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(Un)gendered sentiments: The relationship between modernism and gender in the works of Barnfield and Woolf

Brittany Kay Jungck
University of Northern Iowa

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(UN)GENDERED SENTIMENTS: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MODERNISM
AND GENDER IN THE WORKS OF BARNFIELD AND WOOLF

An Abstract of a Thesis
Submitted
in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

Brittany Kay Jungck
University of Northern Iowa
December/2007

ABSTRACT

By examining the history of literature through the lens of a gender critic, a person is able to discern how society and history frame our understanding of certain concepts. In this study, I have examined the lives and works of Richard Barnfield, a famed poet from the English Renaissance, and Virginia Woolf, a noted twentieth-century British novelist. The analysis of various aspects of Barnfield's and Woolf's creations reveals a connection between gendered language and modernity.

Before modernity, people were not as cognizant of gender boundaries. Barnfield's pastoral poetry reveals a sense of gender that communicates flexibility, multiplicity, and exploration. The characters in his poems are not guided by gendered principles, and the messages of his poems are not specified or directed to a specific gender group. Instead, Barnfield's poems discuss universal experiences such as love, friendship, and knowledge, detailing how the emotions behind these powerful concepts are neither fixed nor gendered. This does not mean that Barnfield spent his career unaware of the growing power of modernity and its effect on society's views concerning gender. He does acknowledge this powerful force in a few of his poems, but he also reminds his readers that we all have the power to resist looking at life through the focus of society.

Virginia Woolf's experimental novel, *Orlando: A Biography* uses fluidity and postmodern thought to illustrate the overwhelming force of modernity in determining a person's identity. Woolf's text serves as a stark contrast to the work of Barnfield in that through her detailed allusions, complex language, and unmatched approach she illustrates

the rigidity that surrounds the language and interpretation of gender in the modern world. Many emotive responses are addressed or discussed within the text including creativity, love, friendship, and the characters' reactions to high modernism. These experiences offer an interesting contrast to Barnfield in that they illustrate the sheer complexity of emotional and gender development. This juxtaposition of Woolf's literary world to that of Barnfield creates a linguistic and sociological comparison of how specific concepts, such as gender, have been constructed through time.

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This Study by: Brittany K. Jungck

Entitled: (Un)gendered Sentiments: The Relationship Between Modernism and Gender
in the Works of Barnfield and Woolf

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the
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24 Sept 07
Date

Dr. Jesse Swan, Chair, Thesis Committee

24 Sept 07
Date

Dr. Samuel Gladden, Thesis Committee Member

24 Sept 07
Date

Dr. Kenneth Baughman, Thesis Committee Member

11/15/07
Date

Dr. Sue A. Joseph, Interim Dean, Graduate College

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my favorite men:

My father for teaching me to be strong and wise,

Wyatt for inspiring me to keep going through every struggle,

And most of all, to Mike for holding my hand along the way.

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I would like to thank the members of my thesis committee for their patience and guidance throughout this long and taxing process. I have been inspired by your work, your knowledge, and your support. I would also like to acknowledge the UNI English Department, and all the faculty members, for all their efforts and outstanding curricula. My successes can be directly linked to my many years being trained by some of the best literary minds in the world of academia.

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CHAPTER 1

THE CREATION AND UTILIZATION OF GENDER

Many gender critics and theorists have spent decades examining *the creation* of gender and *its utilization* by society as a tool to condition human experiences. Modern society *expects* individuals to exhibit a particular list of qualities and actions in line with the modern definitions of how males and females should behave. This “list” of acceptable behaviors limits individuals and causes them to choose between submitting to social orders regardless of individual desires *or* expressing their individualistic desires, regardless of the acceptability of such actions. Modernity established “gender” as a means of maintaining continuity in social settings, and modernity also created the rules that made “gender” necessary. Before modernity, identities were not formed based on lists of qualities associated with a person’s biological sex. Instead, as Megan Matchinske (among others) has pointed out, emotion, education, relationships, and spirituality ruled people’s actions in the time previous to the English Civil War, not a need to submit to a social structure.¹

Ruling during the sixteenth century, Elizabeth I was allowed to experiment with her identity as a woman and a ruler. She never married, she had numerous affairs, she varied her style of dress, she was a forceful, yet emotional, public speaker, and she was ruthless when it came to defending her country. The Queen did not choose her behaviors or perform her identity based on a list of gender expectations; instead, she exhibited herself and chose her actions based on emotion, necessity, and instinct.² As modernity swept over society, however, gender norms began to be communicated and enforced.

Churches developed strict rules and customs tailored to the sexes, emotional responses were structured around gender expectations, and economic and occupational systems were established as gender-specific venues. During this time, people began to define everything in society, even what it meant to be a man or a woman. Some people flourished under these new gender requirements, and others were forced to adapt or repress certain beliefs, behaviors, and reactions in order to conform to the pressures of society.³ Examining these pressures helps to establish gender as a “performance” of specialized, socially mandated roles assigned to a biological sex.⁴ Interpreting these performances, especially the performances described by authors through literature, has become a key to illuminating socially constructed gender roles.

Because gender is often a performance, it has become the job of literary critics to attempt to identify the individual *and* the performance within a piece of literature, seeing where the two “identities” intersect. This becomes especially difficult when analyzing the emotive content displayed in a particular work as many factors are involved with the construction of gender and emotion in literature including the beliefs of the author, the beliefs of the character/speaker, the beliefs of the reader, and the social/historical period in which the text was written *and* the period when it is being read. Analyzing all of this data is all part of the critic’s attempt to see what forces, if any, are producing the emotional sentiments of a piece, and removing or identifying these forces helps us to understand the author’s intentions for creating the works. Gender is an artificial construct used by society to establish and maintain structures of control and power in an attempt to universalize all human experiences. As both Richard Barnfield and Virginia Woolf

illustrate in their writings, gender becomes an issue when examining emotional expressions, only when the pressures from outside forces and agencies force it upon the characters.

Emotion is present in all human behavior. It affects an individual's beliefs, instincts, desires, and acts as a window that reveals a person's concerns, values, and commitments. When a person cries while watching the destruction of the Middle East on CNN, one can assume this particular individual is concerned with international affairs and the fate of humanity. When a person expresses disgust at the sight of a mother nursing her child, one can assume this person feels uncomfortable when faced with intimate, human contact. Certain personality characteristics *can* be linked to specific emotional behaviors, but with the pressure of gender norms constraining people's instincts, we have become less free to express emotion without limitations. In a modern society, emotions are labeled and categorized in an effort to align the behaviors with a specific gender. For example, anger is seen as a masculine emotion because it exhibits aggression and passion, and it usually involves force and is often displayed openly. In contrast, compassion is seen as a feminine emotion, in tune with the "motherly instincts" all women are supposed to have innately. This sorting of emotions into categories has forced many people to adapt their responses to certain situations out of fear of being labeled as "gender deviant" by society.

Judith Butler thoroughly explains this performance of gender and its purpose in a modern society in many of her works. In her discussions, she relates the concepts of materiality and individuality through the eyes of modernity. Because modernity is

obsessed with structure, form, and material objects, as a society it was necessary to create a way in which individuality could be categorized or identified in these terms. Cultural boundaries came to be enforced with greater fervency during this period, as did religious boundaries until finally it became necessary to create *sexual* boundaries. It was during this period, the modern period, that gender was created and behaviors became associated as *belonging* (as property) to certain sexes. As Butler points out in the introduction to her work, *Bodies That Matter*, the continual performance of emotion in relation to gender gave power to the concept that gender identities are not only necessary, they are real (12-16). By reinforcing the beliefs of society, modernity flourished, and “gender” became legitimized through its performance in every aspect of life, including emotional reactions.

Throughout history, literature has functioned as an agency of society that has communicated and preserved the beliefs of various social and political eras. By studying the works of various periods, we are able to discern the specific performances that were important to a particular society. In literature from before the modern era, it is much more difficult to align specific gender associations with certain emotional expressions because individuals had not yet subscribed to the belief that identities should be shaped and expressed according to the stereotypes of society. With fewer restrictions on behaviors and without a fear of being labeled destructive or deviant, people behaved in a manner that illustrated honesty, freedom, and authenticity when conveying emotion.

During the early modern period, men and women *were* bound to certain societal expectations when it came to class, religion, and educational experience, but a concept of “gender” and a specific list of performances required (or prohibited) from members of

each sex were not ideas fostered by large numbers of people during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Richard Barnfield, an early modern poet, composed pastoral poetry brimming with lyrics conveying a wide variety of emotional experiences from love and lust to frustration and sorrow. Because his work dwindled from the literary scene and was only revived after the rise of high modernity, many interpretations of Barnfield's poetry have been clouded by modern conceptions/limitations of emotional expression. As a follower and imitator of Ancient Greek literature, Barnfield subscribed to many ancient, and ungendered, ideals concerning emotion and sex. Ancient Greeks often believed in an individual's ability to separate matters of the mind from matters of the body. This meant a person could love someone but have sexual intercourse with another; a person could think something and act in an opposite manner. Essentially, the Ancient Greeks believed in a person's free will to choose how to act and how to think, regardless of physical or environmental influence.⁵

David Halperin, a leading expert in the field of gender and sexuality and author of the book *How To Do The History of Homosexuality*, clarifies the behaviors of ancient people, showing how many of the sexual behaviors and feelings that once existed were altered by *society*. Halperin's work focuses on the *creation* of homosexuality by the forces of society and how this construction ignores the other possibilities of sexual identity. This is similar to how people have interpreted the beliefs of Barnfield throughout the years, ignoring the multiple possibilities of his understanding of politics, emotion, and relationships and applying, single-worded concepts to the emotions expressed within his work: deviant, homoerotic, uncustomary.⁶ By taking the time to

understand Barnfield's multi-gendered relationship to language and emotion, a reader can identify the sentiments in the poet's lyrics as something other than obscure, and he/she can see something artistic, honest, and unpolluted by society in Barnfield's poetry.

When studying literature, a person becomes aware of how certain emotions seem to be more commonly discussed and explored than others. Many authors enjoy examining the effects of love/attraction, others enjoy discussing creativity/motivation, and others become focused on the emotions created through relationships (either between two individuals or an individual and a situation) such as friendship, frustration, loneliness, and fear. Richard Barnfield discusses all of these emotions in his poetry focusing especially on creativity, friendship, love, and his frustrations with modernity. Throughout his explanations and elaborations on these concepts, though, he never expresses himself in gendered terms. He uses examples that portray the sentiments as universal between the sexes, he alludes to a variety of figures and concepts of varying gender identities including identities that cannot be defined in modern terms, and he varies his form to create a tone that could lend itself to a variety of personalities. This multiplicity expressed within his work makes Barnfield's poetry *more* accessible because it allows any reader, regardless of his/her gender affiliation, to relate to the emotions being communicated by the speaker. This would be appropriate for an early-modern audience because individuals were allowed to construct their own gender/sexual identities without fear of being "labeled" by society.

Virginia Woolf's environment was drastically different from that of Richard Barnfield's. During Woolf's career in the dawn of the twentieth century, the literary

community was steeped in high modernity. Although the world was moving at an extremely fast pace with technological and medical advances at every turn and countries constantly at war, modernism forced people to stop and consider the implications behind every action. As a member of The Bloomsbury Group, Woolf spent time questioning the common social order. She and her colleagues spent a lot of time discussing everything from war to economics to local politics. Believers in the advancement of global human rights and opposing England's imperialistic attitude, Woolf and her peers often found themselves on the difficult side of many important debates. As a woman writing in a time of immense social disorder and a philosophical thinker always in search of the answers or causes to society's behavior, Woolf began to study society's concept of sex and gender and its relationship to history and identity. This exploration combined with Woolf's passionate, five year relationship with Vita Sackville-West sparked the creation of *Orlando*, a novel that explores the formation of identity in a variety of times and situations.⁷

In reading *Orlando*, the reader does not get the same feelings of freedom as expressed through Barnfield's work. Instead, Woolf creates a character that goes through a series of startling physical, emotional, and ideological changes always in an attempt to develop an identity in congruence with her personality *and* the expectations of society. As Woolf illustrates through the complex experiences of her character, this journey toward an identity is wrought with emotion and drama, and it becomes increasingly difficult as Orlando transitions from early modernity to high modernity with the conflicts concerning gender becoming increasingly frequent.

From her modern vantage point Woolf sees that gender is an issue when it comes to forming a “self,” and she includes many subtle details in her early passages to enhance the reader’s understanding of the relationship between gender and emotion. Everything in the narrative is gendered or has a relationship to gender in the book. Writing is masculine, fighting is masculine, and anger is masculine. Flirting is feminine, control in relationships is feminine, and madness is feminine. The emotions that lay the groundwork for these experiences create a tone that feels constricted, specific, and wary. The reader seems to know in the beginning chapters that Orlando’s life will not continue to be as carefree and easy as it appears in the introductory words of the text. This sense of dread builds throughout the story, as the reader waits for Orlando to be confronted with the reality of modern gender pressure.

