CURBING THE CUCKOLD-MAKER: THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE RESTORATION RAKE IN ENGLISH COMEDY, 1660-1686

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Abstract

My thesis examines the theatrical Restoration rake character throughout the years 1660 to 1686. As a cuckold-maker, the rake on stage enforces satire on the husbands he cuckolds. However, as Aparna Gollapudi argues in *Moral Reform in Comedy and Culture, 1696-1747,* at the beginning of the eighteenth century the tone of English theatre shifted towards reform, "not by inflicting punishment but by imparting experiential instruction" (6). I argue, through analysis of four Restoration comedies, that we can observe signs of the moral shift that Gollapudi locates in the 1690s in playwrights' shifting treatment of the theatrical cuckold-making Restoration rake through 1660-1686. Though playwrights in the early Restoration (roughly 1660-1679) subtly undermine their rake characters' satirical authority by characterizing their rakes as manipulative but ultimately self-defeating satirists, playwrights after 1680 more explicitly undermine their rake characters' satirical authority by characterizing their rakes as passionate young men in need of moral education.

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Introduction

A Prelude to Reform: The Transformation of the Restoration Rake in Comedy, 1660-1686

The year 1660 in England marked the Restoration of the monarchy, under King Charles II, after eighteen years of political instability. The London theatres, which had been closed in 1642, reopened in 1660, and for the first time in England featured female actors. The stage comedies of the Restoration period are largely dominated by satire, with a focus on marital discord and verbal repartee. Many Restoration comedies feature cuckolds, husbands whose wives commit adultery. These comedies were a celebration of youthful sexual vigour, reflecting the extravagance of Charles II's court culture, and his own highly publicized sexual exploits. The figure of the rake (or, rakehell) is an important theatrical representation of an upper-class, witty, prodigal, and virile young man who takes the stage as the protagonist of most Restoration comedies.

The rake enforces satire through his cuckold-making in the plots of Restoration stage comedies; Restoration satire is itself somewhat an ambiguous term, as Robert D. Hume discusses in "'Satire' in the Reign of Charles II," but I find his description of Wycherley's *The Plain-Dealer* applies well to the comedies I examine:

> If, by the views of the 1970s, 'satire' basically meant a smear on society, then *The Plain-Dealer* is indeed a kind of town lampoon … Wycherley's play does not … attack recognizable individuals, but like the prose 'characters' of its era, it savages common types. (352)

Ashley Marshall, in her survey of Restoration and eighteenth-century English views on satire, points to how the description of satire as directed towards common types was not widely accepted; she compares Richard Flecknoe (1658) and the author of *Some Critical and Politick Remarks On … Faction Display'd* (1704), whose "antonymous views of the two terms [satire and raillery]" (41) reveal the ambiguity of satire as a generic term,

especially as conceived by late seventeenth-century English commentators. However, the Restoration staged rake in the comedies I examine, aligns with Hume's description by satirizing – attacking, or smearing – husband characters' "types" through the rake's cuckold-making. Though Marshall avoids using the oversimplified term "attack" in her description of satire (3), Matthew Kinservik attributes the more "punitive, judgmental" characteristic of satire to the Restoration stage (275). My argument throughout this thesis aligns with Kinservik's, as I find that playwrights grant the staged rake – who satirizes husbands through his cuckolding "attack" – less and less control of the direction and purpose of their satire. As we approach Behn and Ravenscroft's comedies in the 1680s, we observe how "Sympathy and moral equivalence replace punitive, judgmental superiority as the defining characteristics of the satirist" (Kinservik 275), and how the satire-enforcing rake character becomes constrained and transformed by his playwrights' increasing commitment to moral didactics.

As a means to satirize husband character types, cuckolding in the Restoration comedies I examine is justified by the husband character's lower class, improper treatment of his wife, and his old age (among other negative characteristics which point to the husband's flawed character). In addition, the libertine's cuckold-making is facilitated by various factors, such as his ability to deceive through rhetoric as well as disguise and forgery, his physical attractiveness, and his flexible morality. I research the development of the rake character through the years 1660 to 1686; my aim is to reveal the ways in which playwrights deconstruct the rake character, and the qualities with which they inscribe the rake, through cuckoldry plots. Throughout the Restoration period playwrights fragment the rake character, transforming him from an identity-fluid character whose

cuckolding method only subtly or implicitly undermines his own claims to satirical authority, to a stock character whose claims to satirical authority are explicitly undermined by other characters. This transformation signals a growing discomfort in English society with the amorality of the libertine rake, even among those playwrights who still use his cuckold-making to satirize husband characters.

I examine four stage comedies, and in order to provide a complex and detailed analysis, each chapter is devoted to one comedy: *The Mistaken Husband* (first printed 1675, potentially written 1663), by an anonymous author (but sometimes attributed to John Dryden), *The Country Wife* (1675), by William Wycherley, *The London Cuckolds* (1681), by Edward Ravenscroft, and *The Lucky Chance; Or, an Alderman's Bargain* (1686), by Aphra Behn. These comedies span at most 23 years, and at least 11, depending on how we date *The Mistaken Husband.* The four comedies I examine share, in their plot, the occurrence of cuckoldry. As comedies which share cuckoldry plots, they also share certain character types. We see jealous husbands in two of the four comedies, negligent husbands in three, and a pimping husband in one. In each comedy, rakes and unsatisfied wives assert their power over these husbands by cuckolding them. But while these comedies share in their plot this power assertion through cuckoldry, their playwrights' variations of the cuckoldry plot offer insights into how these playwrights make the rake tameable. The rakes of the comedies *The Mistaken Husband* and *The Country Wife* exploit English marital law, law enforcement, and social practices and regulations, rules and regulations which paradoxically facilitate cuckoldry while condemning it. These rakes also exploit what I call the "capital-romance dyad" - that is, the linguistic and practical entanglement between romance (love, sex, and marriage) and capital – to at

times solicit and other times purvey sex. Finally, these rakes exploit the deceptive potential of rhetorical and physical role adoption, acting as another until even the audience is unsure of the rake's identity. However, as Ravenscroft and Behn adapt the rake character, they diminish the effectiveness of these rakish exploits; other characters as well the audience can "see through" the rake's deceptions, and can therefore hold the rake more accountable for his actions. It is important then, to distinguish now between the "early Restoration" and "late Restoration" staged rakes: the former are exemplified by Hazard of *The Mistaken Husband,* and Horner of *The Country Wife* – chronologically the first two rakes I examine. The latter are exemplified by Ramble and Townly of *The London Cuckolds,* and Gayman of *The Lucky Chance* – chronologically the last two rakes I examine. It is Ravenscroft's comedy that I perceive as reflecting the fragmentation of the staged rake's characteristics, and Behn's that reveals what remains after the rake is fragmented.

In this chapter, I provide historical context for my research into the staged Restoration rake. First, I describe the implications of cuckoldry in the Restoration, and the rake's place in cuckold relationships. I then describe the socially subversive and performative aspects of the Restoration rake as a historical character, looking forward to how these aspects of the rake on stage diminish through the Restoration. Finally, I discuss the contemporary Restoration concerns with the historical rake as an amoral libertine, which leads to the staged rake's moral reform at the end of the seventeenth century. This movement should provide justification for examining the rake through cuckoldry, some understanding of what defines the rake character, and how the transformation of the staged rake in the Restoration predicts eighteenth-century English concerns with the

immorality of adultery and the potential for one's appearances to counterfeit one's moral character.

The act of cuckoldry disturbs household order in contexts where monogamy is necessary. Anthony Fletcher, in *Gender Sex and Subordination in England, 1500-1800* discusses early modern household order, according to religious literature, as a hierarchy with the husband – the patriarch – at the top, particularly through the metaphor of husband as king of his household/commonwealth (205). Laura Gowing explores adultery cases in early modern England, and describes the humiliation of the cuckolded husband (194), husbands' anxieties regarding illegitimate pregnancies (193), and the adulterous wife's sexual autonomy (195). I interpret cuckoldry as *subversive* – as undermining the cuckolded male's authority and making him into the object of mockery.[1] On stage, successful cuckoldry plots – that is, plots which contain cuckoldry in actuality, rather than simply the threat of cuckoldry – place characters in power relations: the cuckold-maker and wife characters who cuckold the husband character exert their power over the cuckolded husband; this allows for an inversion of household order, as prescribed in Restoration London: the patriarch loses dominion over his wife's body and actions. As a cuckoldry plot is subversive, so too is a cuckold-maker. The staged rake, who is a cuckold-maker, is then a subversive character. But although the rake continues to cuckold husbands throughout the plays I examine, the later playwrights Ravenscroft and Behn limit their rake's subversiveness by having them undergo increasingly moral reform.

Cuckoldry plots involve the subversion of certain exaggerated masculinities – the patriarch is characterized as extremely authoritative and uncouth, extremely avaricious, neglectful, or impotent – and their replacement by another, generally inverted masculinity

– the polite, virile, attentive, prodigal young man. Brian Corman's two broad subgeneric categories for Restoration comedy, "punitive" and "sympathetic" (15), are useful in describing the staged Restoration rake's transformation, as the rake shifts from a punitive enforcer to a sympathetic character. Corman states that "the pursuit of cuckolding and/or money generates most punitive comic action" and that "courtship provides the outline for most sympathetic comic action" (15). The plots I examine belong in the "punitive" category, as my research is focused on the rake character – who, like the rogues or wits Corman describes, "are granted a licence to work outside the normal rules and regulations prescribed by their society, in order … to gull a number of fools … sex and/or money being the usual objects" (17). Rakes cheat and lie to cuckold husbands, thereby asserting their dominance over those husbands, who are revealed as fools. However, we must remain careful not to then assume that playwrights, in these plots, promoted the rake character as a model of masculinity; the rake may be the enforcer of satire, but playwrights complicate his success through the concessions he makes to that society whose regulations he *apparently* works outside. The rakes I examine through the Restoration period more and more explicitly concede to the rules of London society, as playwrights implant their plots and rake characters with more "sympathetic" elements; that is, rake characters on stage are increasingly represented as having a genuine romantic dimension, the fulfilment of which requires them to assimilate to the morals of London society.

Comedies such as William Wycherley's *The Country Wife*, Edward Ravenscroft's *The London Cuckolds*, and Aphra Behn's *The Lucky Chance; Or, An Alderman's Bargain*, all feature uncouth husbands who are cuckolded by wittier and younger men, and reveal

the anti-patriarchal bias of cuckold comedies; cuckoldry in these comedies serves to subvert household order, and satirize husband types. I use scholar Alexandra Shepard's discussion of university students' anti-patriarchal codes of manhood in the early seventeenth century to frame my discussion of the Restoration's libertine; Shepard describes how "Conflicting concepts of manhood, often cast in dichotomous terms – such as manly/effeminate; thrifty/prodigal; courageous/cowardly; plain-dealing/cozening; self-governed/licentious – were also invoked in a wide range of disputes in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries" (293). In Restoration stage comedies, we see playwrights characterize rakes as manly, primarily through their virility, in opposition to the effeminate fop; the Restoration rake is also simultaneously prodigal – Etherege's Dorimant suits this description finely; he is courageous – to a criminal extent, Erin Mackie argues; finally, the rake is especially cozening and licentious, as his aim is illicit sex, and his method is deception. Husband characters are parodies, and their signs of manhood are either magnified to a fault, or are perverted: the miserly husband is thrifty to the extent that he will attempt to pimp his wife, and the jealous husband attempts (and fails) to brutally enforce his wife's fidelity. These conflicts remain throughout the Restoration period, as playwrights consistently position the rake in opposition to husbands whose household authority the rake proves to be misguided.

The conflict between the staged rake and his intended cuckold concerns not only masculinity, but also class. Anna Bryson, in *From Courtesy to Civility,* describes how historically, the term "rakehell," or "rake," "had converged with that of 'libertine' to characterize an image of aristocratic lawlessness and vice" (244), pointing to the "court wits of the Restoration, and Charles II himself … as prototypes of the 'rake' or 'libertine'"

(245). Erin Mackie builds on Bryson's ideas in *Rakes, Highwaymen, and Pirates: The Making of the Modern Gentleman in the Eighteenth Century,* arguing that through the end of the seventeenth century, and into the eighteenth, the historical rake shifted from a classed figure to a gendered one – the rake's lawlessness shifted from aristocratic to masculine (37). We can see these elements of the historical rake on the Restoration stage, and the shift that Mackie perceives is evidenced by theatrical representations of the rake throughout the Restoration. While throughout the period I examine in my thesis, the rake's cuckold-making remains both driven by class and masculinity, playwrights define their rakes more and more by his male passions. Ravenscroft fragments the rake in 1681, transferring his trickster qualities to wife characters and a merchant character. By Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1686), the rake is a character driven by passion – his manliness – rather than artifice. As Alexandra Shepard discusses how in the seventeenth century, "Conduct writers repeatedly insisted that the youthful vices they detailed disqualified young men from claiming manhood, and in doing so equated manhood with reason, temperance, and self-control" (30); playwrights Ravenscroft and Behn follow these conduct writers in their representations of the rake character, defining their rakes less by their artifice – which denotes their amorality – and more by their passion, laying the groundwork for their rakes to learn self-control and mature throughout a given comedy.

But before discussing the late Restoration staged rake's reform, I would like first to discuss the early Restoration staged rake's artifice – his trickery – which largely defines the character. Douglas Canfield's *Tricksters and Estates: On the Ideology of Restoration Comedy* follows, expectedly, trickery in Restoration comedy; Canfield examines how tricksters in Restoration comedy either affirm England's established social

order, or subvert it through their devious actions. Restoration tricksters, to Canfield, are dispossessed men and women who subvert order through trickery (e.g. schemes, intrigues, designs) to gain possession of estates (6-7). The rake shares stylistic elements with the trickster, as his cuckolding activity often depends on deception. However, the rake is not necessarily interested in gaining estates – his business is primarily the commerce of sex and power. Much of Canfield's discussion looks to class conflicts, and comedies' attempts to stem the rising middle class in their plots. Canfield's discussion of the "Cit" figure – a working man who does his business in the City, as opposed to the Town, where the landed gentry are located – is particularly useful to my research. Canfield argues that "Cit-cuckolding is ... a trope not just for class dominance," (95) but "for gender dominance as well" (95); the Restoration stage rake asserts a nostalgic, class-based authority, onto the cit, via women who are portrayed as tokens of male authority. The last argument of Canfield's, I hope to complicate; while the misogyny which presupposes most rakes' activities is certainly apparent in Restoration comedies, the rake characters I examine, excepting in *The Mistaken Husband*, subject themselves to wives' whims – an inversion of both patriarchal and misogynist orders. The rake-husband relationship changes little in the twenty-odd years I study; a wife character's illicit sexual activity implicates both her lover and her husband's masculinity and class. However, the rake's deceptive prowess lessens significantly throughout the period along with his ability to orchestrate cuckoldry, as wife characters increasingly hold the cards.

To understand the early Restoration staged rake character, we can look to Wycherley's rake of *The Country Wife,* Horner, as an exemplar. Henry Ten Eyck Perry describes Horner as "the ideal hero for a Restoration Comedy: he has no illusions and

apparently no emotions … He is Wycherley's method of enforcing his satire" (47-8); as an early Restoration rake, Horner is a tool for satire. The rake's primary target is of course the husband character, but playwrights use the satirical rake character also to expose various maladies in Restoration London – for example: corruption in England's legal system, the reliance of London citizens on physical and verbal signs of virtue (which lead to association between a gentleman's polite manner and his as moral uprightness), and the entanglement between romance and finance (continually reaffirmed via marriage and prostitution). The early Restoration rake, reflected in *The Mistaken Husband* and *The Country Wife* (both pre-1680) bribes officers, lawyers and judges to avoid prosecution; he manipulates his appearance and his rhetoric to conceal his character; he gambles with husbands and fathers for their wives and daughters. The late Restoration rake, reflected in *The London Cuckolds* and *The Lucky Chance* (both post-1680) attempts these devious activities but fails to conceal his character well enough to do so without consequence. The rake in comedy then becomes less of a "punitive" character as his deceptive abilities weaken, and grows more "sympathetic;" he is both able and required to make a moral change through a comedy's plot.

To understand the early staged rake's manipulative prowess, I look to Erin Mackie's discussion of the historical rake. In her discussion of the historical rake as a criminal character, Mackie differentiates between the rake and the fop, on this basis: "The rake's purported advantage lies in his fluency in, and his performance and mastery of, those modes of sociocultural discourse that the fop seems only to parrot and ape" (44). The rake's "stylistic mastery" (48) is, as Mackie argues, "rhetorical and performative" (48); the rake not only speaks well, but also performs well. However, Mackie does not in

great detail describe what the rake's stylistic mastery – his rhetorical prowess – looks like on stage. The modes of sociocultural discourse which the staged rake performs vary depending on the situation, but I find three modes to stand out: the first, is "gentlemanly" language, which the rake adopts to suggest that his character is moral; I look to Lisa Freeman, Robert Shoemaker, and John Brewer, among others, for scholarship on the Restoration period's increasingly polite protocols (Shoemaker and Brewer), and the disjunction between external appearances (and speech) and internal moral value (Freeman). The second discursive mode the rake masters is the discourse of what I call the capital-romance dyad: the entanglement in Restoration language, law, and behaviour between romance (including sex, love, and marriage) and capital (whether land, money, or other assets such as china). Thirdly, the rake is a master of a language and performance of fraternal bonding; Alexandra Shepard, in *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England,* describes how, "In their bids for manhood, young men embraced precisely the kinds of behaviour – violent disruption, excessive drinking, illicit sex – condemned by moralists as unmanly, effeminate, and beastlike" (94). The rake similarly embraces these male-youth activities, and genuinely enjoys illicit sex. As I discuss in more detail in Chapters 1 and 2, more subversive rakes, such as Hazard and Horner, engage in a discourse and practice of the youthful manhood Shepard describes, in order to deceive the men around him. As the Restoration period advances, however, I find that, in accordance with Mackie's assertion, rakes on stage are characterized more firmly by their genuine indulgence in the young male behaviour Shepard describes – and less by their exploitation thereof. I hope to add nuance to Mackie's description of the rake's "stylistic mastery" by showing how on stage the rake's ability to role play reflects that stylistic

mastery. The rake's *performative* mastery not only involves his ability to code-switch – to adopt different discourses in different situations – but also his ability to act in a role; it is not only to speak as another character, but act, dress, and generally behave as one.

David M. Turner, in *Fashioning Adultery: Gender, Sex, and Civility in England, 1660-1740,* describes how in some comedies of the Restoration,

> The layers of deception and dissimulation required to cuckold a husband were used to explore more 'libertine' ideas about the validity of moral codes and to examine the ways in which outward allegiance to norms of conduct might be used to more devious purposes. (98)

This statement points to playwrights' critiques of Restoration London's trend towards polite speech as a requirement for social integration, and aligns well with Robert Shoemaker's discussion of the "new emphasis in prescriptions for male behaviour [...] on talk rather than action" (Shoemaker 138) in England at the beginning of the eighteenth century. The rake, who talks well, is successful in this apparently duplicitous, polite Restoration Town. Hazard of *The Mistaken Husband* relies on norms of conduct and fine speech not only to impersonate Mr. Manly, but also to seduce Mrs. Manly and earn her father's approval as a gentleman. The early rake in particular expresses a disjunction between one's behaviour and one's "character" - a disjunction that troubled English playwrights increasingly as polite "codes" (to use Bryson's terms) of conduct were increasingly ingrained in English society.

In her discussion of the libertine rake, Bryson concludes: "In so far as [libertine conduct] was based in the conditions of 'civil society' and depended on the transgression of civil forms for its effect, its development underlined and did not undermine those

conditions and forms" (275). The staged rake's conduct is similarly dependent on the society which he exploits. The unpunished early rake's transgressions against household order, in the comedies I examine, require his immersion in "civil society" - somewhat an inversion of Bryson's statement, but the effect is similar. The early Restoration rake avoids retribution because he adeptly subordinates his own character to the one he adopts. His cuckold-making upsets household order, but it does not restructure it. Nor does the rake's cuckold-making effectively assert the rake's ideology as superior. The late Restoration rake, on stage, is unable to adeptly perform civility in his anti-civil pursuits; he lacks the "performative mastery" that allows his predecessor to cuckold without consequence – and his punishment comes in the form of shame, whether enforced by slapstick comedy or communal criticism. While the early Restoration rake eliminates his own satirical supremacy by depending on potentially deceptive cultural norms, the late Restoration rake cannot disguise his transgressions; both the audience and the other characters on stage can clearly see the late rake's digression from civil society, so both the audience and the other staged characters require his explicit submission to that society.

The early Restoration staged rake's performative mastery not only involves his adoption of particular discourses, like fine speech, but also his ability to perform as another character type. Lisa Freeman's *Character's Theatre* explores the "crisis of character" (27) in eighteenth-century drama – that is, the instability of "character as the conceptual basis for modeling *coherent* identities" (27). Freeman describes how character was enlisted "to delineate and distinguish moral quality" (22), but that "'character' as a measure of an internal moral value was confounded by its dependence upon external appearances and the susceptibility of external appearance to counterfeit" (24). Freeman

provides a layered understanding of the term "character," which is essential to my research; I use the term according to her description. While Freeman looks to eighteenth-century drama as negotiating the crisis of character, the Restoration rake sets the stage for these negotiations. The early rake's manipulation of codes of conduct have him acting doubly – for the audience, and for the other characters on stage. Playwrights' worries about the inconsistency between external appearances and internal character are acted out by the early rake, who manipulates others' understanding of his character through artifice. The early rake can be understood as parasitic on England's emerging polite society, but his parasitism reveals his own lack of character (moral and otherwise). The early Restoration rake is a necessarily unstable character; his success in Restoration plots (to cuckold) relies on and reveals the "crisis of character," and thus contradicts a unitary characterization. However, as the period goes on it seems that playwrights were less willing to play with the crisis of character, both portraying their rakes' failure to exploit it and also relying on the visual markers of the rake's character to reflect that rake's interior moral state.

The final scholar I would like to point to in this introductory chapter brings my discussion of the Restoration staged rake's transformation from an amoral, identity-fluid character to a comprehensible, passionate stock character together in interesting ways. Scholar Aparna Gollapudi marks a shift in the plots of London stage comedies in the year 1696, with Colley Cibber's *Love's Last Shift,* towards moral reform. As such, the shift I perceive predates and anticipates the starker moral shift to which Gollapudi points. Gollapudi argues that Cibber builds up to the rake Loveless' moral reform through visual cues: "The tacit support that an attractive, amoral comic hero gains from the audience is

complicated in *Love's Last Shift* by the ever-present visual reminder of the effects of debauchery" (33). What we can gain from Gollapudi's analysis is not merely the date, 1696, which she marks the beginning of reform comedy; instead, she offers an analytical technique for understanding character development on stage: visual cues. Gollapudi's discussion of reform comedy compellingly presents a trend in the London stage comedies after 1696 to deny cuckoldry in their plots, which aligns with Erin Mackie's assertion that after the 1670s the rake "came under increasing, and to a significant extent effective, assault through the rest of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries" (131). My analysis complements Mackie's and Gollapudi's trends by showing how playwrights critiqued the rake's libertinism, most powerfully exemplified by his cuckolding, more and more explicitly through the Restoration, and transformed the rake into a character for whom reform is possible. The visual cues that signal the rake's deprecating moral "character" become more obvious as the period advances. Hazard, of *The Mistaken Husband* mars and transforms himself to succeed; *The Country Wife*'s husband and wife characters dog the rake, Horner, invading his home in the final scene; in *The London Cuckolds,* chimney sweeps blacken Ramble's face and steal his wig – the sign of status which Gollapudi looks to in her discussion of Loveless' debauchery (29); finally, Gayman, of *The Lucky Chance,* lives in a blacksmith's house, and wears rags as a result of his debauchery. All these rakes may successfully cuckold their rivals, but their successes come at the cost of their satirical authority. The shift that occurs before playwrights cease to actualize cuckoldry in their comedies is a shift in *how* the rake loses his authority: from undermining his own authority to having his authority undermined by other characters.

