda's body—and a direct threat to that body—that forces Lord Elmwood to recognize the damaging impact his tyranny has on his daughter.

Lord Elmwood's moment of recognition alters the course of Matilda's life: she assumes her position as legitimate daughter, and with that, access to her inheritance and a comfortable life. But the novel's ending does not imply that Lord Elmwood's *anagnorisis* extends to his natural inclinations toward intractability and tyranny. Comparing the two times Lord Elmwood sees his daughter before he officially reclaims her affirms Patricia Meyer Spacks's conclusion that "Matilda's career [is] not a narrative of female freedom and power but one of necessary acceptance and limited reconciliation" (199). After Lord

Elmwood banishes Matilda from his house, she accepts her fate and moves to a room in a small country home. There, she is kidnapped by Margrave, and she believes her only escape is death. Knowing of the danger his decision places Matilda in, Lord Elmwood rushes to save her. He is the solution to a problem of his own making, the self-fashioned knight in shining armor. On the staircase, Matilda's unconscious body did not incite actual change; in that moment, she was a disembodied recollection of her mother. But she still inhabited a female body, and, as Ward argues: "At the extreme from which Elmwood operates, no female body is a good body" (14). Having proven that her body is the "good female body," Matilda obtains a modicum of agency in the novel's final pages. Lord Elmwood allows her to choose whether she marries Rushbrook, but even this seemingly empowering moment is dampened by evidence that his choleric disposition lingers. When Rushbrook asks to marry her, Lord Elmwood tells Sandford, "Rushbrook has offended me beyond forgiveness...tell him this instant to quit my house, and never dare to return" (335). One question, one request, is enough to cause Lord Elmwood to reinstate his habit of banishment. He is, arguably, somewhat reformed, as Matilda is able to successfully plea for Rushbrook's position in the home. But the scene provides evidence that although a tyrant can reevaluate his initial declarations, tendencies toward despotism cannot be fully erased.

Conclusion

Similar to the narrator in *Tom Jones, A Simple Story's* narrator interrogates language's inability to express internal feelings. Problems with language receive attention almost from the beginning, when the narrator proclaims: "But how unimportant, how

weak, how ineffectual are *words* in conversation—looks and manner alone express” (Inchbald 17). The narrator insists that readers must reflect upon the “looks and manner” of characters to determine the truth. “Words in conversation” are not valid forms of evidence. Descriptions of the frustration characters experience when there are no words to express their emotional state are often vivid and laced with details that reappear in different scenes. Inchbald’s narrator (unlike Fielding’s) does not explicitly draw attention to affect by using metadiscourse. Instead, her narrator describes the physical appearances of her characters as they struggle to either hide their emotions or find the appropriate words to express them.

What the novels share is the use of objects to mediate intense emotions that lie outside the boundaries of language to express. The muff in *Tom Jones* is, as scholarly attention to it has proven, a sexual metonym for Sophia.⁷⁸ But the object serves a dual purpose for Tom. His character does not see the muff as only a sexual metonym; the muff is also a sign of Sophia’s humanity. Tom’s *cathexis* (a word itself that almost always carries a sexual connotation) toward Sophia is encapsulated in the muff, and his fixation on the object reflects his emotional and sexual interest in her. In front of the mirror, neither Tom nor Sophia need the muff to mediate their feelings. Both have developed the language to participate in a dialectic that expresses how they feel about one another. The muff’s absence highlights the mental and emotional development experienced by Tom and Sophia. The scene achieves what Hume lauds in poesis—that is is a “species of

⁷⁸ Maurice Johnson (1961) interprets the muff as a sign of Sophia’s growing interest in a physical relationship with Tom: “We were earlier told that Sophia wept over the muff; this passage tells us that it has become her bedfellow and bodily substitute for Tom” (133). See also J. Stevenson’s *The Real History of Tom Jones* which deems the muff “a warning and a lure” (12). In “Fielding’s Hierarchy of Dialogue: ‘Meta-Response’ and the Reader of *Tom Jones*,” Nicholas Hudson asserts that readers will “smile knowingly” at the placement of Sophia’s muff on Tom’s bed (182).

painting.” The characters are not described in mimetic language; what is presented to readers does not depend on a natural likeness (as Blair defines imitation), but instead the passage relies on bringing forward a conception of the characters (which is Blair’s configuration of description). The vivid detailing of Sophia in Chapter Two creates a picture of the character, and that picture carries throughout the novel. Spending time developing an ekphrastic description of Sophia suggests that Fielding intended his readers to create a certain kind of image in their mind; the creation is important for the mirror scene, because the ekphrastic description of Sophia from Chapter Two is what is reflected in the mirror scene.

Lord Elmwood’s hat and portrait serve a similar function in *A Simple Story*. They are signs of Matilda’s *cathexis*, her longing to have a relationship with her father. The function the objects serve in *A Simple Story*, however, is very different than that in *Tom Jones*. In the latter, the objects serve as vehicles of *anagnorisis*; repeated contemplation of the objects leads to self-recognition and understanding for the Tom and Sophia. In the former, the objects lead to moments of recognition, and even a reversal for Lord Elmwood, but the novel’s conclusion does not confirm that Lord Elmwood’s tyrannical ways are behind him. In fact, the opposite occurs. When he banishes Rushbrook from his home, he mirrors the intractable behavior he exhibited throughout the novel. Matilda may convince him to allow Rushbrook to stay, but she does so by permitting Rushbrook to continue his proposal of marriage. If Matilda and Rushbrook do marry, Matilda will essentially transfer her obligation to Lord Elmwood to Rushbrook. While Lord Elmwood may not completely change his behavior, Matilda comes to recognize that having a place in her father’s life means submitting to him. It seems that she learns how to manage her

expectations concerning Lord Elmwood: his reclamation of her does not mean that he evolves into a man of complete sensibility; he remains a man predisposed to tyranny. Whether Matilda wants to marry Rushbrook is not the question. There is no indication in the novel that she has romantic feelings for him. What she comes to recognize is that for all those beholden to Lord Elmwood to remain in his good graces, she may have to sacrifice her own happiness. *Ekphrasis* aids in the development of vivid images concerning Lord Elmwood's intractability, a descriptive technique that enlivens the images and provides readers with access to his nature. Inchbald renders the suffering he causes to those around him in ekphrastic language, painting a vivid picture of his temperament. The image is a man who takes his position of power for granted, doing whatever he wants, regardless of the impact it has on those around him. *Ekphrasis* is the descriptive technique that creates a vivid picture of his behavior.

Conclusion

Flip It and Reverse It: Inversions and Patriarchal Order

My intention is not to suggest that all description is ekphrastic. In fact, as I have shown, the opposite is true. For a description to be understood as vivid enough to seem real, special attention must be paid to what information is delivered and how that information is delivered. *Ekphrasis* is a tool used to develop *phantasia* in the audience's minds, and if effective, those mental images are vivid enough to seem real, resulting in *enargeia*. That vivid images can bypass mental and emotional safeguards is integral to effective *ekphrasis*. In the introduction to this study, Pope's *Shield of Achilles* was noted as perhaps the most famous example of *ekphrasis* in eighteenth-century British literature. If the scope is expanded to Europe, then Gotthold Ephraim Lessing's treatise *Laocoön, or On the Limits of Painting and Poetry* (1766) must be seen as perhaps the preeminent late-eighteenth century contribution to the study of *ekphrasis* and pre-Romantic aesthetic theory generally.