After Orlando’s transformation from man to woman and after her environment becomes increasingly modern, things begin to change for her and she begins to identify *everything* in gendered terms. Certain experiences become more than actions after her physical metamorphosis. They become experiments and opportunities for reflection. This brings emotion and gender even closer together as Orlando begins to question the relationship between her sex and her passion, her sex and love, and her sex and creativity. These questions build throughout the text until Orlando’s emotional behavior becomes so connected to gender that she actually stops to narrate and question the relationship between her sex and every emotional thought that crosses her mind including love, commitment, arousal, creativity, and loyalty.

It is at the end of the novel that Woolf expresses her ultimate message about the relationship between modernity, gender, and emotion. In the final chapter, Orlando's life becomes a chaotic scene full of noise and confusion with Orlando's identity becoming lost amongst the reality of the twentieth century. As a woman, it seems Orlando is faced with an insurmountable amount of pressure, and the stress of trying to decide how to react, emotionally, in a world that defines people based on their conformity to sexual stereotypes. In the end of the book, we see Orlando as a woman on the brink in a state of insanity and confusion, pleading for the chaos to end and to find the serenity she once had during the glory days of her youth.

As the times change in *Orlando*, Woolf illustrates the increasing power of society to create and enforce gender norms in every aspect of life including emotional expression. Orlando's experiences contrast with those of Barnfield's speakers in that the emotions she confronts are all gendered in some manner, while Barnfield's sentiments are expressed with a sense of freedom and independence, knowing the feelings of the heart are not necessarily related to a person's sex. Through examining the authors' strikingly different creations, we see how the relationship between gender and emotion has changed with time.

During early modernity, the concept of gender identities had not been established. Gender was created through messages from society mandating certain behaviors and attitudes from individuals based on their biological sex. In *Orlando*, the reader sees that many factors govern Orlando's performance of gender including her government, her family and friends, and her economic class. Similarly, Orlando's concept of certain

emotions such as creativity and love change along with her environment becoming more or less constricted based on the expectations of society. In Barnfield's poems, though, his speakers experience a consistent freedom in their ability to express emotion in relation to gender. As the speakers change and the situations change, the emotions are conveyed in the same manner, and gender seems to be no obstacle to Barnfield's ability to communicate a specific attitude in his work; in fact, he seems intent on *exemplifying* emotional independence in his creations. The only thing that *does* seem to impact Barnfield's independent themes and universal tones is the impending force of modernity looming in the distance. He expresses his distress at society's new found desire to evaluate emotional and artistic expressions in relation to gender in his own voice in "Sonnet XV" from his *Cynthia* collection.

Overall, though, Barnfield's poetry communicates emotional multiplicity where people are allowed to illustrate and experience feelings in a variety of manners. All emotions function as a result of the *human* experience in the early modern period, not *gendered* experience, and individuals are *united* by their similar sentiments not *divided* because of them. In Barnfield's time and in his poems, identity formation is not controlled in the manner illustrated by Woolf in *Orlando*. Orlando is forced to adapt her beliefs, character, desires, and instincts based on society's reaction to her sex, and her emotional responses related to these conflicts are gendered constructions of her sexuality. If Orlando did not have such a complex sexual identity, she would not experience the confusion and frustration she often faces at points throughout the text from trying to decide *how* to react like a man or woman. Expressing herself as an individual comes

with consequences, and Orlando is forced to face those repercussions or learn to adapt to modernity's rules governing gender.

Gender is a product of society's insistence on regulating the behaviors of individual expression. Richard Barnfield and Virginia Woolf illustrate through their drastically different pieces how emotion is tied to the formation of the self. In the case of Barnfield, his early modern environment allows the speakers in his poems to express their desires without a fear of developing a boundary between themselves and society based on gender. Gender was not seen in the same manner as it is today, and many artists like Barnfield saw sexual identities as flexible and ever-changing; this belief is established and illustrated through the poet's choice to connect each emotion to *multiple* gender possibilities thus avoiding *singular* gender assumptions. In her unconventional piece of experimental fiction, Woolf builds an ominous tone that warns her readers about the power of modernity to influence gender identity formation. Through following Orlando through her various changes, the reader is able to experience a variety of emotional conflicts while witnessing how the character's environment forces her to adapt her behaviors based on the expectations of society. After reading the works of these two authors and examining the effects of modernity on the relationship between gender and emotion, it is easy to see how our modern society has constricted an individual's ability to create a non-gendered identity.

CHAPTER 2

UNGENDERING EMOTION IN THE WORK OF RICHARD BARNFIELD

Studies of gender and sexuality have long been associated with the work of Richard Barnfield due to the poet's practice of composing pastoral verse with scenes steeped in romanticism and sexual innuendo. His works are usually relegated to anthologies for homosexual authors, and it wasn't until quite recently that he was recognized as having a significant impact on the field by his inclusion in the most recent Longman Anthology of British Literature. Those literary critics who have read his biographies note that little is known about Barnfield's personal life. What *is* known is that Richard Barnfield enjoyed creating and reading poetry, he admired the work of other poets such as Edmund Spenser, Christopher Marlowe, and Robert Greene, and he relished the personal, ideological freedoms reinforced through early-modern ways of thinking.

Barnfield created a wide variety of poems during his career and his styles and subjects varied with time and reception, yet his beliefs and the roots of his process remained fairly consistent. The act of creating literature appeared to be a sacred achievement, one that was conducted with great reverence and superstition but without emotional limitations. Now in the midst of the postmodern era, we can see how Richard Barnfield's works have been misinterpreted for centuries, especially by modern literary critics who seem intent on drawing connections between the emotional content of the poet's work and the author's gender/sexual identity. By using the perspective of a postmodern historian, we can now remove the boundaries that have long-restricted the

interpretation and appreciation of Barnfield's work revealing a poet who was inspired by his environment and relationships and someone who wrote without constricting his sentiments in order to conform to cultural, gender stereotypes. Gender is never an issue in Richard Barnfield's poetry, and from what can be interpreted in his work, "gender" as a modern, binary term was not a concept the poet would have understood or appreciated. All of Barnfield's pieces seem to exhibit a sense of freedom in tone and attitude, as the poet makes a point to connect each emotion expressed to a variety of symbols, words, and identities, each with multiple connotations and multiple gender associations.

Emotional Creativity in "Sonnet IIII"

Creativity is the essence of every writer. Without ideas and inspiration, no conflicts would every be imagined, no metaphors would ever be developed, and the artistic world of language we know as literature would be extinct. Many literary critics consider poetry to be the most complex, beautiful genre of the literary realm. It is for this reason that many poets adopt convictions related to inspiration and creativity; they are committed to this imaginative power to communicate their messages to the world. It is no surprise, then, to realize that many poets have devoted entire poems, often multiple poems, to this subject, the fascination with and reverence for creativity.⁸ Richard Barnfield is no exception to this feature of poetic vocation, and many of the poems in his early volumes are dedicated to discussing this complex emotion.

In "Sonnet IIII," from *Greene's Funeralls*, Barnfield's speaker focuses on the task of creating a poem fitting for his legendary poet-friend, Robert Greene. This poem becomes an explication of the process of "creating" and the emotional experiences of the

poet involved in this artistic saga. In true early modern form, Barnfield incorporates characters from ancient myths and develops a tone that adapts to the situation. After reading “Sonnet III,” the reader becomes aware of the dramatic process of creating even the shortest poems, and Barnfield is able to connect a sense of universality with the piece by focusing the content on the speaker’s internal conflicts instead of the deceased friend, thus opening up the poem to serve as an anthem of creation for any poet who has experienced feelings of inadequacies in his/her ability to honor another with the gift of verse. This sense of universality allows us to conclude that Barnfield does not view the emotions associated with creativity (passion, confidence, courage) as gendered.

“Sonnet III” begins in the first person, giving the reader an exact understanding of the speaker’s emotions. This poem, intended to be a memorial for Robert Greene, now becomes centered on the writer and his plight to find creative assistance. This aspect gives the poem a sense of duality as we see two purposes interwoven in the text. The first is to honor the friend of the speaker, and the second is to discuss *what* the poet *needs* to create a masterfully crafted piece of literature. This multiplicity is echoed in the emotional sentiments expressed in the piece, each emotion exemplified through Barnfield’s use of multiple images to prove his point. Because the poem is written in first person, it is much more intimate than many of the other selections in the book. The reader is drawn in to the experience knowing that the feelings expressed are not assumed, but come first hand. This level of honesty reveals the speaker’s ideology and helps in confirming that the voice is not gendering the sentiments expressed in the sonnet.

Barnfield begins “Sonnet IIII” with the command, “Come.” This invocation expresses a sense of urgency in the speaker’s tone. Barnfield could have started his piece with the word “Please” or “Help,” but instead he chooses to command the help of the goddess, Minerva, with the word “Come.” The speaker is desperate for any type of assistance in his quest to create the perfect poem. This desperation has caused him to drop on his knees and conjure the gods for support. This request for divine assistance rather than mortal assistance takes gender out of the equation and puts faith and assistance on the fore front. Religious figures, although often “sexed” biologically, are often accepted as gender neutral. Their power and presence is their essence, not their sex. The speaker in “Sonnet IIII” appears to be connecting with this devotion through his invocation of the goddess as he pleads for her mercy and guidance.

The tone of “Sonnet IIII” continues to reflect the speaker’s sense of distress and adoration for his absent muse in the first eight lines of the verse with Barnfield using the command “Come” to begin half of these lines. In line nine, the tone begins to shift to one of polite flattery and sly humor with the words, “Come thou hither sweet *Amyntas*.” Here, the speaker becomes more gracious and less demanding with his request by complimenting his addressees. Later, self-deprecating humor becomes a part of the speaker’s routine as he puts himself down by making a pun for himself out of the name of the great king, Amyntas, mentioned before: “Come and teach this fond *A-mint-Asse*.” This change in tone indicates that Barnfield’s speaker is dynamic, always changing to adapt to his situation. This serves as one of the first signals in “Sonnet IIII” that Barnfield does not believe emotions are attached to gender. In this poem, he illustrates

that emotion is attached to the situation, a force outside the individual not connected to the sex of the speaker's body.

In analyzing the symbolism in this piece, it becomes more clear that Barnfield believed gender to be a construct of society that is imposed on objects and thus shaping perceptions and experiences. For example, in line two of "Sonnet IIII," the speaker reveals exactly what he needs from his muse with the words, "Come and bring a Coronet." A coronet represents several images and feelings in reference to this particular poem beyond being simply a crown. According to the *Online Etymology Dictionary*, the word coronet was coined in English in 1494. Before this time, many writers used the feminine, Latin word "corona" when referring to a crown, as Latin was the language of the literate before the Renaissance. Latin is a language that contains grammatical gender, with nouns divided into morphological classes and labeled with masculine and feminine articles. With subtle hints to this language, Barnfield is reminding his readers how society has been constructing gender for centuries even in languages. So, he uses nouns like "Crowne" that could belong to either gender class, depending on the language.

Acknowledging this puts a different spin on the poet's choice of words through his use of a hybrid term for his piece a word whose etymology is feminine yet is used to symbolize a gift for his male friend. Barnfield has used care in determining the specific request from the muse, and the fact that she is to "bring" something so unspecified in its gender illustrates the poet's belief that imagination, passion, and creativity are emotions or states that are not gendered in the traditional, modern sense. After all, the muse isn't actually going to bring the crown of sonnets when she comes; her job is to instill the

speaker with the power to create them. This power, energy, or force seems to be an emotion that is neither absolutely masculine nor purely feminine because Barnfield indicates no preference for either gender in his use of the term “Coronet.”

Another symbol used within the piece is the “silver sounding Swanne” (line 10). This reference is much more dynamic than that of the coronet, but it communicates a message of multiplicity within objects, experiences, and emotions. This multiplicity is reflected in the alliteration of this line, the repetition of the “S” creates attention for this object and reflects the impassioned, fixated tone of the speaker. The meanings behind these symbols also create a sense of multiplicity. Silver is known as a feminine material being the opposite of gold which is said to be the masculine counterpart. This is established through Greek mythology with the twins Apollo and Artemis each one representing one of these precious metals. Artemis, the goddess of the moon, touts a silver bow and arrow, aligning her with the element. Swans, however, are usually seen as symbols of masculinity and the divine. Zeus often took the form of a swan to trick other gods and goddesses into bending to his will. Also, many Greeks considered the swan to be an animal of creativity and associated with the nine muses. This combination of masculine and feminine energies in relation to the creation of art is the very aspect highlighted in “Sonnet III,” and with this line, “silver sounding Swanne,” Barnfield communicates that the feminine (silver) and masculine (swan) often work together to create energy, inspiration, and thought. In this single line, the reader can see the blurred boundaries between the genders when it comes to interpreting emotion and creating poetry.