If the moral reformation of the rake character occurred in 1696, a reformulation of

the rake occurred in the years before. Early Restoration playwrights illuminated Freeman's crisis of character by portraying a rake whose performative mastery leads the audience to question both the solidity of the rake's character and his superiority to the conditions he satirizes. However, as the norms which the rake satirized became more ingrained in English society, playwrights grew more concerned with portraying the rake as a morally salvageable character; the rake's libertinism becomes, throughout the comedies of the period, a symptom of his young male passions (which can be corrected) rather than a defining characteristic of the rake (which is more fixed). In addition, the late Restoration playwrights Ravenscroft and Behn characterize their rakes as having genuine romantic interests, allowing for their coherent reform to monogamy. Playwrights such as Ravenscroft and Behn expose the moral infirmities of their rakes on stage to both the audience and other characters. The rake who emerges from their alterations looks less like an attractive Machiavellian manipulator and more like an attractive, passionate young man in need of moral education – from an inscrutable void of character to a readily understood stock character. Though the rake in the late Restoration still enforces satire through his cuckold-making, playwrights in the late Restoration "declaw" their rakes much more explicitly than their predecessors.

Both Gollapudi and Freeman discuss how the crisis of character must be allayed by playwrights and audiences (Freeman 45, Gollapudi 24) in the theatre of the eighteenth century – whether to enable reform or to communicate character in general. By analyzing the shift in playwrights' treatment and characterization of the Restoration staged rake, I show how playwrights began to depend on the "equation between visible surface and the invisible inner worth" (Gollapudi 24) *before* the eighteenth century. The shift I perceive in

the perceptibility of Restoration staged rake's character is as significant as the shift I perceive in playwrights' moral treatment of the rake. While early Restoration playwrights make visible the crisis of character via their role-adopting rakes – who confuse any interpretation of their character by adopting the appearance, discourse, and behavior of another character – late Restoration playwrights make visible their rake's character via the rake's more genuine appearance, discourse, and behavior. My research fills a gap in our literary history by revealing the backwards continuity of the trend Freeman and Gollapudi describe, both in how playwrights communicate character as well as in how playwrights moralize the stage.

In *The Mistaken Husband,* we have a clear example of an early rake whose self-transformation allows him to seduce a wife (Mrs. Manly), but which results in the elision of his initial identity – and his justification for cuckold-making. Wycherley's *The Country Wife* provides another example of an identity-fluid rake whose method of and success in cuckold-making contradicts his intentions, and subordinates him to other characters. In my first two chapters, I focus on how these early Restoration playwrights characterize their rakes – which I describe as "early Restoration rakes" – as performative masters and as manipulators of their own character. I examine how the playwrights of *The Mistaken Husband* and *The Country Wife* subtly critique their rake characters' ideology by writing their rakes to undermine their own satirical authority via their method of cuckold-making. In my first chapter, I show how the rake Hazard elides his own rakish character in his pursuit of cuckoldry, ultimately adopting the husband role which he intended to satirize through cuckoldry. In my second chapter, I examine how Wycherley's rake Horner subordinates himself to the wives he intends to satirize. In Wycherley's comedy we also

begin to see a moral critique of the rake's cuckold-making activity, as it interferes with the romantic plot of the comedy.

Ravenscroft's *The London Cuckolds* shows clearly how the rake was fragmented in the Restoration, as several of Ravenscroft's characters display rakish qualities without being fully rakish characters. Additionally, *The London Cuckolds* shows how playwrights began to grow more concerned with the amoral sexual aggression of the rake, as the most rakish character in the comedy undergoes a sort of quasi-reform to become a passive cuckold-maker. In chapter three I locate a significant shift in the theatrical treatment and characterization of the Restoration rake, and I look at Ravenscroft's rake (as well as Behn's, in Chapter Four) as a "late Restoration rake". In chapter three I examine how Ravenscroft undermines the rake's satirical authority by transferring his performative mastery to wives and a merchant; I also show how Ravenscroft advances the moral critique of the rake character that Wycherley provided in *The Country Wife* as potentially interfering with romance plots. Behn's *The Lucky Chance* reveals what is missing from, and what is left of the rake character at the tail-end of the Restoration: his subversive and seductive libertine deceptiveness is gone, but his virility and class remain. Behn, though she enacts cuckoldry in her comedy, she offers the rake even more of a moral impetus to reform to monogamy. In my fourth chapter, I show how Behn completely transfers her comedy's satirical authority to her wife character, and how Behn writes her wife character to enforce the rake's explicit moral reform to monogamy. In my fourth chapter we see can clearly see how the staged rake transformed throughout the Restoration, such that playwrights characterize the rake no longer as a masterful interpreter and manipulator of character, but as a passionate young man in need of moral guidance.

While early Restoration playwrights may write their rakes to undermine their own satiric authority by catering to the English society they hope to exploit, these playwrights' critiques of the rake is too implicit – the rake's "character" is too concealed – for a late Restoration moral climate. Late Restoration playwrights responded to their moral climate by explicitly critiquing their rake's immoral "character" – which they expose – and by requiring his character change through their comedies – to control his passions. The rake shifts from a punitive enforcer to one who is punished himself, primarily by wife characters, and so his loss of satiric authority changes differently as well throughout the period. Where the early Restoration staged rake abandons his own satiric authority by assimilating to the society he apparently satirizes, the late Restoration staged rake's satiric authority is confiscated by other characters.

Notes

1. Turner, David. “Cultures of Cuckoldry.” *Fashioning adultery: gender, sex, and civility in England, 1660-1740.* Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp. 83-115. Reinke-Williams, Tim. “Misogyny, Jest-Books and Male Youth Culture in Seventeenth-Century England.” *Gender & History*, Vol. 21 No. 2 August 2009, pp. 324–339. Canfield, Douglas. *Tricksters and Estates: On the Ideology of Restoration Comedy.* University Press of Kentucky, 1997. Griffiths, Paul. *Youth and Authority: Formative Experiences in England 1560-1640.* Clarendon Press, 1996. Foyster, Elizabeth A. *Manhood in Early Modern England: Honour, Sex, and Marriage.* Addison Wesley Longman Limited, 1999.

Chapter One

Intentionally Impotent: Hazard's Self-Inflicted Loss of Satirical Authority in *The Mistaken Husband*

The Mistaken Husband is a satirical comedy, first produced in 1674 at the Theatre Royal, Drury Lane, by the King's Company, and first printed in 1675. The comedy is often attributed to John Dryden, although he was likely not the author.[1] The plot is centred on the character Hazard, who impersonates Mr. Manly – a man who has been absent from England for nine years – to seduce Mr. Manly's wife, and claim his father-in-law's estate. The playwright evidences Hazard's rakish character by having Hazard masterfully exploit English law in practice and masterfully perform for other characters, in order to cuckold Mr. Manly. Hazard's performative abilities show in his adoption of different discourses and behaviours to cater to and manipulate the other characters on stage, and his libertinism shows in his cuckolding intent and his amoral behaviour. Hazard's self-transformation into a socially cohesive character fulfills his aim to cuckold Mrs. Manly, but it also shifts Hazard from a character who satirizes others to one who is satirized himself. In this chapter I closely examine the rake character Hazard's exploitation of Restoration English systems of law, social regulation, and interpreting character, to show how this early rake effaces his identity and undermines his satirical authority via his performative mastery.

After discussing the scholarship which informs my readings of *The Mistaken Husband,* particularly as it relates to Hazard's performative mastery, the English system of law that Hazard exploits, and the growing discomfort with a perceived discordance between one's appearance and one's identity in Restoration England, I turn to *The*

Mistaken Husband itself. I examine Hazard's criminal exploitation of English law before examining Hazard's appeals to fraternity, avarice, and romance. Then, I discuss Hazard's metatheatrical reference in the fourth act which leads to my characterization of Hazard as a satirical enforcer. Finally, I discuss how Hazard's successes throughout the comedy require his submission to and implication in the English society which he appears to satirize – contradicting that characterization of Hazard as an enforcer of satire and showing how this early rake undermines his own satirical authority by his cuckolding method.

Hazard evidences his rakishness by his physical attractiveness, youthful vigour, amorality, and his knowledge and exploitation of English behavioural and linguistic expectations of a moral character. Erin Mackie's discussion of the rake's "stylistic mastery" (48) – his proficiency in "modes of sociocultural discourse" (44) – is very much relevant to Hazard, especially as he tricks Mr. Manly, Mrs. Manly, and Learcut into trusting him. Much of my discussion shows how Hazard manipulates other characters through his mastery of various modes of sociocultural discourse and practice; in particular, I examine Hazard's utilization of romantic discourse, and homosocial and legal discourses and practices. Mackie's general assertion that "the superior stylistic mastery that distinguishes the rake from the fop ... is the very same thing that, in the literary and historical record, distinguishes the rake from the common criminal" (37), certainly applies to Hazard. The staged rake of *The Mistaken Husband* avoids prosecution for his criminal activities because of his successful rhetorical appeals. It seems that the playwright presents a "masculine libertine fantas[y]" (Mackie 42) through their rake character's success, as Hazard asserts his superiority over Mr. Manly as a man by

cuckolding Mr. Manly and gaining his estate. However, as I show in this chapter, Hazard's rakish mastery results in his assuming the role of the husband, whose masculinity the cuckold-making Restoration rake diminishes. Hazard thus transforms from a subversive cuckold-maker to a cuckold himself.

Hazard's performative mastery depends on other characters' belief that his appearance accurately signals his identity. David Turner and Lisa Freeman's discussions of English anxieties regarding the discordance between one's appearance and one's moral character in the late seventeenth century and into the eighteenth, which Freeman calls the "crisis of character" (27), and which Turner describes are the libertine subject of some cuckolding comedies (98), are similarly significant, as Hazard alters his behaviour and appearance to seem wealthy, loving, and moral. Cynthia Lowenthal's examination of the performance of identities on the Restoration stage is especially pertinent in my examination of *The Mistaken Husband,* as she focuses her attention on the body. She states, in the same vein as Turner, that "Opportunities for an individual's self-conscious manipulation of the external signs of identity are events that Restoration playwrights often, even compulsively, explore and/or lament" (Lowenthal 21). In *The Mistaken Husband,* the playwright focuses their plot on the exploration of such self-conscious manipulation in the character Hazard. Furthermore, Hazard displays both the "troubling" and "liberating" aspects of "those identities whose bodily surfaces exist at odds with that individual's – reputed and invisible – interior life, an internal identity beginning to be valued [in the Restoration] as the only 'authentic' identity" (Lowenthal 5). Hazard transforms his own body in order to assume the role of Mr. Manly, particularly via the scar on Manly's chest which Hazard replicates. For Hazard, this refashioning of his

exterior to disguise his internal identity is liberating – he escapes the trappings of his identity as a younger brother and gains control of an estate. However, Hazard's liberation is troubling for the Restoration rake character, as his success depends on the violent repression of his internal identity.

I describe Hazard's transformation into a model husband throughout *The Mistaken Husband* as from a subversive (cuckold-making) character to a socially cohesive (cuckold) character. For this transformation, I refer to Brian Corman's discussion of the "rogue-hero" (34) who gulls fools in a Jonsonian punitive comedy (17). Corman compares "the Jonsonian punitive intrigue and its Restoration imitators" (32), arguing that the latter are less committed to revoking the rogue-hero's "licence to work outside the normal rules and regulations prescribed by their society" (16). In *The Mistaken Husband,* the playwright half-heartedly revokes Hazard's licence through a statement of moral reform, and seems to provide a mix between punitive and sympathetic – following a Fletcherian line which according to Corman subordinates character to intrigue (19). J. Douglas Canfield describes Hazard as a "Jonsonian trickster" (125), arguing that though *The Mistaken Husband* "resembles Restoration social comedy, for the ending features a converted younger brother rake, the union of the right couple poised to inherit an estate, [etc.]," the comedy "spins out centrifugally ... at the end" when it "rewards a trickster's calculated if not callous supplanting of a friend in his marriage bed" (124). I agree with Canfield, but I seek to complement his argument. Hazard's seeming moral conversion in the conclusion certainly reads ironically, but I argue that Hazard's loss of satiric licence – his conversion into a husband – is more subtle, continual, and powerful than it may seem. The playwright of *The Mistaken Husband* does mix punitive and sympathetic elements in

the conclusion, but the playwright's subordination of Hazard's character to the plot (which requires his dubious reformation) can be explained by Hazard's subordination of his own character to his method of cuckold-making. Hazard must declare his conversion in the conclusion as his entire success depends on his adoption of the loving husband role. Additionally, instead of simply losing his punitive licence to satirize, Hazard turns himself from an enforcer of satire to the object of satire, revealing the playwright's critique of the libertine trickster rake.

The Mistaken Husband differs from some other cuckolding comedies in its focus on English law in practice; Hazard appeals to and by doing so exposes a corrupt system of law in order to threaten Learcut and Mr. Manly as well as to secure himself. I look to Keith Wrightson's "Two Concepts of Order: Justices, Constables and Jurymen in Seventeenth-Century England" and Norma Landau's "The Trading Justice's Trade" for their discussions of how the practice of law in seventeenth-century England may not have aligned with the letters of the law. In the former, Wrightson states, "All that can be said of the petty constables ... of England as a body is that they were ordinary members of their communities" and, "Not infrequently this job was pushed on to a poor man" (26). In addition, Wrightson points to "illiteracy and legal ignorance of local officers," resulting from their laity, and exacerbated by English law's frequent changes through the period (28). If petty constables were "ordinary members" of English society, then their commitments are less to enforce the law as written – a difficult task for someone who is illiterate – than to maintain social cohesion; Wrightson states, "The efficient constable or juryman in the eyes of the law would be very likely to turn every tongue, if not every hand, against himself." In this light, the playwright's farcical treatment of the constables

in *The Mistaken Husband,* which I discuss in the next section, appears to have justification. Hazard's understanding and exploitation of the illiterate and inefficient Watch both reveals Hazard's rakishness and satirizes the system of justice that would persecute an innocent on the word of a criminal. However, the playwright undermines Hazard's satire of English law by writing Hazard to rely on English law in the comedy's resolution. Hazard's relationship with English law reflects more broadly the treatment of the early Restoration staged rake by playwrights who undermine the rake's satirical authority by necessitating his dependence on the marital, legal, or social systems which the rake intends to satirize (through cuckoldry, which entangles those systems through sex). In Chapter Three, we will see a shift in the Restoration staged rake's relationship with the law: where Hazard to an extent satirizes English law in letter and practice by exploiting it to make a cuckold of Mr. Manly, Ravenscroft's rake of *The London Cuckolds* (1681) is publicly satirized *by* the Watch – the law enforcers. While Ravenscroft maintains a farcical representation of the Watch, we can observe a change in the staged Restoration rake through the rake's changing relationship with the law – from satirizer to satirized.

I now turn to *The Mistaken Husband* itself, beginning with my analysis of Hazard's exploitation of a system of law that is both corrupt and ineffective in practice. English law in *The Mistaken Husband* facilitates Hazard's criminal behaviour as well as his ultimate adoption of Mr. Manly's title, as it caters more to social cohesion than the preservation of the law's overarching moral values. The comedy portrays the Watch, in particular, as corrupt and unconcerned with evidence. The watchmen who arrest Mr. Manly do so on Underwit's false word (Dryden 4.4 p. 46), and two of the watchmen

fabricate crimes and accuse Mr. Manly of performing them: “I do not think but this is he that stole away my Lanthorn, I dreamt of him presently after” and “I warrant you, he had my Bill too. Sirrah confess” (4.4 p. 45). This interaction makes a farce of the Watch, whose verve to mete out justice Hazard anticipates and exploits. Given Wrightson's description of the Watch, these characters are not in a socially secure enough position to doubt the word of Underwit, who at this point is under the protection of Hazard – who is under the protection of Learcut, a wealthy “Noble.”[2] As poor, potentially illiterate men, the constables are neither able to understand the laws they are to enforce, nor to easily reject bribery – especially when such a rejection may endanger themselves. In *The Mistaken Husband,* Hazard exploits the constable's financially unstable position and commitment to social cohesion, to protect himself from Mr. Manly. Through this exploitation, the playwright characterizes Hazard as a satirist who brings the inefficiencies of the Watch onto the stage. The playwright continues to satirize English law through Hazard, whose increasingly blatant criminality the law protects.

During Mr. Manly and Hazard's conversation in the prison, in which the former Mr. Manly is forced to come to terms with his own cuckoldry, Hazard first offers Mr. Manly the dowry owed him, if Mr. Manly does not pursue charges against Hazard (5.2 p. 60). Hazard emasculates Mr. Manly by cuckolding and imprisoning him, but appears more as a criminal than a trickster when he threatens Mr. Manly with the alternative:

> I'le drown your Father in Law in earnest.
> Transport away your Wife to the *West-Indies*.
> Keep all the estate, and the next Sessions.
> I'le hang you for a High-way man, I have Money,
> And the City certainly can furnish me
> With witnesses for good considerations. (5.2 p. 60)

This second option very clearly displays Hazard's self-interested immorality. He shows

that he is willing to kill Learcut, abduct Mrs. Manly, and have Mr. Manly killed in order to keep his identity unknown, and to receive Learcut's estate. Rarely do we see a character on the Restoration stage who so powerfully reflects the elite criminality that Erin Mackie attributes to the rake. But besides revealing his criminal Machiavellian tendencies, Hazard here alludes to the "City" as a potential ally. The City is inherently the cuckolder's ally in Restoration comedy, as it is the area of London wherein the rising middle class – merchants, aldermen, and lawyers – reside, these being the typical cuckolded husbands in Restoration comedy. But the City is also the place of law, to which Hazard alludes. Hazard's "Money" seems to be the "good considerations" that will lead to his receiving witnesses. So while Underwit's false witness of Mr. Manly's apparent theft seems to reveal a lack of rigour in London's justice system, Hazard's allusion to the "City" providing Hazard with witnesses for his wealth more strongly portrays London's justice system as corrupt and easily exploited. Underwit's "promise of a Turky pye at *Easter"* to make a drunken Justice "lean to [his] party" and commit Mr. Manly to Newgate (4.5 p. 49) augments the playwright's critique of English law; Norma Landau's discussion of how in metropolitan London "justice was a business" (60), helps us to understand the implications of the playwright's representation of the Justice's corruption. Landau describes how the term "basket justice" precedes the eighteenth-century term "trading justices," and how both labels point to Justices who made a business of justice. Hazard appeals, then, not only to the ineffectiveness of the Watch but also to the corruption of the Justices; the playwright thus shifts their critique to a higher level of law enforcement in England through Hazard, who exploits the law's corruption.

Hazard's knowledge of England's legal system – and its flaws – and his

manipulation of that system display his rakish intellectual and social prowess, and simultaneously satirizes English law in practice. However, in the resolution of the plot, the playwright contradicts their critique by using the law to justify Hazard's transformation into a husband character. This contradiction I examine more closely further on in this chapter. But before I move to that discussion, I examine Hazard's performative mastery – his ability to perform as a friend, husband, and son-in-law; while English law justifies Hazard's cuckold-making, Hazard's performative abilities enable his cuckold-making. Thus, before examining how Hazard undermines his own satirical authority, I examine in more depth how the playwright initially characterizes Hazard as a rake character and satirical enforcer.

Hazard succeeds in changing his social position via his performative mastery, which he reveals in his interactions with Mr. Manly, Mrs. Manly, and Learcut; I will begin with Mr. Manly, whom Hazard meets first. To properly impersonate Mr. Manly, Hazard befriends him. Hazard tells Underwit he "furnished [Manly] with Clothes and Money; many expensive drunken Meetings we have had, in order to this grand Design" (Dryden 1.1 p. 13); Hazard's strategy is to flatter Mr. Manly with gifts, and spend time drinking with him. Alexandra Shepard discusses how excessive drinking was a practice of fraternal bonding in Early Modern England, stating, "Beyond cementing ties of neighbourhood and community, drinking was also a central feature of the dramatic rituals of male bonding" (103); here we see Hazard exploiting this fraternal bonding practice in order for personal gain.[3] Hazard also blatantly lies to Mr. Manly, promising to be Mr. Manly's "Solicitor, and reinstate him in his Wife and Fortunes" (Dryden 1.1 p. 13). Hazard's flippant oath to Mr. Manly, along with his condemnation of "useless Morals" (1.1 p. 12) in response to

Underwit's misgivings, emphasize Hazard's unscrupulous ethics; he only makes his promise in order to gain the sign of Mr. and Mrs. Manly's marriage: a broken piece of gold. Both Hazard's exploitation of fraternal bonding practices and his willingness to make a promise he has no intention of keeping strongly characterize Hazard as a trickster rake character. But it is his knowledge and utilization of signs of wealth that most show Hazard's rakish ingenuity.

The Mistaken Husband is a comedy very much concerned with the relationship between marriage and wealth. Hazard intends his plan to conclude with "profit at the end as Well as pleasure" (1.1 p. 12); Hazard will enjoy the sexual experience as well as the dowry he intends to assume. Learcut chased Mr. Manly out of the Town due to Manly's destitution, and Manly himself conflates Mrs. Manly's fortune and her body in his hopes of being reunited with both. But it is Hazard who, understanding the close relationship between marriage and wealth, is the one to gain in both. Hazard uses alcohol to "perswade" Mr. Manly to give Hazard the "Golden Key" to Mrs. Manly's "Chamber" - a "piece of Gold" which "was broke betwixt [Mr. and Mrs. Manly] at their separation" (1.1 p. 13). That the sign of Mr. and Mrs. Manly's love and separation is a broken piece of gold fortifies the tie between capital and romance in *The Mistaken Husband,* and Hazard's description of the gold as a key does more so. The symbol of Mr. and Mrs. Manly's separation also grants access to Mrs. Manly's private space, which connotes sex with Mrs. Manly. In taking the broken piece of gold from Mr. Manly, Hazard takes one of Mr. Manly's identifiers, and is able to provide a very personal and romantic sign of his identity to Mrs. Manly. Put less romantically, Hazard offers Mrs. Manly a stolen, broken coin for sex; Hazard's use of the coin is void of personal affection, and it reinforces the

discrepancy between Hazard's adopted persona and his amoral character. Hazard's conflation and manipulation of romantic and commercial symbols to gain private access to their intended lovers are echoed in Wycherley's rakish character Horner (discussed in Chapter Two). However, both Ravenscroft and Behn confiscate their rake's manipulative proficiencies for moral purposes, either in Ravenscroft's case by physically obstructing the rake's access or in Behn's by characterizing her rake as so vivacious that he cannot maintain his deception.

Though the broken coin may offer Hazard a key into Mrs. Manly's bedchamber, it will not suffice to grant him access into her household. Learcut, Mrs. Manly's avaricious merchant father, is the head of her household and thus has the most power to open or close his domestic space. However, Hazard both recognizes and plays on Learcut's avaricious character to more easily gain admittance. Hazard uses a ship he won gambling at Gravesend as a symbol of his wealth, and he produces several forged letters and bills of lading which he shares with Learcut; these letters and bills greatly exaggerate Hazard's wealth and foothold in trade, but they serve to impress Learcut who finds, "Since *Manley's* Rich, he may do what he please" (1.1 p. 24) with Mrs. Manly. Hazard effectively exploits his appearance of wealth to manipulate Learcut not only into accepting Hazard's identity as Mr. Manly, but then into excitedly awaiting Mrs. Manly's impregnation (2.1 p. 29). As an early rake, Hazard caters to the desires of others in order to disguise and fulfill his own subversive desires.