In his seminal treatise, Lessing dissects the properties unique to painting and to poetry, making clear distinctions between the forms. Perhaps the largest distinction Lessing recognizes between poetry and painting is that:

Moreover, there is nothing to compel the poet to compress his picture into a single moment. He may, if he so chooses, take up each action at its origin and pursue it through all possible variations to its end. Each variation which would cost the artist a separate work costs the poet but a single stroke. (23-4)

The most important difference between the two is what subjects can be effectively conveyed in both. Painters are further restricted because they “can use this moment only with reference to a single vantage point” (19), but for poets, “whole infinite realm of perfection lies open to his description” (23). The distinction noted by Lessing concerning painting and poetry is the same distinction Ruth Webb makes between classical and modern *ekphrasis*: the former brings any subject matter before the eyes, whereas the latter is restricted to a particular type of image. Lessing is concerned with appropriate descriptions that develop a picture but still allow audiences the opportunity to imaginatively fill in details, meaning that audiences are meant to think beyond the scope of the painting or poetry before them:

In other words, if not every trait used by the descriptive poet can have as good an effect on the painter’s canvas or sculptor’s marble, could not every trait of the artist be equally effective in the poet’s work?

Undoubtedly, for that which we find beautiful in a work of art is beautiful not to our eyes but to our imagination through our eyes. Thus, just as the same image may be conjured up in our imagination by means of arbitrary or natural symbols, the same pleasure will be aroused, though not always to the same degree. (41)

Painters and poets, then, can ignite the audience’s imagination to picture what is beautiful, and audiences then take pleasure from the source. The details included in a painting or a poem are integral to guiding the audience’s imagination to produce the intended image.

In order to teach his readers to recognize and appreciate the differences between painting and poetry, Lessing follows the methodology of his classical predecessors, including Longinus and Aristotle, by engaging with extant works of classical literature and art to illustrate his argument:

Example may guide me here. I repeat: the picture of Pandarus in the fourth book of the *Iliad* is one of the most elaborate and graphic in all of Homer. From the seizing of the bow to the flight of the arrow every moment is painted, and all these moments follow in such close succession and yet are so distinct, one from the other, that if we did not know how a bow should be handled, we would be able to learn it from this description alone. (76)

Lessing's example, and the explanation that follows, reads much like treatises on *ekphrasis*. The source material Lessing references is written with such attention to detail that he can parse out each movement, guiding the reader's imagination to picture the images described in the poetry. The descriptions are not overly long, but the information is provided with such skill that readers who are not familiar with the source material or the image described "would be able to learn it from this description alone."

What Lessing asserts in the later eighteenth century about painting and poetry is also recognizable in the literature produced during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Within each work studied in this examination, at least one character is subject to mimetic or ekphrastic descriptions, sometimes both. What becomes apparent is that even though contemporary philosophers proposed that sight is the most reliable of the senses, each drama, short prose fiction, and novel emphasizes that people must interrogate what is before their eyes before they can acquire complete understanding.

Ekphrastic descriptions, of female characters in particular, occur prior to the exposure of male characters who abuse their positions of power.

Central to the ekphrastic description in the period are male characters who act as patriarchal tyrants, imposing their will on those around them, as I show in the works examined. For instance, Ben Jonson's *Epicoene* proves that the sight—philosophically the most perceptive and hardest to deceive of the senses—can be tricked in the most dramatic way: a boy is mistaken for a woman. Morose so desperately wants to find his ideal woman that he believes what he sees, without properly interrogating what his sight tells him is true. The audiophobic miser is described in vivid detail, making his detestable behavior unmistakable to audiences. Truewit's attempt at *ekphrasis* when describing female archetypes is actually mimetic: he describes potential brides as imitations of stereotypes. His language has the opposite effect of its intention; rather than being persuaded to stop searching for a wife, Morose marries the first “woman” brought to him as a potential bride.

William Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* manipulates a mimetic representation of Hermione in a way that elicits *anagnorisis* in Leontes. As Webb notes, classical *ekphrases* tell an entire story—they go from beginning to end, top to bottom, in order to develop a complete picture. The courtiers' inability to effectively describe the first reunion scene reveals that they are bereft of language able to convey the emotional depth of Leontes, Polixines, and Perdita upon meeting. The courtier scene contrasts with the final scene, when Hermione is reunited with all the characters. It seems that by trying to describe the scene using mimetic language, the courtiers attempted to use language dependent upon imitation to describe a scene that has no equal. There is no previous

example to imitate, because nothing like this has ever occurred. When describing something new—something without equal—*mimesis* is not the most effective rhetorical tool. The final reunion, in contrast, does not rely on imitations. Instead, dialogue describes how the characters react, and it details each of Hermione's progressive movements. While it can aid in adding nuance to a description, in *The Winter's Tale*, *mimesis* cannot effectively describe both the scene and the emotions expressed in the reunion. When Hermione transforms from the immobile statue, one that (if real) would be an imitation of her, into a moving, speaking woman, she shocks the men surrounding her. Rather than looking at her as an art object that they can project their faults, misgivings, and errors onto, she is a person with her own feelings and experiences. She is not simply a vessel for male characters to project themselves onto. Between *Epicoene* and *A Winter's Tale*, imitations are proven unreliable forms for imitating people. *Epicoene* is not a woman, and Hermione is not a statue. *Ekphrasis* is integral to developing vivid images for audiences, allowing them to interrogate the scenes played out on the stage, and come to a recognition that imitations can deceive the sight.

Drawing on Jonson's and Shakespeare's critique of *mimesis* and absolutist patriarchs is Aphra Behn's own femicentric account of tyrannical men and the female characters they impact. *The Forc'd Marriage* and *The Rover* both capture female characters as mimetic representations of themselves, Erminia as a ghost in the first, Angellica in a portrait in the latter. Both women find that they cannot persuade men against abuses of power when they rely upon mimetic imitations. When Erminia relies on a mimetic imitation, she fails to persuade Alcippus to control his temper after he tries to murder her; in *The Rover*, Angellica cannot convince Willmore to love her, ultimately

threatening him with a gun, ending the play stripped of effective language. No scene is fully ekphrastic in the drama, but *The Rover* does repeatedly reveal the correlation between *mimesis* and women's liminal position. Behn's work of fiction under her name, *Oroonoko* positions Imoinda in multiple ekphrastic scenes, scenes that make vivid the tyranny of the men around her, ultimately exposing the degree to which patriarchal systems harm women. She is presented through detailed language with the particular intention of developing *phantasia* in the minds of readers, in order to teach readers how to interrogate women's subjugation.

At the midpoint of my dissertation, I focus on the pivotal shift from Restoration to Georgian culture, using William Congreve's combination of an organic theory of fiction and his representation of female characters to examine the progression of descriptions. The preface to *Incognita* asserts that the short prose fiction will introduce readers to something he claims has never done before—the deliberate inclusion of dramatic techniques in prose form. What Congreve recognizes is the potential difficulty in finding the language to express emotions without characters to mimic them on stage. The narrator in *Incognita* continually laments that language cannot effectively describe what he witnesses, yet these complaints are followed by descriptive passages. In *The Mourning Bride*, Alphonso (as Osmyn) repeatedly describes his perception of other characters and events in terms of Hobbes's mechanical philosophy. Manuel, an absolutist monarch, imitates Alphonso in an attempt to manipulate Zara, the queen whose army he just defeated. Repeatedly, Manuel exhibits behavior and thought processes contrary to what Alphonso's dialogue suggests is the appropriate method for perceiving the world. Those predisposed to tyrannical behavior are killed; those who interrogate their perceptions

remain alive. *The Way of the World*, Congreve's most famous work, provided audiences with a sophisticated examination of the relationship between mirrors, descriptions of female characters, and despotic male characters. It is through ekphrastic descriptions that audiences learn different ways that patriarchs can abuse their position of power, exposing flaws in the seemingly natural system.