One of the final symbols in “Sonnet IIII” is that of the hobby-horse in line fourteen. In lines 13-14, the speaker calls on the pretty muse again and asks her to come riding on a toy pony (hobby-horse): “Come thou hither my friend so pretty, / All riding on a Hobby-Horse.” These two lines are curious in their construction as the speaker is talking directly to the muse, again, yet in the second line he uses the word “all” as if talking about a large group of people. Hobby-horses are stick ponies often constructed out of wood with a head of the horse on the end of a stick (used for the body). The fact that Barnfield juxtaposes the image of a beautiful muse and a phallic-shaped object is quite curious. It seems to echo his theme of duality carried through the entire verse. This line is the final image the reader gets of the speaker’s “creative assistant” and it is paradoxical in its gender representation. Why would a woman enter riding a penis-shaped toy? Perhaps the poet is commenting on how the blend of masculine and feminine creates art, or perhaps Barnfield’s continued use of multi-gendered symbols illustrates how gender exists, and is relevant, only to those who choose to construct gender-based identities for people, objects, and emotions.

The famous characters and references used in Barnfield’s text create the final basis for discovering whether creativity is gendered in “Sonnet IIII.” Within these 18 lines of text, Barnfield references *at least* five specific people. In the first line, it is the powerful female muse, Minerva, the goddess of poetry and song. In the fourth line, Barnfield refers to a “Colinet” which is a reference to Edmund Spenser and his character in the *Shepherds’ Calendar*. In line five, the speaker calls for Silenus—the oldest, wisest, drunkest male follower of Dionysius. Barnfield’s characters do not share much in

common physically. Their biological sexes are different: one is a fictional character from an epic poem, one is a goddess from an ancient tradition, and one is a god known for his inappropriate behavior. What all the characters *do* have in common, though, is their connection to art and poetry. Colin, Minerva, and Silenus all have the power to help Barnfield with his poetry. They can inspire him and instill him with the emotional creativity needed to construct his lines of verse. Their biological sexes have no impact on this power. This gift exists independently of the idea of gender, focused on the creation of art, not the reinforcement of sociological identities.

In line nine, though, Barnfield's allusions become even more complex as he uses a double entendre to reference two people with his inclusion of "Amyntas" in his text. Amyntas is known for being a powerful Indian king who left behind a mint of silver coins. "Artemis" (which sounds curiously similar to Amyntas and has the same number of syllables) is the goddess associated with silver. These two people, one male and one female, both represent the concept communicated by Barnfield. Barnfield's use of characters who possess complementary characteristics in a single image is a brilliant way to subtly reinforce his ideas concerning gender. Both Amyntas and Artemis have a tie to the "silver" mentioned in line ten of the poem, "silver sounding Swanne" each name is pronounced in a similar manner, and both fit the scansion pattern of the verse. This connection between the ancient goddess and king is notable and reflects Barnfield's consistent use of references with connotations of conflicting, or mixed, sexual roots. This use of characters with multiple identities and gender associations within the text, relates to the idea that gender was not a fixed characteristic of identity during the English

Renaissance. The inclusion of these characters also indicates that gender was not associated in binary terms during the English Renaissance. Rather than being an either/or label placed on an individual by society, as is the case in modern, Western cultures, gender was seen as an abstract notion, a blending of characteristics an individual expresses, and something interpreted by the outside world (not by the individual). Gender was not solely masculine or feminine; it was much more complex, and this allowed a greater balance between individuals in society because people had the freedom to express their emotions without fear of being labeled. Furthermore, the creative experiences expressed by the speaker in “Sonnet III” were products of the psyche, not the environment.

Friendship(s) in “An Ode” (“As It Fell Upon a Day”)

English Renaissance writers are known for their reverence for classical antiquity and one of the cornerstones of social life during both of these periods was friendship (especially intimate, friendly relationships between men).⁹ Many early modern writers used friendship as a subject for their work, including Edmund Spenser in his epic piece, *The Faerie Queene*, so it should be no surprise that Richard Barnfield also chose to write passionately about the topic.¹⁰ Aligning with the ideology established in his notes on creativity in “Sonnet III,” Barnfield makes a point to express the notions of friendship in a manner that resonates with all of his readers, regardless of their particular sexual identities. Because of this, friendship is not depicted as a gendered emotion in Barnfield’s poem “An Ode” (As It Fell Upon a Day) from *Poems in divers humors*.

Similar to Barnfield's strategy in "Sonnet III," "An Ode" presents the reader with a sense of multiplicity or indecisiveness when it comes to representing gender within the text. The many elements of the poem evolve constantly from line to line, and the images and allusions presented within the text convey a sense of generality or androgyny when it comes to communicating gendered emotions. The best example of this element is the speaker of the poem whose background is never revealed. Assumed to be male, the sex of the speaker is never discussed. The voice of the poem is so general, it is hard to detect any gendered sentiments within the lines. Barnfield uses a variety of pronouns within the text, varying his expressions by using general, third-person pronouns such as he/she and intimate, first-person reflections with the use of "I." This would be very disconcerting to a modern reader who is used to a singular outlook on a particular subject, but it is fitting for a poem reflective of friendship during the early modern period because it parallels the sense of intimacy that would be involved in an early modern friendship. Beginning with an omniscient perspective, the speaker describes the scene and the bird that becomes the central character, and the audience, of much of the text. In line 15 though, the reader sees the focus shift to the speaker with the use of the pronoun "I," creating a more personal experience for the reader as he/she notes the emotions surfacing as a result of hearing the nightingale's song.

This intimate tone, supported by the use of the pronoun "I," continues until line 30 as he/she laments over lost relationships and warns the bird about becoming friends with unfaithful people. This use of a slight personal detail works to "hook in" the reader through connecting the audience to the speaker's own experiences with friendship,

loyalty, and loss. In line 31, however, the poem shifts to a more general tone with the use of a more “third person” grammatical structure. With this choice, the speaker seems to want the reader to focus on his advice, not his actual experience, noting how it applies to any relationship.

The remainder of the poem reads as an apostrophe to an absent friend. This is fitting for a poem that reflects general sentiments about honesty and reliability in relationships. These emotions are not tied to any specific, relationship, and by making his message general and explanatory, Barnfield creates a warning for any reader trying to connect with a supposed friend. The universality created by this statement would be troubling to a modern reader, unable to understand how friendship could exist beyond the sociological borders of gender.¹¹

Barnfield continues this sense of universality with his use of a variety of images in “An Ode,” all very general and even a bit hermaphroditic in their representations of gender. In the beginning of the poem, the reader is presented with a series of vivid images often associated with femininity. For example, in the second line the speaker notes his tale occurs during the “merrie Month of May.” May is named after the Roman earth goddess Maia, and it symbolizes birth and renewal (very fitting for spring). The third and fourth lines reveal that the speaker is sitting in the shade of myrtles, a type of flowering bush common in Europe and Africa. Myrtle branches have long been associated with the love goddess, Venus, and this connection continues Barnfield’s string of feminine images. Trees are also mentioned in the opening sequence of “An Ode.” This symbol has often been seen as the quintessential image of Mother Nature as the

strong, knowledge-bearing, sheltering object of the earth. Amongst these flowers and trees sits a bird, or more specifically a nightingale, with her breast turned up to the sky singing a song. Nightingales, commonly seen as a feminine bird, have been used throughout literary history to signify the relationship between love and sorrow or love and death, both fitting with the theme of this poem.

At the same time, many of these images could also be interpreted as masculine. For instance, the myrtles, although associated with the goddess of love, are also known for their unconventional number of stamens (the male organ of the flower). This characteristic causes them to have a masculine essence. Additionally, trees, with their phallic shape and limbs that thrust forward into the sky, could also be interpreted as masculine. Lastly nightingales, with their penetrating voices, project a masculine energy. It is common for the male nightingales to be the most prominent singers in the species, singing to attract a mate, or possibly in the case of "An Ode," a friend. This blend of gendered energies shows the hermaphroditic concept of gender held by Barnfield, and likely, many of his early modern readers. This poem about friendship speaks for every type of reader, regardless of sex, and the symbols used within the text support this sense of life without the constraints of gender labels.

In line 37, the speaker of "An Ode" begins a tale of a king who was wronged by those who had appeared to be his friends. This message by the speaker, although about a king (interpreted as male), seems more general in its content and the story lines applied could refer to many rulers, male and female, that have reigned throughout history. Barnfield's choice to make the character in the story a "King" seems to be one of

generality, not of specificity, as it fits with all the other general statements in the short tale. For example, line 37 begins with the words, “If that one be prodigall.” The use of the pronoun “one” is generic as it could refer to any “one” being that has lived. Even the choice of the word “prodigall” is sweeping in its meaning, as it is rare for any person of royalty to not be spoiled with money or riches.

In the middle of the speaker’s example, in line 43, the speaker *does* refer to a king who is obsessed with women, yet as Barnfield points out in many of his other works, including *The Affectionate Shepherde*, this quality isn’t necessarily gender-based either. In *The Affectionate Shepherde*, Lady Penelope Rich is the person of power having an affair with the support of her peers, not her husband. So, knowing all of this broadens the possibilities behind Barnfield’s use of the word “King” and “Woemen” as more of a product of his “basic” story line than a reference to a particular person or action.

Finally, near the end of the speaker’s elaborate explanation, Barnfield comments upon the relationship between fortune and friendship implying that when fortune dwindles, so does the loyalty of one’s friends, “But if Fortune once doe frowne, / Then farewell his great renowne” (45-46). What is important though, is that Barnfield never reveals the sex of these traitors. Instead of saying Lords or her maidens, he chooses to refer to these “failed friends” as “They,” as in the lines, “They that fawned on him before, / Use his company no more” (47-48). This vague description of a “common scene” where an unseeing person easily finds himself betrayed at the hands of a supposed “friend” is the perfect analogy to preface the poet’s famous ending, describing what a true friend *does* look like. The situations described could fit the life of any person, rich

or poor, monarch or not, as they simply describe what it is like to rely on people who exhibit false pretenses. Barnfield's message stretches far beyond the limitations of gender in these lines, and his poem ends with a feeling of determination in educating "the public" about how to find a true friend. Gender never comes up as a part of the equation of friendship created by the speaker in "An Ode."

Finally, if we examine the rhyme scheme of "An Ode" we can see that even the prosody of this particular verse reveals no preference for males or females. In the first six lines of the text, the lines end in strong, masculine rhymes with the pairings of "Day" and "May," "shade" and "made," and "sing" and "spring." Interestingly, this section with its distinct masculine rhymes is the same that was so heavy with feminine images of myrtles and May. Later in the poem, the rhyming becomes more feminine (with the stress on the first syllable of the end word instead of the last). This can be seen in lines 11-12 which end with "Pitty" and "Ditty." This mixture of sounds and images continues Barnfield's emphasis on the artificiality of gender.

Gender is something that cannot be specifically identified in the prosody of the verse, just as many of the images within "An Ode" contain ambiguous references to males and females. Barnfield's focus on this blending of ideas supports the belief that gender is something placed on a person or object by society, and the subject of this poem (friendship) appears to have the power to avoid the defining grips of modern thought. In "An Ode," friendship lives in a space in-between and around the two modern choices of masculine and feminine, existing as a pure product of humanity and selfhood, untouched by the pressure of modernity and its obsession with gender labels. Many other emotions

experienced during the early modern period exist in this plane separate from the masculine and feminine, including the feelings of passion, loyalty, and attraction associated with love.

Loving Experiences in “An Ode” (From *Cynthia*)

Love is a classic subject in any piece of literature but especially the literature from the English Renaissance. Morton Hunt discusses this subject in his book, *The Natural History of Love*, in which he comments upon Edmund Spenser’s and William Shakespeare’s focus on love in their works *The Faerie Queen* and *The Taming of the Shrew* while analyzing whether modernity affected the men’s interpretations of the condition. In the end, Morton *does* decide that Renaissance men had a desire to blend the practical purposes behind love with the romantic, yet he does seem to focus on love in a gendered manner, always referring to how *men* “love” *women*. This implies that “love” is a gendered emotion and something a man “does” to a woman, and this cause/effect concept (and its specific gender relationship) is *all* that is discussed by Morton concerning the works of Shakespeare and Spenser. Never does Morton experiment with other interpretations of love in the texts, suggesting ungendered expressions or relationships between persons, but this “ungendered” concept of love *is* something Richard Barnfield discusses in his verses, which is perhaps why the study of his work has been so limited. Barnfield discusses the effects of “love” in many of his pieces while staying consistent, stylistically and ideologically, with the messages expressed in his other lyrics. Like the poet’s expressions concerning friendship in his famous poem “An Ode” (“As It Fell Upon a Day”), Barnfield does not gender the feelings of attraction,

passion, and suffering often associated as products of an intimate, romantic relationship. This is illustrated in his poem, “An Ode” from *Cynthia With Certain Sonnets*. In this verse, the reader is confronted with a variety of images and experiences associated with love and attraction including the poet’s use of hybrid rhyme schemes; contrasting gender focuses, highlighted through the poet’s use of assonance; and a collection of characters that reveal a resistance to identity constructions based on gender.