However, Hazard encounters more difficulty in that regard with Mrs. Manly than he does with her father. Though Izabel, Mrs. Manly's maid, calls Hazard "A pretty Gentleman" and also praises him for his fine "discourse" (3.1 p. 37), Mrs. Manly detects

what the others cannot. After the two have intercourse, Mrs. Manly accuses Hazard of being an imposter, but is unsure:

> Pray good Sir, stay, Alas! my troubled Brain's
> Distracted 'twixt the Love and Doubt of you;
> And by two Strengths of equal pow'r my Fears
> and my Affections bend two several wayes:
> Trembling I stand! Tortur'd between them both;
> But cannot yeild to the force of either.
> So willingly I pray to be deceived,
> That I could wish one Sense a Traytor to me,
> For all things else conspire in your reception;
> But this old trusty servant, the Sense of Hearing
> Evinces plainly you are not the man. (2.1 p. 28)

Mrs. Manly's powerful internal conflict between her attraction to Hazard and the evidence he has provided, and her trust in her own senses, reveals the difficulty of her situation. After waiting nine years for her husband, she is confronted with and sleeps with a man who manipulates his own personage in order to – almost – become Mr. Manly. Hazard may have a mastery of rhetoric, but he fails to fully embody Mr. Manly. Hazard can only *represent* Mrs. Manly's husband. Mrs. Manly displays an ability to see, or more accurately, hear through Hazard's deception. It seems here we have an argument by the playwright of *The Mistaken Husband* for the power of intuition to bypass the crisis of character which Lisa Freeman describes; Hazard may fail here as a trickster rake, to effectively manipulate the exterior signs of his character. Though Hazard manipulates his bodily surface, to use Lowenthal's terms, his body still signals his interior, authentic identity to Mrs. Manly. But the playwright rebuts their apparent argument for intuition and reemphasizes the persuasiveness of rhetoric when Hazard successfully applies poetic rhetoric to sway Mrs. Manly's feelings towards him.

Hazard refers back to the body as a signifier of interior identity when he attempts

to reassure Mrs. Manly, poetically relocating his argument according to her terms. Hazard asks,

> Please to consult the Steward of your Soul,
> And Ruler of your Senses, Your wise *Reason.*
> Ask if nine Winters cold, nine Summers Heats,
> And almost a continual emptiness
> Can chuse but alter th' Organs of the Voice? (2.1 p. 28)

Through the repetition of "nine," referring to the time of Mr. and Mrs. Manly's separation, and by justifying his "altered" voice by way of that separation, Hazard applies a poetic reasoning which is effective, but certainly not rigorous. Hazard looks to the body as a signifier of internal identity, but instead of his body revealing his fraud, he intelligently flips the argument to use his body as evidence of his identity as the long-lost Mr. Manly. Mrs. Manly believes Hazard after this, abandoning her fears and doubt and accepting that the years and supposed emotional turmoil have altered her husband's voice. Hazard's ability to utilize rhetoric to his advantage – i.e. his poetic, emotional appeal interestingly entwined with an appeal to logic – overpower Mrs. Manly's instincts, and land Hazard firmly in the category of rakes whose rhetorical abilities are their means of seduction.

Mrs. Manly's reasons for accepting Hazard as her husband are her desire for him and his ability to convince her of his "identity". But after she is confronted by her actual husband, Mrs. Manly becomes immediately aware of Hazard's deception. She states, "To be a Loyal Wife I must proclaim my self / A Strumpet" (4.4 p. 45), accurately describing the predicament she is in. Hazard reiterates her point: "Renounce him stiffly, or you know with what Tittle / The Town will qualifie you", and Mrs. Manly ultimately decides, "I must abominate a real Vertue, / That unto Vulgar eyes [she] seem unspotted" (4.4 p. 45). Rather than make public her adultery, Mrs. Manly decides to pretend not to know the real

Mr. Manly – placing her reputation above "a real Vertue". We have seen Hazard utilize homosocial customs, personal signs, and emotional appeals, but here Hazard bullies Mrs. Manly by calling to "The Town" - London, particularly the fashionable area of London – and Mrs. Manly's reputation therein. Hazard involves Mrs. Manly in his play with identity and appearance, pointing to why she might be compelled to favour an appearance incongruous with her internal identity: as the Town's social regulations are such that the negative consequences of appearing "spotted" outweigh her moral principles. The early Restoration rake, by involving others in his role-play, reveals the ubiquity of Freeman's crisis of character in London society.[4]

We can see here both how the early Restoration rake reveals and reflects Freeman's crisis of character, and also how the playwright of *The Mistaken Husband*'s treatment of his rake differs from that of the late Restoration and early eighteenth century. According to Freeman, in *A Bold Stroke for a Wife* (1718) the rakish "Fainwell … reveals a protean capacity to perform rather than inhabit each [character] type" (159), a description which could easily be applied to either early Restoration staged rakes Hazard or Horner (discussed in Chaper Two); however, where Centlivre "attempts to instill Fainwell with a reliable solidity" (159), the playwright of *The Mistaken Husband* is less concerned with providing their rake with a characteristic centre. Gollapudi describes Colley Cibber's method of communicating his rake character's reform in *Love's Last Shift* (1696) as "collapsing together the visible self and the inner moral self" (38); the transformation of the staged rake character throughout the Restoration is largely in how playwrights treat the crisis of character. Playwrights in the early Restoration use the rake character to reflect and reveal the crisis of character, but playwrights of the late

Restoration actually rely on a one-to-one correspondence between the rake's performance and his character in order to facilitate the rake's comprehensible reform to the audience.

Hazard further points to how the Town favours external appearances over internal "virtue" in a metatheatrical moment in the fourth Act. To convince Mrs. Manly to stay quiet (after she discovers his fraud), Hazard asks,

> How many Women whose names stand white in the Records of Fame, have acted willingly what you were wrought by fraud to suffer; only they keep it from the publique knowledge, and therefore they are innocent. How many Fair ones, were this your story acted in a Play, would come to see it sitting by their Husbands, and secretly accuse themselves of more. So full of spots and brakes is humane life, but only we see all things by false lights, which hide defects, and gloss 'ore what's amiss. (4.5 pp. 47-8)

Hazard alludes to women whose adultery is intentional, but who are innocent *due to* their discretion. Again, Hazard applies specious logic to push his claim (one may recollect the hypothetical tree falling in a forest with no one to hear it). Then, Hazard makes a metatheatrical reference, linking this argument to the comedy to the context of its production, and implicating the women in the audience. Hazard's third statement most powerfully comments on its context of production (and makes a general claim about humanity), arguing that we colour our own perception, only seeing the ideal. This third statement applies to the earlier discussion of Mrs. Manly, whose affection for Hazard motivates her to accept his reasoning, and him as Mr. Manly. It also applies to Mrs. Manly's dedication to Hazard after learning of his identity – she glosses over his history of deceit. The argument as a whole reveals the satirical intent of the comedy: to reveal the "spots" and "defects" which people commonly hide, or ignore. Hazard enforces the satire of *The Mistaken Husband* by exposing and exploiting these "spots," but he does not enforce the satire fully. This comedy's plot slips from subversive to socially cohesive

when Mrs. Manly accepts Hazard as her husband, because she chooses the option which will not disrupt her social standing. Similarly, Hazard abandons his satirical character when he takes Mr. Manly's place and conforms to the role of husband.

Hazard's transformation into a quasi-husband character begins early and violently. In this section I examine Mr. Manly's scar, which Hazard replicates to appear as Mr. Manly. In Hazard's attempts to convince Mrs. Manly that he is Mr. Manly, he "Imprinted [on his chest] the Scar of such a wound As [Mr. Manly] receiv'd in [Mrs. Manly's] quarrel once" (1.1 p. 13). Like the fraternal bonding practice of drinking alcohol, Mr. Manly is shown here to engage in a "typical" masculine act of dueling; however, this honourable masculine act was already becoming outdated as men's restraint and self-control became increasingly important in adhering to an English masculinity (Foyster 30, Shoemaker 135). Hazard, by imprinting – that is, digging – a scar on his chest, signals his honourable masculinity as well as his identity as Mr. Manly. However, this act is not only completely false, but it is violent and permanent in comparison to his adoption of romantic or fraternal behaviours. Hazard attempts to fully adopt the bodily surface of Mr. Manly; in doing so, he ably disguises his interior identity, but he is left with the mark of that adoption. He can never revert to his initial identity as his scar signals doubly – it signals his false identity as Mr. Manly and it signals the strike through his identity as Hazard.

In the final act, Hazard completes his transformation into a socially cohesive character, whose satirical edge is dulled by his own subversive activities. I return to my discussion of English law, as here it legitimates Hazard's "marriage" to Mrs. Manly – or at least, nullifies her marriage to Mr. Manly. Underwit states, "[Mr. Manly] has been above seven years away beyond Sea, and has never Writ her word he was alive; so that in

Law the Marriage is void" (Dryden 5.3 p. 67). According to Lawrence Stone, "Only in 1603 was bigamy first made a penal offence", and "the act followed custom in exempting persons whose spouses had been overseas or absent without news for seven years or more" (191). So the nullification of Mr. and Mrs. Manly's marriage in *The Mistaken Husband* has legal backing. But more significantly, this nullification decriminalizes Mrs. Manly's adultery and allows Hazard to legally fill Mr. Manly's role as husband. While the law here enables Hazard to subvert Mr. Manly's household authority entirely, by taking Mr. Manly's place as husband Hazard undermines his authority to satirize the household; Hazard turns from exploiting the discordance between the values of the law and the practice of it, to embracing the law as it stands. Similarly, Hazard turns from exploiting the discordance between one's internal identity and their outward appearance, to embracing outward appearance as reality.

Hazard undergoes a seeming moral transformation when he becomes Mrs. Manly's husband; he renounces his "wild follies and debaucheries" and pledges his dedication to Mrs. Manly (Dryden 5.3 p. 67). But what may be seen as a reformation of the rake reads instead ironically, as it is Hazard's very debaucheries which earn him his place as a quasi-husband. Hazard's revocation of his punitive licence, to borrow Corman's terms, comes with marriage; again, in Corman's terms, this allows the playwright to achieve a "mix" of punitive and sympathetic comedy, where "the manic energy of the punitive rogue is finally absorbed by the order of society, with the heroine offering more than adequate compensation for the loss of his licence for extravagance" (47). Hazard's manic energy is evidently absorbed by the order of society in that his criminal activities apparently cease with the "compensation" of Mrs. Manly and her estate. However,

Hazard's marital position in the conclusion of the comedy is also a *cuckold* position. In taking Mr. Manly's name and his marital status, Hazard also takes Mr. Manly's shame of cuckoldry: "'tis true I have had her before hand but that's but being my own Cuckold" (Dryden 5.3 p. 67). In the fulfilment of Hazard's cuckolding act, Hazard takes Mr. Manly's name and identity, assuming the cuckold position and abandoning his position as cuckold-maker. Hazard uses the passive voice in his statement, emphasizing not his cuckold making, but rather his being made into a cuckold. Instead of Hazard enforcing satire, in the conclusion of *The Mistaken Husband* it is Hazard who is satirized. But it is important to reiterate here that Hazard's loss of satirical authority is self-inflicted. Hazard is not like the "extravagant rake," who, according to Corman, "invariably overreaches himself and suffers a consequent humiliation" (48).[5] Poetic justice does not shame Hazard into reformation; Hazard's method of cuckold-making, to integrate himself into Mrs. Manly's family and to assume the identity of Mr. Manly, requires his assumption of the cuckold position.

In *The Mistaken Husband,* the playwright presents a masterful manipulator, Hazard, who exploits English law, fraternal bonding practices, signs of wealth and love, romantic rhetoric, and reputation's power to regulate behaviour, in order to cuckold Mr. Manly and gain Mrs. Manly's dowry. In his manipulation, Hazard reveals himself as an early Restoration, trickster stage rake whose performative abilities grant him the licence to satirize (in this case the husband who he cuckolds, English law, and an apparent fixation on external signs as verifiers of internal character), through his subversive cuckolding activity. However, Hazard also reveals how the early Restoration rake's method of role-adoption – his fluid identity – to cuckold without consequence undermines

his satirical authority. In this case, Hazard's exposure of the corruption and ineffectiveness of English law turns to a dependence on and acceptance of that very system of law to enable his permanent adoption of Mr. Manly's title. Hazard's active elision of his identity as a rake results in his adoption of the husband character role – the object of the cuckoldry plot's satire. In the next chapter I analyze Wycherley's *The Country Wife,* produced just one year after *The Mistaken Husband* in 1675, showing how though the particulars of Wycherley's rake's method differs greatly from the rake Hazard's, Wycherley's rake Horner also undermines his satirical authority by embracing a role that is counter to his rakish identity.

Notes

1. The note from Richard Bentley, the "Bookseller to the Reader," explains that *The Mistaken Husband* was "left in Mr. Dryden's hands many years since" and that "[a]fter Twelve years expectation, Mr. Dryden gave it to the Players" (8). From these statements, we cannot ascribe any particular author to the text. However, if Bentley's latter statement is accurate, we can tentatively date the play's inception to around 1663 – fifteen years before its printing. In my discussion of *The Mistaken Husband,* I cite Dryden as the author, and refer to the printing date, but it is important to keep the authorship and inception questions in mind throughout my discussion.
2. I use quotation marks here because Mr. Manly describes Learcut as "a Fellow rais'd from a Whole-sale Cheese-monger to be a Merchant, and Match into a Noble Family!" (4.4 p. 42). The implicit critique of class mobility present in this description provided the impetus to use quotation marks, as the playwright seems to question the legitimacy of Learcut's nobility. Regardless, Learcut's title and wealth would afford him legal protection that would not be available to the newly landed Mr. Manly.
3. In the following chapter, we will see another rake, Horner, exploit a fraternal rhetoric to disguise his lascivious intentions. However, we see a large shift in how the rake relates with other male characters in Ravenscroft and Behn's comedies; the rakes in those comedies partake in these activities and discourses genuinely and without ulterior motives. This is an example of how the rake became less subversive over the Restoration, as even his delinquent behaviour grew more honest.
4. Canfield describes that Hazard's allusion to the Town requires Mrs. Manly's conversion to "become Wycherley's Lady Fidget, Restoration comedy's greatest hypocrite" (125). In the next chapter, I discuss how Horner, who occupies the same comedy as Lady Fidget, exploits the Town's dedication to reputation as a signifier of a person's moral value. Horner and Hazard both craft a reputation for themselves that allows them to cuckold more easily (though that reputation looks quite different between the two), and they both allude to reputation to maintain their cuckolding relationships (though Hazard does so much more aggressively).
5. Robert Jordan formulates the character of the "extravagant rake" in "The Extravagant Rake in Restoration Comedy." Brian Corman draws from and builds on Jordan's model, tying the extravagant rake – particularly the convention of the extravagant rake's reformation – to his own discussion of how playwrights combined aspects of punitive and sympathetic comedy in the Restoration (particularly in *The Countrey Wit*, by John Crowne). Robert D. Hume also draws on Jordan's subcategory in "The Myth of the Rake in 'Restoration' Comedy," in his argument that playwrights who present extravagant rakes do not intend to seriously advance the rake's libertine ideology (50).

Chapter Two

From Wolf to Spaniel: Horner's Exchanges in *The Country Wife*

Wycherley's widely read comedy, *The Country Wife* (1675) contains complex representations, discussions, and critiques of the relationship between reputation and virtue, of husbandly behaviour and its apparent causal relationship with marital infidelity, and of the power of speech to represent character. In *The Country Wife*, the rake Horner plays the role of eunuch in order to gain close access to the wives of London, and to cuckold their husbands. Horner's performance convinces everyone but the jealous husband of the comedy of Horner's apparently monstrous character, but upon privately disclosing his falsehood to members of the "virtuous gang" (5.2 l. 90) – wives characterized by their hypocrisy – these wives immediately embrace the opportunity to secretly cheat on their husbands. By sleeping with these wives, Horner satirizes their hypocrisy (their reliance on reputation as a marker of virtue) as well as their husbands' negligence (their satisfaction in having an apparently impotent man keep their wives occupied). Horner asserts his superiority over Pinchwife, the jealous husband, in several ways: rhetorically, spatially, and finally, sexually – by cuckolding him. In this chapter, I examine Horner's mastery of rhetoric and commercial spaces – which indicate his mastery of romantic exchange, and show his control over his own image, and over other characters. I characterize Horner as having two major goals in *The Country Wife*: to cuckold as many husbands as possible, and to assert control over his private space. Although Horner may succeed in the former, he fails in the latter. Additionally, Horner's success in cuckolding husbands results in his submission to the "virtuous" wives he initially appears to satirize. Horner does succeed in cuckolding husbands, but his success

ultimately comes at the cost of his satirical edge; because Horner's cuckolding activity depends on his performance as a eunuch, Horner consigns himself in the conclusion of the comedy to that role, and loses the superior position he held in the comedy's opening. My discussion begins with the scholarship that informs my readings of Horner's rakish character. I then move to analyses of Horner's rhetorical and spatial prowess in the Exchange scene and the china scene; I then discuss Horner's appeals to misogyny and homosociality, finally moving to Horner's loss of satirical direction, power, and authority in the final act.

Horner is, in his own words, "a *Machiavel* in love" (4.3 ll. 63) – a description which attests to Horner's exploitative, amoral, and self-interested pursuit of power through sex. Robert D. Hume accurately describes Horner as a "rogue-hero, a trickster who cuckolds fools," and who possesses "an immense amount of self-control and [has] a profound understanding of the ways in which people can be manipulated" (43) – a description which aligns Horner with Hazard of *The Mistaken Husband*, another trickster rake. Much of this chapter describes what Horner's manipulative understanding looks like on stage, in order to characterize Horner as a performative master. As in the previous chapter, two important topics are important to keep in mind: Erin Mackie's discussion of the rake's "stylistic mastery" as largely setting him apart from other social characters (48), and Lisa Freeman's "crisis of character" - the discontinuity between appearance and identity with which playwrights in the eighteenth century were especially concerned (27); through Horner, we can see how the Restoration rake precedes the eighteenth-century concern and how the *early* Restoration rake successfully exploits the crisis of character. Horner's performative mastery involves mastery of space, rhetoric, and commerce, each

of which Horner employs to pursue illicit sex. Horner ably manipulates other characters so that they misunderstand *his* character, in order to cuckold husbands without their knowledge. However, Horner's success in adopting various roles and in exploiting those roles to satirize the Town's hypocrisy, Pinchwife's jealousy, and Jaspar's neglectfulness, depends on Horner's contradiction of his own character. In the comedy's conclusion, Horner's commitment to his self-fashioned role prevents his fulfilment of a satirist role. Horner's rakish performative mastery allows for his subversive cuckold-making, but his performance requires and results in his docility; *because* Horner is so successful as a covert cuckold-maker, he cannot fully enforce Wycherley's satire.

We can distinguish several rhetorical styles which Horner adopts throughout *The Country Wife.* The misogynist style is perhaps most blatant, and appears around Sir Jaspar most prominently. Horner's rhetoric when with Harcourt and Dorilant is also misogynistic, but he emphasizes male camaraderie with them, more than with anyone else. With Pinchwife, Horner is teasing and derisive – one example of this is after Pinchwife asserts, "there will be danger in making me a Cuckold," Horner responds, "Why, wert thou not well cur'd of thy last clap?" (Wycherley 4.3 ll. 299-301), making light of Pinchwife's threat by deriding him. Margery and the "virtuous gang" witness Horner's most affectionate and "honorable" discourse; Henry Ten Eyck Perry describes how Horner's "plot ... endears him to them [the "virtuous gang"] when they learn the truth, because their good names have been so well safeguarded" (48), and Knapp illustrates not only the contradictory double-meaning of the word "honor" in *The Country Wife,* but also the romantic associations that Lady Fidget makes between Horner's "honorable" sacrifice of his reputation to maintain hers (462). Both scholars adroitly

describe how Horner's relationships with women, generally, in *The Country Wife* are built around his self-portrayal as honourable. Horner's rhetoric seems most genuine with Quack, his accomplice and audience-figure, and Horner speaks with Quack in Horner's own lodgings – a space in which Horner plots, but which slowly loses its privacy.[1] So Horner adopts five different rhetorical styles in *The Country Wife,* with only one that can be understood as genuine. Horner's ability to adeptly switch between these styles evidences his rakish performative mastery, but Horner's commitment to his roles results both in his contradicting his own intentions and disorienting the comedy's satirical direction.

Horner's duplicitous manner makes it difficult to analyze his intentions, and to discern what social commentary Wycherley makes with Horner. Pat Gill aptly describes Horner's mastery of signs, but notes: "[Horner] is made up of directly contradictory facades that will collapse without support of their mutual opposition" (60). Horner's deceit does seem to result in his "becoming an extension of the perversion of language rather than a moral metacommentary on that perversion" (60); Gill argues that the satire loses its firm moral stance because Horner refuses to expose himself, Margery, and the "virtuous gang." However, Horner does, as Knapp argues, expose himself and the ladies to the audience, providing some satirical force (466); I support Knapp's reading of the comedy as requiring, on the part of the reader or audience, a "split subjectivity, which simultaneously enjoyed the triumph of Horner's witty immorality and counted its personal and social costs" (468). Such a reading allows us to view Horner as a satirist, but somewhat of a failed one. It seems that Wycherley actually satirizes Horner when we consider Horner's how Horner's stated goal of his cuckold making compares to his

situation at the comedy's conclusion. Horner tells Quack in the first scene how his new reputation as a eunuch will benefit him: "First, I shall be rid of all my old Acquaintances [...] that invade our Lodgings in a morning: And next, to the pleasure of making a New Mistriss, is that of being rid of an old One, and of all old Debts Love when it comes to be so, is paid the most unwillingly" (Wycherley 1.1 ll. 139-143). Horner seeks to cut off relations both with undesirable acquaintances and previous amours. Horner then alludes to promises of love he has made, by describing love as a debt – a debt that he will likely not have to repay now that his reputation has been adequately sullied. Horner seems to be more interested in the exploitation of vice than its exposure, as Gill argues, but Wycherley has Horner direct his cuckolding activity towards a jealous husband and a negligent one – typical butts of cuckolding satire.[2] Horner does, then, play the role of satirist, particularly as he exploits the folly of both husbands so that they facilitate their own horns. However, when the comedy ends we find Horner in the inverse situation he hoped for: his lodgings are invaded by every other character, and he remains trapped in the sexual relationships he establishes throughout the course of the comedy.

Horner's mastery of monetary, sexual, and verbal exchange is reflected perfectly in the Exchange scene of *The Country Wife.* In Act 3, Scene 2, Pinchwife dresses Margery as a boy and brings her through the exchange, where she notes the "power of brave signs" (Wycherley 3.2 l. 181) – the bull, ram, and stag – which induce anxiety in the jealous Pinchwife, to whom all signs with horned animals point to cuckoldry. Gill analyzes this scene to show Pinchwife's inept manipulation of signs, and Horner's comparative aptitude, and also to argue that "Horner's false claim of sexual incompetence throws awry the whole system of sexual signification" (Gill 71). It is certainly difficult to parse the

Exchange scene in *The Country Wife,* as Horner's exploitation of Margery's disguise confuses our understanding of his sexual desires. However, if we presume that Horner is aware of Margery's identity throughout the scene – not an unreasonable presumption, as even Pinchwife notes how "sillily" Margery carries her disguise (3.2 l. 375) – then a closer examination of Horner's blatant flirtation is possible. Horner is able to manipulate the system of sexual signification that he has thrown awry, and the audience follows; we, unlike Pinchwife, are in on the secret. I examine Horner's rhetoric in this scene, as he maintains his facade as a eunuch to Dorilant and Harcourt while pursuing sex with Margery by exploiting her disguise as a boy. Horner de-sexualizes his flirtation by framing it as a homosocial activity.[3] In addition, I examine Horner's ability to direct Margery and Pinchwife's movement in the Exchange; this ability reaffirms Horner's power over Pinchwife and Horner's mastery of romantic exchange. I then examine Margery's role in this scene, as an agent as well as an object of desire.