Eliza Haywood's three works each critique the ease with which patriarchal systems can be manipulated. At the center of her commentary is ekphrastic descriptions of female characters. *A Wife to be Lett* and *Fantomina* both reveal the dangers the disenfranchisement of women by men open these female characters to. *A Wife to be Lett* relies on imitations to expose the superficiality of male behavior—Mr. Graspall and Beaumont (at least initially) refuse to recognize how their behavior impacts their wives. Mrs. Graspall, with her ability to interrogate her perceptions and examine the world around her, exposes their abuses of power, ultimately leading Beaumont to *anagnorisis*. Neither *Fantomina* nor *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless* have blameless female protagonists: *Fantomina* adopts multiple disguises to aid in her sexual exploits; Betsy is pointedly unaware of how her behavior reflects on her virtue. Yet, within both the short fiction and the novel, Haywood reveals their internal processing of perceptions, showing readers how to develop their own mental understanding. The outcome is that *Fantomina* and Betsy both teach readers how to interrogate perceptions in aid of developing solid foundations of knowledge.

Tom Jones and *A Simple Story* contain characters, descriptions, and plots that highlight the development of *ekphrasis* as a reliable, persuasive rhetorical tool that has been traced in the previous four chapters. These novels serve as model examples of the

complex relationship between philosophy, description, and social structures during the late eighteenth century. What is strikingly different about the final two novels examined is that female—not male—characters are the ones who experience *anagnorisis*. The muff and the mirror in *Tom Jones* aid in developing a sense of individuality in Sophia, ultimately leading her to recognize how she is perceived by those around her. In *A Simple Story*, Lord Elmwood's hat and portrait both serve as evidence of his tyrannical behavior, and though he does soften his stance slightly by the novel's end, he is by no means a fully reformed despot. Instead, Matilda is the one who comes to recognize how to function in her father's world.

By recovering the classical origins of *ekphrasis*, we can better interrogate how authors attempted to bridge the gap between feeling and expression that both *Tom Jones* and *A Simple Story* repeatedly dramatize. But recent scholarship has tended to focus on the twentieth-century version of *ekphrasis* promoted by such scholars as Jean Hagstrum, James A.W. Heffernan, and John Hollander; the verbal description of a visual representation (real or imagined). Certainly, productive work can be—and has been—done by explicating how early modern literary works (particularly in poetry) exhibit this modern understanding of *ekphrasis*. However, focusing on the classical definition allows us to correct an issue that Ruth Webb and Simon Goldhill recognize in modern research—in order to genuinely examine *ekphrasis*, modern scholars need to first understand its classical origins and uses. My project demonstrates that classical *ekphrasis* is a technique capable of transcending genre. In eighteenth-century Britain, it was employed specifically to expose abuses of power and elicit transformative emotional responses. *Ekphrasis* is a particularly effective way to appeal to an audience's emotions,

as Goldhill argues—when descriptions convey vivid images, they can bypass mental and emotional barriers that preserve one’s self-image. Authors elicit emotions from readers in order to teach them how to name their emotions and feelings; being able to name and understand feelings is a crucial part of developing understanding, especially in a society that increasingly relied upon empirical evidence to determine the truth, as the eighteenth century did, and as our own, perhaps, still does.

Ekphrasis is particularly effective as a technique of intervention—it develops descriptions that activate the audience’s imagination. Viewers both observe and, using verbal and visual cues, imagine characters and events that are emotionally charged. As I have shown, *ekphrasis* affects the imagination, causing readers to picture what is before them, as if viewing actors on a stage. The largely eighteenth-century shift in the popularity of drama as the primary narrative form to the novel exemplifies this process. This transference of emotion is, for example, central to the sentimental novel, which rose dramatically in popularity in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. The sentimental novel, made ubiquitous by Jane Austen, frequently relies on *ekphrasis* to develop vivid descriptions that highlight pivotal affective moments in the plot, ones that often track the developing interiority of her characters. These intense moments are often fundamentally dramatic in and of themselves, or, in fact, involve specific references to drama, suggesting the influence of earlier dramatic modes on novelistic discourse. For example, *Mansfield Park* (1814) exemplifies this relationship between drama and the novel. In the novel, the characters attempt to stage Elizabeth Inchbald’s *The Lover’s Vows*, and the passages that describe their proceedings exhibit cumulative *ekphrasis*, building throughout different parts of the novel into an explosive outburst by the novel’s patriarch,

Sir Thomas. Upon finding his children and their companions at rehearsal, Sir Thomas immediately halts the actors. His countenance reveals his displeasure, which is easily interpreted by all but one of the characters present:

Mr. Yates...immediately gave Sir Thomas an account of what they had done...relating every thing with so blind an interest as made him not only totally unconscious of the uneasy movements of his friends as they sat, the change of countenance, the fidget, the hem! of unquietness, but prevented him even from seeing the expression of the face on which his own eyes were fixed—from seeing Sir Thomas’s dark brow contract as he looked with inquiring earnestness at his daughters and Edmund, dwelling particularly on the latter, and speaking a language, a remonstrance, a reproof, which *he* felt at his heart. (171-2)

The passage makes it clear that Yates worsens the situation because he is unable to interrogate what his eyes perceive—he does not *see* Sir Thomas’s anger. Cumulative *ekphrasis* is present, because multiple passages prior to this scene expound on Sir Thomas’s dislike of acting and plays being performed by his children; those descriptions culminate in this scene, in which his displeasure is evident enough on his face that Edmund and Fanny can almost read his internal thoughts. Similar scenes occur in *Pride and Prejudice*, as Elizabeth Bennet learns that her perceptions do not always align with the truth; her moment of *anagnorisis* while reading Darcy’s letter is provided in such vivid detail that it has become one of the most famous scenes in period-based cinema.

The sentimental novel, like many other mid- to late-eighteenth century narrative forms, responded to the empirical practice of incorporating the emotions into verifiable

data points—rather than detracting from human understanding, feelings became sources of evidence. This process was crystalized by a number of intellectuals and philosophers during the time. For instance, Edmund Burke’s definition of the sublime in *A Philosophical Enquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757) is based on the effects the descriptions have on readers, following classical prescriptions of *ekphrasis* as defined by Webb and Goldhill.⁷⁹ What is more striking about Burke’s sublime is that it impacts not only one person’s emotions, but a collective body of feeling; emotions are described in terms of contagion, spreading between text and reader:

We yield to sympathy, what we refuse to description. The truth is, all verbal description, merely as naked description, though never so exact, conveys so poor and insufficient an idea of the thing described, that it could scarcely have the smallest effect, if the speaker did not call in to his aid those modes of speech that mark a strong and lively feeling in himself. Then, by the contagion of our passions, we catch a fire already kindled in another, which probably might never have been struck out by the object described. Words, by strongly conveying the passions, by those means which we have already mentioned, fully compensate for their weakness in other respects. (160)

It is the emotions attached to description that make them effective. Evidence of Burke’s theory on the sublime certainly appears in Gothic novels such as Horace Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) and Ann Radcliffe’s *The Mysteries of Udolpho* (1794), but it also arises in Austen’s fiction.

⁷⁹ Another example of this use of *ekphrasis* to explore feelings of emotion and sentiment is, of course, the Gothic novel.

The transference of emotion from vivid descriptions that Burke celebrates is particularly apparent in Austen's last novel *Persuasion* (1817), written in response to both Romantic poetry and the Napoleonic aftermath of the French Revolution. At a significant turning point in the novel, the characters walk by the sea one afternoon next to the Cobb. As they pass the stairs down to the lower promenade, Louisa insists that "she must be jumped down them by Captain Wentworth" (137). She enjoys the jump so much that "to shew her enjoyment, [she] ran up the steps to be jumped down again" (137). Readers, at this point, sense the scene's cyclical nature: Louisa is jumped down, she runs up, and wants to be jumped down again. Only this time, the cycle ends: Louisa "was too precipitate by half a second" and she "fell on the pavement on the Lower Cobb, and was taken up lifeless!" (138). The "horror" that all present characters feel quickly diffuses through the group: Mary screams, and in turn clutches her husband, which, coupled "with his own horror," made "him immovable" (138); just moments later, "Henrietta, sinking under the conviction, lost her senses too," and Captain Wentworth calls out in despair (138). The only character capable of a rational response is Anne; she is the objective spectator who exerts some counteraction to the contagious emotion circulating among the group that Austen describes in heightened terms. *Ekphrasis* is thus used in service of teaching readers the responsible use of their emotions. Anne, rather than imitating her acquaintances, determines the most logical course of action and directs those around her in a calm, efficient manner.