“An Ode” is positioned after a series of twenty love sonnets in the author’s *Cynthia With Certain Sonnets* collection, and it serves as a fitting conclusion to his sequence of romantic sentiments. It seems that Barnfield did not want to end his collection with a limited point-of-view on “love,” as “An Ode” expands on the poet’s previous representations of the emotion, casting women as well as men in the role of “the lover.” By doing this, “An Ode” becomes a poem that expresses the general sentiments associated with “love” in a purposefully nonspecific manner. This could indicate that love was not seen to be connected to a particular type of masculinity or femininity, or it could illustrate that Barnfield went to great pains to express how gender (as a specific type of performance) is an absent factor in many romantic relationships, illustrated through his use of Daphnis’s experience. Regardless of the process, the result produces the same message: the feelings of affection, passion, and pain associated with romantic relationships are not gendered.

Barnfield’s ode begins with a pleasing rhythm of syllables, falling into his usual pattern of seven-syllable lines: “Nights were short, and daies were long; / Blossoms on the Hawthorn’s hung” (1-2). This pattern is not constant throughout the entire piece as

the poet works in an extra syllable here and there throughout the poem. Shortly after the speaker begins his description of the scene and characters, he deviates from the reader's expectations with the line, "Give moysture to each living thing" (26). In this section, Barnfield is relating the behavior of Aurora for his audience, detailing her sorrow over the loss of her son. This inconsistency is noticeable when the poem is read aloud as the pattern of the verse becomes uncomfortable in spots. Barnfield switches back and forth between seven and eight syllable lines, forcing the reader to revisit this uncomfortable feeling. With this decision the poet signals his readers, reminding them that this poem is not about a single person's experience. The incorporation of subtle lines of syllabic variation signals the reader to the multiple voices that exist in this emotional piece.

Aurora's experience is not the only one dramatized through this variation in meter. In lines 87-88, the speaker returns to offer his reaction to Daphnis' dramatic experiences with love: "Scarce had he these last words spoken, / But me thought his heart was broken." With these words, Barnfield prompts his readers to another voice taking part in the narration, and he also reminds them of the "new" victim of love—Daphnis. Previously, this method was used to draw attention to Aurora's emotional state, so by focusing the reader on another, very different character, Barnfield reinforces his message concerning the universal agony caused by love. This supports the idea that the poet does not intend his poem to reflect the emotions of a particular person, or even a particular sex of people. Instead, this variation in scansion illustrates how "An Ode" is an anthem of affection and pain reflective of many people's experiences in relationships.

In addition to the variation in the number of syllables used in the poem's lines, Barnfield also varies the types of rhymes that complete each line. For example, the poem begins with a slant rhyme featuring the words "long" and "hung." This imperfect matching of sounds becomes a symbol for the imperfect experience of love reflected in the remainder of the verse. Later, Barnfield falls into a clear pattern of masculine rhymes, mainly of single syllable words with harsh tones such as "spray" and "day" in lines 7-8 and the words "fate" and "late" in lines 21-22. Again, Barnfield chooses to be inconsistent in his choice of end rhymes as he works in other combinations at key points in the story such as in lines 77-78 with the comment, "Either She, or else no creature, / Shall enjoy my love: whose feature." These lines end with two-syllable words that rhyme in each syllable; additionally, the stress of the rhyme is on the first syllable of each word. These are key features of a feminine rhyme scheme, and Barnfield's choice to vary the sounds of his lines illustrates how literature and expression take precedence over the communication of gendered emotions or actions. The inconsistencies in Barnfield's rhymes express a need to adhere to his tone and message, without feeling the constant pressure to represent the emotions expressed in "An Ode" as gendered.

Barnfield's variation in rhyme schemes is not the only element of the poem that displays inconsistency with sound; Barnfield's use of assonance in different portions of the text also communicates an assortment of feelings about attraction, passion, suffering, and the possible connections to gender. In this case, the poet uses assonance to exemplify or magnify the subject of his verse at points in the poem. For instance, in line 18, "Weepe she did for companie" and line 77, "Either She, or else no creature," the

subjects of the lines are women. In line 18, the speaker is discussing the goddess Aurora, and in line 77 Daphnis is discussing his feelings for his female beloved. In both of these lines, Barnfield makes a point to emphasize the “she” in the poem with the use of other long “e” words such as “weepe,” “companie,” “either,” and “creature” (18, 77).

Furthermore, as we find out later in the verse, the woman adored in this poem is Queen Elizabeth, and this repetition of the long “e” sound in discussion of feminine objects serves as auditory imagery and foreshadowing revealing the ultimate female subject of the verse: The Queen. The effect of this choice is to emphasize the female subject of the verse.

By examining other uses of assonance within “An Ode,” we can see how Barnfield also uses this tool to emphasize the masculine images of the story. For example, when Daphnis begins to tell his story in line 45, we see a preference for words with a short “I” sound beginning to develop. First, the repetition of the word “did” becomes quite frequent in the following seven lines with it being used seven times in six of the seven lines. When Daphnis reveals the name of his lover in line 51, he purposefully alters the spelling to enhance the masculine end-rhyme and create an additional short “I” sound, making the line heavy with assonance, “Love I did, fair Ganymed.” Here, the sound comes three times, once in the word “did” and twice in the pronunciation of “Ganymed.” In Daphnis’ description of his lover he does not end the use of this sound; he continues with two internal rhymes as in the line, “Him the quintessence of Nature,” highlighting the gentleman being described (54). Barnfield uses this literary tool to emphasize the complexity of their personalities. In this way, we are

even more conscious of the poet's mixture of gendered sounds and subjects throughout his poem and his intent to create a piece that refuses to define affection and attraction in a gendered manner.

Barnfield's mixture of rhymes and sounds works perfectly in conjunction with his mixture of allusions. In "An Ode" Barnfield incorporates several characters but the four main references are: Aurora, Daphnis, Ganymede, and Eliza. The allusion to Aurora has several meanings, all reflective of Barnfield's use of conflicting gender images in his poem. First, "aurora" means "dawn" in Latin. This translation is important as it conveys a sense of multiplicity or being "in between" two things. Here, the focus on Aurora could project an existence of a being, or feeling, between two static concepts such as night and day or masculine and feminine. Secondly, Aurora's siblings, the god of the sun (Apollo) and the god of the moon (Artemis), often overshadowed her, conveying a sense of the ungendered often being overlooked by the gendered. Barnfield wants to focus on the unspecific, the emotions that are universal and apply to everyone, so using a reference to Aurora is important. Aurora, used as an allusion or character in "An Ode" is complex in its meaning and supports the idea that Barnfield did not believe the emotions associated with "love" were gendered.

Barnfield's choice to name the main character Daphnis is also a significant decision for the piece. Daphnis was a Silican nymph often depicted as a shepherd and a flutist. According to legend, another nymph named Normia fell in love with the young boy, but Daphnis could not remain faithful. He was often suspected as having a relationship with the Greek god Pan. This relationship represents the opposite of what

happens in “An Ode.” In Barnfield’s poem, Daphnis falls for a young boy and leaves him for a powerful, beautiful woman. The poet’s choice to alter this myth shows his intent to highlight the emotions involved, not the characters. Barnfield’s focus on the emotion and not the subject reveals his intent to universalize the devotion and agony felt by Daphnis.

The history of the character “Daphnis” is one of great complexity, and Barnfield’s choice to incorporate this legendary, mythological being into many of his works is significant. In this poem, the poet’s use of Daphnis as the protagonist says something about the power of love and its relationship to gender. In mythological history, the personality of Daphnis is one of speculation, and his romantic involvements were many and the objects of his love varied greatly. As the Encyclopedia Britannica Online points out, many modern followers of mythological traditions are quick to label Daphnis as the son of the god, Hermes; however, many ancient tales refer to Daphnis as Hermes’ eromenos (boy lover). This blend in historical interpretations, along with Daphnis’ romantic links to other gods/beings including Pan and Normia (mentioned before) combine to create a character full of flexibility, possibility, and mystery. This makes it nearly impossible to make any distinct assertions about Daphnis’ sexual preference. Complicating the situation even further is the link between the name Daphnis and an ancient triad of virginal, nymph sisters called the Thriae.¹² These sisters, one of whom was named Daphnis, were said to be responsible for teaching divination to Apollo. They were also members of a form of hybrid creature said to resemble a cross between a woman, a bee, and an angel. This conglomeration of figures represents a mixture of

ideals that add further speculation to the root of the character “Daphnis.” Barnfield, someone well-versed in mythological histories, chose a character with ancient roots but roots that could not be linked to a specific identity, characteristic, or gender. By using this character in a poem elaborating on the passion and attraction brought on by love, our author blurs the lines between the connections that can be made between this complex emotion and modern distinctions of gender. Thus, our main character in love is neither masculine nor feminine but an indistinct blend of multiple possibilities of sex and gender.

Ganymede, another figure in Greek mythology, is known as a hero and legend in literary history. Barnfield’s use of this name is meant to highlight the masculinity of the character. Daphnis falls in love with Ganymede for his beauty, but the poet also wants to highlight the character’s power and virtue. According to the *Encyclopedia Mythica*, Ganymede was known as a hero and the most beautiful mortal on earth. Zeus even takes the young boy to be his lover and live eternally amongst the gods. The popularity of this legend is evident in how many times it has been recreated in literary tradition, incorporated into the works of Homer, Plato, and Virgil. The image of Ganymede has been preserved in scientific and literary history as the basis for the constellation, “Aquarius,” and used as the name for one of the moons of Jupiter.

Symbolically, these objects hold feminine interpretations as moons are commonly seen as feminine objects, representing the cycle of nature, and the myth behind the constellation of Aquarius ties Ganymede to the fountains of The Nile, providing water for everyone on Earth. This role as provider of life to the natural world is distinctly feminine, and these well-known connections to the character of Ganymede, the beautiful

warrior, contrast the gender affiliations of this being. Thus, again, Barnfield chose a character (for Daphnis' love object) that cannot be identified as distinctly masculine or feminine according to modern associations of these words. Ganymede is a character of multiplicity whose chief characteristics are strength and beauty, two qualities not considered masculine or feminine in the early modern period as they are qualities also held by Daphnis' other love interest—Queen Elizabeth I.

Queen Elizabeth I was the object of adoration, obsession, and attraction for many people during the early modern era, and in "An Ode" Barnfield illustrates how Daphnis is deeply affected by his intense relationship with The Queen. This is revealed in the final lines of the poem where the speaker describes a name etched into the heart of the young protagonist: "In whose heart (thus riv'd in three) / ELIZA written I might see" (91-2). Posing Queen Elizabeth as the ultimate woman in this poem was a brilliant choice on the part of Barnfield. The image of The Queen has long been accepted as one of delicacy, femininity, and extreme power. Serving as "the mother" of her country for more than forty years, Queen Elizabeth I developed a reputation as a caregiver for her country. People worshipped Elizabeth I for her power and her beauty and these feelings are consistent with those expressed by Daphnis in the poem. Elizabeth I becomes the perfect counter-lover to Ganymede as she, too, was a hero for her country and seen as an aesthetic icon. Barnfield's use of historical and literary characters of mixed gender representations serves as the largest piece of evidence in an argument for the poem's use of ungendered ideas in relationship to the sentiments of attraction, devotion, power, and suffering expressed as characteristics of love in "An Ode."

In this manner, “An Ode” functions as the pre-modern manual for love which is to say, a true road map or list of characteristics for this emotion does not exist. Love is expressed in this poem through a variety of characters in a variety of manners with a blend of symbols and dialogue that connects a sense of freedom with the emotion. Barnfield shows how some experiences with love are universal including frustration, attraction, and powerful devotion, but the objects and agencies involved in the experience can vary. Love is free to be an emotion without boundary, and Barnfield takes a moment to revel in this freedom with “An Ode.” As we will see in some of the poet’s other work, it is likely Barnfield wrote this poem to support his pre-modern way of life, and as a dedication to others who align with him in his thinking. During the late sixteenth century many people were beginning to doubt, or feel uncomfortable with, the sense of freedom the author expresses in this particular piece.