Horner begins complimenting Margery almost immediately after greeting Pinchwife, which seems to conflict with his false characterization as a eunuch; why Dorilant and Harcourt are not surprised when Horner flirts with Margery – calling her "pretty" thrice in thirteen lines (3.2 l. 370, 380, 383) – is initially unclear, after Horner has declared his "hate" for women loudly and repeatedly in the preceding scenes. Horner does eventually give Dorilant and Harcourt reason to aid in his advances towards Margery, by stating: "let us torment this jealous Rogue a little" (3.2 l. 424). Because Pinchwife is the object of Horner's statement – Margery is not mentioned at all – Horner frames his flirtation as homosocial, rather than heterosexual. Horner avoids giving either Dorilant or Harcourt an indication that he has any sexual motivation, and thus avoids contradicting

his prior misogynist characterization. To Pinchwife, who is unaware of Horner's new reputation, Horner's advances on Margery are actual threats – and his anxiety is justified. Margery hardly disguises her attraction to Horner; in an aside, she states, "... he's a curious fine Gentleman, and I love him already too" (3.2 ll. 393-394). Margery's prompt attraction to Horner can be explained by their shared youth, by his affectionate proclamations to her, and perhaps also by Margery's warm spirits. While Pinchwife neglects to compliment Margery throughout the entire comedy – except when justifying his jealousy (2.1 l. 106) – Horner mentions that he loves Margery twice in this scene (3.2 l. 391, 444) and calls her handsome, beautiful, and lovely. The effects of Horner's flattery are to agonize Pinchwife, and to attract Margery's sincere interest. So Horner not only asserts his mastery over Pinchwife by exploiting Pinchwife's attempt to disguise Margery, he does so without compromising his own disguise.[4]

The Exchange itself is a public space where business is conducted; Pinchwife fears this space as he lacks the authority here to limit either Margery or her prospective gallants' space. Both Pinchwife and Horner perceive the Exchange as a space of romantic (or sexual) exchange, but Pinchwife hopes to avoid any "business" that may come. In his discussion of the signs in the Exchange scene, Tim Keenan states, "for Pinchwife they are emblems of his own destiny intensified by Margery's sensual consumerism that desires a 'belly full' of the Exchange" (Keenan 48). Margery seems on one hand to indeed be the sensual consumer in this scene, set in the center of commercial exchange in London, but on the other hand seems to be an object of exchange. Pinchwife invokes the rhetoric of romantic exchange repeatedly in this scene, usually when attempting to move Alithea or Margery out of this commercial space. Pinchwife states, referring to Alithea's fiancé

Sparkish, “The Fool her Gallant, and she, will muster up all the young santerers of this place, and they will leave their dear Seamstresses to follow us” (Wycherley 3.2 ll. 173-174); Pinchwife is correct, as Horner has already sighted Margery and decided to pursue her. Pinchwife's statement is more interesting, however, in that the sexualized commerce that Pinchwife refers to – the “dear Seamstresses” – is applied to himself. Pinchwife becomes the unwilling purveyor of Margery's body, reinforcing the comedy's notion that Pinchwife's horns are self-inflicted.[5] Pinchwife again conflates the commercial and the sexual in his denunciation of Sparkish's loose grip on Alithea, stating, “He that shews his wife, or money will be in danger of having them borrowed sometimes” (3.2 ll. 340-341). This line foreshadows Horner's abduction of the willing Margery later in the scene, and supports Knapp's description of Pinchwife's character, as revolving “around guarding a woman's sexual actions as possessions which might be pilfered by another man” (Knapp 457).[6] Upon entering a discussion with Horner, Pinchwife attempts to excuse himself by stating, “I have business, Sir, and must mind it; your business is pleasure, therefore you and I must go different wayes” (3.2 ll.368-369). This line not only sets Pinchwife apart from the rakes by calling attention to his occupation, but also by calling to the rakes' sexual priorities.[7] Both Horner and Pinchwife have “business” in the Exchange, Horner's business being not simply to “torment this jealous Rogue a little” (Wycherley 3.2 l. 424) – the excuse he gives Harcourt and Dorilant – but to begin his process of cuckolding Pinchwife.

Margery, disguised as a boy, stands as a token of herself in the Exchange scene; Pinchwife cannot acknowledge her actual identity, and Horner is thus able to court Margery publicly. Margery stands between the three rakes and Pinchwife, and the three

compliment her figure. Horner calls her (being disguised) “a very pretty commendation” (3.2 ll. 409) – that is, her “brother” is a commendation to Margery. Their appraisal of Margery here positions her as an object of exchange. Horner is the potential buyer, and Pinchwife is the unwilling purveyor. Pinchwife attempts to manipulate Margery's appearance, but does so ineffectively; Horner, who himself is proficient in role play, perceives the obvious discordance between Margery's appearance and her identity and exploits it. After Horner sneaks Margery out of Pinchwife's sight, Margery returns loaded with oranges and dried fruit (3.2 stage directions l. 518). As Margery relates in detail to Pinchwife in Act 4, Scene 2, Horner kissed her “an hundred times” (4.2 l. 18). In this exchange, Margery acts as purveyor of her own sexuality, rather than as a sexual object – a sort of prostitute role, emphasized by the Wycherley's allusion to female orange sellers – Horner again being the buyer.[8] However, upon returning to Pinchwife, her role returns to that of commodity. Pinchwife, in an aside: “You [Horner] have only squeez'd my Orange, I suppose, and given it me again” (3.2 ll. 526-527), conflating Margery with the oranges she carries, and despairing at Horner's consumption of her. Margery may enter the Exchange as a consumer, but she leaves as a commodity in an unequal trade between Horner and Pinchwife – a trade which Horner dominates.

Horner is similarly a master of space in this scene. When Pinchwife attempts to leave, Horner “[t]akes hold of Mrs. Pinchwife” (3.2 l. 370), aggressively preventing their departure. The next stage direction to do with Margery's movement on stage comes when Pinchwife “[o]ffers to take her away” (3.2 l. 386). The term “offers” is slightly ambiguous, and equally unclear is whether or not Pinchwife is able to lead Margery out of Horner's grasp. Pinchwife does mention in an aside, “I wish she and I were well out of

their hands" (3.2 ll. 432-433), indicating that she is indeed held by Horner until he, Harcourt, and Dorilant briefly exit the scene. Pinchwife's inability to move Margery away from Horner attests both to Margery's attraction to Horner and to Pinchwife's powerlessness – Horner "takes" and Pinchwife "offers." Horner then waits for Pinchwife to exit before he leads Margery off stage. Alithea believes they are only in "the next walk" (3.2 l. 486), but Horner actually leads Margery into a house "next to the Exchange" (4.2 l. 10). Pinchwife cannot navigate the Exchange proficiently, and amusingly exits and re-enters the scene repeatedly, before Margery returns with the fruit of Horner's labour. Pinchwife's erratic movements contrast Horner's much more deliberate and straightforward direction; Horner displays his mastery of space and movement in the Exchange, acting authoritatively in this space of romantic and commercial exchange, and Pinchwife reacts subordinately.

Horner's control of space in *The Country Wife* is similarly evident in the china scene when he, offstage, cuckolds Sir Jaspar who is on stage; Horner first takes Sir Jaspar's "cue" (4.3 l. 81) and redefines his lodging as a commercial space (the china house). He then tells Lady Fidget to "[l]ock the door" (4.3 l. 105), thus preventing Sir Jaspar from entering his chamber – the location of the exchange of china for sex between Horner and Lady Fidget. Horner's desire to exert power over other men is most evident in this scene, and it is true when he tells Sir Jaspar, "though you laugh now, 'twill be my turn e're long" (4.3 l. 116). Horner anticipates turning Jaspar into the butt of Wycherley's satirical joke, and the audience is invited to share Quack's position of "voyeur who watches from behind the screen not so much Horner's cuckolding activity but the cuckolds' delivering of their women to him" (Canfield 128). Canfield accurately describes

the audience's position in the china scene, a position which signals Horner's role as an exposer of folly – a satirical enforcer. But it is not only men who Horner delights in tricking; when the equally ignorant Squeamish asks for some of Horner's "china," Horner replies, "I cannot make China for you all, but I will have a Rol-waggon for you too, another time" (4.3 ll. 193-194) – foreshadowing their sexual relations further in the comedy. Horner adeptly plays on Lady Fidget's partial understanding of his statement's sexual implication, and the other characters' very literal understanding of "Rol-waggon" as a vase. Horner performs as a purveyor of both sex and china, conflating the two in both his language and his private space. Horner's ability to freely enter private spaces with Lady Fidget – even getting "into her the back way" (4.3 ll. 119-120) – and his ability to exclude men from those spaces both point to his performative mastery. The three characters, Squeamish, Jaspar, and Old Lady Squeamish, wait in confusion outside Horner's Lodging, Squeamish unable to find a way inside (4.3 l. 174), while Quack observes in bewilderment. Horner closes off his private space to all but Lady Fidget, his sexual partner, and shares with her (and Quack) their private joke while Jaspar waits contentedly – this scene can be viewed as containing Horner's central conceit; Horner directs the other characters, invoking duplicitous language, and cuckolds unwitting husbands. Horner dominates the other characters' movement on the stage throughout *The Country Wife*, and shows himself to be a master of the Exchange space as well as romantic exchange in general. Horner aligns with the early staged rake Hazard whose confinement of Mr. Manly and Learcut reveal his own spatial mastery. In chapters three and four, we will observe how playwrights of the later Restoration limit the rake's spatial authority – as a part of a broader attempt to confiscate the rake's satirical authority.

Previously in this chapter I discussed, briefly, Horner's ability to maintain the illusion of fraternity with Harcourt and Dorilant, in the Exchange scene. The following discussion covers Horner's strategic misogyny and his rhetorical appeals to homosociality in more depth. Throughout *The Country Wife,* Horner practices his rhetorical mastery by performing differently depending on his audience. Around Sir Jaspar, Horner speaks in a misogynistic way; lines such as, "I do know your Wife, Sir, she's a Woman, Sir, and consequently a Monster, Sir, a greater Monster than a Husband, Sir" (1.1 ll. 74-75), emphasize Horner's supposed distaste for women. Horner's description of husbands as monsters may ally him with poorly treated wives, but if we consider cuckolds as monsters, given their horns, then Horner's description also connotes the misogynistic notion that all wives commit adultery; Horner's account gives no room for husbands *not* to be monsters. More explicitly, Horner compares "Woman" to the

> more noble Creature a Spaniel, [who] has all their tricks, can fawn, lye down, suffer beating, and fawn the more; barks at your Friends, when they come to see you; makes your bed hard, gives you Fleas, and the mange sometimes: and all the difference is, the Spaniel's the more faithful Animal, and fawns upon one Master. (2.1 ll. 454-460)

Horner's comparison here is disturbing – he condones beating women, and describes women as nagging, diseased, and disloyal. All three of the "virtuous gang" are understandably appalled; Sir Jaspar laughs, and tries to convince them to accept Horner as "a supernumerary Gentleman-Usher" (2.1 l. 475). Horner's adopted misogynistic language, however, assures Sir Jaspar of Horner's harmlessness, as he is now detested by Lady Fidget. Horner's misogyny, like his reputation as a eunuch, instills detest in both husbands and wives but also instills a sense of security in husbands; Horner exploits the crisis of character in an interesting way by manipulating his appearance to seem not only

monstrous (as a eunuch), but also utterly immoral.

Both Horner's monstrous and immoral appearance serve to secure his interests, as husbands like Jaspar believe that Horner's misogyny *and* impotence are genuine – and thus perceive him as no threat; Horner is a master of the misogynist eunuch role, like the early staged rake Hazard is a master of the gentleman role. Both rakes disingenuously and masterfully perform roles (one of a moral character and the other as a monster) to pursue cuckoldry, and lead to my characterization of the early Restoration staged rake as a master of role play. As I show in chapters three and four, playwrights in the late Restoration alter and de-authorize the rake character by transferring his performative mastery – his primary method of cuckold-making – to wife characters. However, as I argue in chapter 1, early Restoration playwrights do undermine their rake characters' satirical authority, just more subtly than the late Restoration playwrights. While Horner's performance allows him time with Lady Fidget away from her husband, the dialogue in this scene – particularly Horner's reference to Spaniels – foreshadows Horner's emasculation, or perhaps more aptly, dehumanization at the hands of the virtuous gang. However, before discussing how Wycherley dulls Horner's satirical edge, I further describe how Wycherley constructs Horner as a rakish performative master through Horner's appeals to fraternity and reputation in *The Country Wife.*

Horner's friends, Dorilant and Harcourt, display their wit immediately upon entering the stage, teasing Horner for his soiled reputation with the women of the Town (1.1 ll. 166-189). Although Horner maintains some of the misogynistic rhetoric he applies around Sir Jaspar, he emphasizes homosociality – male-male bonds – with his friends. Horner promotes wine over love in a series of binaries, for example, "Wine makes us

witty, Love only Sots: Wine makes us sleep, Love breaks it" (1.1 ll. 209-210), and the other two join Horner's game. Dorilant sees the "reason" (1.1 l. 211) of Horner's argument – this is poetic, rather than logical, reasoning.[9] Each of these rakish characters display their wit by engaging in Horner's rhetorical game, but Horner displays his social mastery by catering to his friends' expectations of his changed character (the misogynist eunuch) while maintaining their friendship by promoting alcohol. Horner's sexual reputation does not seem to play a large role in his relationships with Dorilant and Harcourt; the friends can still engage in homosocial practices, such as excessive alcohol consumption and witty ridicule.[10] The three rakish characters rail at Sparkish, for his pretensions to politics and to wit, and at Pinchwife for his jealousy. It seems that Pinchwife and Horner's friends are the company around which Horner's rakish persona appears. In these interactions, Horner's rakish persona looks like the Restoration rake that Anna Bryson describes, whose flagrant anti-civility defines his libertinism (252). However, Horner's libertinism has more depth than he lets on. Horner provides a good example of the disjunction between the Restoration rake in English society and the presentation the Restoration rake on the early Restoration stage; he is not a comical representation of a rakish person, but a staged trickster rake who disingenuously adopts even rakish rhetoric to manipulate his friends and advance his libertine intrigues. As I show in the following section, Wycherley troubles the relationship between these rakish characters and the trickster rake, Horner; although these character types are both libertines, Wycherley seems to argue that they are not compatible. For while Horner's friends genuinely enjoy the rhetorical games they play, Horner simply uses those games in self-interest. Dorilant's easy conversion to Hazard's apparent viewpoint portrays him as a fool; in this way, Hazard satirizes even the

mannish rakes with whom he associates. Like Hazard, Horner brings to attention how the practices and discourses of male bonding can be exploited for self-interest. But Wycherley has Horner undermine his authority to satirize in two ways: by targeting Harcourt and Alithea, Horner loses some moral backing to his satire; also, Horner's method requires him to maintain and submit to social order, rather than disrupt and escape it.

As the devilish or immoral rake, Horner plays along with Margery's lie – that Alithea and Horner have had sexual relations. Harcourt, as Alithea's suitor, is set directly against Horner in this closing scene, and their conversation apart from the others onstage reveals the tension between them:

> *Har*. ... *Horner* I must now be concern'd for this Ladies Honour.
> *Hor*. And I must be concern'd for a Ladies Honour too.
> *Har*. This Lady has her Honour, and I will protect it.
> *Hor*. My Lady has not her Honour, but has given it me to keep, and I will preserve it.
> *Har*. I understand you not.
> *Hor*. I wou'd not have you. (5.4 ll. 254-261)

Horner's dedication to Margery, here, is in line with his commitment to clandestine sexual relationships over fraternal relationships; in addition, his favour of his "Lady" over his friend supports a characterization of the rake not only as a sexual outlet for unhappily married women, but as a shallow character – whose concerns are appearances, rather than reality. Horner and Harcourt's quick exchange reveals the comedy's focus on honour, and the two-sided definition of the term. Peggy A. Knapp discusses the dual meanings of the term "honour", as well as six other bifurcated terms that are prominent in *The Country Wife.* She claims,

The bifurcation of the word *honor* in Renaissance usage is a sign of the vacillation

> in seventeenth-century thought and feeling between a shame culture in which one's moral identity rests on public esteem or disgrace and a guilt culture which stresses inward awareness. (Knapp 461)

The comedy's bifurcation of "honour" is evident in Horner and Harcourt's discussion; Horner wishes to "preserve" Margery's honour in the "shame culture" of *The Country Wife,* while Harcourt hopes to "make all the world believe" that Alithea "has her Honour" – not based on her reputation, but on his accurate awareness of her character. Horner's ability to tease out the term's ambiguity shows his mastery of rhetoric, but his willingness to deceive and confuse Harcourt as well as his complicity with Margery in tarnishing Alithea's reputation place Horner in opposition to the romantic couple of *The Country Wife*. Horner has deceived Harcourt throughout the entirety of the comedy, of course, but by implicating Alithea in his satire, Horner weakens its effect; Corman describes how Horner's success as a "rogue-hero ... overshadows those characters like Alithea who are bound to the rules of conventional morality" (34), but Horner does more than overshadow. Horner involves Alithea, whose "Honour" is genuine, with the "virtuous gang," and in doing so he broadens his satire to the point of ineffectiveness. Horner not only troubles his social position by making an enemy of his friend Harcourt, but Horner also diminishes his satirical authority by targeting a wife who stands in moral opposition to Wycherley's satirical butts. So although Wycherley does not advance a moral critique of the rake as explicitly as Ravenscroft or Behn do (as discussed in the following chapters), Wycherley reveals how ineffective the rake character is in targeting a specific satirical butt; thus, Wycherley undermines his rake character's satirical authority via the rake's dedication to covert cuckoldry.

Without the aid of Lucy – Alithea's maid – who tells the company a compelling lie, it is hard to see how their relationship might be salvaged. Canfield notes how Quack and Lucy prevent Harcourt and Horner's "deadly rivalry" (129); although the two men do not duel, neither do they reconcile to each other, and Horner still sacrifices his homosocial bonds. But more significant than Harcourt and Horner's broken friendship which emphasizes the rake's staunch and unwavering commitment to his sexual relations, is how Horner's rescue comes at the hands of a maid. Horner does not seem overly concerned with asserting power over women; when Quack asks Horner "how fadges the new design" (Wycherley 4.3 l. 1), Horner responds, "last night I was drunk with half a dozen of your civil persons, as you call 'em ... and am already come to the privileges of sleeping on their Pallats, warming Smocks, tying Shooes and Garters, and the like" (4.3 ll. 8-13). Although Horner emphasizes his proximity to the "civil persons," his role seems to be one of servitude, rather than of control or satire. Gill accurately describes how "[t]he women's ridicule of [Horner] ... serves not merely to hide his virility but to tame it" (60). Gill's point can be further attested to by the resolution of the plot in *The Country Wife*. When Margery almost reveals Pinchwife's horns, Horner is unable to take control of the scene. It is Lucy who offers to "fetch [Horner] off" (Wycherley 5.4 l. 315), and she provides a story which contains the lie that Horner had not been sleeping with Margery, and the truth that he had not been sleeping with Alithea – Alithea and the "virtuous gang" quickly support this story. Horner's rescue comes not from his own wit, but from a more communal and female "forgetting" - specifically, his rescue comes from a maid, reinforcing Horner's dependence on women, and perhaps indicating a loss of class-based power. Horner loses his rhetorical mastery at a pivotal moment, relying on the abilities of

women; this moment where Horner is at a loss for words reflects perfectly Horner's loss of rakish authority and manipulative ability.

Not only does Horner lose his rhetorical fluency in the final act, but he also loses his spatial mastery – he fails his stated objective to be rid of the "Duns" that "invade [his] lodgings" (1.1 l. 140). While in the fifth act Quack notes upon entering Horner's lodgings that Horner is "all alone, not so much as one of [Horner's] Cuckolds here, nor one of their Wives" (5.2 ll. 1-2), it is not long before both Pinchwife and Jaspar, Horner's two cuckolds, enter as well. Horner's "private feast" (5.2 l. 104) with Margery is interrupted when the virtuous gang enters his lodging "too soon – before I have sent back my new – Mistress" (5.4 ll. 1-2).[11] Horner then locks Margery in his room while he entertains the gang – an interesting echo of the china scene, wherein he locks Lady Fidget in his room. However, whereas in the china scene Horner's manipulation of space allows him to assert his power over other characters, in this scene Horner locks his room as a reaction. The virtuous gang imposes on Horner's personal space, preventing him from achieving sexual fulfilment – contradicting Horner's use of space to facilitate sexual fulfilment in the china scene. In addition, every character in the play appears in Horner's lodgings in the final scene, completely dominating his private space. Horner successfully gains four new mistresses; Pinchwife contents himself with willing self-deceit (5.4 ll. 410-411), and Jaspar continues to believe that Horner is a eunuch after Quack assures him, "upon the word of a Physician" (5.4 l. 346). So Horner is able to "preserve" Margery's honour (that is, her reputation) as well as both Fidget and Mrs. Squeamish's, largely due to Lucy's help. Horner also avoids punishment himself for his cuckold-making, again thanks to Lucy. However, Horner fails to regulate the boundaries of his private space – the only

space he seems able to discourse honestly. Horner's failure to spatially maneuver the other characters on stage in the final scene contradicts Wycherley's characterization of Horner as a spatial master throughout the comedy, reflecting how this rake's successful cuckolding endeavours result in him losing the detached power he initially holds; Horner becomes integrated with the duns and hypocrites he initially satirizes, and he becomes subject to those satirical butts. Wycherley here completely undermines his rake character's satirical authority by placing the rake in a subordinate position to the rake's intended satirical butts; Wycherley also signals to us how the rake character through the Restoration is progressively (as well as more explicitly) subordinated by playwrights to the wives who the rake intends to cuckold. As I discuss in the following chapters, playwrights Ravenscroft and Behn of the later Restoration very explicitly require their rake characters to submit to wife characters.

Perry describes Horner as "the ideal hero for a Restoration Comedy: he has no illusions and apparently no emotions; certainly he has no vices aside from purely animal ones" (47). This description is accurate; Horner acts as a Machiavel, and seems almost solely interested in sex. Horner displays his mastery of rhetoric by continually adjusting his speech to conform to the varied personae he constructs for himself – those personae being the outright misogynist, the rakish misogynist, the self-sacrificing lover, and the teasing rival. Horner plays to Sir Jaspar's expectations of a eunuch's behaviour, and is able to – at first – maintain his fraternal bonds with the hyper-masculine Harcourt and Dorilant even while his virility, the most potent sign of his masculinity, is suspect. Horner also seems to be a master of space in *The Country Wife*; he directs the movement of both men and women in various scenes, particularly the Exchange scene and the china scene.

Furthermore, Horner's proficiency in these scenes points to his expertise in romantic exchange, wherein women act both as sexual subjects and objects.