In this scene, we see Austen's interest in combining melodrama, realism, and even a degree of Gothicism in order to build a sequence of passages that not only elicit emotions from the reader but that also integrates them into an ethical structure. Perhaps

alluding to Eve's notorious fall and the fall of all women, Austen locates her instructive moment, rendered ekphrastically, amidst the Burkean sublime of the Cobb's landscape, both to describe affective contagion and to channel its effects for moral purpose. The passage is reminiscent of Matilda's fall in *A Simple Story*—also witnessed by another character who is overwhelmed by his senses and has to respond in a similar (if not as effective) manner as Anne. The passage details her every movement, from her entrance into the room to her falling on the ground. In *Persuasion*, the emotional contagion reflects negatively on all characters present, barring Anne. It thus highlights her rationality and presents her as a character worthy of emulation. The heightened emotion of the scene, coupled with the disparate responses to Louisa's condition, recalls Burke's discussion of the emotions in his *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790). There, Burke maintains that emotions do transfer between people:

When I see the spirit of liberty in action, I see a strong principle at work; and this, for a while, is all I can possibly know of it. The wild *gas*, the fixed air, is plainly broke loose: but we ought to suspend our judgment until the first effervescence is a little subsided, till the liquor is cleared, and until we see something deeper than the agitation of a troubled and frothy surface. (8)

However, Burke, post-revolution, distances himself from his prior lauding of heightened emotion and its impact on people: "A foolish imitation of the worst part of the manners of England, which impaired their natural character, without substituting in its place what perhaps they meant to copy, has certainly rendered them worse than formerly they were" (117). Imitation, closely linked to vivid descriptions and impulsive actions, becomes a

negative attribute when Burke is confronted with the consequences of feeling and enacting the sublime in a political register. Louisa's romantic excess, coupled with the overly emotional responses her companions have to her accident, seems to align more with Burke's later philosophy. However, Anne's response—though more measured and rational—is still emotional. She understands how to function effectively, even while experiencing deep feeling. In this pivotal moment in *Persuasion*, we can see how *ekphrasis* will go on to serve nineteenth-century writers who exploit the emotions in Gothic, sentimental, and realistic novels—techniques pioneered by Aphra Behn, Eliza Haywood, Henry Fielding, and Elizabeth Inchbald. Examining Austen as a mediator between pre- and post-revolutionary France, suggest the directions that vivid narrative descriptions will take in the next century.

Works Cited

- Aercke, Kristiaan P. "Congreve's *Incognita*: Romance, Novel, Drama?" *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 2, no. 4, July 1990, pp. 293-308. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/ecf.1990.0041. Accessed 25 Feb. 2018.
- . "Theatrical Background in English Novels of the Seventeenth Century." *JNT*, vol. 18, no. 2, Spring 1988, pp. 120-36. *MLA International Bibliography*, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/30225211>. Accessed 27 Feb. 2018.
- Addison, Joseph and Richard Steele. *The Spectator in Four Volumes, 1711-1712*, edited by Gregory Smith, 3rd ed. Everyman's Library, 1945.
- Agnew, Lois. "The Civic Function of Taste: A Re-assessment of Hugh Blair's Rhetorical Theory." *Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, vol. 28, no. 2, 1998, pp. 25-36. DOI: 10.1080/02773949809391117. Accessed 24 March 2017.
- Anderson, Emily Hodgson. "Performing the Passions in Eliza Haywood's *Fantomina* and *Miss Betsy Thoughtless*." *The Eighteenth Century*, vol. 46, no. 1, 2005, pp. 1-15. *MLA International Bibliography*. Accessed 4 August 2016.
- . "Revising Theatrical Conventions in *A Simple Story*: Elizabeth Inchbald's Ambiguous Performance." *Journal for Early Modern Cultural Studies*, vol. 6, no. 1, 2006, pp. 5-30. *Project Muse*, http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_for_early_modern_cultural_studies/v006/6.1_anderson.html--<http://www.jstor.org/stable/40339560>. Accessed 18 Dec. 2018.
- Andriopoulos, Stephan. "The Invisible Hand: Supernatural Agency in Political Economy and the Gothic Novel." *ELH*, vol. 66, no. 3, 1999, pp. 739-58. *Project Muse*, doi: 10.1353/elh.1999.0021. Accessed 15 Dec. 2018.

Appelbaum, Robert. "'Lawful as Eating': Art, Life, and Magic in *The Winter's Tale*."

Shakespeare Quarterly, vol. 42, 2014, pp. 32-41. *MLA International*

Bibliography. Accessed 13 Jan. 2019.

Aristotle. *On Rhetoric: A Theory of Civic Discourse*. 2nd ed. Translated by George A.

Kennedy, Oxford UP, 2007.

---. *The Poetics of Aristotle*. Edited by S. H. Butcher, MacMillan and Company, 1902.

Armstrong, William A. "The Audience of the Elizabethan Private Theaters." *The*

Seventeenth-Century Stage: A Collection of Critical Essays, edited by Gerald

Eades Bentley. Chicago UP, 1968, pp. 201-36.

Austen, Jane. *Mansfield Park*, edited by Kathryn Sutherland. Penguin Books, 2014.

Backscheider, Paula R. Introduction. *The Plays of Elizabeth Inchbald* by Inchbald. Edited

by Paula R. Backscheider, vol. 1, Garland Publishing, Inc., 1980, pp. ix-xlv.

---. *Spectacular Politics: Theatrical Power and Mass Culture in Early Modern England*.

The Johns Hopkins UP, 1993.

---. "The Shadow of an Author: Eliza Haywood." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 11,

no. 1, October 1998, pp. 79-102. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi:

10.1353/ecf.1998.0045. Accessed 6 July 2015.

---. "The Verse Essay, Locke, and Defoe's *Jure Divino*." *ELH*, vol. 55, no. 1, Spring

1998, pp. 94-124. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.2307/2873113.

Accessed 15 Nov. 2017.

Bacon, Francis. *Of the advancement and proficiencie of learning; or, The partitions of*

sciences IX bookes / written in Latin by the most eminent, illustrious, & famous

Lord Francis Bacon baron of Verulam, Vicont St Alban, Counsilour of Estate and Lord Chancellor of England; Interpreted by Gilbert Wats. Oxford, 1640.

---. *The novum organum of Sir Francis Bacon, Baron of Verulam, Viscount St. Albans epitomiz'd, for a clearer understanding of his natural history / translated and taken out of the Latine by M.D.* London, 1676.

Baldwin, William. *A myrroure for magistrates Wherein may be seen by example of other, with how greuous plages vices are punished: and howe frayle and vnstable worldly prosperitie is founde, even of those, whom fortune seemeth most highly to fauour.* London, 1559. *Early English Books Online*. Accessed 18 December 2018.

Ballaster, Ros. "Contexts, Intertexts, Metatexts: Eighteenth-Century Prose by Women." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 11, no. 3, 1999, pp. 347-58. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/ecf.1999.0025. Accessed 4 March 2016.

Bamber, Linda. *Comic Women, Tragic Men: A Study of Gender and Genre in Shakespeare.* Stanford UP, 1982.

Battestin, Martin C. "Tom Jones on the Telly: Fielding, the BBC, and the Sister Arts." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 10, no. 4, July 1998, pp. 501-5. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/ecf.1998.0057. Accessed 3 June 2018.