Emotional Reactions to Modernity in “Sonnet XV”

As seen in Barnfield’s lyrical expressions in “An Ode,” the complex emotions involved in loving relationships were not defined in gendered terms. People who lived during the English Renaissance believed in a freedom of expression and a flexibility in existence that resonated with the life of the ancient figures depicted in mythological histories. This sense of flexibility and experimentation did not last, and during the late sixteenth century and early seventeenth century people began to feel the pressure of modernity exert itself on this undefined way of life many individuals had grown to love. These years became a dramatic push and pull between the believers in pre-modern ideals who based life on the desire to seek pleasure in any form without the boundaries of labels

or distinct rules for behavior and those who saw a future in the modern practicality based in structure and the framing of actions into acceptable and deviant behaviors. In “Sonnet XV” from *Cynthia With Certain Sonnets*, Richard Barnfield serves as the speaker of the poem, and he reveals he still believes in living and creating in a world where gender is an abstract concept. Through this poem he establishes himself as an opponent to modern ideals, and he expresses a fear of losing the people and things he holds dear to this destructive and oppressive power that insists on interpreting all actions and emotions in a gendered manner.

“Sonnet XV” appears in the last quarter of Barnfield’s sonnet sequence from his *Cynthia* collection. After fourteen other poems that deal with various speakers’ tales of admiration, attraction, and torment of a particular person, usually a man, “Sonnet XV” begins with a strikingly different attitude, lacking the profound sentimentality present in many of the other verses. Right away the reader becomes aware that someone else is speaking in this poem and through textual clues, we realize the person is Richard Barnfield. The point-of-view is the first element of the poem that supports this reasoning. By telling the story in first person, the author calls the reader to participate in his obviously personal, emotional journey. Many first-person narratives or poems reveal a subject or message to a general audience, as was the case in many of the odes studied earlier, but in “Sonnet XV” Barnfield speaks directly to someone he calls Ganymede (a character established in his work as a romantic, beautiful, and powerful hero of indistinct modern, gender associations). Through analyzing this conversation between two partners in an intimate relationship, the reader becomes explicitly aware of the candor in the

speaker's statements, and we are taken on a fourteen-line journey into Richard Barnfield's thoughts on gender, poetry, and modernity.

The attitude expressed by Barnfield in "Sonnet XV" is one of disdain and self-degradation. He seems to be discouraged over his inability to create art the world can understand. His poem opens with a gentle plea to his lover to listen to his woes: "Ah fairest *Ganymede*, disdain me not" (1). These words seem casual, yet important. The use of the word "Ah" to begin the line gives the impression that the speaker and his lover are familiar with each other and a sense of formality isn't necessary. It seems to reflect the casual, yet loving, expression found in many relationships, "Oh, darling, please don't hate me. . ." Furthermore, we know through Barnfield's use of the word "fairest" that he is quite intimate with Ganymede and this is then reflected in the poet's fear of being "disdained" by his partner. In the second line, the confessional continues with the speaker calling himself a "silly Sheepeheard" who only "presumes" to love his partner. These words reflect a feeling of weakness on the part of the speaker who has lost touch with his ability to control his emotions and express them in a proper manner. He cannot *know* if he loves Ganymede anymore, he can only *presume*.

This seems to communicate a sense of confusion that the speaker has found himself in a world of mystery where nothing is quite like it seemed; the reader can imagine the poet saying these lines with his head hung in shame, disappointed in his ability to show his lover the proper affection and glory. Lines three and four continue in the same manner with Barnfield putting down his poems, calling them "harsh songs and Sonnets" that fail to draw emotion from Ganymede. He appears to feel that his love is an

inadequate gift for someone as beautiful as his partner. These feelings of sorrow and a lack of self-worth seem like the antithesis of the messages Barnfield portrays in his other texts. In the introduction to *Cynthia*, for example, Barnfield is the picture of confidence and playfulness as he asks his audience to “delight” in his lyrics. The raw quality of the emotions revealed in the first four lines of “Sonnet XV” grabs the reader’s attention and seems to uncover the doubts, fears, and insecurities of our talented author.

This feeling of misery established in the early lines of the poem shifts slightly as the speaker develops animosity for his situation. In lines five and six, we can see Barnfield gain energy through his frustration as he comments on the reputations of powerful gods such as Apollo and Jove (also known as Jupiter). These names are not one of country shepherds in love, as Barnfield points out, but of powerful gods who ruled with pride and dignity, controlled nature, and valued art. The names of the shepherds have not been preserved with as much frequency, and the speaker seems to be commenting about how the “common country man” is often ignored by the public. In line seven, Barnfield speaks of the effect of this disregard for his value as a shepherd poet (likely referring to his role as a pastoral poet): “Nor want we pleasure, though we take some pains.” In this line, Barnfield seems to explain to his lover that he does not want much from his audience—just respect and less criticism. The poet’s feelings of inadequacy in the increasingly modern world seem to mount with this line and true fear starts to evolve. It becomes more and more clear as the poem continues that Barnfield is begging his lover not to write him off as “insignificant” or “powerless.” Barnfield’s attitude shifts yet again in the following lines to a more flippant form of sarcasm with

hyperbolic remarks about being “content” and having nothing to do but watch his sheep. This sneering feeling of disrespect causes Barnfield’s audience to wonder exactly *what* force has caused the poet to feel so sidelined. This is Barnfield’s goal. He wants his readers to feel the distress expressed in this interaction, so they can become curious to its cause and go back to find the clues that reveal the answer.

The emotions expressed through the tone of “Sonnet XV” *are* described as belonging to a shepherd poet, but they are not necessarily gendered. Barnfield does not claim he is the only person experiencing these sentiments, yet his examples could also apply to other types of artists and writers who have fallen out of the “mainstream” for the period.

Identifying the subject in “Sonnet XV” involves a closer reading, and revealing the subject of Barnfield’s poem brings the reader closer to discovering the force causing all of the distress in the piece. In line eight, Barnfield creates a clever effect with his continuance of an idea from a previous line and its pairing with the beginning of a new example. This line, “We live contentedly: a thing call’d pride,” feels sarcastic to the reader when expressed alongside the poet’s other lines lamenting about his criticism. The audience knows Barnfield feels no peace in his situation, and so when paired with the comment, “a thing call’d pride,” it gives the reader the impression that pride is also something denied to the poet due to his occupation as a pastoral poet. Barnfield *intends* to say in these lines that he would be content if he no longer lived in the “paine” he described in the previous line, and instead he is forced to fight for this “thing” called “pride.” Barnfield’s diction in this statement is very telling. If he truly believed in

“pride,” then he would not call it a “thing.” He would just say “pride.” Barnfield’s choice of words in this section reveals that pride is a “thing,” a material object, coveted by people in his environment. This reference to materialism is a sign of modernity and its growing influence on the general audience of Barnfield’s poetry. Barnfield feels obvious disgust for modernity and its effect on society, even claiming that it “corrupts the Court and every place” (9). Here, we see that pride is not a gendered emotion although powerful and evil, pride is not particular in whom it infects. Barnfield seems to think it important to make this clear within line nine by specifying that it affects “every place” which implies it also affects everyone, regardless of gender.

Modernity becomes the enemy, and the subject addressed in this poem, and through analyzing the asides made in “Sonnet XV,” we can determine exactly *what effects* of modernity seem to distress Barnfield the most. Lines 10-11 form an aside that clarifies the terms he uses in the previous lines where he comments about the corruption of the “Court and every place” (9). In lines 10-11, Barnfield specifically reveals which places have been desecrated by modernity—schools. Schools are a personal subject for Barnfield because as a life-long scholar and young writer, he is thought to have spent a great deal of time living and working among other scholars and writers in England’s Inns of Court. The Inns of Court have a long tradition of providing intellectual opportunities and life-long professional associations to its members. Here, many of England’s best literary minds bonded through their scholarship and experience, learning through reading and responding to each other’s work. Barnfield’s experience at the Inns of Court likely exposed him to a variety of masculinities, gender interpretations, and identity politics that

crafted his sense of ideological flexibility that is evident in his work. Barnfield's comments about how modernity has changed learning are rooted in deep, personal ties because the institution of knowledge served as the very basis of his identity and he was not interested in seeing it change.

The inclusion of this information in the poet's conversation with his lover, offers a clue to the couple's relationship. By using this element in his argument, the audience gets a sense that the schools are important to Ganymede as well, for it would not be logical for Barnfield to discuss an agency with which his lover was not familiar. Perhaps the couple met through school, either as students, or as Barnfield assisting with a class as a tutor or teacher. Many of Barnfield's suspected lovers were men who studied or frequented the Inns of Court including Abraham Fraunce, Robert Greene, William Shakespeare, and Thomas Watson. The honesty behind Barnfield's disgust that modernity has crept into the very place where he found love and companionship is heightened by this historical coincidence. It is likely this new relationship between modernity and the schools really *did* impact many of Barnfield's relationships.

To further his expression of frustration, Barnfield claims the changes brought on by modernity go beyond the teachers and the curriculum, claiming the process, power, and roots of learning have been affected by this growing, oppressive trend: "And yet of late, even learnings selfe's infected" (11). Barnfield's use of the word "selfe" in connection with learning reveals his sense that the very core of the learning has been altered in some manner. This idea is obviously very distressing to Barnfield's partner, and he confesses to his lover that he does not know what it means for their future (12).

Knowing that Barnfield sees modernity as the enemy, and knowing the modernity changed the way of thinking for all people, regardless of gender. The “Ganymede” Barnfield talks to in this text is obviously someone who shares his pre-modern outlook on life, someone else who is in danger of being passed over by the force of modernity, and someone who understands the author’s pain. Ganymede could be anyone. He could be a beautiful boy with whom Barnfield shares his bed, or the name could signify any of Barnfield’s early modern peers (male or female) who enjoy writing pastoral lyrics and fear the day when they will no longer be read. Ganymede could also be someone who was in danger of being “taken” by these modern forces of judgment, these controllers of emotions, just as the mythological Ganymede was kidnapped by powerful beings out of his control. The use of this character reflects the instability in the situation expressed by Barnfield in this dramatic poem, and the conversation between these two lovers reveals the complex relationship between emotion and gender during the early modern period. Barnfield’s emotions are tied to his relationships and experiences, not his identity or the identity placed on him by the outside world. But it is obvious that the poet fears his lover could be taken over by this force and inundated with gendered emotions that could wreck their relationship.¹³

This paranoia over the effect of the modern age was extremely common among writers and artists throughout literary history. Modernity affected the way of life for every pre-modern individual because its beliefs became invested in religious practices, governmental structures, and social relationships. People became programmed by the expectations of gendered society and this programming changed what it meant to be a

writer during the early modern period. As Barnfield predicts in this poem, the styles of writing, especially in the genre of poetry, began to change during the seventeenth century, and pastoral poetry quickly became a form of the past. Barnfield continued to write for a few years until 1605, but he mysteriously stopped and disappeared into obscurity soon after his final work, *Poems in divers humors*, was published. Modernity changed Barnfield's life forever, and it changed the lives of everyone else in society, as well.

Although for Barnfield emotions were able to remain distinct from gendered expectations or gender-based labels, modernity quickly ushered in the practice of labeling various expressions and feelings with gendered associations. The age of an indistinct freedom of expression was over, and people were no longer allowed to love how they wished, befriend people in any manner they saw fit, and use creativity in any form without fear of being labeled as either masculine or feminine.¹⁴ Those people who wished to live in a world without either/or expectations concerning gender were left without a home as the pressure from the modern period came with such a force that no one was able to escape its grasp. As the modern age quickly approached, everything in life was affected and defined—even the feelings that lived in the darkest recesses of people's souls. This caused later authors, like Virginia Woolf, to examine the human experience with reference to gender and modernity, deciding whether it is possible to live a life without gendered emotions or experiences as Richard Barnfield appears to have done.