Horner's primary objectives in the comedy, which can be understood only in his conversations with Quack (as none of his other conversations can be read as genuine), are to gain safe and easy "access" to as many wives as possible, and to govern his own private space. Horner is successful in his first objective, but his success comes at the cost of his satirical authority. Instead of exposing the hypocrisy of the "virtuous gang," Horner becomes their "spaniel," to adopt Horner's language. Additionally, Horner's commitment to both his secrecy and the reputation of Margery results in Horner confusing and derailing Wycherley's satire, as Horner involves Alithea. Horner's desire to control his private space is unfulfilled; despite his ability to govern commercial spaces (or spaces constructed as commercial), Horner loses his detached satirical position, becoming subject to *their* whims rather than vice versa, in the final scene when he fails to govern the other characters' movement into his house. Horner displays his rakishness by adopting roles, masterfully manipulating the other characters on stage so that they misunderstand his character and intentions. Horner's method of role-adoption provides him opportunities to satirize husbands *and* wives through cuckoldry. However, Horner's dedication to the roles he adopts – his method of cuckold-making – is exactly what undermines his satirical authority at the close of the comedy. In *The Country Wife,* Wycherley presents an early Restoration rake who fails as a satirical enforcer due to his success as a cuckold-maker. In the next chapter, we will see how Ravenscroft fragments the rake character in *The London Cuckolds,* necessitates the rake's genuine homosociality, and undermines his rake Ramble's satirical authority more explicitly than either Wycherley or the author of *The*

Mistaken Husband.

Notes

1. See David D. Mann, "The Function of the Quack in *The Country Wife"*. *Restoration: Studies in English Literary Culture, 1660-1700,* vol. 7, no. 1, 1983, pp. 19-22.
2. See Pat Gill, *Interpreting Ladies: Women, Wit, and Morality in the Restoration Comedy of Manners* for her discussion of the various cuckolded husband types.
3. Sedgwick discusses how "Horner is able to pretend, mockingly and opportunistically, to his men friends that he now can value only homosocial bonds. ... He does this, however, actually in order to be brought near the women" (57). Sedgwick does not analyse the Exchange scene in her chapter, but I argue that Horner uses this strategy, veiling his heterosexual aims with homosocial appeals, in the Exchange. I wish to emphasize, not Horner's motivations, but his impeccable method.
4. See Gill, *ibid.* for a discussion of Horner's superior sign manipulation.
5. Gill, *ibid.* Perry, Henry Ten Eyck. "William Wycherley: 1640?-1716." *The Comic Spirit in Restoration Drama: Studies in the Comedy of Etherege, Wycherley, Congreve, Vanbrugh, and Farquhar*. New York: Russell & Russell, 19621925. Vieth, David M. "Wycherley's *The Country Wife*: An Anatomy of Masculinity." *Papers on Language and Literature* 2.4, 1966, pp. 335-350.
6. Pinchwife's grip on Margery is excessively tight. Knapp discusses the double meaning of "pinch" in *The Country Wife* as indicating both "excessive frugality" and "a common form of spousal abuse in this period" (Knapp 456, 457). This double meaning certainly coincides with Pinchwife's characterization, and as Knapp argues, makes it difficult for us to "return him to the familiar comic role of cuckold-who-deserves-his-fate" (457).
7. David M. Vieth, in *Wycherley's* The Country Wife: *An Anatomy of Masculinity*, implies that Sir Jaspar and Pinchwife's shared penchant for business over pleasure is an aspect of their inferior masculinity. Cuckoldry plots which involve working or merchant cuckolds, such as Ravenscroft's *The London Cuckolds,* Behn's *The Lucky Chance,* or Vanbrugh's *The Provoked Wife* seem to support Vieth's implication.
8. See Alison Margaret Conway's *The Protestant whore: courtesan narrative and religious controversy in England, 1680-1750* for a discussion of how orange sellers were often associated with prostitutes in Restoration England.
9. Hazard, in *The Mistaken Husband,* applies similarly poetic reasoning to woo his prospective lover, Mrs. Manly. Figurative language and metaphor, seem in both these comedies, to compel people akin to logical reasoning – characters in these comedies readily accept specious logic; this ready acceptance may point to the playwrights' critiques of the period's trend toward politeness – eloquent speech does not necessarily signal true or honest statements.
10. Shepard, in "From Anxious Patriarchs to Refined Gentlemen? Manhood in Britain, circa 1500-1700," describes the role of alcohol in homosocial bonding, and Reinke-Williams finds many jests of the seventeenth-century based in taverns, in his article, "Misogyny, Jest-Books and Male Youth Culture in Seventeenth-Century England."
11. Horner does not clarify whether he shares this metaphorical feast with Margery, or

whether she is to be “consumed;” again, as in the Exchange scene, Margery's place as consumer or consumed is ambiguous.

Chapter Three

Edward Ravenscroft's Fragmentation and Declawing of the Rake in *The London Cuckolds*

The London Cuckolds (performed 1681, printed 1682), by Edward Ravenscroft, has an interesting and complex role in the development of the Restoration rake. The comedy follows three husbands, three wives, and three gallants – young male lovers. The wives, Peggy, Arabella, and Eugenia, each cheat on their husbands, Wiseacres, Doodle, and Dashwell (respectively), with one or two of the gallants, Ramble, Townly, and Loveday. In *The London Cuckolds,* each gallant embodies certain rakish traits, but the comedy as a whole fragments and "tames" – removes the aggressive sexuality of – the rake character. Firstly, only one of the rakish characters intentionally seeks varied sexual experiences, and the one who does so (Ramble) is taught through humiliation to abstain from such behaviour. Secondly, the wife characters, Eugenia and Arabella, orchestrate their extra-marital affairs and enforce the comedy's satire themselves; Ravenscroft underplays the cuckold-makers' seductive and subversive qualities by characterizing Eugenia and Arabella as active and industrious seekers of male sexual goods. Thirdly, each rakish character possesses some qualities that can be associated with the early staged Restoration rake, but clearly lacks others which would allow us to fully characterize them as that sort of rake. Ravenscroft's fragmentation of the rake character opens the rake's characteristics to more people (i.e. women and the forming middle class), while simultaneously eliminating the rake character; there is no fully rakish character in *The London Cuckolds*, if we are to use the early Restoration staged rakes Hazard and Horner as exemplars. Instead, there are in Ravenscroft's comedy many characters with different

rakish qualities. Ravenscroft's fragmentation of the rake character signals a shift in Restoration playwrights' treatment of the rake, from implicitly critiquing the rake's cuckold-making method as undermining the rake's satirical intent, to explicitly critiquing the rake's cuckold-making method by foiling the rake's attempts to orchestrate cuckoldry and by transferring the performative abilities that make the early rake's clandestine cuckold-making possible to wife characters and a merchant. This shift reveals Ravenscroft's hesitation to grant the libertine, aristocratic rake with authorial power, and predicts the more explicit critiques of the rake's moral infirmity in Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (discussed in Chapter 4) and the comedies of the 1690s and early eighteenth century.

In the following discussion, I describe the scholarship that informs my analysis of *The London Cuckolds,* pointing to the implications of that scholarship on my reading of the comedy. Afterwards, my discussion falls into three basic categories. I first briefly discuss the merchant character Loveday, whose class and romantic motivations prevents his association with the early Restoration staged rake – while his method of cuckold-making simultaneously facilitates that association. Loveday signals Ravenscroft's opening up of rakish characteristics to male characters who are *not* aristocratic. I then discuss the rakes Townly and Ramble, focusing on Ramble's failures as a rake and his quasi-reform to Townly's sexually opportunistic behavioural paradigm. Ramble and Townly most closely resemble the Restoration rake in history as described by Bryson and Mackie, in terms of their aristocratic status and profligate behaviour (Bryson 244, Mackie 40). They also both (more or less successfully) attempt to cuckold husbands, engaging in that very rakish illicit activity. However, Townly's romantic motivations and

opportunistic cuckold-making method, and Ramble's conformation to Townly's method each signal their departure from the early staged rake character. In addition, Ramble and Townly's rhetorical and performative failures further signal Ravenscroft's hesitation to grant his aristocratic rakes with the subversive proficiencies of the early staged rake. In the third discussion, I examine the wife characters Arabella and Eugenia, who display the rakish rhetorical and performative mastery of the early staged rakes Hazard and Horner, and who claim satirical authority in *The London Cuckolds*. Each discussion points to Ravenscroft's "declawing" of the rake character: the second discussion shows how Ravenscroft explicitly curtails his aristocratic rake's sexuality and cuckold-making authority; the first and third discussions show how Ravenscroft transfers characteristics of the rake – particularly those characteristics which empower the rake to seduce wives and to covertly cuckold husbands – to characters who cannot be accurately described as rakes, thereby removing from the aristocratic libertine rake his satirical privilege.

The sexual politics of cuckolding are as relevant in my analysis of the rakes of *The London Cuckolds* as they are in my analysis of earlier staged Restoration rakes, as cuckolding in *The London Cuckolds* still involves an assertion of power by the cuckold-maker onto the cuckold. I frame much of my discussion on the cuckold-makers in *The London Cuckolds* with Brian Corman's discussion in *Genre and Generic Change in English Comedy 1660-1710* regarding "punitive" and "sympathetic" comic action; punitive comic action, to Corman, is generated by "the pursuit of cuckolding and/or money" whereas "courtship provides the outline for most sympathetic comic action" (15). Though Ravenscroft's comedy involves much punitive action (three cuckolds are made), Ravenscroft displays his affinity with the "mixt way" of comedy by portraying

romantically inclined – sympathetic – characters, Townly and Loveday, whose punitive cuckolding action against the humour characters – the husbands – are motivated by love. Additionally, Ravenscroft asserts those more sympathetic cuckold-makers' masculine superiority over the comedy's more punitive character Ramble (for whom cuckoldry is an end in and of itself) through sexual performance.

David M. Turner discusses how, in the Restoration, "Cuckoldry upset indices of status and authority between men as well as inverting relationships between man and wife ... The lover's triumph ... established a new hierarchy of men, based ... on sexual attractiveness and sexual performance" (101). Here Turner emphasizes how cuckoldry reorganized both heterosexual and homosocial relationships hierarchically, such that both the cuckolded husband's masculinity and his patriarchal authority were diminished. Ravenscroft, through cuckold relationships, builds a hierarchy between his male characters, with husbands at the bottom, and Townly and Loveday at the top. However, Ravenscroft's hierarchy is not simply based on sexual attractiveness and performance, but on certain behavioural characteristics. Ramble works his way up that homosocial hierarchy throughout the comedy, and though he may begin above the husbands – being wittier and more attractive – he never quite reaches Townly and Loveday's level. Ravenscroft's hierarchy reveals his preference for the romantically rakish characters Townly and Loveday, and his comparative trepidation with regard to the more sexually rakish Ramble.

The masculine hierarchies which Ravenscroft establishes through sexual performance (cuckold-making) in *The London Cuckolds* are tied to class hierarchies. Class concerns in *The London Cuckolds* are perhaps even more blatant than in either *The*

Mistaken Husband or *The Country Wife*; Douglas Canfield describes *The London Cuckolds* as a "Cit-cuckolding" comedy which "associates the Town wits of the play with the Court party and gives a royal sanction, as it were, to their tupping of their rivals' women" (88). Ravenscroft certainly makes his lawyer and aldermen into fools who simply cannot compete sexually with the "Town wits," Ramble and Loveday. According to Canfield,

> the conflict of those Restoration comedies featuring Cit-cuckolding ... aggressively reinscribes aristocratic ideology ... not only through *language* but through the *body-language* of stage performance ... where the perfect, potent bodies of Town wits dominate over the imperfect, impotent bodies of Cits and where the bodies of women become the contested ground for class dominance. (77)

So Cit-cuckolding involves class domination through the bodies of women – particularly, wives. However, in *The London Cuckolds,* Ravenscroft complicates the Cit-cuckolding trope, presenting *imperfect* Town wits, a cuckold-making merchant, and wives whose agency puts them at odds with Canfield's description of female characters whose bodies are simply "contested grounds for class dominance." Ravenscroft provides a Cit-cuckolding play, but one which signals a shift in Restoration playwrights' judgment of the Restoration rake character; no longer does the aristocratic rake character hold all the cards – Ravenscroft transfers much of the rake's rhetorical and performative powers to wives Eugenia and Arabella, and the merchant character Loveday.

For my discussion of rhetorical power in *The London Cuckolds,* Erin Mackie's discussion of the rake's elite masculine criminality is again crucial. She argues that the rake's "sublimation of criminal violence into elegance is first and foremost rhetorical and performative … [W]hat distinguishes the rake from the (mere) criminal is the same thing that distinguishes him from the fop: his superior stylistic mastery" (48). So it is that the

characters of *The Mistaken Husband* excuse Hazard's criminal acts by way of his "gentlemanly" performance. The rake's status may exempt him from punishment, but his style – his "performative mastery" (Mackie 45) – represents his status. In *The London Cuckolds,* Ravenscroft presents two rakes – Townly and Ramble – who when compared to earlier staged Restoration rakes appear rather inelegant, and whose rhetorical and performative abilities are inferior to the wives they pursue (excepting Peggy). Additionally, Ravenscroft presents a merchant character who fabricates his perceptible status through performance. So although Mackie's discussion of the rake's "stylistic mastery" is relevant in this chapter, much of my use of her argument goes to show how Ravenscroft's aristocratic male rakes *fail* to perform and how Ravenscroft's wife characters and merchant perform masterfully.

I would like to bring attention to Lisa Freeman's *Character's Theatre,* which informs my discussion of both Eugenia and Loveday's rakish performances – their role-adoption – in *The London Cuckolds*. In discussing her concept of the "crisis of character," Freeman states that "the concept of character offered in the eighteenth century … and what the theater could exploit by taking it up, was an understanding of identity not as an emanation of a stable interiority, but as the unstable product of staged contests between interpretable surfaces" (27). Ravenscroft displays a similar understanding of identity with regards to his characters Eugenia and Loveday, who both manipulate other characters' interpretations of their "character;" these two disguise their illicit sexual intentions by adopting the appearance, behavior, and rhetoric of virtuous characters – for Eugenia, the "godly" wife, and for Loveday, the "gentleman." These two characters' method of cuckold-making echoes the method of the early Restoration staged rake; however, neither

Eugenia nor Loveday can be accurately described as Restoration rake characters – Eugenia's gender and Loveday's class prevent that characterization.

That Eugenia chooses the role of godly wife is quite significant as the Christian church during the Restoration period portrayed women as "more receptive to divine signals" (Shoemaker 210); according to both Robert B. Shoemaker and Anthony Fletcher, women's proximity to divinity "empowered" (Shoemaker 210) women, providing "a sense of control over their lives" (Fletcher 348). However, while godly women seemed to gain some autonomy through their religious devotion, religious conduct literature contradicted this turn by encouraging women's "reverence and obedience" (Fletcher 349). By outwardly adopting the role of godly wife, Eugenia gains some control over her household while appearing – unlike Arabella – to adhere to the then normative characterization of an obedient, chaste wife. Eugenia uses her position of moral authority, achieved through religious "devotion," to cuckold and cudgel Dashwell without consequence. In this way, Ravenscroft's character Eugenia reflects David Turner's argument regarding some cuckolding comedies "of the later seventeenth century," which "explore more 'libertine ideas about the validity of moral codes and … examine the ways in which outward allegiance to norms of conduct might be used to more devious purposes" (98). Eugenia aligns with earlier libertine rakes Hazard and Horner: all manipulate their discourse and behaviour to appear as another character type, and all enjoy the security and freedom (particularly to cuckold) that their adopted roles afford. However, Eugenia also shows Ravenscroft's divergence from early Restoration characterizations of both wife and rake characters: Ravenscroft writes his wife character to orchestrate her own cuckoldry plot, and in doing so Eugenia – not Ravenscroft's male

cuckold-makers – performs the role of satirical enforcer.

Both Eugenia and Arabella enforce satire on their husbands through their defiant laughter. I draw on Audrey Bilger's *Laughing Feminism: Subversive Comedy in Frances Burney, Maria Edgeworth, and Jane Austen*, for her discussion of eighteenth-century satires by female authors against comic male characters. Bilger discusses how "[e]ighteenth-century conduct literature urged women to refrain from laughing at men as a general principle" (114), and she goes on to argue that "by subjecting male power to laughter, women novelists register their rejection of male authority" (120). Ravenscroft was not a female author, nor did he write *The London Cuckolds* in the eighteenth century; it is important to keep in mind how Collier's *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage*, Cibber's *Love's Last Shift*, and William and Anne's policies reflect a shifting moral climate in England at the end of the Restoration (Gollapudi 8), as the conduct literature of the eighteenth-century may be more censorious of women's laughter than it was in the Restoration. However, Ravenscroft's female characters do laugh defiantly at their husbands, making those husbands into fools and rejecting those husbands' authority. Arabella's laughter at Ramble and Townly similarly rejects those rakes' authority, and establishes her satirical supremacy to the rakes. This laughter evidences Ravenscroft's more explicit rejection of rakish satirical authority, as well as his transfer of the role of satirical enforcer from the rake character to the wife character. But before discussing Eugenia and Arabella's satirical authority in more depth, I would like to examine the rakish merchant character of *The London Cuckolds*. Loveday signals to us both Ravenscroft's opening up of the rake character to characters who are not aristocratic, as well as Ravenscroft's application of romance as his cuckold-maker's

motivation.

The character Loveday presents a slight problem for a consideration of the rake in *The London Cuckolds*. Loveday's performative mastery is certainly rakish, but his status and motivation inhibit me from characterizing Loveday as a Restoration rake. Erin Mackie critiques literary history and literary scholarship on the rake, because in those discourses, "The status of rakish masculinity rescues its transgressions from relegation to the ranks of ordinary crimes and, instead, transforms them back into signs of the very prestige that guarantees the status-linked exception in the first place" (46) Thus, when Townly tells the audience that he has yet to kill a watchman (Ravenscroft 3.1 p. 59), the audience is to laugh with him, rather than anticipate his punishment; Townly's aggression towards the watch is a symptom and a symbol of his status – his "elite license" (Mackie 40). Townly and Ramble enjoy the class privilege which Mackie discusses in the rake, but the pair lacks invention – as I discuss in this chapter's body, Arabella and Eugenia repeatedly rescue Townly and Ramble when their invention fails. But Loveday lacks the rake's elite status to excuse his criminal activity – e.g. his impersonation of Dashwell's brother's acquaintance, and his beating of Dashwell; Loveday is written as a "young Merchant" (Ravenscroft *Dramatis Personae*). For a Restoration rake not to be a gentleman seems an oxymoron, based on Mackie's discussion. However, a closer examination of the term "gentleman" as it pertains to the Restoration clarifies Loveday's position, reveals how Ravenscroft responded to contemporary concerns regarding the correlation between gentlemanly language and status, and evidences Ravenscroft's fragmentation of the rake character – his transferal of some of the early Restoration staged rake's rakish characteristics to non-rakes.

Loveday, like the early staged rake Hazard, adopts a gentlemanly persona in order to access the household he intends to disrupt. Jason D. Solinger, in "Gentlemen and Their Knowledge of the World," discusses how the Restoration and eighteenth-century gentleman was conceived of and constructed by prescriptive writers such as Jonathan Swift, William Ramesay, and John Locke. These writers, according to Solinger, promote a "knowledge of the world" (13) in their formulation of a gentleman (16, 19). Solinger describes this knowledge of the world as abstract, but he does list some "basic pieces of the aristocratic male's liberal education: a carefully paced and closely supervised course of reading and travel, consisting of the study of ancient and foreign languages, history, poetry, rhetoric and the fine arts" (24). However, Solinger argues that discourses which stressed education in becoming a gentleman, conflicted with hierarchical, class-based notions of the gentleman – as such discourses facilitated the term's "appropriation by those with short pedigrees and long fortunes" (17). This conflict, to Solinger, is "a central event in the historical rise of the modern middle-class individual" (23). I argue that Loveday can be read to represent Solinger's argument. Both Eugenia and Doodle call Loveday a gentleman after he shows them the knowledge he supposedly acquired at Oxford (Ravenscroft 2.2 p. 28); Loveday's knowledge earns him the title of gentleman, but that knowledge is suspect – the "*Black-Art*" (2.2 p. 29) Loveday apparently learned in Oxford is exaggerated, cliché, and only employed to advance his cuckolding interests. Loveday, then, reflects how a merchant with rakish rhetorical skills could confuse Restoration class hierarchies, when those hierarchies are understood by way of one's experience and performance.

Loveday's performative mastery aligns with the character of the early staged rake,

and his method of role-adoption particularly echoes the rake Hazard's. Loveday enters Dashwell's household under the pretense that he has been sent by Dashwell's brother, for employment, bringing a letter of recommendation from Dashwell's brother that "gives [Loveday] a very good Character" and which speaks of his "fidelity and sober carriage" (Ravenscroft 2.2 p. 28). This description is ironic, considering firstly that the character the letter describes is not Loveday, and secondly that Loveday hopes to cuckold Dashwell. According to Loveday, after returning from seven years of travel (4.2 p. 63), he learned that Eugenia was alive (counter to his parents' assertions), and married. So he met the young man who had actually been recommended to Dashwell, "learn'd from his discourse he depended on Service, and what provision he had made for his reception here --- [Loveday] receiv'd him into [his], took this Letter from him with design to personate him here" (4.2 p. 65). Loveday's method is rakish: he steals the letter not through force, but by garnering and exploiting the young man's trust; in addition, and more pertinently, Loveday successfully impersonates the young man, once in England. Loveday's method of exploitation and impersonation mirrors the early Restoration staged rake Hazard's, but Loveday's motivations differ greatly. Whereas Hazard aligns with Corman's description of the Jonsonian rogue, for whom the object of their punitive action is "sex and/or money" (17), Loveday does not. Loveday's motivations are, like Townly's, romantic. So Loveday may align with the early Restoration staged rake in his performative abilities – his method of cuckold-making being role-adoption – but Loveday differs from the early staged rake in both his romantic motivations and his class. Loveday signals how Ravenscroft transfers subversive characteristics of the early Restoration staged rake away from the aristocratic libertine characters, and to more obviously disadvantaged characters.

Loveday also signals Ravenscroft's theatrical involvement in the shift Mackie perceives in the historical rake, from a character whose criminal privilege is class-based to one whose privilege is gendered.

In the previous discussion I examine how Ravenscroft's characterization of Loveday aligns with the characterization of early Restoration staged rakes; in the following discussion I argue that Ravenscroft also removes from his aristocratic libertine rakes the industry which largely characterized the rakes of *The Mistaken Husband* and *The Country Wife.* I examine the rakes Townly and Ramble, who act as foils for each other, and whose sexual failures and successes reveal Ravenscroft's "declawing" – removal of the aggressive sexuality from – the rake character. Much of Ramble and Townly's conversation throughout the comedy focuses on their ideas of proper male behaviour: Ramble seeks "intrigues" (Ravenscroft 1.1 p. 14) – sexual relations – while Townly seeks alcohol. The pair are introduced to the audience in Ramble's lodgings, where they argue over what "business" of theirs is more valuable: sex or drink.[1] Ramble is for the former, but Townly reflects a sentiment which is supported by the action of the comedy when he states, "[P]rethee leave hunting, that difficult game, and learn of me to divert thy self with a bottle ... you will never be successfull so long as you make it your business; Love like riches comes more by fortune than industry" (1.1 p. 15). Townly uses two popular conceits, love as hunting and love as business, to make his final point – that those who solely pursue sex are unlikely to find it. Townly recommends somewhat passive behaviour in sexual relationships, which is significant in Ravenscroft's characterization of the rake, as such advise contradicts the industrious methods of rakish role models like Wycherley's Horner.[2] In addition, Townly prioritizes homosocial

relationships – which are fortified by alcohol consumption – over heterosexual ones, emphasized by his frustration when Ramble refuses to spend the day drinking with him: "I consented to lie with you [last night], thinking to have been sure of you all this day" (1.1 p. 15). Townly expects Ramble's commitment, having lain with him through the night – a commitment which Ramble is not willing to uphold. Throughout the comedy, Ravenscroft writes in scenes to discipline Ramble, and to make him conform to Townly's fraternally biased outlook; this conformation contradicts previous playwrights' characterizations of the rake as one who engages in homosocial activities as Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick describes, "mockingly and opportunistically" (57).