Behn, Aphra. *Oroonoko*. In *Aphra Behn: Oroonoko and Other Writings*. Edited by Paul Salzman. Oxford UP, 1998, pp. 3-73.

---. *The Forc'd Marriage; or, The Jealous Bridegroom. A Tragicomedy, as it is acted at His Highness, the Duke of York's Theatre.* London, 1671. *Early English Books Online*. Accessed 25 January 2016.

- . *The Rover; or, The Banished Cavaliers*. In *Aphra Behn: Oroonoko, The Rover and Other Works*. Edited by Janet Todd. Penguin Books, 2003, pp. 155-248.
- Bender, Ashley Brookner. "Containing Identity in *The Plain Dealer* and *The Way of the World*." *Eighteenth-Century Life*, vol. 37, no. 2, Spring 2013, pp. 1-25. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1215/00982601-2080964. Accessed 3 April 2017.
- Blackstone, William. *Commentaries on the Laws of England, in Four Books*, 15th ed. London, 1809.
- Blackwell, Mark. "The People Things Make: Locke's *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* and the Properties of the Self." *Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture*, vol. 35, 2006, pp. 77-94. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/sec.2010.0047. Accessed 18 September 2018.
- Blair, Hugh. *Lectures on Rhetoric and Belles Lettres*. 1853. Edited by Abraham Mills. Kessinger Publishing, LLC, 2010.
- Breashears, Caroline. "Defining Masculinity in *A Simple Story*." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 16, no. 3, 2004, pp. 451-70. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/ecf.2004.0009. Accessed 5 Aug. 2017.
- Bree, Linda. "Henry Fielding's Life." *The Cambridge Companion to Henry Fielding*, edited by Claude Rawson. Cambridge UP, 2007, pp. 3-16.
- Brown, Laura. *The Ends of Empire: Women and Ideology in Early Eighteenth-Century Literature*. Cornell UP, 1993.

- Budra, Paul. "The *Mirror for Magistrates* and the Politics of Readership." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 32, no. 1, pp. 1-13. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.2307/450937. Accessed 2 Nov. 2018.
- Burke, Edmund. *A Philosophical Enquiry Into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful*. Oxford UP, 1990.
- . *Reflections on The Revolution in France, and On the Proceedings in Certain Societies in in London Relative to that Event: In a Letter Intended to have been sent to a Gentleman in Paris*, edited by Frank M. Turner. Yale UP, 2003.
- Castle, Terry. *Masquerade and Civilization: The Carnavalesque in Eighteenth-Century English Culture and Fiction*. Stanford UP, 1986.
- Chico, Tita. "The Arts of Beauty: Women's Cosmetics and Pope's *Ekphrasis*." *Eighteenth-Century Life*, vol. 26, no.1, 2002, pp. 1-23. *MLA International Bibliography*. 5 May 2016. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1215/00982601-26-1-1. Accessed 5 May 2016.
- Congreve, William. *Incognita or, Love and Duty Reconcil'd*, edited by. H.F.B. Brett-Smith, Basil Blackwell, 1922.
- . *The Mourning Bride, a Tragedy: As it is acted at the theatre in Lincoln's-Inn-Fields by His Majesty's servants*. London, 1697. *Early English Books Online*. Accessed 16 December 2018.
- . *The Way of the World*, edited by Kathleen M. Lynch. U Nebraska P, 1965.
- Conway, Alison. *Private Interests: Women, Portraiture, and the Visual Culture of the English Novel, 1709-1791*. U of Toronto P, 2001.

- Corbett, Edward P. J. "Hugh Blair as an Analyzer of English Prose Style." *College Composition and Communication*, vol. 9, no. 2, May 1958, pp. 98-103. *MLA International Bibliography*. Accessed 8 June 2016.
- Corman, Brian. "The Way of the World and Morally Serious Comedy." *University of Toronto Quarterly: A Canadian Journal of the Humanities*, vol. 44, 1975, pp. 199-212. *MLA International Bibliography*. Accessed 18 March 2018.
- Crehan, A.S. "The Rape of the Lock and the Economy of 'Trivial Things'." *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 31, no. 1, 1997, pp. 45-68. *Project Muse*, doi: 10.1353/ecs.1997.0051. Accessed 5 March 2019.
- Davis, Vivian. "Dramatizing the Sexual Contract: Congreve and Centlivre." *SEL: Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 51, no. 3, Summer 2011, pp. 519-43. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/sel.2011.0030. Accessed 27 Feb. 2018.
- "Daw, v.3." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, www.oed.com/view/Entry/47503. Accessed 5 May 2017.
- Dawkins, Claire. "Gendered Narratives of Marital Dissolution in Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale*." *Women's Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, vol. 46, no. 1-4, 2017, pp. 95-112. *MLA International Bibliography*. Accessed 6 March 2019.
- Dawson, Paul. "From Digressions to Intrusions: Authorial Commentary in the Novel." *Studies in the Novel*, vol. 48, no. 2, Summer 2016, pp. 145-67. *Project Muse* <http://muse.jhu.edu/article/624984>. Accessed 27 Feb. 2018.
- Decker, Sharon L. "The Problem with Binaries: Balancing Reason, Emotion, Body, and Mind in *A Simple Story*." *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, vol. 47, no. 2, Fall 2014, pp. 59-82. *MLA International Bibliography*,

http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/studies_in_the_literary_imagination/v047/47.2.decker.html. Accessed 19 June 2018.

- Delsigne, Jill. "Hermetic Miracles in *The Winter's Tale*." *Magical Transformations on the Early Modern English Stage*, edited by Helen Ostovich and Lisa Hopkins, Routledge, 2014, pp. 91-108.
- Derrin, Daniel. *Rhetoric and the Familiar in Francis Bacon and John Donne*. Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2013.
- Donkin, Ellen. *Getting Into the Act: Women Playwrights in London 1776-1829*. Routledge, 1995.
- Dryden, John. *Of Dramatick Poesy, an essay*. London, 1890.
- Erickson, Amy Louise. *Women & Property in Early Modern England*. Routledge, 1993.
- Erickson, Robert A. "Lady Wishfort and the Will of the World." *Modern Language Quarterly: A Journal of Literary History*, vol. 45, no. 4, 1984, pp. 338-349. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1215/00267929-45-4-338. Accessed 1 March 2018.
- Erwin, Timothy. *Textual Vision: Augustan Design and the Invention of Eighteenth-Century British Culture*. Bucknell UP, 2015.
- Ferguson, Margaret. "The Authorial Ciphers of Aphra Behn." *Cambridge Companion to English Literature, 1650-1740*, edited by Steven N. Zwicker, Cambridge UP, 1998, pp.225-249.
- Fielding, Henry. *The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling*. Edited by John Bender and Simon Stern. Oxford UP, 2008.

- Filmer, Robert. *Patriarcha, or, The natural power of Kings by the learned Sir Robert Filmer*. London, 1680.
- Frank, Marcie. "Melodrama and the Politics of Literary Form in Elizabeth Inchbald's Works." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 27, no. 3-4, Spring-Summer 2015, pp. 707-30. *Project Muse*, doi: 10.3138/ecf.27.3.707. Accessed 8 Aug. 2017.
- Gagen, Jean. "Congreve's *Mirabell* and the Ideal of the Gentleman." *PMLA: Publications of the Modern Language Association of America*, vol. 79, no. 4, September 1964, pp. 422-27. *MLA International Bibliography*. Accessed 8 March 2018.
- Gallagher, Catherine. *Nobody's Story: The Vanishing Acts of Women Writers in the Marketplace, 1670-1920*. U of California P, 1995.
- Gardner, Kevin J. "Patrician Authority and Instability in *The Way of the World*." *South Central Review*, vol. 19, no. 1, Spring 2002, pp. 53-75. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.2307/3190039. Accessed 8 March 2018.
- Gill, Pat. "The Way of the Word: Telling Differences in Congreve's *The Way of the World*." *Broken Boundaries: Women & Feminism in Restoration Drama*, edited by Katherine M. Quinsey, U of Kentucky P, 1996, pp. 164-184.
- Goldhill, Simon. "What is Ekphrasis For?." *Classical Philology*, vol. 102, no. 1, January 2007, pp. 1-19. *JSTOR*, doi: 10.1086/521129. Accessed 9 June 2016.
- Gurr, Andrew. *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*. Cambridge UP, 2004.
- Habermas, Jürgen. 1962. *The Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere: An Inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois Society*. Translated by Thomas Burger and Frederick Lawrence. The MIT P, 1991.