CHAPTER 3

MODERNITY'S GENDERED FOCUS IN VIRGINIA WOOLF'S *ORLANDO*

Virginia Woolf created her work, *Orlando: A Biography*, with the intent of exploring exactly *how* society constructs and controls the gender identities of individuals. This is executed through Woolf's use of a character with a unique perspective and a unique experience with gender. The conflict in *Orlando* is also unique as the novel presents the reader with a likeable, powerful, and engaging character who must grapple with the battle between instinct and the will of society. Throughout the story we see Orlando evolve from a young man who is free to experience life as an explorer and aristocrat, full of imagination and determination, to a young woman who battles what it means to have a fiery, creative spirit in an age that is determined to label a woman inferior and remove her free-will and ability to submit to her desires.¹⁵ As time progresses, Orlando becomes used to a life of compromise, always calculating what piece of her personality she must sacrifice in order to function as a member of her sex in the changing world. Although Orlando continues to claim to be the same romantic boy that once penned enthusiastic lines of verse in tattered notebooks, it becomes clear to the reader that even someone with a great deal of strength and resolve, such as Orlando, is forced to bend to the will of society. With her novel, *Orlando*, Virginia Woolf illustrates the influence of modernity and how gendered thinking has led to the destruction of individuality. She accomplishes this through exhibiting how emotions such as inspiration, courage, creativity, attraction, passion, and camaraderie are gendered through the eyes of modern society, and how Orlando, a person of indistinct gender heritage, is

forced to deal with conflict and disappointment in attempting to understand how to express herself according to modern, gendered expectations.

Gendered Creativity

From the beginning of *Orlando*, writing is described as something masculine. In the open scenes of the novel, the reader finds the young boy beating at the severed head of a young victim of battle. This immediately establishes Orlando as a “strong” and “brave” character. Woolf reinforces this sense of masculinity with her choice of words for this opening scene, beginning the entire piece with the word, “He,” and following it with a very direct statement about the lad’s sexual identity: “He—for there could be no doubt of his sex [. . .]” (13). With these words, the reader has no doubt that the young boy should be seen, and should be viewed by his contemporaries, as a gallant, virile young man. In the first few pages of the novel, Orlando does two things: beat the dead body of a “Pagan” and write. This juxtaposition of two tasks that require different temperaments is telling because it establishes Woolf’s message that writing, along with sword play, were the activities of a growing, young, masculine aristocrat during the early modern period.¹⁶ In this way, creativity is established as gendered within the first five pages.

Similarly, throughout the novel, all the examples of successful writers are men. This pattern also begins very early in the text on pages 21-22 when Orlando stumbles upon a “mystery poet” who captures his attention. In this scene, Orlando is in a hurry to greet The Queen, who has recently arrived at his home, but while taking a shortcut through the castle, he notices a stranger quietly writing in a room, and he can’t resist

watching the man in action. The careful, detailed description used to describe this passing character, draws the reader's attention to this scene and Orlando's reactions. Even though Orlando has no idea who the man is, or if he is truly an accomplished writer, he seems forced to watch, in a state of awe, the "ruff" and "dirty" man create his texts. "For all his hurry, Orlando stopped dead. Was this a poet? Was he writing poetry? [. . .] he had the wildest, most absurd, extravagant ideas about poets and poetry" (21). Through this passage, the connection between creativity and masculinity is solidified. Woolf stops Orlando in the middle of his rush to The Queen, just to observe the possibility of a man creating a few lines of verse. The intensity of Orlando's reaction is telling, and within the first ten pages of the text, the reader becomes convinced that creativity is a masculine emotion in *Orlando*.

In the second chapter, the connections between gender and creativity become clearer as Orlando begins to interact with other, more noted writers of the time. Orlando gushes over the abilities of these men, always emphasizing their power and gender as well as their abilities: "For, to Orlando in the state he was now in, there was a glory about a man who had written a book, and had it printed [. . .]" (82). With these words, Orlando emphasizes the connection between "man" and "writer" including the word "glory" in an almost religious fashion to worship the "great men" who published texts. After exalting the writers' glorious talents, Orlando continues to identify *the bodies* of his male idols as the source of their extraordinary abilities: "To his imagination it seemed as if even the bodies of those instinct with such divine thoughts must be transfigured" (83). This emphasis on *the body* as the root of the person in contrast to the spirit is consistent

with a modern concept of identity. In this passage, Woolf comments through the voice of her character, that identity, even an occupational identity, is very much based on appearance, and in this case, biological sex.¹⁷

Orlando has contact with many accomplished writers throughout his life, all inspiring him to work voraciously with his writing. By the time he reaches early adulthood, he has written dozens of plays, histories, and poems, all in an effort to gain the respect and admiration he, himself, feels for the great writers of his day. Orlando's focus on the great writers of the period has a notably masculine focus as he interacts with Nick Green, John Dryden, Joseph Addison, and Alexander Pope. Nothing is ever mentioned of the female early modern writers like Elizabeth Cary and Lady Mary Wroth, two women whose work Woolf undoubtedly knew. After her transformation from man to woman, Orlando still does not seek out noted female writers to help support her craft. The focus of the creativity seems to be centered on the fact that writing is a man's occupation, and women must fight the force of society to get noticed in a world that does not support the work of female writers.

Throughout the novel, Orlando wrestles with her life-long writing project, "The Oak Tree." In chapter five, the dolorous section that ushers in the Victorian Age, the reader hears Orlando reflect on what it has been like to work on her piece for over 300 years. She obviously feels like the poem has become a story of her life, and she feels the need to create an ending. Gender begins to play a role in Orlando's creative process, yet again, as she attempts to pen more lines of verse for the end, her pen prevents her from writing: "Orlando, who had just dipped her pen in the ink, and was about to indite some

reflection upon the eternity of all things, was much annoyed to be impeded by a blot [. . .]” (237). In this scene, a mysterious power takes over Orlando’s hands and prevents her from physically being able to write. Orlando suspects the cause of this condition is the presence of Basket and Bartholomew, and this realization keys the reader to the fact that Orlando is aware of the power of gender in the creative process. For her to even wonder if the presence of these men could have caused her lack of productivity shows that people in her time were cognizant of a connection between gender and creative emotions. Reflecting the passionate expressions of a young maiden, Orlando is able to push through this barrier to create thirteen lines of powerful verse; however, an obstacle prevents these words from ever becoming a part of “The Oak Tree” as ink spills all over the draft and all evidence of Orlando’s rebellious writing is gone. One would think that she would be distraught or furious to have fallen victim to such a curious twist of fate, but Orlando actually seems pleased: “by an abrupt movement she spilt the ink over the page and blotted it from human sight she hoped forever” (239). By “hoping” that no one would ever find out about her momentary period of creative productivity, the reader gets the sense that Orlando is actually embarrassed about her ability to write. She even goes so far as to call the feeling of her creation “repulsive” (239). This harsh tone makes a lasting connection for the reader between gender and creativity, giving the audience the impression that only men should find creative thoughts pleasurable.

Orlando does end up finding the ability to write again, without feeling pain (or tingling), but this happens only after she marries Shel and submits herself to the gender expectations of her age. Through Woolf’s description, it seems as if the wedding band on

Orlando's finger functions as the "key" to unlocking her ability to write. This gives the message to the audience that in order to create, women must submit to the gender rules of the period. In essence, Orlando had to pay a price (agree to love and obey her husband) before she was allowed to write as a woman: "She had just managed [. . .] by putting on a ring and finding a man on a moor, by loving nature and being no satirist, cynic, or psychologist [. . .] to pass its [modernity's] examination successfully. [. . .] Now, therefore, she could write, and write she did" (266). In this passage, Orlando outwardly recognizes the power of her decision to "submit to her age." By bending her will and acknowledging the force of the time without doubt or sarcasm, she was allowed to continue her life's work (as long as she kept abiding by the rules). Here, Woolf sends the message that the link between gender and creativity was heightened in the Victorian Era, as women were forced to *submit* to the beliefs that certain people must play an inferior role to keep the world in balance. In the world of writing, women were allowed to participate only if they appeared to be following society's gender expectations in every other aspect of their life, including marriage and motherhood.

This pressure to submit and conform to the will of others is what confuses Orlando, and it keeps her searching for a way to hold on to her personality while still living a successful life in her time. The constant struggle between personal beliefs and the beliefs of others, especially when tied to gender, is what isolates Orlando throughout most of the story. Her journey through time is unique in that it positions her alongside her peers, but at a distance. She comes to appreciate the life of many people she meets between the sixteenth century and the twentieth century, but she never finds a person who

holds her unique perspective on life and her ability to see how time and agencies can control our identities if we let them. This distinct feature of her existence prevents Orlando from creating lasting relationships as it impedes her ability to connect with others on an emotional level without the influence of gender or gendered ideals.

Gendered Friendship

Orlando's ability to write is not the only aspect of her existence that is plagued by gender issues; her ability to relate to other people in her environments is also affected by society's views concerning gender. Friendship is a gendered emotion in *Orlando*. Because relationships are established though a basis of commonality, Orlando struggles with being able to establish a lasting bond with another person who shares her views on life, and especially gender. No other character is in a position to understand Orlando's complex identity and her view of her self without reference to time or society, so no other character is able to develop the intimate connections required of a close friendship. Orlando makes several attempts at forging a friendship with other individuals, but issues of gender always hinder the progress of the relationships.

Friendship is established as a gendered emotion in *Orlando*. Successful relationships based on an intense likeability are usually forged between people with similar characteristics. Orlando is unique in her situation and identity, so it becomes nearly impossible for her to establish friendly bonds with other characters in the text. Still, she does make several attempts at friendship, and the study of the breakdown of these relationships helps to illustrate the connection between gender and amicability in the text. Orlando's relationship with Queen Elizabeth I is the most successful attempt at

friendship in the novel, yet even this match between the most powerful woman in the world and her admiring Lord finally fails.

The Queen becomes intrigued by Orlando after their first meeting, but in their first thoughtful encounter, we find the connections between Orlando and Elizabeth are quite striking. This can be seen in Elizabeth's interior monologue as she examines her new subject: "The young man withstood her gaze, blushing only a damask rose as became him. Strength, grace, romance, folly, poetry, youth—she read him like a page" (24-25). In this scene we see what draws this strange pair together. Orlando, as a young boy, has much in common with the old queen. They are both bold and strong, exhibiting power in the most stressful situations. There is also an immediate understanding between the pair, indicated by the words "she read him like a page." The Queen instantly accepts the boy's qualities and, in turn, instantly accepts him into her life. Even their difference in age does not seem to impact the friendship between the two characters.

Only pages later though, we find the relationship ends poorly between the two. After quite a time together, the friendship becomes sexual. The Queen's growing affection for the boy grows into attraction and desire fueled by the couple's growing differences. Soon, it becomes obvious that Orlando is suddenly aware of the gender differences between himself and all members of the female sex (including The Queen) as shown in his comment relating women to flowers: "Girls were roses, and their seasons were as short as the flowers" (27). This objectification of "the other sex" indicates that Orlando saw himself as different from many of the females around him. This discovery and interest in women leads to the destruction of the boy's relationship with The Queen

because it makes the young man more aware of the other differences between him and Elizabeth.

Woolf illustrates this sense of choice or contrasts in identities that existed during the Elizabethan Period in the vivid adjectives she uses to describe the setting: “The rain fell vehemently, or not at all. The sun blazed or there was darkness” (27). This passage uses images that symbolize the drastic differences between people in the early modern period, a time when many relationships were based on likeness or opposites. Just as the passion from a rainstorm could ignite or cease, so could the trust and faithfulness behind a friendship. Amicability is an emotion based on likeness, and in an instant, Orlando realizes he is not as much like his friend, The Queen, as he once thought. The difference in gender is what sparks the breakdown of this collaboration, illustrating the connection between gender and friendship in the relationship between Elizabeth I and Orlando.

In Chapter Three, Orlando changes from a man to a woman, and her quest to find friendship continues as her wandering amongst the gypsies in Turkey leaves her feeling lonely and in need of company. Because Orlando’s love of writing is still a significant aspect of her character, she decides to spend time with some famous writers including Addison, Dryden, and Pope. During a visit to her home, however, Orlando discovers that even these great, talented men have flaws. During her afternoon tea parties, Orlando endures comments by the men, objectifying the members of her sex and even stepping as low to describe “woman” as a, “beautiful, romantic animal” (210). Although a poet, Addison’s gifts with figurative language are not enough to put a positive spin on this comment. With these words, he signifies the difference between himself and his host.

This reminds her that he sees himself as a superior person due to his gender. In fact, according to Addison, Orlando isn't a person at all, but merely a "beautiful, romantic animal." Days later, Pope makes the visit worse when he shares a line from a piece he is working on in which he describes women as, "children of a larger growth" (213). All of these experiences compound to make Orlando come to a realization about her famous, poet friends: "[T]he intellect, divine as it is, and all worshipful, has a habit of lodging in the most seedy of carcasses [. . .]" (213). With these words, Orlando grasps that intelligence and writing ability cannot override a personality tarnished with gender bias. Addison, Dryden, and Pope spend time around Orlando because she has money and because she is beautiful, not because they respect her intelligence or her wit. After this sad realization comes to surface, Orlando falls into a depressed stupor and decides not to visit with the men again, ending another friendship due to conflicts of gender.