Ramble's dedicated pursuit of sex, adroitly presented in his couplet, "Women are Miracles the Gods have given, / That by their brightness we may ghess at Heaven" (1.1 p. 22), troubles his relationship with Townly. Ramble displays his reverence for women by describing them as miracles, and as heavenly – he sanctifies women. However, unlike any of the other male characters in *The London Cuckolds,* Ramble pursues women persistently and indiscriminately – without any consideration of their character. Ramble's name itself reflects his meandering sexual activity; like the husbands' business takes them away from their wives, Ramble's business (love-making) takes him away from Townly – and like the husbands, Ramble loses his intrigues to more romantically inclined men. Or, to use Corman's terms, Ravenscroft transfers "the licence granted the rogue in punitive comedy to the lover of sympathetic comedy" (47). Ramble, the more libertine character of the two (signalled by his amoral willingness to pursue his friend's lover and by his unscrupulous libido) must transfer his satirical licence to Townly and Loveday; this is significant in the Restoration staged rake's development as Ravenscroft limits the

libertine rake's power, favouring instead the two more romantic, sympathetic rakish characters.

Townly's displays his romantic cuckolding intentions through poetic language. Regarding the book that Townly gave to Arabella but which she mistakenly returned to Ramble, Townly declares: "the Woman I gave it to, is the person of all the World I most fancy" (1.1 p. 21), and he proceeds to describe Arabella in poetic language: "she once show'd me [her hand] for a Sample, and if her skin all over be like that, Snow was never whiter, nor Alabaster half so sleek and Polished" (1.1 p. 21). While Ramble praises women generally in his couplet, Townly describes Arabella specifically, and his use of comparatives recalls the poetic, romantic, language of sonnets. However, Townly asserts that it is not her beauty, but "'tis her Wit [he] admire[s]" (1.1 p. 21). Townly admires Arabella's character – the "Pretender to Wit" (*Dramatis Personae*) – so his attraction is not purely sexual. Townly may intend to cuckold Doodle, but he does so to fulfill his romantic desires and not to satirize or assert his masculine superiority over Doodle. Townly contrasts with earlier Restoration rakes in his romantic intentions, and reveals how Ravenscroft alters the rake character by instilling romantic – and more morally justifiable – motivations.

Although we can consider both Ramble and Townly rakes, Ramble displays his greater affinity with the early Restoration staged rake by sacrificing his fraternal bonds in favour of his sexual ones; upon learning of Townly's relationship with Arabella, Ramble refuses Townly's offer to "go in [Ramble's] place" (1.1 p. 22), and attempts to pursue both Arabella and Eugenia. Townly, in response, curses Ramble, stating, "I wish thee the same curse I do to Misers that hoard up Gold, and woud not part with any to save a man from

starving:---which is, that you may be rob'd of all, and after hang thy self with grief for the loss" (1.1 p. 22). Townly's reference to Ramble as a miser is significant, not only in that it engages a discourse that commodifies romantic matters, but also when we consider the negative light with which Restoration comedies cast miser characters.[3] Townly describes Ramble as the libertine's antithesis; if the libertine rake spends freely, then for Ramble to behave possessively in sexual matters, as Townly infers, is counter to rakish ideals. Ravenscroft does not prohibit the rake from satirizing husbands through cuckoldry – after all, each rake in *The London Cuckolds* successfully cuckolds a husband. However, Ravenscroft critiques the rake Ramble's uncontrolled lasciviousness as being detrimental to fraternal bonds. That Ravenscroft puts the critique in the mouth of Townly, whose successful illicit sexual activity earns him a higher rakish status, is very significant; Townly does not represent the polite society which Ramble contradicts, he represents a group with which Ramble would hope to identify. In this way, Ravenscroft treats Ramble's homosocial disruptiveness more seriously than Wycherley does Horner's (discussed in Chapter 2). We can see here a clear shift in playwrights' "declawing" of the rake character, from Horner, whose commitment to clandestine sexual promiscuity contradicts his supposed satirical intent, to Ramble, whose commitment to promiscuity is both explicitly critiqued by Townly and punished extravagantly by Ravenscroft's poetic justice.

In the second act, Ravenscroft presents a situation wherein Ramble's indiscriminate lust directly results in his poor "Fortune" in love. After Dashwell's unfortunate early return home prevents Ramble and Eugenia from having sex, Ramble sends Roger, his footman, to learn the location of Arabella and Doodle's house. However,

he is quickly distracted by Peggy, Wiseacre's wife-to-be. After flirting with Peggy for a short while, and after Wiseacres enters and directs Peggy off stage, Ramble exits the scene to find Roger again. Townly then enters, and is mistaken by Jane for Ramble. Townly's brief responses to Jane, “Well, well ... No, no ... Yes, yes ...” (2.2 p. 37) display Townly's passivity in this sexual encounter, as Townly drunkenly acquiesces to Jane's invitation. After Ramble re-enters the scene, Townly enters, embracing Eugenia. After the two discover each other's identities, Ramble again alludes to his sexual pursuits as a hunt, saying, “I beat the Bush, but thou hast catch'd the Bird” (2.2 p. 39); Townly responds, “I only shot flying” (2.2 p. 39), humbly pointing to the role of luck in his success. However accurate both Ramble and Townly's statements are, their utilization of the hunting metaphor reaffirms their rakish attitudes – sex is sport to the pair. In addition, their statements reflect Ravenscroft's preference of Townly's character to Ramble's. As the playwright contrives the events of the comedy, Ramble's meandering pursuit of sex ironically results in his friend “catching the bird,” Eugenia. So Ravenscroft critiques the indiscriminate sexual activity of the early staged rake by presenting it as counterproductive in Ramble’s case.

Rakes such as Hazard and Horner display their mastery of space by limiting or guiding other characters' movements, but in the third act Ramble reveals his failure as a rake by passively attempting to escape Doodle's home when Doodle inopportunely returns. The scene turns humourously to Ramble repeatedly peeking out of Arabella's chamber, only to timidly “slip back agen” (3.1 p. 44) when Doodle tiredly turns away from Arabella's embraces; Ramble’s cowardice here signals his lack of authority. Arabella finally distracts Doodle long enough for Ramble to escape, but Doodle locks the house's

main, large door. When Ramble panics, Arabella laughs at his "faint heart" (3.1 p. 46), displaying her confidence, and reiterating Ramble's lack thereof. Arabella's laughter places Ramble at the butt of a joke, satirizing him and rejecting his "male authority," to use Bilger's words. Arabella establishes her supremacy to Ramble here, and in this relationship we can see how Ravenscroft undermines the staged rake's satirical authority. It is Arabella who devises the bed-trick, to have Engine sleep in Arabella's bed and vice-versa, and Arabella who eases Ramble's concerns. Ramble enters the third act without authority: he lacks the rake's power to secure a space in which to cuckold Doodle, he lacks the boldness to escape, and he lacks the ingenuity to devise a scheme wherein he may cuckold Doodle in Doodle's near presence. When we compare this scene to Wycherley's China scene (discussed in Chapter 2), Ramble's comparative ineptitude at maneuvering through domestic spaces and manipulating other characters' movement is quite apparent. Ravenscroft's fragmentation of the rake character is in part to remove spatial mastery from his male rake characters' arsenal.

Ravenscroft more explicitly undermines Ramble's satirical authority by again positioning Ramble as the butt of a joke immediately after he attempts to re-enter Arabella's house. Ramble attempts to crawl into the cellar window, but Engine discovers too late that it is locked. Ramble hangs "like a Monkey by the Loins" (3.1 p. 53) in the cellar window, a monstrous symbol of the failed rake, whose prestige is publicly contested by Engine's laughter from above.[4] Ramble's correct understanding of Eugenia's hypocritical character signals his rakish knowledge of the Town – like the early rake Horner, who perceives the concealed hypocrisy of the "virtuous gang". However, Ramble's comparative ineptitude in maneuvering through and between both public and

domestic spaces – here we can recall Horner's maneuverability in the Exchange space (see Chapter 2) – signals his failure as a rake.

Several slapstick events compound Ramble's failure: a link-boy knocks his "Link" (3.1 p. 53) – lantern – into Ramble's face, an apprentice empties a chamber pot onto Ramble's face, and a chimney sweeper passes gas in front of Ramble's face. Finally, the two chimney sweepers steal Ramble's "new Bever hat, ... Periwig and Sword" (3.1 p. 55). Ramble's hat, periwig, and sword are not only possessions, but symbols of his class, of which the sweeps strip him. Ravenscroft humiliates Ramble by constricting him, hurting him, soiling him, and finally by removing the emblems of Ramble's class and masculine authority; that Ramble's social inferiors perform each of these humiliations compounds Ramble's shame. When the Watch appear, they make Ramble's shame even more public and more biting by calling the residents of Doodle's house outside. Ramble, in a detestable state, must face both the husband over whom he intended to assert his own masculine superiority, as well as the wife who he attempted to seduce. Arabella teases Ramble relentlessly, again asserting her supremacy to him, and this rake appears in a worse state than the husband he attempts to cuckold, in front of that husband – an astounding situation for a Restoration rake (either historical or literary) to be in. Ramble not only fails to enforce Ravenscroft's satire on the Cit character Doodle, he is also humiliated by several characters of a lower class. This scene is a clear example of how differently Ravenscroft treats his rake than his predecessors. For Ravenscroft to not merely prevent Ramble's attempt to cuckold Doodle but to actually make a farce out of his rake, shows how seriously Ravenscroft takes Ramble's transgressions against homosociality and love (i.e. the romance between Townly and Arabella).

Ravenscroft completes his punishment of the promiscuous Ramble in the fourth act, and Ramble even undergoes a sort of quasi-reform. Ramble, attempting one last intrigue, tells Townly, “If I fail now, I will, from this time, give over assignation and stratagems and be thy convert for ever” (4.1 p. 62) – offering a deal which emphasizes Ravenscroft's concern with two behavioural aspects of masculinity: the pursuit of illicit sex through deception, and the fortification of male bonds through alcohol consumption. Ramble's lack of success up to this point indicates Ravenscroft's preference for the latter, and Ramble's continued failure confirms it. While Ramble may not experience the same physical humiliation at Eugenia's that he did at Arabella's house, Eugenia refuses Ramble more explicitly than Arabella does. Ramble enters the house after Loveday has confessed his love for Eugenia, and soon after so does Dashwell. Caught in an uncomfortable position, Eugenia tells Ramble to “hunt about as if you look'd for some body” (4.2 p. 70). Ramble follows Eugenia's instruction, without knowing that Loveday is hiding within the room. After Ramble uncovers Loveday, it is the ingenious and disingenuous Eugenia who conceives of a compelling lie to placate Dashwell, who has now found two men in his wife’s bedchamber (4.2 p. 71). Ramble exits the scene, crying, “Oh false, dam’d false woman” (4.2 p. 72), signaling again his humiliation. But the significance of this scene may not be immediately apparent – the significance being that Ravenscroft relegates his rake to a cuckold position. Ramble must confront his masculine inferiority once again as he faces another man – Loveday – whom Eugenia prefers to him. For the rake to be placed in a cuckold position inverts the power relations that playwrights of cuckolding comedies in the Restoration generally support; instead of enforcing satire on Dashwell, Ramble is himself satirized by the merchant character Loveday. Furthermore, Eugenia

displays her superior rakish rhetorical skills to Ramble, by fashioning the lie that enables his safe escape.

When we consider Canfield's discussion of Cit-cuckolding comedies, the significance of Ramble's cuckold position in the fourth act is yet clearer - for Ramble's body is certainly neither "perfect" nor "potent," (Canfield 77). Ramble's body, here, hardly "dominate[s] over" the body of the Cit, Dashwell – the two are in the same position. So not only does Ravenscroft place Ramble in a cuckold position, he places Ramble beside a Cit; Ramble's sexual humiliation is thus augmented by a class-based humiliation. We may view Eugenia's body as the "contested ground" in this scene, but she coordinates the men's bodies in a way that conflicts with the impression that Canfield offers, as women's bodies being dominated in Restoration comedy. In addition, Loveday's superiority over Ramble is not based on class. Arabella prefers Townly to Ramble due to a relationship she and Townly have developed, which is based on more than physical attraction; so too does Eugenia prefer Loveday to Ramble, based on her prior love relationship with Loveday. So Ravenscroft makes way for his two romantic couples by pushing his most sexual rakish figure to the fringe – again, to use Corman's terms, transferring "the licence granted the rogue in punitive comedy to the lover of sympathetic comedy" (47). Ramble performs the subversive cuckolding act, but only after he converts to Townly's behavioural model, and after he makes way for the comedy's romantic characters. In this way, Ravenscroft renders Ramble much less potent than prior rakes such as Hazard and Horner whose cuckold-making is uninhibited by the other staged characters' interests; Ramble is forced into the back seat, so to speak, of Ravenscroft's cuckoldry plot: he must submit to "Fortune" – rather than "Invention" – to succeed, and

he is additionally only able to seduce a naive country girl – to use Ramble's language, an easy “target.”

At the beginning of the fifth act, Ramble bemoans his misfortune, and finally tells Townly, “my own ill Fortune and thy Counsel have at last converted me” (Ravenscroft 5.1 p. 79). Having been rejected by both Arabella and Eugenia, Ramble decides, “I'll never make Love my Business; if I find a Lady willing, and a fair opportunity present, I'll nick the critical minute, go my way, and trust Providence for such another” (5.1 p. 79-80). Echoing their conversation in the first act, where Townly and Ramble discuss love as business, Ramble reveals his change in character. Townly and Fortune (i.e. the stage action) reform Ramble to be a reactive pursuer of sex – an opportunist – rather than an active one. Interestingly, it is only shortly after Ramble's conversion that he engages in his most successful rakish activity: cuckolding Wiseacres. When Aunt yells “fire” (5.1 p. 80), Ramble uses the opportunity to seek out Peggy. Peggy displays her naivety when she explains why she did not leave the house at the sound of alarm: “they cry a great many things here in *London*, I heard 'em cry Oranges and Lemons, and a great many things” (5.1 p. 82). Peggy, like Margery Pinchwife of *The Country Wife*, lacks an understanding of the Town (and lacks common sense), and the Town's commercial elements overwhelm her. Peggy conflates signs of danger with signs of exchange, and mistakes the former for the latter.[5] Ramble exploits both Peggy's naivety and Wiseacres' patriarchal treatment of her, to “instruct” Peggy “in the whole Duty of a Wife” (5.1 p. 83). Ramble finally succeeds, “two or three times” (5.1 p. 92), displaying his sexual vivacity for the first time in the comedy. Ramble may exploit Peggy's simplicity to sleep with her, displaying some rakish rhetorical power, but his success is mitigated by Peggy's social status and credulity.

Ramble himself reassures himself that though he has "lost" (5.1 p. 106) both Eugenia and Arabella, "I am sure of my pretty Fool whene'er I can come at her" (5.1 p. 107); Ramble's reassurance is that he is secure in a foolish lover, rather than romantically inclined towards one he admires. Thus, Ravenscroft limits his sexually aggressive rake character to sexual relationships that are not in danger of obstructing the comedy's love romances; in comparison to Wycherley's Horner, who endangers the romance between Harcourt and Alithea, or *The Mistaken Husband*'s Hazard, who infiltrates the potential romantic reunion between Mr. and Mrs. Manly, Ravenscroft's Ramble is much less subversive as his sexual activity only complicates the relationship between a young and foolish girl and a jealous husband.

Ramble, in the homosocial hierarchy of *The London Cuckolds*, sleeps with the wife who is available to him, after discovering that the others are not. That is to say, Ravenscroft denies his sexual rake the privilege of choice. Ravenscroft "declaws" his rake by limiting his sexual activities – Ramble can only cuckold one specific husband – and by pacifying his rake's character – both Townly and Ramble rely on "Fortune" to direct their sexual activity. Here we see how Ravenscroft responded to a shift in England's moral climate by limiting his libertine rake's subversive activities. Where the early Restoration staged rakes have the rhetorical and performative powers to direct their respective comedies' plots towards the fulfillment of cuckoldry, Ravenscroft's rakes have no such power. Instead, it is the wife characters Arabella and Eugenia who direct the action of Ravenscroft's *The London Cuckolds*.

I briefly pointed to Arabella's wit, when she enables Ramble to escape from her home, but Arabella's rakish ingenuity merits a longer discussion, as it is Arabella's wit

that reveals Ravenscroft's fragmentation of the rake's characteristics and transferal of the rake's performative mastery to wife characters. Arabella flaunts her wit most prominently in her "No" scene, in the fifth act. Arabella's "No" scene results from Doodle's request to Arabella in the fourth act: "That till my return, to all impertinent men, that ask you any questions, or talk to you, answer 'em all with No---Let 'em say what they please, let your answer still be, No, no" (4.2 p. 78). Arabella agrees to Doodle's request, but Doodle lacks the nuance to see how Arabella can manipulate his simple instruction to contradict his intentions. At the start of the fifth act, Arabella complains to Engine, "You should have seen how I'de have mannag'd that No to the best advantage, to the confusion of my husband's stratagem---I hate to be out-witted, and long to try what I could make on't" (5.1 p. 80). Arabella intends to exploit her husband's request, not only to attain sexual satisfaction, but to assert her superior wit over Doodle – to show him for a gull. So when in the fifth act Townly finds Arabella and attempts to court her, Arabella uses the opportunity to display her linguistic power. Townly's initial confusion eventually turns to understanding as he realizes that to receive an answer in the positive he must ask his question in the negative. Through simple repetition, Arabella exploits Doodle's rhetorical instruction and teaches Townly how to speak. Arabella also bypasses her husband's instructions; she laughs when Townly asks whether she is a maid (5.1 p. 81), and she whistles when he posits that she is a wife (5.1 p. 81). So while Doodle's request to Arabella constrains her language, Arabella sidesteps his instruction by communicating without words.[6] Arabella exploits patriarchal discourse through simple repetition and she also avoids patriarchal discourse via nonverbal communication. She does so to pursue her own desires while superficially following her husband's instruction. Arabella thus asserts

her linguistic mastery over both Townly – to whom she teaches her game – and Doodle – whose stratagem she outwits. In this way, Arabella flaunts her "stylistic mastery" – using Mackie's phrase – much more impressively than either Ramble or Townly (the two more typical rakes of the comedy).

Arabella's rakishness is evidenced by her stylistic mastery, but Eugenia, the other rakish wife of *The London Cuckolds,* displays her alignment with the early Restoration staged rakes through her rakish performance and manipulation of roles. Ravenscroft introduces Eugenia in the first act through the conversation between Doodle, Wiseacres, and Dashwell, and the letter she sends to Ramble. Ramble describes Eugenia's religious fervor as a "pretense" (1.1 p. 17) to avoid her husband, Dashwell, to whom she had been married "[b]y the inducement of her Parents … against her inclinations" (1.1 p. 17). Eugenia affirms Ramble's description in the second act, when Jane – her maid – encourages Eugenia to pursue Ramble, "to supply the defects of a husband" (2.1 p. 23). Eugenia adheres to the conduct of "the godly wife" (1.1 p. 11), in order to avoid spending time with her husband; Fletcher and Shoemaker show in their arguments regarding Restoration associations between women and God, Eugenia's adoption of the "godly wife" role also allows for her greater autonomy. But Eugenia does not simply exploit the "crisis of character" to avoid Dashwell and establish control in her domestic space; Eugenia aligns with the early staged rakes Hazard and Horner by exploiting the crisis of character to cuckold her husband without repercussions.

Eugenia's scheme to make time for her and Loveday to make love is fascinating, in that she plays, like Wycherley's Horner, with concealing and revealing.[7] Eugenia confronts Dashwell, telling Dashwell the truth: Loveday had come for her sake, and had

made an assignation with her. However, she adds that he asked her to meet her in her "Night-gown … under the Summer-House in the Garden" (5.1 p. 86). Then, Eugenia asks Dashwell to impersonate her and take a cudgel in order to "drub [Loveday] soundly" (5.1 p. 86). While Jane dresses Dashwell, Eugenia and Loveday have sex; after, Eugenia has Loveday whip Dashwell repeatedly in the garden, pretending that he thinks Dashwell is Eugenia. Loveday then acts as though he intended to test Eugenia's morality, and discipline Eugenia for Dashwell. In this facade, Eugenia plays with identity: Eugenia augments Dashwell's feminized cuckold positioning by making Dashwell cross dress as her; Dashwell temporarily gives up his masculine authority by adopting a wifely demeanor. Eugenia also plays with Loveday's identity, revealing him first, and truthfully, as Dashwell's rival in love, and then having him behave as protector of Dashwell's interests. Eugenia is a master of identity, hiding her own from her husband throughout the comedy, and then manipulating Dashwell and Loveday's apparent characters to, in her words, make her husband "a Cuckold, Cudgell'd, and Content" (5.1 p. 107). What heightens Eugenia's achievement here is that she gets the last laugh, so to speak; these lines close the comedy (before the epilogue). Eugenia shows herself as a playwright character and performative master in *The London Cuckolds,* manipulating and fashioning her and her lovers' roles to punish her husband while advancing her own interests.

Both Eugenia and Arabella display the performative mastery that we see in early staged Restoration rakes, and their manipulative abilities tempt me to characterize them as female rakes – a characterization that contradicts Mackie's assertion that "there is no *feminine* analogue for the rake" (43). As such, I maintain that these wife characters are *rakish,* and not rakes, a distinction which alludes to Ravenscroft's fragmentation of the

rake character. These wife characters have the rakish performative proficiency which the rake characters Townly and Ramble lack. Additionally, and more significantly, these wife characters also have the satirical authority which Ravenscroft forcibly removes from Ramble (and which Townly never purports to have). At the close of the fifth act, Arabella invites Eugenia "to meet tomorrow; each confess the whole truth, and laugh heartily at the Folly of our Husbands" (Ravenscroft 5.1 p. 107). This invitation clearly locates Arabella and Eugenia as Ravenscroft's satirical enforcers; it is Arabella and Eugenia who laugh at the close of the comedy, and they do so after orchestrating their husbands' cuckoldry themselves.

Considering Bilger's discussion of the subversive effect of women's laughter in the eighteenth century, Arabella and Eugenia's laughter in Ravenscroft's comedy establishes that the wives are the satirists; their laughter also emphasizes homosociality between women – a focus which decentres the rake from Ravenscroft's cuckolding plot. Ravenscroft transfers (forcefully, in Ramble's case) his comedy's satirical authority to cuckold and laugh at a foolish husband character to his female characters Eugenia and Arabella. In Ravenscroft's comedy, then, the rake character lacks the seductive, subversive power that characterizes the early Restoration rake. Ravenscroft's comedy in this way predicts the imposition of morality onto the English stage, to which Aparna Gollapudi points as occurring in the late Restoration and early eighteenth century – not in an assertion of marital chastity through a virtuous wife character (which this comedy lacks) but by an assertion of female sexual authority over the rake and husband characters. Ravenscroft shows a dissatisfaction with the aristocratic and masculine privilege which early Restoration playwrights afforded the rake character, by transferring

that character's satirical authority to wives.

In *The London Cuckolds,* Ravenscroft fragments the Restoration staged rake character by transferring his performative mastery to wife characters and a merchant – none of which can be described as rakes, according to Mackie and Bryson's descriptions of the historical Restoration rake. The wife characters Eugenia and Arabella not only perform better than the rake, they also enforce the comedy's satire. These two characters orchestrate their cuckoldry plots, repeatedly asserting their satirical supremacy to both their husbands and their gallants. Eugenia and Arabella play satirist roles, laughing at the folly of their husbands and at the inadequacy of the comedy's lustful rake Ramble. Though the comedy's gallants may cuckold Doodle and Dashwell, their success is mitigated by their passive role in that cuckoldry, and so Ravenscroft transfers the devious ingenuity and satirical authority of the early Restoration staged rake to his comedy's wife characters.