- Haggerty, George E. "Female Abjection in Inchbald's *A Simple Story*." *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900*, vol. 36, no. 3, Summer 1996, pp. 655-71. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.2307/450804. Accessed 2 Nov. 2018.
- Hagstrum, Jean H. *The Sister Arts: The Tradition of Literary Pictorialism and English Poetry from Dryden to Gray*. U Chicago P, 1958.
- Harris, James A. *Hume: An Intellectual Biography*. Cambridge UP, 2016.
- Haywood, Eliza. *A Wife to be Lett. A Comedy. As it is acted at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane, By His Majesty's Servants. Written by Mrs. Eliza Haywood*. London, 1735. *Eighteenth Century Collections Online*. Accessed 23 Jan. 2016.
- . *Fantomina, or, Love in a Maze. Fantomina and Other Works*, edited by Alexander Pettit, Margaret Case Croskery, and Anna C. Patchias, Broadview Literary Texts, 2004. 41-72.
- . *Selections from The Female Spectator*, edited by Patricia Meyer Spacks, Oxford UP, 1999.
- . *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*, edited by Christine Blouch, Broadview P Ltd., 1998.
- Heffernan, James A.W. *Museum of Words: The Poetics of Ekphrasis from Homer to Ashbery*. U Chicago P, 1993.
- Hinnant, Charles H. "Gifts and Wages: The Structures of Exchange in Eighteenth-Century Fiction and Drama." *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 42, no. 1, Fall 2008, pp. 1-18. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/ecs.0.0029. Accessed 15 Jan. 2019.

- Hobbes, Thomas. *Leviathan, or, The Matter, Form, and Power of a Common-Wealth Ecclesiastical and Civil*. London, 1651. *Early English Books Online*. Accessed 6 Dec. 2017.
- Hogarth, William. 1753. *The Analysis of Beauty*, edited by Ronald Paulson, Yale UP, 1997.
- Hollander, John. *The Gazer's Spirit: Poems Speaking to Silent Works of Art*. U Chicago P, 1995.
- Hudson, Nicolas. "Fielding's Hierarchy of Dialogue: 'Meta-Response' and the Reader in *Tom Jones*." *Philological Quarterly*, vol. 68, no. 2, 1989, pp.177-194. *MLA International Bibliography*. Accessed 28 February 2019.
- Hughes, Derek. "Aphra Behn and the Restoration Theatre." *The Cambridge Companion to Aphra Behn*, edited by Derek Hughes and Janet Todd, Cambridge UP, 2004, pp. 29-45.
- . *The Theatre of Aphra Behn*. Palgrave, 2001.
- Hultquist, Aleksandra. "Haywood's Re-Appropriation of the Amatory Heroine in *Betsy Thoughtless*." *Philological Quarterly*, vol. 85, no. 1-2, Winter-Spring 2006, pp. 141-65. *MLA International Bibliography*. Accessed 5 June 2018.
- Hume, David. *An Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding and Other Writings*. 1748. Edited by Stephen Buckle. Cambridge UP, 2007.
- Hunter, J. Paul. *Before Novels: The Cultural Contexts of Eighteenth-Century English Fiction*. W.W. Norton & Company, 1990.
- Inchbald, Elizabeth. *A Simple Story*, edited by J.M.S. Tompkins. Oxford UP, 2009.

---. *The British Theatre; or, A Collection of Plays, Which are Acted at the Theatres Royal, Drury Lane, Covent Garden, and Haymarket*. 3rd vol. London, 1808.

Nineteenth-Century Collections Online. Accessed 5 December 2018.

"Incognita, adj. and n.1." *OED Online*, Oxford UP, www.oed.com/view/Entry/93612.

Accessed 19 December 2018.

"Incognito, adj., adv., and n." *OED Online*, Oxford UP,

www.oed.com/view/Entry/93615. Accessed 12 September 2018.

Ingrassia, Catherine. "Aphra Behn, Captivity, and *Emperor of the Moon*." *Restoration:*

Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660-1700, vol. 41, no. 2, Fall 2017, pp. 53-

67. *Project Muse*, <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/684051>. Accessed 9 April 2018.

Jennings, Kristine. "The Sign of a Woman: Femininity as Fiction in *The History of Miss*

Betsy Thoughtless." *Studies in the Literary Imagination*, vol. 47, no. 2, Fall 2014, pp. 39-58. *Project Muse*

http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/studies_in_the_literary_imagination/v047/47.2.jennings01.html. Accessed 19 Nov. 2017.

Johnson, Maurice. "Some Minute Wheels: *Tom Jones*." *Fielding's Art of Fiction: Eleven*

Essays on "Shamela," "Joseph Andrews," "Tom Jones," and "Amelia." U

Pennsylvania P, 1961, pp. 115-138.

Jonson, Ben. *Epicoene or The Silent Woman*. 1609. Edited by Roger Holdsworth.

Bloomsbury P, 2008.

Kaufman, Anthony. "Language and Character in Congreve's *The Way of the World*."

Texas Studies in Literature and Language: A Journal of the Humanities, vol. 15,

1973, pp. 411-27. *MLA International Bibliography*. Accessed 3 March 2017.

- King, Kathryn R. *A Political Biography of Eliza Haywood*. Routledge, 2016.
- Kukkonen, Karin. *A Prehistory of Cognitive Poetics: Neoclassicism and the Novel*. Oxford UP, 2017.
- . "Flouting Figures: Uncooperative Narration in the Fiction of Eliza Haywood." *Language and Literature*, vol. 22, no.3, 2013, pp. 205-18. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1177/0963947013489238. Accessed 9 Nov. 2017.
- Kurnick, David. *Empty Houses: Theatrical Failure and the Novel*. Princeton UP, 2012.
- Lamb, Jonathan. "The Rape of the Lock as Still Life." *The Things Things Say*. Princeton UP, 2011, pp. 98-126.d
- Landa, Louis A. "Pope's Belinda, the General Emporie of the World, and the Wondrous Worm." *South Atlantic Quarterly*, no. 70, 1971, pp. 215-35. *MLA International Bibliography*. Accessed 20 Aug. 2018.
- Leijenhorst, Cees. "Sense and Nonsense about Sense: Hobbes and the Aristotelians on Sense Perception and Imagination." *The Cambridge Companion to Hobbes's Leviathan*, edited by Patricia Springboard, Cambridge UP, 2007, pp. 82-108.
- Lessing, Gotthold Ephraim. *Laocoön: An Essay on the Limits of Painting and Poetry*. Translated by Edward Allen McCormick. The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc, 1962.
- Lewis, Jayne Elizabeth. "The Air of *Tom Jones*; or, What Rose from the Novel." *The Eighteenth Century*, vol. 52, no. 3-4, Fall/Winter 2011, pp. 303-321. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/ecy.2011.0027. Accessed 29 Aug. 2018.
- Lloyd, Genevive. *Enlightenment Shadows*. Oxford UP, 2016.

Locke, John. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. London, 1690. *Early English Books Online*. Accessed 7 March 2018.