As both a man and a woman, Orlando realizes that gender plays an important role in establishing compatibility with a partner, and with these examples, we see that friendship is a gendered emotion in *Orlando*. Throughout the novel Orlando searches for someone who will understand her desires and accept her complex identity. This task spans several centuries, and eventually Orlando realizes there may be no one who can understand her life and appreciate her social perspective. The root of much of the confusion that soils many of Orlando's relationships is the set of performances required of her during different historical periods and biological states. For many years Orlando is unable to see this connection between her complex biological identity and her failed relationships, but near the end of the novel (during her relationship with Shel) Orlando

realizes the power of gender performance and its effect in stabilizing the public and private relationships of a person's existence. This experience parallels one in Woolf's own life as her relationship with Vita Sackville-West (the inspiration for *Orlando*) ended while she was writing this piece. This event likely created an opportunity for Woolf to reflect on the role of gender performance in the success or failure of relationships. Her novel becomes the medium for her lessons concerning these revelations. Consequently, the resounding power of gender and its ability to control a person's emotions is a central issue in Orlando's loving relationships.

Gendered Love

Love is a complex emotion wrought with tension and delicacy. Orlando's experiences with love are similar to her experiences with friendship in that they are not entirely successful. In her journey through the centuries, Orlando is displayed as a lover of passion and connection with other human beings. He becomes lovers with The Queen and several ladies of the court before falling for Princess Sasha, and after his transformation from man to woman, she develops an intensely passionate relationship with Marmaduke Bonthrop Shelmerdine (Shel). In each experience, Orlando seems to take on a different role, always experimenting with the power dynamic of the relationship, the sexual aspects of the pairing, and the qualities she seems to be drawn to. In her two most significant relationships, however, gender *does* end up playing a role as a lack of power/freedom caused by gender expectations/roles leads to the destruction of the relationships.

Orlando's first *real* love is with Princess Sasha during the early 17th century.

Even though this time is characterized as one of flexibility and opportunity, free from the pressures of the later periods, Orlando and Sasha's storybook love affair, once thought of as exemplary for its notion of equality, ends with bitterness, deception, and a display of gendered emotions. Throughout their relationship Orlando seems to love Sasha for the energy she encompasses and the spirit she projects. When he eyes her on the skating rink, he becomes attracted to her before he can even discern her sex.

It seems that in the beginning, gender was not an issue for the couple. Gradually, though, we experience the couple taking on more of the roles thought of as masculine and feminine by modern society. Orlando falls into a jealous rage when he sees Sasha sitting on the lap of another man: "For one second, he had a vision of them; saw Sasha seated on the sailor's knee; saw her bend towards him; saw them embrace before the light was blotted out in a red cloud by his rage. He blazed into such a howl of anguish that they whole ship echoed" (51). In this passage, we see Orlando take on the modern, masculine role of the jealous man looking upon his flirting wife.¹⁸ His power and rage exhibit his control in the relationship and his desire to "keep" Sasha for himself. Quickly, Sasha is forced to remedy this situation through copious praise of her lover and an increased sense of tenderness and concern for his feelings. This action seems to acknowledge the need for Orlando's ego to be restored and her loyalty to her mate to be proven through the worship of his qualities: "Sasha, as if to reassure him, as tenderer than usual and even more delightful [. . .] she praised him; for his love of beasts; for his gallantry; for his legs. [Orlando was] ravished with her praises" (53-54). Sasha seems to feel that her

relationship with Orlando can be mended through exalting his masculine features, such as his bravery and appearance. This seems out of place for a scene meant to exhibit early modern love as it reads like something from a Victorian novel. Woolf seems to be commenting about how modernity can ruin a relationship by placing expectations for gender roles on emotions such as love, passion, and devotion. A relationship once based on beauty and commonality has now turned and crumbled through the pressure to observe certain practices associated with gender.

It seems that over time Sasha realizes her relationship with Orlando is doomed to failure. She chooses to leave her lover on the shores of the beach without a word of warning. This intense scene, featuring a dramatically devastated Orlando, could have been penned in a variety of ways. Woolf could have chosen to feature the character overcome with grief sobbing on the beach and crying out for Sasha to return—almost in the style Orlando cries for Shel in the end of the novel, but Woolf does not have her character take this action. Instead, the author shows Orlando in a fit of rage, in disbelief at the deceit Sasha has exhibited at returning to her country without warning and refusing to fulfill her promises of creating a life together: “Standing knee deep in the water he hurled at the faithless woman all the insults that have ever been the lot of her sex. Faithless, mutable, fickle, he called her; devil, adulteress, deceiver [. . .]” (64). In this moment, Orlando labels Sasha, and she becomes “the other.” Sasha is not only gendered with these statements, but she is also aligned as a member of her gender with some of the most heinous characters and identities one can imagine. He makes her a devil, a whore (adulteress), and a liar (deceiver); these names not only establish a gendered relationship

between the couple, but also a gendered belief that women are weak, nasty creatures if they end a romantic relationship. Ironically, Sasha takes a passive role in this action by leaving without verbally confronting Orlando with her feelings, yet Orlando, unable to see through his bruised ego for being left heartbroken, makes Sasha appear malicious for leaving her lover wounded without explanation.

In time, Orlando is able to heal. After her transformation, she finds love again in Marmaduke Bonthrop Shelmerdine. The romance between Orlando and Shel is a whirlwind affair that begins with passion and is fueled by time and conversation. The couple becomes engaged very quickly, an action that seems to be presented as a common practice for the time (the Victorian Age), and over a breakfast together, their passion for each other becomes evident. After the two exchange life histories, Orlando becomes so moved by her lover's story that she unexpectedly bursts out with a vocal expression of adoration for her mate: "Oh! Shel, don't leave me!" she cried. "I'm passionately in love with you" (251). No sooner does this explosion of feelings occur, than does the couple make another mutual discovery stating, "You're a woman, Shel!" and "You're a man, Orlando!" respectively (252). This announcement reveals a tie between gender, and not only the couple's personalities and histories, but also their attraction to each other. Gender is a component in the couple's relationship because, as this display illustrates, the couple's happiness is heightened by the fact that they have finally fallen for a partner of a complementary gender. After this exchange, the couple have a romantic encounter on Shel's boat, during which Orlando cries delicious tears of joy, signifying a sense of solace that she had found her mate.

The couple's relationship does not continue on this glorious note as just paragraphs later, the reader discovers that The Court has decided Orlando's sex: "'Sex? Ah! What about sex? My sex,' she read with some solemnity, 'is pronounced indisputably, and beyond the shadow of a doubt [. . .] Female'" (255). This announcement produces a sense of disappointment and confusion in Orlando, and it is obvious that she has invested a great deal in her self-identified gender. To have an agency arrive on her property and "declare" her gender seems to put a weight on Orlando's shoulders and a wedge in her relationship with Shel. Immediately upon being informed of Orlando's "official gender," the couple's interactions change, and their passion and attraction seem to wane in the face of this "gender obstacle." This is illustrated in Orlando's conversations with Shel, and her choice to refer to him as "Bonthrop," which, the narrator notes, she only does when she is in a "solitary mood" (259). After the realization of her gender begins to settle in her mind, Orlando becomes restless in her relationship with her lover and cannot carry on the lengthy colloquies that once fueled their romance. She even gets up and walks away during some of their interactions. This sense of solitude dawns on Orlando as she describes herself and Shel as "specks on a desert" and as she dreams of a peaceful, and prompt, death (259). Within eight pages, we see a dramatic change in Orlando's spirit. At first, she is vibrant, elated, and excited about a future with a man who seems to add balance to her chaotic life, but after learning her "official sex," Orlando is lost in her relationship with Shel—and her relationship with herself.

Through these pages, Woolf paints a clear connection between gender and love for her readers. The Victorian society depicted in this scene puts an official limitation on Orlando's identity that had not been present for over three hundred years. After living for centuries in a world that allowed her to discover, experiment, and create her own gender identity, Orlando was now being violently labeled by her society. This modern action takes a toll on the couple's relationship and on the emotions of love, attraction, and admiration in the story. In these few pages, it becomes painfully obvious that modernity has gendered love. Orlando continues to question modernity and the power it holds over her actions and beliefs as the novel draws to a close. In the final chapter, we are able to see the final effects modernity has on our once carefree, rebellious, flexible, romantic character.

Gender, Modernity, and Madness

In the final chapter of *Orlando*, the reader witnesses a dramatic break-down of Orlando's spirit. In this portion of the text, our protagonist faces increasing challenges due to the pressure of twentieth-century modern society. Near the end of Chapter Six, Orlando gives birth to a son. This experience of becoming a mother seems to heighten her sense of awareness at the changing environment around her. With the reign of King Edward, the world seems to retract. Everything that was once covered with a dense cloud of oppression is replaced with a sense of claustrophobia as Orlando spends hours gazing out the window at her setting feeling a sense of panic at her evolving world: "It was alarming—this shrinkage" (296). Orlando confines herself to her room, and her seat at the window, becoming a prisoner in this changing world, her character literally framed by

the window (society) around her. This image, created by Woolf, is designed to represent how women's characters changed with the mounting pressures of modernity. Soon, Orlando begins to hallucinate as she describes the images that are part of this fast-paced, technologically based, highly-structured society. This "hallucination" creates a feeling of madness surrounding Orlando as the final pages of the text begin to describe the way modernity creates madness in the lives of women.¹⁹

Like Barnfield, it seems that Woolf harbored a deep distrust of the modern way of life. When compared to the freedom of past eras, the constraint created by the rules, policies, and machinery of the twentieth century affected every aspect of living, including the performance of gender.²⁰ Orlando is in a unique position in that she knows what it is like to experience the freedom of other periods. Even though society's acceptance of her way of life proved satisfying on the surface, in Chapter Six, Orlando begins to yearn for the serenity she experienced in past centuries. Orlando becomes overwhelmed with the technological advances of her new environment: "There was something definite and distinct about the age, which reminded her of the eighteenth century, except that there was a distraction, a desperation—as she was thinking this [. . .] the light poured in; her thoughts became mysteriously tightened [. . .] at the same time her hearing quickened" (298). In this passage, Orlando's body begins to adjust as she settles in her new environment and realizes how uncomfortable life has become with the use of electricity, the strict style of dress, and the focus on reality. This discomfort unsettles Orlando and begins her journey into madness. By focusing this dissent into mania on Orlando and her experience adapting to life as a woman, a wife, and a mother, Woolf illustrates the

historical ties between madness and gender by showing how modern society *forced* women into this sense of irrationality.

Continuing her assault on the modern period, Woolf describes Orlando as being “struck” in the head by the present moment. The reality of living in a time that only cares about the present is overwhelming for Orlando as she can no longer draw on her past experiences to function in this ever-changing environment. As she climbs into her automobile for the first time, Orlando is not given time to think: “[T]he road shone like silver-headed nails [. . .] she noticed sponges, bird-cages, boxes of green American cloth. But she did not allow these sights to sink into her mind even a fraction of an inch as she crossed the narrow plank of the present” (299). The chaos created by the conflicts in her mind in trying to balance her imaginative instincts and society’s desire for her to focus on the present remind the reader of the madness women felt during the modern period in struggling to constantly balance their lives. This sense of insanity is continued when Orlando arrives at the store and her mind refuses to focus on the task at hand. Orlando cannot rid herself of her past, and she sees reminders of her former experiences everywhere she looks: “‘Oh Sasha!’ Orlando cried. Really she was shocked that she could have come to this; she had grown so fat; so lethargic [. . .]” (303). The focus on fast-paced living and thin bodies has altered Orlando’s outlook, so that she is imagining the people of her past living in her present. Orlando’s thoughts have become so skewed by her madness that her ability to judge her surroundings has been altered by the influence of modernity. The healthy, beautiful body of Orlando’s former lover now appears fat in comparison to the thin bodies of the present women, and her age is

amplified by the focus on reality of the twentieth-century society. In this scene, we see how derangement is gendered by modernity as Orlando seems to be the only one affected by her environment.

After arriving home, Orlando's paranoia peaks and she panics as a feeling of confusion comes over her in her unfamiliar surroundings: "So Orlando, at the turn by the barn, called 'Orlando?' with a note of interrogation in her voice and waited. Orlando did not come" (309). In this scene, Woolf illustrates Orlando's loss of identity by having her literally call out to "find" the self of her past. This metaphorical split in her personality reveals to the reader how society has divided the identities of women into smaller bits of their former selves.