This transfer of the early staged rake's more subversive characteristics and satirical authority effects Ravenscroft's "declawing" of the aristocratic libertine staged rake. The characters who align most closely with Bryson and Mackie's descriptions of the historical Restoration rake are Ramble and Townly, but these characters lack the performative mastery that allowed their predecessors (Hazard and Horner) to actively devise cuckolding intrigues; Townly converts Ramble to a behavioural model that stresses passivity in sexual relations and generally prioritizes fraternal relationships over sexual ones. Both conversions signal Ravenscroft's concern with pacifying – lessening the subversive aspects of – the rake character. Additionally, Ravenscroft prevents Ramble from disrupting the comedy's romantic plots and Ravenscroft gives his rake Townly

genuine romantic motivations. In this way, Ravenscroft decentres the aggressively sexual, subversive rake from his comedy, and favours a more "sympathetic" (Corman 15) – i.e. romantic – characterization of the rake and treatment of the cuckoldry plot. Ravenscroft not only explicitly critiques and punishes the rake character's amoral indiscriminate sexual activity via Ramble's repeated humiliation and quasi-reform, Ravenscroft also "opens up" the rake character to members of a different gender and class. In doing so, Ravenscroft confiscates from the rake his most effective cuckold-making tool, and thus Ravenscroft undermines the rake's satirical authority both subtly, in his characterization of the rake and very explicitly, in his stage treatment of the rake. Ravenscroft's comedy can be viewed as reflecting a shift in English attitudes towards the aristocratic rake character, a shift that both involves and requires playwrights' visible and morally driven critique of the rake on stage.

Notes

1. Ravenscroft's play on the word "business" is common in Restoration comedies; in fact, the rake characters in each comedy I examine – Hazard, Horner, and Gayman – make sex their "business". The prevalence of this association points to how entangled sex and capital were in the period; Ramble's sexual pursuits are devoid of economic motivations, unlike *The Mistaken Husband's* Hazard, but his sexual exploits are still framed in economic terms.
2. Wycherley's character Horner, discussed in the previous chapter, is a striking example of a rake whose industry makes him successful in his sexual exploits. Ravenscroft does not seem content to promote such a deceitful character, as his punishment of Ramble shows.
3. Some examples of miserly characters who are humiliated in Restoration comedies can be found in *The Mistaken Husband*'s Learcut, discussed in chapter one, and Aphra Behn's characters Sir Feeble Fain'woud and Sir Cautious Fulbank from *The Lucky Chance; Or, an Alderman's Bargain,* discussed in the following chapter. These misers, like Ramble, inevitably lose control of the women that they "hoard."
4. For discussions of the satirical effect of portraying humans as animals, particularly in England during the long eighteenth century, see Kirk Combe's "Making Monkeys of Important Men: Performance Satire and Rochester's 'Alexander Bendo's Brochure'" and Heather Keenleyside's *Animals and Other People: Literary Forms and Living Beings in the Long Eighteenth Century* – particularly her discussion regarding Swift's satire on the reader in *Gulliver's Travels*.
5. This scene can be compared to the Exchange scene in Wycherley's *The Country Wife,* wherein Horner's sexual advances on Margery are economic as well as sexual. Margery does not discern the sexual implications of Horner's gifts to her. Both country wives fail to see the dangers within the commercial Town.
6. Arabella shares her ability to communicate without language with Susanna Centlivre's Miranda, in *The Busie Body* (1709)*,* who nonverbally communicates her love for Sir George Airy in her famous dumb scene. Arabella appears as something of a precursor to Miranda, as both exploit or bypass a patriarchal discourse of feminine coyness and silence, to pursue their individual romantic aims.
7. Pat Gill argues that Horner's "play with presence and absence, with revelation and concealment … prevents him from making a moral, sexual, or emotional commitment" (60). Eugenia plays in a similar way, but her character is not compromised through her play.

Chapter Four

The Rake Reformed: Aphra Behn's *The Lucky Chance; Or, An Alderman's Bargain*

Aphra Behn's *The Lucky Chance; Or, An Alderman's Bargain* (1686), is a suitable comedy with which to end my discussion; in it, Behn more than either Wycherley or Ravenscroft relegates her rake character to a subordinate position – under her wife character. Additionally, Behn fulfils the threat of cuckoldry in her plot whilst simultaneously representing her cuckolding wife character as virtuous; this combination allows Behn to satirize her husband character as well as to critique the immorality of the libertine rake. In its castigation of cuckoldry, Behn's cuckolding comedy differs greatly from its predecessors, and anticipates the English theatrical trend towards moral reform which Aparna Gollapudi associates with Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1696), and early eighteenth-century theatre. However, Behn maintains certain tropes of the cuckoldry plot, such as the May-December relationship, the libertine rake, and the "socially maladroit" (Dawson 30) Cit husband who Mark Dawson describes in *Gentility and the Comic Theatre of Late Stuart London*. For the purposes of my discussion, I will focus on Julia Fulbank's plot, as hers is the only one which contains the threat of cuckoldry. Cuckoldry in *The Lucky Chance* seems to affirm these three characters' types: Gayman the rake, Fulbank the miserly patriarch, and Julia the unsatisfied wife. Julia's rejection of cuckoldry affirms her character type as the virtuous – though unsatisfied – wife, and Julia's virtue seems to reform both Fulbank and Gayman's characters. In contrast to earlier Restoration stage representations of the unsatisfied wife character, Behn's Julia does not seek to cuckold her husband; this contrast is significant, as the moral permissiveness of cuckoldry

is greatly lessened when the wife who that cuckoldry concerns does not consent. Behn provides a clear moral critique of cuckoldry by portraying cuckoldry in her comedy as driven by her male characters' moral deficiencies. Behn does not only undercut her rake's moral authority by presenting a virtuous wife character, she also undermines the rake's satirical authority by presenting the most inept role-adopting rake of the four comedies I examine – almost completely wiping from the rake his subversive, deceptive abilities.

The previous playwrights I examined in this thesis, in fulfilling cuckoldry in their plots, establish the masculine superiority of the rake character in the society of the Town, despite characterizing him increasingly as passive; these earlier rakes understand the Town's characters and fulfil their own critical and subversive role within it. Behn, in contrast, uses her cuckoldry plot to diminish the subversive power of the rake character and instead grants Julia, her wife character, the comedy's critical authority. Behn's rake lacks the performative mastery that largely defined early Restoration rakes, and Behn continues Ravenscroft's trend in transferring the rake's performative prowess to wife characters. Behn also continues Ravenscroft's trend in giving a romantic motivation for the rake's cuckold-making, though Behn presents cuckoldry as more morally reprehensible than Ravenscroft does. In Behn's comedy, then, we can clearly see how the rake character transformed throughout the Restoration: by 1686, though the rake practices libertinism through gambling, drinking, and cuckold-making, the rake loses his fluid identity. Though Behn's rake's cuckold-making method is still based on role-adoption, Behn's rake's youthful vivacity betrays his character; Behn's rake is unable to successfully perform as another character, whereas early Restoration staged rakes do so masterfully. Behn continues Ravenscroft's presentation of the rake as a young, passionate

man in need of moral education, and Behn uses cuckoldry not only to satirize her husband character but also to critique her libertine rake. Behn's rake's inability to deceive – which sets him apart from the early rakes Hazard and Horner – allows Behn to explicitly undermine his satirical authority (his "right" to cuckold) through her virtuous wife character, and to assert morality onto the rake character. The more obvious critiques of rakish libertinism in the 1690s and early eighteenth century, reflected by Collier's *Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage* (1698) and the activities of the Societies for the Reformation of Manners, were anticipated by playwrights such as Behn who more and more explicitly diminish their libertine rake's satirical authority and characterize their rakes as monogamously motivated and morally redeemable.

My discussion in this chapter begins with the scholarship that informs my analysis of *The Lucky Chance.* I first examine how Behn critiques her avaricious husband character Fulbank through Julia's words and actions, with reference to David Turner and Anthony Fletcher's discussions of the popular commentary of Early Modern England, regarding the shame of cuckoldry and the cuckolded husband's responsibility to avoid cuckoldry. This discussion points to how Behn, in portraying a "pimping husband," satirizes her husband character. The next discussion shows, with reference to Douglas Canfield's analysis of *The Lucky Chance,* how Behn's critique of cuckoldry in the comedy is particular to her wife character Julia; Behn's Julia displays a divergence in characterization from earlier Restoration staged wife characters, as Julia's virtue is both genuine and "existential." I then consider Nancy Copeland's argument regarding the economic constraints of Julia's relationships with Gayman and Fulbank, and I dispute Copeland's claim that Julia remains a commodity in the comedy's conclusion. Behn

asserts Julia's power in *The Lucky Chance* by having Julia dictate both Gayman and Fulbank's activities and by refusing them both sexually. Behn's characterization of Julia is significant in the development of the Restoration staged rake character because Behn continues Ravenscroft's trend of transferring the rake's satirical authority to wife characters; furthermore, Behn's assertion of Julia's existential virtue reflects the period's increasing anxiety regarding the amoral and sexually aggressive libertine rake character, as Behn allows room for cuckoldry only when it is sanctioned by the cuckold-making wife character.

Behn satirizes her husband character through cuckoldry, but she also confiscates the rake's authority in that satire by transferring his deceptive prowess to a wife character and by characterizing her rake as a young, passionate romantic – and *not* an intelligent, manipulative "*Machiavel* in love" (Wycherley 4.3 ll. 63), to use Horner's words. For my discussion of the rake Gayman, I look to Mackie's discussion of the historical Restoration rake, particularly in how that character's status became gendered rather than classed at the end of the Restoration and into the eighteenth century. I also utilize Brian Corman's terminology to frame my discussion of Gayman's romantic or "sympathetic" characterization, and I use Gollapudi's method, to analyze the visual cues of moral debauchery and reform on stage, to reveal Behn's reform of Gayman. Lisa Freeman's "crisis of character" is once again relevant in my analysis as Gayman is unable to manipulate the verbal and visual cues of his character to either the audience or other characters on stage; this inability signals a great divergence from the early Restoration staged rake in Behn's characterization of Gayman, where Behn "declaws" the rake by removing his subversive, deceptive abilities completely.

Although Behn presents a wife character whose sense of virtue prohibits cuckoldry, Behn still uses cuckoldry to satirize her husband character. Behn characterizes Fulbank as a "pimping husband" character, who would "bear a Conscience" regarding Julia's potential cuckold-making of Fulbank, "provided [she] do things wisely … in a civil way" (Behn 5.4 p. 268). The moral detestability of such a husband character in Restoration England can be understood with reference to Anthony Fletcher's *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800,* wherein Fletcher describes how in Early Modern England, "Chastity before marriage and fidelity within it was the heart of a code of female honour which was overwhelmingly seen in sexual terms" (101); Fletcher also states that "Above everything else, it was a man's business to avoid being made a cuckold" (103). Both statements help to justify Julia's question to Fulbank, upon discovering Gayman in her bed: "Why have you left my Honour thus unguarded?" (Behn 5.7 p. 272). Julia's "female honour" is potentially compromised by her unknowing cuckold-making; Fulbank's male honour is surely compromised as well. David M. Turner, in *Fashioning Adultery: Gender, Sex and Civility in England, 1660-1740.* Turner argues that late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century "commentators clearly believed that some cuckolds were considered to be more despicable … than others. The worst variety was the 'pimping cuckold' – a man who conspired in his wife's adultery for profit" (91). That Behn chose to represent the "pimping cuckold" in her comedy allows her to, through Julia's refusal to cuckold, critique not only the cuckold-maker (whose sexual advances she refuses) but also her cuckold (whose ready acceptance of his own horns is morally despicable), as both are complicit in endangering Julia's honour.

Although Julia refuses to be complicit in her husband's cuckold-making, and

although she finds it detestable that her husband is complicit in it, her distaste for cuckoldry is individual rather than prescriptive. Julia has, to use Douglas Canfield's words, an “existential” rather than “ontological” virtue (229), meaning that it is based neither on a static, Platonic notion of virtue nor a virtue defined by her peers; rather, Julia determines her virtue by and for herself. Julia notes what a “wise Woman ought to have done” (Behn 2.2 p. 219) in response to Fulbank prematurely falling asleep on their wedding night, and in the same conversation – which takes place in Sir Feeble's house (2.2 p. 216), amongst several other characters – Julia makes an explicit critique of May-December relationships, as vulnerable to cuckoldry. Fulbank and Fainwou'd complain of “Christnings and Gossipings” as the “very Schools that debauch our Wives” (2.2 p. 219); it seems that according to Fulbank and Fainwou'd, that when wives gather – particularly around “the overjoy'd good Man” (2.2 p. 220), which likely refers to a minister – these women quickly “anatomise” their husbands, share in their distaste for their husbands, and cuckold their husbands. Julia responds to Fainwou'd and Fulbank's paranoia by placing the blame for cuckoldry on the husband: “Wise Men knowing this, should not expose their Infirmities, by marrying us young Wenches; who, without Instruction, find how we are impos'd upon” (2.2 p. 220).[1] According to Julia, young wives need no “instruction” in order to complain of their old husbands, as their husbands' “infirmities” are clear. The obvious allusion to impotence in Julia's advice provides a clear critique of the May-December relationship, which the comedy's plot reiterates. While Julia makes her commitment to fidelity quite clear throughout *The Lucky Chance,* Julia also acknowledges a link between unsatisfactory marriages and cuckoldry – supporting the adulterous wife while refusing to emulate her. Behn, through Julia, allows room for

playwrights to satirize husband characters via cuckoldry, but constrains that satire by the will and consent of the cuckold-making wife character.

Before I move on to discuss Behn's characterization of her libertine rake character Gayman, I would like to briefly consider Nancy Copeland's discussion of Julia's status as a commodity in the resolution of Behn's comedy; I find that Copeland's analysis of Behn's comedy underestimates Julia's agency in the comedy. At the close of *The Lucky Chance,* Fulbank conflates Julia's estate and her body in marriage, stating that upon his death he will "bequeath" (5.7 p. 277) both to Gayman. Fulbank's use of the term "bequeath" is certainly disconcerting, and Nancy Copeland finds that this bequeathing "reiterates [Julia's] status as commodity and her lover's implication in the commercial world of economic exchange" (77), contradicting Julia's efforts throughout *The Lucky Chance* to "separate her relationship with Gayman from the economic motives that govern her marriage" (72). Copeland's argument is quite compelling, but though Julia's plot resolution may relegate Julia to a position as commodity, Julia *does* "negotiate the transfer herself" (77). At the moment of Julia's refusal to comply with Gayman and Fulbank's deal, Julia moves from a stake in their gamble to an agent, with more "on the table" than either Gayman or Fulbank. Julia then uses this position to correct both Gayman and Fulbank's behaviour by refusing both of them sexually. Additionally, in the second act Julia asks Gayman to love her chastely, up to her husband's death; while Fulbank's offer in the fifth act does not entail any sexual expectations, Julia's earlier refusal of sex with Gayman seems to establish an understanding that Julia and Gayman's relationship will be chaste until Fulbank's death. The close correspondence between the relationship Julia hopes to have with Gayman, and the relationship that they have at the

close of *The Lucky Chance* is evidence that Julia successfully negotiates her marriage. Like the early rake Hazard (discussed in Chapter 1), Julia uses cuckoldry – though she in contrast does not pursue it – to manipulate her marital and economic circumstances. Julia's ability to negotiate her marriage in response to cuckoldry shows a rakish understanding of capital-romance dyad – the close relationship between sex, marriage, and wealth – that is lacking in both Behn's male rake character Gayman and her husband character Fulbank. In this way, Behn continues in the trend which Wycherley signaled (as discussed in regards to the "virtuous gang" in Chapter 2) by subordinating her rake character to her wife character.

Although I disagree with Copeland's assessment of Julia's status in *The Lucky Chance,* her focus on the commercial elements of Behn's comedy is apt, particularly as they pertain to Behn's rake character Gayman, whose economic destitution Behn ties to Gayman's moral character. Behn's cuckoldry plot revolves around prostitution. Fulbank, the miser, attempts to pimp his wife, Julia, to Gayman. However, Gayman also plays the prostitute in *The Lucky Chance.* Robert A. Erickson, in "Lady Fulbank and the Poet's Dream in Behn's *Lucky Chance*," discusses how Gammer Grime, Gayman's landlady's metaphor of Gayman's "sword," "emblematizes Gayman's sexual decline in the world from a promiscuous and well-to-do gay blade to 'the dull drudging' workhorse in [Gammer's] employ" (98). Erickson discusses Gayman as a "young cynic and libertine rake" (89), but Gayman is a rake in dire straits – without the wealth to support his libertine desires. Julia Fulbank, Erickson describes as "Behn's female libertine hero counterpoised against the great male libertine heroes of the roaring '70s" (91) – Gayman representing the "male libertine heroes." The role reversal Erickson describes is

significant in the development of the Restoration rake; Behn's characterization of Julia as a virtuous libertine involves granting Julia the rake's authority (that is, control of other characters' movements, as well as the movement of the comedy in general), but it also involves Behn's subjugation of the male rake Gayman's ideology. To be clear, because commerce and romance – marriage, love, and sex – are so tightly bound in *The Lucky Chance,* Behn's transfer of power from a greedy husband and shameless gallant to a virtuous wife does not provide a critique of the economic systems through which that transfer occurs. However, Behn does provide an explicit critique of the libertine rake through Behn's wife character Julia, who defies the rake's sexual predation and confiscates his satirical authority.

Behn presents Gayman as a rakish failure, at least by the standards of the early Restoration stage. Behn's rake lacks the "performative mastery" (Mackie 45) that Mackie ascribes to the historical Restoration rake. Additionally, Behn's characterization of Gayman, in *The Lucky Chance,* aligns with the trend Mackie finds well-described by Steele's *Tatler 27*: "established on the foundation of a natural and irresistible subjectivity, rakish prestige ... becomes more socioculturally mobile as it becomes first and foremost a function of gender ... rather than of elite status" (55). Behn characterizes Gayman as *passionate*, and in need of education. His rakish activities, illicit sex, gambling, and drinking, are symptomatic of his passion, rather than his amorality, and Gayman participates in these activities genuinely – not in the advancement of his subversive interests. Alexandra Shepard discusses how, in the seventeenth century, "Conduct writers repeatedly insisted that the youthful vices they detailed disqualified young men from claiming manhood, and in doing so equated manhood with reason, temperance, and self-

control" (30). Behn constructs Gayman as an immoderate character to reform – not as Ravenscroft's Ramble reforms, merely to become a good friend and opportunistic cuckold-maker, but to abandon his rakish drives completely, and to control his passions. Thus, Brian Corman's discussion of the punitive and sympathetic aspects of plot in the Restoration and eighteenth-century English theatre are once again valuable in my analysis of Behn's rake, Gayman. Behn shows her engagement with the theatrical trend towards reform that Gollapudi discusses as occurring in the 1690s by providing romantic motivations for her rake's cuckold-making. Behn provides courtship, which Corman points to as the motivating outline for sympathetic plots, as the motivation for Gayman's punitive cuckold-making activity. So Behn appears to engage in the "mixt way of comedy" (27) which Corman describes. However, Behn resolves her plot by chastising her rake character and punishing his attempts to enforce the comedy's satire on the miserly husband character; thus, Behn uses cuckoldry in her comedy largely to display its abhorrence. Behn requires her rake to relinquish his satirical authority – his "comic licence" (17) – and to commit himself to a chaste, romantic relationship with his intended lover. In this way, Behn continues the trend that we saw Ravenscroft reflect, by altering their characterizations of the rake to become a romantically inclined, passionate character in need of moral education.

Behn signals both Gayman's need for moral reform and his reform itself through visual cues. Gollapudi discusses how in Colley Cibber's *Love's Last Shift* (1694), "The dramatic representation of a moral 'interior' self capable of change is effected with the aid of visual codes posited within an implicit rhetoric of performance and observation that reassures the audience of the veracity of visible surfaces as reliable markers of inner

worth" (21) - that is, the audience can understand Loveless' reform by visual cues. Behn similarly depicts Gayman's character by his decrepit lodgings and attire – his cleaner clothes and performance of reform in the last scene reflect a shift in his character. Previous, undisciplined rakes like Hazard and Horner exploit Lisa Freeman's "crisis of character" (27) – the problems that come with gauging someone's worth based on misleading exteriors – through their masterful manipulation of exterior signs of their character; Gayman does not. Behn actually relies on exterior cues to communicate Gayman's character to the audience, and Gayman himself is unable to effectively manipulate other staged characters' understanding of his character; Gayman is discovered in the bed-trick scene because, as he says, "my Excess of Love betray'd the Cheat" (Behn 5.7 p. 272). This betrayal by Gayman's passion sets him far apart from the early Restoration rake, Horner, whose self-control in part defines his rakish character.[2] Gayman appears as a stock character, readily understood by both those on stage and in the audience. Rather than display the performative mastery that Mackie describes distinguishes the rake from other masculine characters of the late Restoration and eighteenth century (44), Gayman performs a rakish role singularly. Gayman successfully performs the subversive act of cuckolding Fulbank, but he does not disguise his character effectively – in contrast to Julia, who controls her passions and performs roles masterfully. Behn removes the fluid identity which characterized the early Restoration rake, and enables his reform in the comedy's action by exposing his character to both the audience and the other characters on stage.

In the following discussion I perform several close readings of Behn's *The Lucky Chance*, providing more detailed evidence for my argument that Behn's treatment of

cuckoldry and her rake character reflect the theatrical transformation of the staged rake in the Restoration towards a stock character whose immorality is reformed explicitly by other characters and by the action of the comedy. I first examine Behn's rake Gayman, whose ineffective rhetorical and performative endeavours display his divergence from the early Restoration staged rake, and whose moral infirmity is signaled to the audience and other staged characters both by Gayman's actions and his appearance. I then discuss Julia's comparative performative prowess, and her ability to interpret Gayman's character as well as to test and reform Gayman's character; Behn puts the performative mastery of the early Restoration staged rake into the hands of a moral exemplar, revealing Behn's anticipation of the wide-spread movement to reform which Gollapudi describes in England at the end of the seventeenth century.

Where early staged Restoration rakes masterfully utilize rhetoric to seduce wives and make cuckolds, Gayman's rhetorical talents are comparatively limited, and his method of cuckold-making lacks the nuance of his predecessors. Gayman relates, to Bellmour, the news of Julia's marriage to Fulbank

> here i'th' City; at which you [Bellmour] know I storm'd, and rav'd, and swore, as thou wo't now, and to as little purpose. There was but one way left, and that was cuckolding him. [...] And hotly have pursu'd it: Swore, wept, vow'd, wrote, upbraided, prayed and railed; then treated lavishly, and presented high – till, between you and I, *Harry,* I have presented the best part of Eight hundred a year into her Husband's hands, in Mortgage. (1.1 p. 194-5)

The location of the marriage, in the City, is important, as it affirms Fulbank's status as a "Cit" - a middle class, working person (his knighthood augments this characterization) – one who is not a gentleman.[3] But more important, for my discussion, is Gayman's assertion that cuckoldry is the only course of action left to him; this assertion aligns Gayman with Ravenscroft's romantically inclined rake Townly, for whom cuckoldry is

the only opportunity to engage romantically with his married lover. Behn shows her involvement in shifting the rake character to a more sympathetic, or romantic, cuckold-maker by motivating her cuckold-maker's rakish activities via love. But Behn also shows her involvement in transforming the rake character through Gayman's unsuccessful rhetorical appeals. In the passage, Gayman lists a number of rhetorical acts he had hoped would allow him to cuckold Fulbank – he wavers between two poles, either castigating Julia or praising her. Gayman shows how he attempts to, like a rake, intentionally and disingenuously to manipulate a woman, Julia, to submit to his advances. However, Gayman's rhetoric is ineffective, and he thus resorts to treating and presenting, which lead (in his description) to his eventual debt to Fulbank. Gayman's failure as a rake to seduce Julia through rhetoric is lessened by her dedication to chastity within marriage, but by resorting to treating and presenting Gayman displays a lack of rakish ingenuity; Gayman's cuckold-making method – his rhetorical appeals as well as his appeals to romantic exchange – lack the complexity of early Restoration rakes such as Hazard and Horner. Where the early Restoration staged rake Hazard utilizes signs of wealth to gain access to Mrs. Manly, Gayman relies on a one-to-one notion of sex and currency, attempting to pay directly for sex. But while Behn critiques Gayman's commitment to the notion that sex can always be bought through Julia's refusal of Gayman, Behn ties Gayman's romantic, economic, and moral destitution together so that his romantic, economic, and moral restitution can occur simultaneously.