---*Two Treatises of Government: In the former, The false Principles, and Foundation of Sir Robert Filmer and his Followers, Are Detected and Overthrown. The Latter is an Essay Concerning The True Original, Extent, and End of Civil Government*. London, 1690. *Early English Books Online*. Accessed 27 January 2019.

Lockey, Brian C. "‘A Language All Nations Understood’: Portraiture and the Politics of Anglo-Spanish Identity in Aphra Behn’s *The Rover*." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies*, vol. 39, no. 1, Winter 2009, pp. 161-81. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1215/10829636-2008-018. Accessed 19 Feb. 2016.

Lucas, Scott. "The Consolation of Tragedy: *A Mirror for Magistrates* and the Fall of the "Good Duke" of Somerset." *Studies in Philology*, vol. 100, no. 1, Winter 2003, pp. 44-70. *Project Muse*
http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/studies_in_philology/v100/100.1lucas.pdf--
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4174748?origin=pubexport>. Accessed 15 Dec. 2018.

MacKenzie, Scott R. "Sexual Arithmetic: Appetite and Consumption in *The Way of the World*." *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 47, no. 3, Spring 2014, pp. 261-76. *Project Muse*, doi: 10.1353/ecs.2014.0014. Accessed 8 March 2018.

Maioli, Roger. "Empiricism and Henry Fielding’s Theory of Fiction." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 27, no. 2, Winter 2014-2015, pp. 201-228. *Project Muse*, doi: 10.3138/ecf.27.2.201. Accessed 10 March 2018.

McGuire, Kelly. "Mourning and Material Culture in Eliza Haywood’s *The History of Miss Betsy Thoughtless*." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 18, no. 3, 2006, pp.

281-304. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/ecf.2006.0044. Accessed 15 Aug. 2018.

McGuire, Michael. "The Rhetoric of Narrative: A Hermeneutic, Critical Theory."

Narrative Thought and Narrative Language, edited by Bruce K. Britton and Anthony D. Pellegrini, Psychology P, 1990, pp. 219-236.

McGuire, Nancy Klein. *Regicide and Restoration: English Tragicomedy 1660-1671*. Cambridge UP, 1992.

McKenzie, Alan T. *Certain, Lively Episodes: The Articulation of Passion in Eighteenth-Century Prose*. The U of Georgia P, 1990.

McKeon, Michael. *The Secret History of Domesticity: Public, Private, and the Division of Knowledge*. Johns Hopkins UP, 2007.

Meek, Richard. "Ekphrasis in *The Rape of Lucrece* and *The Winter's Tale*." *SEL: Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, vol. 46, no. 2, Spring 2006, pp. 389-414. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/sel.2006.0018. Accessed 4 Jan. 2017.

Merrens, Rebecca. "Unmanned with Thy Words: Regendering Tragedy in Trotter and Manley." *Broken Boundaries: Women & Feminism in Restoration Drama*, edited by Katherine M. Quincey, U of Kentucky P, 1996, pp. 31-53.

Michaelson, Patricia Howell. *Speaking Volumes: Women, Reading, and Speech in the Age of Austen*. Stanford UP, 2002.

Miller, J. Hillis. *Reading Narrative*. U of Oklahoma P, 1998.

Min, Eun Kyung. "Giving Promises in Elizabeth Inchbald's *A Simple Story*." *ELH*, vol. 77, no. 1, Spring 2010, pp. 105-27. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/elh.0.0079. Accessed 19 Nov. 2018.

- Mori, Gianluca. "Hobbes, Descartes, and Ideas: A Secret Debate." *Journal of the History of Philosophy*, vol. 50, no. 2, 2012, pp. 197-212. OhioLINK Electronic Journal Center, rave.ohiolink.edu/ejournals/article/322896197. Accessed 29 March 2019.
- Nachumi, Nora. *Acting Like a Lady: British Women Novelists and the Eighteenth-Century Theater*. AMS P, Inc., 2008.
- . "'Those Simple Signs': The Performance of Emotion in Elizabeth Inchbald's *A Simple Story*." *Eighteenth-Century Fiction*, vol. 11, no. 3, 1999, pp. 317-38. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/ecf.1999.0037. Accessed 19 Nov. 2018.
- Oakleaf, David. "Circulating the Name of a Whore: Eliza Haywood's *Betsy Thoughtless*, Betty Careless and the Duplicities of the Double Standard." *Women's Writing: The Elizabethan to Victorian Period*, vol. 15, no. 1, 2008, pp. 107-34. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1080/09699080701871542. Accessed 9 Nov. 2018.
- Olivier, Sarah. "'Banished his country, despised at home': Cavalier Politics, Banishment, and Rape in Aphra Behn's *The Rover*." *Restoration & 18th Century Theatre Research*, vol. 27, no. 1, Summer 2012, pp. 55-74. *MLA International Bibliography*. Accessed 24 May 2016.
- Orgel, Stephen. *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Shakespeare's England*. Cambridge UP, 1996.
- Pacheco, Anita. "Rape and the Female Subject in Aphra Behn's *The Rover*." *ELH*, vol. 65, no. 2, Summer 1998, pp. 323-42. *Project Muse*, doi: 10.1353/elh.1998.0013. Accessed 24 May 2016.

- Parker, Jo Alyson. "Complicating *A Simple Story*: Inchbald's Two Versions of Female Power." *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 30, no. 3, Spring 1997, pp. 255-267. *Project Muse*, doi: 10.1353/ecs.1997.0014. Accessed 9 Nov. 2017.
- Pateman, Susan. *The Sexual Contract*. Stanford UP, 1988.
- Patterson, R. F. *Ben Jonson's Conversations with William Drummond of Hawthornden*. London, 1923.
- Pawl, Amy J. "Only a Girl?: Miss Milner, Matilda, and the Consolations of Filial Piety in *A Simple Story*." *Reflections on Sentiment: Essays in Honor of George Starr*, edited by Alessa Jones. U of Delaware P, 2016, pp. 105-134.
- Peacham, Henry. *The garden of eloquence conteining the most excellent ornaments, exornations, lightes, flowers, and formes of speech, commonly called the figures of rhetorike*. London, 1593. *Early English Books Online*. Accessed 15 November 2016.
- Phelan, James. "Present Tense Narration, Mimesis, the Narrative Norm, and the Positioning of the Reader in *Waiting for the Barbarians*." *Understanding Narrative*, edited by James Phelan and Peter J. Rabinowitz, The Ohio State UP, 1994, pp. 222-45.
- Pinch, Adela. *Strange Fits of Passion: Epistemologies of Emotion, Hume to Austen*. Stanford UP, 1996.
- Plato. *Phaedrus*. Edited and translated by Robin Waterfield, Oxford UP, 2002.
- . *Republic, Volume II: Books 6-10*. Edited and translated by Christopher Emlyn-Jones and William Preddy, Harvard UP, 2013.

- Poovey, Mary. *The Proper Lady and the Woman Writer: Ideology as Style in the Works of Mary Wollstonecraft, Mary Shelley, and Jane Austen*. The U of Chicago P, 1984.
- Pope, Alexander. *The Rape of the Lock*. Dublin, 1714.
 ---*Observations of the Shield of Achilles. The Iliad of Homer, translated by Mr. Pope*. London, 1720, pp. 1442-1457.
- Puttenham, George. *The arte of English poesie. Contriuued into three bookes: the first of poets and poesie, the second of proportion, the third of ornament*. London, 1589.
Early English Books Online. Accessed 15 November 2016.
- Quintilian. *The Orator's Education*, edited and translated by Donald A. Russell, Harvard UP, 2001.
- Radcliffe, Ann. *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, edited by Bonamy Dobrée. Oxford UP, 2008.
- Richardson, Samuel. *Clarissa, or The History of a Young Lady*, edited by Angus Ross, Penguin Books, 2004.
- Riley, Patrick. "Social Contract Theory and Its Critics." *The Cambridge History of Eighteenth-Century Political Thought*, edited by Mark Goldie and Robert Wokler, Cambridge UP, 2006, pp. 347-375.
- Rosenthal, Laura J. "Reading Masks: The Actress and the Spectatrix in Restoration Shakespeare." *Broken Boundaries: Women & Feminism in Restoration Drama*, edited by Katherine M. Quincey, U of Kentucky P, 1996, pp. 201-218.
- Sanchez, Reuben. "'Things like truths, well feigned': Mimesis and Secrecy in Jonson's *Epicoene*." *Comparative Drama*, vol. 40, no. 3, Fall 2006, pp. 313-36. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/cdr.2006.0035. Accessed 12 Feb. 2016.