Woolf is careful to paint Orlando in a world of isolation in her struggle with reality. In this way, the book ends as it began—with a focus on Orlando, the individual—and her actions in her environment.²¹ Again, we find Orlando alone, but this time she is suffering without the assistance of others. Young Orlando had The Queen to lean on, and later Sasha. Even her author friends provided distractions at some points in time, but now, Orlando was alone with the disappointment of her new world and the loss of her former freedom. This experience becomes so overwhelming that she falls into a sense of overwhelming mania, left to call out breathlessly to her absent husband for support. This final act in this great novel serves as Woolf's final comment concerning gender and emotion. Here, we find our character in her most desperate moment, fraught with anxiety and confusion; her only option is to call out for her husband, whom she hasn't seen in nearly a century. This action displays woman's dependency on man for

comfort and safety during the modern period. Men were given all the power in society, and Orlando is lost without her ability to control her life. In the end, her spirit is broken by the age, her gender consumes her identity, and we close the book with an image of a woman in need of her savior, and a date—11 October 1928. Orlando's life, once brimming with hope, possibility, and excitement, has been evacuated and replaced with the cold, empty reality of modernity.

CHAPTER 4

GENDERED EMOTIONS IN GENDERED CLIMATES

Through studying the work of Richard Barnfield and Virginia Woolf, a reader can understand the power of society in affecting a person's actions, thoughts, and general ways of being. Even something as innate as emotional expression does not have the ability to avoid the pressure of a changing social climate. As time changes and societies evolve, people are forced to adapt to their new surroundings. Identities shift due to pressure from the outside world, and even things as basic as emotional responses are impacted by a shift in cultural ideology. For example, in many ancient societies, love and sensuality were emotions expressed with little limitation in frequency, style of expression, and the object of such desires. Men were free to indulge in passionate, sexual encounters with their young, male apprentices without being labeled deviant or obscure. It actually took the intervention of society to link the concepts of "love" and "sex;" without modern influence these concepts would have remained independent ideas. The pressure of the church was the leading force in promoting individuals to connect committed relationships and sexual interaction. Still, affairs and other sexual experiments were practiced quite liberally until modern beliefs became infused in the social structure of society at the end of the sixteenth century. Love, lust, and passion were not the only emotions individuals were forced to reevaluate after modern thinking took over the Western world. All emotional expressions have shifted in their interpretations, and society's ability to examine a person's identity without drawing connections between actions or expressions and a his/her sense of "self" has dissolved.

In Richard Barnfield's works, we are able to see the picture of what life was like prior to the public's shift to a stringently modern way of being. His lyrics express a sense of freedom in their sentiments and an ability to share the innermost depths of his character without fear of being constrained to a single interpretation of his identity. This is witnessed in Barnfield's use of a variety of characters, forms, and figurative devices to establish the tone of affection, loyalty, intensity, or vulnerability in his lyrics. In his later work, specifically in "Sonnet XV" from *Cynthia with Certain Sonnets*, Barnfield *does* begin to speculate about the effect of modernity on his ability to use emotion without judgment. This fear of the private sphere being altered by public influence was a reality many early modern thinkers came to dread. Barnfield, himself, seems to be especially concerned about the future of emotional expression and people's ability to be affectionate, creative, and passionate without having to deal with public ridicule. As a poet who practiced a genre that is defined by its ability to tap into the sentimental spirit of individuals, it seems that Barnfield predicted his future illegitimacy in a world intent on framing everyone's existence around a single expression or line of words.

Although Barnfield's fears proved to be justifiable as he slipped from the literary scene for hundreds of years, he is now, in the twenty-first century, finally beginning to be studied without a shroud of modernist thought limiting his artistic value. It has taken over four centuries for our environment to shift to a place where we are *allowed* to understand the emotional *possibilities* in Barnfield's work and begin to evaluate, without modernist bias, how his poetry has contributed to the history of literature and the record of human experience.

Virginia Woolf's career was spent addressing the boundaries of modernity and testing the value of such a system in an intellectual society. Through her linguistic experimentations in her essays and novels like *Orlando*, Woolf has indicated without doubt, that environment affects *everyone* regardless of the person's biography, economic class, or ideological views. Through her own life, she was tested in her ability to accept what time dealt her. The deaths of her mother, father, and siblings weighed heavily on her psyche for decades and influenced her style as a writer in that they helped her to question how every experience in one's social environment impacts an individual's identity.

Orlando uses a fluid timeline and a protagonist with a flexible sexual identity offers credibility to her study of how society can create a person's identity. Orlando is given many freedoms within the text including economic security, strong personal relationships, and an indefinite gender. These liberties give Orlando the power to explore her place in her environment and evaluate her identity in terms of herself, without having to bend her will out of necessity, or so we are led to think. As society becomes gradually more structured and the social and political climates adopt a sense of order and desire for specificity, Orlando is *forced* to identify herself in a gendered manner through her emotional expressions. Society *tests* Orlando throughout the entire novel, introducing pressures that cause her to adopt a particular point of view (always gendered), and then as time changes, society changes, and her identity that was once established becomes "out of date." This constant shift in belief structures, instinctual reactions, and most importantly, emotional communication, drives Orlando to madness. This is Woolf's

ultimate message: We can't continue to let society label our "selves," for if we do, we will become so displaced by our disingenuous expressions that we will lose everything. Having the will to avoid the pressure to divide, classify, and label every aspect of being appears to be a goal of Virginia Woolf as it is the goal of many postmodern literary theorists who seek to uncover the multiple *possibilities* of expression that have been hidden in our texts by the limitations of modern thinking.

ENDNOTES

¹ This concept is explored in Matchinske's book, *Writing, Gender and State in Early Modern England : Identity Formation and the Female Subject* where she studies the work of four, early-modern women writers and how their social identities were formed and expressed.

² Elizabeth I has been described in this manner by many historians including Michael Best of the Internet Shakespeare Editions.

³ David Halperin is the leading expert in the field of socially constructed gender roles, and his ideas support this thinking that history and society support, and often create, specific human identities, even gender and sexual identities. These topics are discussed in his books *One Hundred Years of Homosexuality and Other Essays on Greek Love* and *How To Do The History of Homosexuality*, and his noted article "Forgetting Foucault: Acts, Identities and the History of Sexuality" published in the Summer 1998 issue of *Representations*.

⁴ A concept developed by gender socialist, Judith Butler, and discussed in her theoretical books and essays including, "Identity, Sex, and the Metaphysics of Substance" (from Butler's *Gender Trouble*) and *Bodies That Matter*.

⁵ Morton Hunt discusses many of the important facets of ancient love and sexuality in his text *The Natural History of Love* in which he details the history of boy-love, platonic love, and the rules/ethical messages associated with the emotion.

⁶ George Klawitter elaborates upon the anachronistic analyses of Barnfield's work in the introduction to his 1990 collection of Richard Barnfield's poetry, *Richard*

Barnfield: The Complete Poems. Klawitter discusses Barnfield in a historical context that reviews how many critics' opinions of the author have been framed by the expectations of their societies. The freedom to look beyond the boundaries of modernism to judge pastoral poetry in its true historical context only began to surface in the last decade of the 20th century (48).

⁷ Many theorists have examined the connections between the character, Orlando, and Woolf noting how the frustrations and curiosities of the author seem to be voiced in the narrative content of the piece. On theorist, Dorothy Brewster, even describes the novel as "her [Woolf's] own consciousness" (122).

⁸ According to the noted poet, Edward Hirsch, in his article, "Help Me, O Heavenly Muse," for The Poetry Foundation, poetry is created through a complex mixture of the conscious and the unconscious. Hirsch explains how, for centuries, many poets have relied on a combination of natural skill and concentration and a faith in the divine, creative process in order to create their works. This faith in the process is often manifested by an outward obsession with the power and source of creativity.

⁹ Alan Bray discusses the concept of "The Masculine Friend" in his essay "Homosexuality and Male Friendship." In this work, Bray details the intimate actions of two male friends during the Renaissance in order to show how/why they have been misconstrued as signs of same-sex object choice. "The image of the masculine friend was an image of intimacy between men in stark contrast to the forbidden intimacy of homosexuality. It is an image which will be very familiar to students of Elizabethan poetry and drama, where it frequently appears" (42).

¹⁰ Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick wrote an entire book on this subject in 1985, entitled *Between Men: English Literature and Male Homosocial Desire*. Through this collection of essays, Sedgwick examines how various pieces of literature reveal a plethora of attitudes and experiences concerning male homosocial relationships.

¹¹ This concept of “identity borders” is a topic that has been discussed in great detail by sociological and gender theorists. One notable article, “Crossing Borders and Erasing Boundaries: Paradoxes of Identity Politics” by J. Lorber (1999), discusses the modern belief that all ways of being (gender, cultural, economical) are limited by the boundaries/expectations established by society and even proposes a solution to this serious sociopolitical problem.

¹² Susan Scheinberg in an article for the *Harvard Studies in Classical Philology* informs her readers about the Thriae, or “Bee Maidens,” and their relationship to Hermes. One of these maidens is known as Daphnis or Laurel in Greek Mythology, further complicating the history behind the name.

¹³ George Klawitter notes in his collection how Barnfield’s “later poetry becomes more somber” with time (*Poems of Richard Barnfield*, vii). Barnfield’s worries and fears were well founded and documented and the structural and emotional changes in his works illustrate the effect of modernity on the freedom of expression and the creation of identity.

¹⁴ Stephen Garton discusses the effect of modernity on an individual’s perception of gender and sexuality in his book, *Histories of Sexuality: Antiquity to Sexual Revolution*. In his chapter entitled “Imagining Perversion,” Garton discusses how labels

for “deviant” or “perverse” behaviors or performances were created and infused into the psychosis of humans in society.

¹⁵ Woolf was characterized as being overwhelmed with an interest in how gender was created and how men and women assumed their roles in society, as Nancy Topping Bazin explains in her book, *Virginia Woolf and the Androgynous Vision*: “Her [Woolf’s] interest in what it means to be a male or a female was related to her quest for the self . . . Virginia Woolf’s interest in the accepted versus the real difference between the sexes was aroused when she was quite young . . .” (3-4). These comments reveal Woolf’s investment and inspiration for creating a character who travels through time and space experiencing the effects of history and environment on the interpretation and construction of gender. Although *Orlando* is said to be a biography of the life of Vita Sackville-West, as Bazin point out, it also serves as a platform for Woolf to explore her own curiosities and frustrations related to modernism, society, and gender.

¹⁶ Raymond Stephansons’ *The Yard of Wit: Male Creativity and Sexuality* elaborates on the process of how writing and creativity developed masculine connotations over the course of history. Stephanson draws specific connections between modern, social developments and a connection between masculinity, the male body, and the creation of literature.

¹⁷ In a telling essay, “The Voyage Out and Virginia Woolf’s Struggle for Autonomy: Imagery of Separation and Dependency,” Ann Speltz researches the autobiographical writings of Virginia Woolf, noting the author’s lifelong struggle in coming to terms with the boundaries of her sex: “Woolf’s lifelong feelings of

disintegration and wholeness are reflected in a pattern of spatial imagery in her autobiographical writings” (311).

¹⁸ Mark Breitenberg discusses this concept of masculine jealousy during the early modern period in his essay, “Anxious Masculinity: Sexual Jealousy in Early Modern England,” in which he attributes the social acceptance of male, heterosexual jealousy and the obsession with the purity and chastity of women to the gender flexibility of the period. Breitenberg suggests that the unstable definitions of gender that predated the early modern period allowed for the opportunity for certain performances or behaviors to be cast as masculine or feminine by modern society.

¹⁹ Anthony Cascardi asserts in his book, *The Subject of Modernity*, that madness is what “results when desire rises up against established forms of social life” (231). This concept implies that as a woman, Orlando is destined to become mad if she does not conform to the social graces of modern culture. Of course, Orlando continues to think independently and her “confusion” grows throughout the remainder of the text.

²⁰ In “Virginia Woolf and the Age of Motor Cars” an essay by Makiko Minow-Pinkney in Pamela Caughie’s collection *Virginia Woolf in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*, Minow-Pinkney traces Woolf’s tumultuous relationship to technology, describing a love-hate relationship that communicates an overall sense of hesitation or distrust toward the mechanics of the new age. This internal debate likely inspired Woolf to illustrate the connections between the technological environment of the modern age and the psychological state of modern women.

²¹ This sense of isolation and entrapment during the modern era was not uncommon, and it was reflected in many of the most famous pieces of literature from the period, including T. S. Eliot's legendary poem, "The Waste Land" (1922). This poem may have served as a creative inspiration for this section of Woolf's text. It is well-known that Woolf was highly affected by Eliot's work, as in her diaries she describes her friendly relationship with the author, her feelings of admiration for Eliot and his vision, and her pride over being owner of a press that published his piece, "I have just finished setting up the whole of Mr Eliots [sic] poem with my own hands: You see how my hand trembles." Virginia Woolf to Barbara Bagenal, July 8, 1923.

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