- Schochet, Gordon. "Models of Politics and the Place of Women in Locke's Political Thought." *Feminist Interpretations of John Locke*, edited by Nancy J. Hirschmann and Kirstie M. McClure, Pennsylvania State UP, 2007, pp. 131-54.
- Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet. The Norton Shakespeare Based on the Oxford Edition: Romances*, edited by Stephen Greenblatt, 2nd ed., W.W. Norton & Co, 2008.
- . *The Winter's Tale. The Norton Shakespeare Based on the Oxford Edition: Romances*, edited by Stephen Greenblatt, 2nd ed., W.W. Norton & Co, 2008.
- Shapiro, Michael. *Children of the Revels: The Boy Companies of Shakespeare's Time and Their Plays*. Columbia UP, 1977.
- Sidney, Philip. *The Defence of Poesie*. London, 1595.
- Skinner, Marilyn B. "Ladies' Day at the Art Institute: Theocritus, Herodas, and the Gendered Gaze." *Making Silence Speak: Women's Voices in Greek Literature and Society*, edited by André Lardinois and Laura McClure, Princeton UP, 2001, 201-22.
- Sokol, B.J. *Art and Illusion in The Winter's Tale*. St. Martin's Press, 1994.
- Spacks, Patricia Meyer. *Desire and Truth: Functions of Plot in Eighteenth-Century Novels*. The U of Chicago P, 1990.
- . *Privacy: Concealing the Eighteenth-Century Self*. The U of Chicago P, 2003.
- Spirit, John. "The bride-woman's counsellor being a sermon preach'd at a wedding, May the 11th, 1699, at Sherbourn, in Dorsetshire." London, 1699.
- Starr, G.A. "'Only a Boy': Notes on Sentimental Novels." *Genre*, vol. 10, 1977, pp. 501-527. *MLA International Bibliography*. Accessed 26 Sept. 2017.

- Staves, Susan. *A Literary History of Women's Writing in Britain, 1660-1789*. Cambridge UP, 2006.
- . *Married Women's Separate Property in England, 1660-1833*. Harvard UP, 1990.
- Stevenson, John Allen. *The Real History of Tom Jones*. Palgrave Macmillan, 2005.
- Stuart, James. *Basilikon Doron. Or His Majesties instructions to his dearest sonne, Henry the prince*. Edinburgh, 1603.
- Stuart, Shea. "Subversive Didacticism in Eliza Haywood's *Betsy Thoughtless*." *Studies in English Literature*, vol. 42, no. 3, Summer 2002, pp. 559-75. *Project Muse*, doi: 10.1353/sel.2002.0032. Accessed 29 Aug. 2018.
- Swann, Marjorie. "Refashioning Society in Ben Jonson's *Epicoene*." *SEL: Studies in English Literature 1500-1900*, vol. 38, no. 2, Spring 1998, pp. 297-315. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.2307/451039. Accessed 9 May 2016.
- Swift, Jonathan. *A Tale of a Tub. A Tale of a Tub and Other Works*, edited by Angus Ross and David Woolley. Oxford UP, 2008, pp. 1-103.
- Tierney-Hynes, Rebecca. "Fictional Mechanics: Haywood, Reading, and the Passions." *The Eighteenth Century*, vol. 51, no. 1-2, 2010, pp. 153-72. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/ecy.2010.0005. Accessed 9 Nov. 2017.
- Thompson, Helen. "*Betsy Thoughtless* and the Persistence of Coquettish Volition." *Journal of Early Modern Cultural Studies*, vol. 4, no. 1, Spring/Summer 2004, pp. 102-26. *Project Muse*
http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/journal_for_early_modern_cultural_studies/v004/4.1.thompson.html. Accessed 9 Nov. 2017.
- Todd, Janet. *The Secret Life of Aphra Behn*. Rutgers UP, 1997.

- . *The Sign of Angellica: Women, Writing and Fiction, 1660-1800*. Virago P, 1989.
- Tuck, Richard. *Hobbes: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford UP, 1989.
- Ulman, H. Lewis. *Things, Thoughts, Words, and Actions: The Problem of Language in Late Eighteenth-Century British Rhetorical Theory*. Southern Illinois UP, 1994.
- Wall, Cynthia S. *The Prose of Things: Transformations of Description in the Eighteenth-Century*. U of Chicago P, 2006.
- Wallace, Elizabeth Kowaleski. "The Things Things Don't Say: *The Rape of the Lock*, Vitalism, and New Materialism." *The Eighteenth Century*, vol. 59, no. 1, pp. 105-122. *Project Muse*, doi:10.1353/ecy.2018.0005. Accessed 5 March 2019.
- Wandless, Bill. "Narrative Pain and the Moral Sense: Towards an Ethics of Suffering in the Long Eighteenth Century." *Literature and Medicine*, vol. 24, no. 1, Spring 2005, pp. 51-69. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1353/lm.2005.0031. Accessed 9 Oct. 2018.
- Ward, Candace. "Inordinate Desire: Schooling the Senses in Elizabeth Inchbald's *A Simple Story*." *Studies in the Novel*, vol. 31, no. 1, 1999, pp. 1-18. *JSTOR* <http://www.jstor.org/stable/29533309>. Accessed 9 Nov. 2018.
- Watt, Ian. *The Rise of the Novel: Studies in Defoe, Richardson, and Fielding*. 1957. U of California P, 2001.
- Webb, Ruth. *Ekphrasis, Imagination, and Persuasion in Ancient Rhetorical Theory and Practice*. Ashgate Publishing, 2009.
- Widmayer, Anne F. "Aphra Behn's *Rover* and Renaissance Balcony Scenes." *Theatre Annual*, vol. 59, 2006, pp. 63-86. *MLA International Bibliography*. Accessed 19 Aug. 2017.

- Theatre and the Novel from Behn to Fielding*. Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Winston, Jessica. "A *Mirror for Magistrates* and Public Political Discourse in Elizabethan England." *Studies in Philology*, vol. 101, no. 4, Fall 2004, pp. 381-400. *Project Muse*
http://muse.jhu.edu/journals/studies_in_philology/v101/101.4winston.pdf--
<http://www.jstor.org/stable/4174800?origin=pubexport>. Accessed 18 Dec. 2018.
- Wright, Louis B. *Middle-Class Culture in Elizabethan England*. U of North Carolina P, 1935.
- Wright, Thomas. *The passions of the minde in generall*. London, 1604.
- Yiu, Mimi. "Sounding the Space between Men: Choric and Choral Cities in Ben Jonson's 'Epicoene; Or, the Silent Woman.'" *PMLA*, vol. 122, no. 1, 2007, pp. 72–88. *MLA International Bibliography*, doi: 10.1632/pmla.2007.122.1.72. Accessed 3 June 2017.
- Zanker, Graham. "Enargeia in the Ancient Criticism of Poetry." *Rheinisches Museum für Philologie*, vol. 158, no. 3/4, 1981, pp. 297-311. *JSTOR*
<https://www.jstor.org/stable/41245057>. Accessed 9 Aug. 2016.
- Zucker, Adam. *The Places of Wit in Early Modern English Comedy*. Cambridge UP, 2011.