Although Behn portrays Gayman's attempts to "buy" Julia's affection as ineffective, Behn does conflate Gayman's financial poverty with his unrequited love and his debauchery. As Wasteall, Gayman is bound to Sir Cautious Fulbank by indentures (4.1

p. 248), but Gayman and other characters also attribute his poverty to Julia's scorn. According to Pert, Julia's "woman" (*Dramatis Personae* p. 190), Gayman's fortune is "sacrificed to his Passion for your Ladyship" (Behn 1.2 p. 200); Bredwell also describes "what Expences his Despair have run him on – As Drinking and Gaming to divert the Thought of [her] marrying [Bredwell's] old Master" (1.2 p. 200). In addition, when Julia accuses Gayman of not loving her, he offers his spending as a sign of his love: "Not love you! [...] Why at your feet are all my Fortunes laid, and why does all my Fate depend on you?" (4.1 p. 244). The characters Bredwell, Pert, and Gayman share the view that Gayman's excessive spending is not only a sign of his love, but also a measure and a consequence of it; this view situates Julia as responsible for Gayman's poverty, as she continues to withhold her love from him. Instead of his libertine activity being excused by Gayman's status *or* gender, it is excused by his love for Julia; Behn lays the groundwork for Gayman's reform by describing his rakish activity as motivated by love. Like Ravenscroft's Townly, Behn's Gayman directs his cuckoldry in a romantic direction; though elements of the rake as punitive rogue-hero – here using Corman's terms – persist in the subversive cuckolding act, Behn ensures that the audience can view Gayman sympathetically, as a scorned lover. Behn also ensures that the audience can literally view Gayman's degraded moral character, through visual cues.

Behn most clearly signals Gayman's moral and financial degradation in *The Lucky Chance* in the second act's landlady scene – but this scene also signals Behn's divergence from her Restoration predecessors in the rake's deceptive characteristics. The scene in which Gayman force feeds his landlady alcohol and flatters her so that she will provide him money to "redeem one of [his] Suits" (2.1 p. 213) – an interesting phrase, as Gayman

hopes to figuratively redeem his pursuit of Julia with the money he gains, as well as literally mend his suit – reveals not only Gayman's willingness to prostitute himself (although the term is complicated by the absence of sex in both the landlady scene and the masque scene), but also reveals his tendency to bypass women's consent. Behn signals Gayman's moral infirmity in this scene by his forceful inebriation of the landlady, but his moral degradation is augmented visually by his "old Campaign – with tan'd coloured Lining – once red – but now all Colours of the Rain-bow, a Cloke to sculk in a Nights, and a pair of piss-burn'd shammy Breeches" (2.1 p. 211). Here Behn uses Gayman's visual appearance – his worn clothing – to signal the degraded state of his character. Here Behn relies on Gayman's external appearances to signal Gayman's character to the audience and to the other staged characters; Behn's characterization of the rake thus differs greatly from her early Restoration predecessors, as where the early Restoration staged rake conceals his character by manipulating his appearance and behavior, Behn's rake's character is signaled through his appearance. The early Restoration rake displays his performative mastery by manipulating the "crisis of character" to serve his interests – Behn's rake is unable to do so, and thus he is held accountable for the depraved state of his character. That Gayman's romantic, economic, and moral depravity are so closely tied allows Behn to signal Gayman's moral reform through his economic and romantic restitution in the comedy's conclusion. However, before I discuss Gayman's reform, I would like to take some time to describe Behn's characterization of her wife character Julia as a simultaneously virtuous and rakish performative master.

Behn continues to characterize Gayman as an ineffective cuckold-maker through Julia's understanding of Gayman's character and her refusal of his advances. Julia

opposes both Gayman's method and his goal; in response to the letter Gayman sends Julia through Bredwell, Julia claims, "Faith, *Charles* [Gayman], you lie – you are as welcome to me now, / Now when I doubt thy Fortune is declining, / As if the Universe were thine" (1.2 p. 200). Gayman's extravagant spending does not, as he assumes, make him more "agreeable" to Julia (1.2 p. 199). So Behn offers a character for whom both the rake's method and his ideology are ineffective; Behn diminishes the rake's seductive powers, as neither Gayman's rhetoric nor his attempts to purchase Julia's affections are effective. In addition, Gayman's attempts to disguise his poverty are ineffective; whereas early Restoration staged rakes Hazard and Horner disguise their libertine characters in order to cuckold through deception, Gayman displays a comparative lack of performative prowess; Behn writes her rake character as unable to effectively manipulate the external signs of his character – to exploit the crisis of character. In this way Behn limits the deceptive, seductive, and subversive abilities of her rake character, and hinders his ability to orchestrate his cuckoldry plot.

Behn displays her unwillingness to grant her rake character the comedy's satirical authority not only by limiting his performative prowess, but also by characterizing her wife character, Julia, as a virtuous performative master. Julia's personal commitment to fidelity, which she repeatedly vocalizes, prevents Gayman from cuckolding Fulbank. Julia requests from Gayman a "Lease of [his] Love, / Till the old Gentleman [her] Husband depart this wicked World" (2.2 p. 222), a request which performs in three ways: first, the request foreshadows the resolution of Julia's plot, providing evidence that Julia is able to orchestrate the action of the play in her interest. Julia's request also affirms Julia's fidelity to Fulbank, and reveals her ethical opposition to Gayman: for Gayman, cuckoldry is the

only solution to Julia's unsatisfactory marriage, and for Julia, chaste patience is the only solution. These two viewpoints are irreconcilable, and for the plot to resolve, one must succumb to the other; Julia's power, in her plot, is revealed by her ability to make Gayman accept to her paradigm. Third, Julia's request for Gayman is phrased economically. By asking for a "Lease" of Gayman's love, Julia commodifies it, and offers a sort of contract. Julia uses the language of romantic exchange to cater to Gayman's ideology, displaying her rhetorical prowess. Though she is unsuccessful at this time, Julia appears more rakish than Gayman, in terms of her comparative mastery in code-switching – that is, in adopting a particular discourse for a particular purpose. Though Julia's moral inclinations certainly oppose the Restoration rake's, Julia displays the rake's performative mastery much more than the comedy's rake, Gayman.

Julia displays her rakish performative mastery most effectively in the second act masque scene, wherein she tests Gayman's character by assuming the role of seductress. Bredwell enters Gayman's lodging, "drest like a Devil", and offers Gayman an anonymous invitation and a "bag of Money" (2.1 p. 214). In this interaction, Bredwell entwines wealth, romance, and superstition; he fulfills Julia's request to provide Gayman with some money (in compensation for Gayman's excessive spending on her), and provides some incentive (via the offer of money and guise of a devil) for Gayman to begin the test Julia has formulated. Julia orchestrates the masque scene, wherein she manipulates Bredwell's appearance as well as her own, like Ravenscroft's Eugenia manipulates the appearances of Loveday and Dashwell in Ravenscroft's *The London Cuckolds*; however, Julia's moral intent – to test Gayman's debauchery – signals a shift in how Behn uses her rakish wife character: where Ravenscroft utilizes the performative

mastery of his wife character to enforce satire on his cuckolded husband character, Behn utilizes the same mastery to assert morality on her rake character. Gayman's misinterpretation of the masque, believing that "Some Female Devil … [h]as seen this Face … and thinks it's worth her Hire" (2.1 p. 215), points to Julia's performative mastery (her ability to mislead Gayman through performance) as well as Gayman's inability to correctly interpret the signs of Julia's character. Where the early Restoration staged rake Horner displays his mastery of the "crisis of character" by correctly interpreting the hypocrisy of the "virtuous gang," and by manipulating the signs of his own character, Gayman shows no proficiency in either regard. Instead, Julia possesses the manipulative and performative powers, and the understanding of the early Restoration staged rake; however, Julia's moral motive sets her completely apart from both the rakes of *The Mistaken Husband* and *The Country Wife,* and the rakish wife characters of *The London Cuckolds.* The libertine rake Gayman's lack of performative mastery, and the virtuous wife Julia's abundance of that mastery, both signal Behn's commitment to transferring the satirical authority – the power to direct the comedy's satire – away from the potentially immoral rake character and towards Behn's moral exemplar.

But although Behn offers Julia the comedy's moral and satirical authority, Behn does not do so by satirizing Gayman. Gayman's debauchery throughout *The Lucky Chance,* evidenced by his extravagant spending on Julia, his willingness to prostitute himself to the "Devil," and his treatment of his landlady, goes relatively unpunished – it is even rewarded in the comedy's resolution, in which Gayman's financial and romantic reimbursement come in a single sentence. However, Julia corrects Gayman's tendency to bypass women's consent – evidenced by his treatment of his landlady, inebriating her (to

seduce and exploit her) by forcing her to drink wine (2.1 p. 212), and especially evidenced by his bargain with Fulbank (to have sex with Julia without her knowledge) – by refusing him sexually. Gayman, in response to Fulbank's "offer" of Julia and his estate upon Fulbank's death, explicitly asks, "do you consent, my Julia?" (5.7 p. 277). This question is significant, as it shows Gayman consciously considering Julia's feelings; in comparing this scene with *The Lucky Chance*'s gambling scene, we see Julia here as an active member of the conversation, rather than an unknowing stake.[4] Furthermore, Gayman exclaims, "I could kill myself with shame and anger," (5.7 p. 277) upon discovering that the woman in the masque and Julia are one and the same. This expression of shame is likely caused by Gayman's realization that Julia knows what "base means" he has used to maintain his "Gallantry." Gayman is confronted with his shameful behaviour, and the audience is given an opportunity to laugh at him – to lightheartedly criticize. Where Ravenscroft punishes his rake's aggressive and omnidirectional cuckolding pursuits, Behn continues in Ravenscroft's vein by punishing her rake's nonconsensual cuckolding pursuits, emphasizing not fraternal bonds but women's sexual autonomy. Behn does so by *vocalizing* Gayman's shame. Additionally, we can see here how Julia masterfully performs another role – like the rake, Horner, who adopts roles counter to his character, Julia adopts the seductress role when she is in fact a chaste wife. Instead of the cuckold-maker enforcing the comedy's satire, Behn has Julia condemn the cuckold-maker's attempts to do so; Behn not only diminishes the authority of the rake character, but also asserts a moral that is in keeping with the period's increasing anxiety regarding libertine moral decadence.

Fulbank learns a similar lesson to Gayman; he must "grant" Fainwou'd's

proclamation that they “are a couple of old Coxcombs” (5.7 p. 277). Both Gayman and Fulbank are publicly shamed in the comedy's final scene. However, their relationships with Julia are resolved differently. While Fulbank must “rest [him] self contented” (5.7 p. 277) with Julia's decision to forswear his bed, Gayman and Julia's relationship ends much more optimistically. Julia's repetition of Gayman's earlier evaluation of the masked seductress - “a canvas Bag of wooden Ladles were a better Bed-fellow” (5.7 p. 277) – is certainly ambiguous, as Copeland argues (77). However, Julia immediately justifies her deception: “I had no design upon his Person, but that of trying his Constancy” (Behn 5.7 p. 277). By explaining the innocence of her deception, and by providing justification at all, Julia displays her continued commitment to Gayman.[5] The young libertine, Gayman, learns through shame to treat Julia properly, and he is reformed and rewarded in the resolution of *The Lucky Chance.* Fulbank also learns, but his lesson is that he and Fainwou'd, amongst the young men and women of the comedy, “are not fit Matches for either” (5.7 p. 278). Fulbank is put in his place, so to speak, as an unfit husband and unfit competition for “lusty young Fellows” (5.7 p. 278). In her comedy, then, Behn still asserts the rake’s masculine supremacy over her husband character, but Behn undermines the rake’s satirical authority – his power to direct the comedy’s satire – not just by limiting his performative abilities but also by requiring her rake’s submission to his intended lover’s behest. Behn revokes the license of the punitive, roguish rake character to satirize husbands through cuckoldry. She then converts the rake to chaste romance, re-characterizing the rake through reform to become a “sympathetic” character and to abandon his satirical intentions. Thus, Behn provides the most explicit critique of the libertine rake’s amoral and subversive character that we have seen in these four comedies,

by requiring the rake's very explicit reform to chastity.

In *The Lucky Chance*'s resolution, Gayman does conform to Julia's paradigm, finally accepting Julia's request for a "Lease" of his love (reiterated by Fulbank), which is significant in that his change alludes to Julia's moral authority in *The Lucky Chance.* Julia's refusal to cuckold Fulbank also shapes the comedy's critiques in certain directions. Gayman and Fulbank's efforts to bypass Julia's consent are thwarted, and as a result, Julia reestablishes her relationships with both, according to her notion of virtue. Sex is, of course, the pivot on which both of her relationships turn. Refusing extra-marital sex *is* virtue, to Julia, and forswearing her husband's bed is her ultimate form of punishment. In punishing Fulbank, Julia establishes a certain expectation of husbandly behaviour – that is, that a husband plays a somewhat patriarchal role in protecting his wife's honour (which is defined by her sexual activity). Fulbank is ousted due to his improper behaviour as a husband as well as his improper choice of spouse – the old man simply cannot compete with his younger rival. Gayman's willingness to prostitute himself is critiqued when Julia makes her knowledge of it public, and in general, Julia confutes Gayman and Fulbank's assumption that an unsatisfied wife will inevitably cuckold her husband, by refusing to do so.

As for the Restoration rake, Aphra Behn, even in fulfilling the threat of cuckoldry, reforms her rake. Behn's rake is ruled by passion, and the stylistic mastery which largely characterized Gayman's predecessors is notably lacking in Gayman. Instead, Julia Fulbank has the rakish qualities that Gayman lacks. Behn's rake is wild, dangerous, and in need of reform; additionally, Behn uses cuckoldry in her comedy, not only to reveal her husband character's flaws, but to discipline her rake. Behn's use of cuckoldry differs

greatly from the previous playwrights I have examined: Behn presents cuckoldry in her plot, but she does so to condemn cuckoldry and the men who organize it without a woman's consent. Behn's comedy, in relation to previous cuckolding plots, harshly critiques the libertine rake, while solidifying what playwrights in the eighteenth-century look to as the rake's character. Behn draws on elements of earlier Restoration playwrights' characterizations of the rake, but she follows Ravenscroft in transferring his rhetorical and performative prowess to wife characters. This transfer downplays the rake's seductiveness and provides wife characters more autonomy in their sexual relations. It also enables playwrights to morally discipline their rake characters by allowing other characters on stage to observe the rake's debauchery. In sum, Behn's rake completes the trend I observe throughout the Restoration period: from *The Mistaken Husband*'s Hazard, whose masterful role-adoption effaces his own rakish character to *The Lucky Chance*'s Gayman, whose uncontainable rakishness results in his disciplining by the wife character he hopes to seduce.

Notes

1. Fulbank and Fainwou'd's jealous paranoia is further evidenced by their mistaken conversation in Act 3, Scene 5, in which both husbands, seeing the other in an agitated state, immediately assume that the other has been cuckolded. The jealous husband character type has a history; we can look almost a century before Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1686), at Ben Jonson's *Every Man in His Humour* (1598), which features the extremely jealous merchant, Kitely. Or we can look to the York Mystery play, "Joseph's Troubles about Mary," a Middle English play on Joseph's anxieties regarding the legitimacy of his child, Jesus.
2. We can recall the china scene in *The Lucky Chance,* wherein Horner is able to covertly cuckold Jaspar by conflating commercial and sexual discourse in a double entendre – by offering a "Rol-waggon" (4.3 l. 194) to Lady Fidget.
3. *The Lucky Chance*'s status as a cit-cuckolding play is interesting; the class warfare in the comedy, which reasserts the rake's superiority over the cit, aligns with many cuckolding plots, and shows how Behn inserts herself into a generic trend. However, analyzing the class conflict inherent in a cit-cuckolding comedy takes space from, to me a more valuable, discussion of the rake's character in relation to the wife character he intends to sleep with – as in Behn's comedy, the latter discussion reflects a large shift in the rake's authority.
4. Copeland accurately describes Julia's position in the gambling scene as "the butt of a sexual joke at her expense" (75).
5. Peggy Thompson argues that Julia closes off relations with Gayman, but it is likely that her "fury" (75) is more tongue-in-cheek, since she, shortly after, defends her actions.

Conclusion

Into the Eighteenth Century: An Epilogue for the Restoration Rake's Reform

In this conclusion to my thesis, I review the transformation of the Restoration staged rake which I argue occurs roughly between the years 1663 and 1686. I first reiterate my argument that as playwrights throughout the period adopted and adapted the rake character they transformed the character from one whose cuckold-making method results in his self-"declawing" – the undermining of his own satirical authority – to a character whose satirical authority is undermined by the stage action and by other characters on stage. The transformation I describe reveals how playwrights anticipated and responded to a changing moral climate in England, one which is more obviously represented by the moral reform comedies of the early eighteenth century. I look to Benjamin Hoadly's *The Suspicious Husband* (1747) as a case study to elucidate the trend I perceive as well as how that trend towards moralizing the rake character continued onto the eighteenth-century stage. Finally, I look to scholarship on the eighteenth-century English theatrical climate, and situate the transformation of the Restoration staged rake in a changing English moral, political, and theatrical climate. What we can understand from my argument is not only that early Restoration playwrights did not celebrate the rake character, but more importantly that the shift towards normative morality on the English stage did not occur suddenly; playwrights responded to a changing moral climate in England both by altering their predecessors' characterizations of the cuckold-making rake and by undermining their rake's satirical authority more and more explicitly on stage.

Early Restoration playwrights such as Wycherley and the author of *The Mistaken Husband* characterize their rakes as amoral manipulators, whose method of cuckold-

making results in a contradiction – the undermining of their satirical authority by the adoption of a subordinate character type who the rake had initially intended to satirize. Later playwrights in the Restoration period, Ravenscroft and Behn, treat their rake characters differently, both in characterization and stage treatment; their transformation of the staged rake character involves their characterization of the rake as a more *genuine* character who engages in libertine activities (such as excessive alcohol consumption and gambling) not in order to enforce satire through cuckoldry, but as a result of their male passions. Behn and Ravenscroft's transformation of the rake character also involves their de-emphasis of performative mastery – the ability to intentionally manipulate rhetoric, behavior, and appearance – in their characterization of the rake; these playwrights transfer this mastery to wife characters, and thus "declaw" the rake character by confiscating his most effective tool for cuckold-making. While the early Restoration playwrights who I examine offer a sort of *reductio ad absurdum* argument against the rake by displaying his cuckold-making method as counterproductive to the rake's satirical intent, the later Restoration playwrights offer a critique of the socially disruptive rake by explicitly punishing their rake characters – either by positioning him as the butt of a physical joke or by presenting the rake's public shame and reform vocally.

The early Restoration staged rake, represented in my thesis by Hazard of *The Mistaken Husband* and Horner of *The Country Wife*, perform masterfully (rhetorically and behaviourally) to deceive husbands and wives and to cuckold without punishment. In contrast, the later Restoration staged rake, represented by Ramble and Townly of *The London Cuckolds* and Gayman of *The Lucky Chance,* ineptly perform, and though they succeed in cuckolding husbands their performative failures – both rhetorical and in their

manipulation of their perceivable "character" – result in their being disciplined and morally instructed by other characters. This shift in playwrights' treatment of the rake character towards explicit critiques of the rake's moral deficiency signals a growing anxiety among playwrights with the rake's social subversion, and anticipates the more rigorous moral censorship of the stage that comes in the early eighteenth century in England.

The shift in treatment of the staged Restoration rake, where late-Restoration playwrights such as Behn and Ravenscroft discipline their rake characters on stage in a way that Wycherley and the author of *The Mistaken Husband* do not, involves a shift in characterization as well. Whereas early rakes Hazard and Horner exploit homosocial activities such as excessive alcohol consumption in order to manipulate the men around themselves, later rakes on the Restoration stage – such as Townly and Gayman (and Ramble, eventually) – engage in these activities with genuine interest. Fraternity, to the staged Restoration rake, shifts from a concept to employ in the pursuit of cuckoldry, to a concept that is valuable in and of itself. This shift signals that playwrights Ravenscroft and Behn were more concerned than their predecessors with representing the rake character as having a sociable component. The early rakes of *The Mistaken Husband* and *The Country Wife* may sacrifice their satirical authority in the fulfillment of their cuckolding activities, but they remain amoral characters. The subordination of these rakes' satirical edge to the society which they intend to satirize does not imply their acceptance of that society's normative morals. But in Ravenscroft's *The London Cuckolds* particularly, we see through Ramble's quasi-reform to Townly's homosocial imperative how playwrights began to necessitate their rakes' moral conformation to English

(specifically London) standards. For Behn, the reform of the rake is to become chastely monogamous, and to completely abandon his subversive cuckolding intent. Behn's rake becomes, in his reformation, an even more socially cohesive character than Ravenscroft's rake, as Behn's rake learns to – in complete opposition to his early-Restoration counterparts – obey the sexual strictures of marriage. In this way, the shift I perceive throughout these four plays predicts the generic shift that Aparna Gollapudi marks in 1696 towards reform comedy.

Aparna Gollapudi uses the term "reform comedy" generically to describe many (if not most) of the English comedies of the early eighteenth century. Gollapudi looks to the 1688 revolution, William and Mary's moral politics (112), and Jeremy Collier's "anti-theatrical vitriol" (8), *A Short View of the Immorality and Profaneness of the English Stage,* as shaping the "reforming impulse in the eighteenth century" (7). Gollapudi discusses how "[t]he cultural anxiety about slippage between external signifiers and 'real' value which also permeates into the action onstage needs to be allayed if the 'authenticity' of inner moral transformation is to be unequivocally conveyed to the audience" (24); that is, in the eighteenth century, "the stage offers us a medium in which public exteriors were taken not merely as symptomatic of an interior, but rather as the *only* basis upon which judgments about character could be formed" (Freeman 27). The staged rake's reform requires a face-value understanding of character. As a reader of Restoration comedies, this appears ironic, as the early Restoration staged rake is successful in cuckoldry *because* of his exploitation of external signs as signifiers of internal value; for example, Hazard of *The Mistaken Husband* clearly shows how the early staged rake adopts rhetorics, behaviours, and appearances to give a false view of their character. In contrast, the later

Restoration rake – Behn's Gayman is a clear example – is unable to disguise his character from others on stage. The shift then, in Restoration playwrights' treatment and portrayal of the Restoration rake, is twofold: playwrights Ravenscroft and Behn diminish the deceptive and manipulative proficiency of their rakes to make the rake's moral education possible, and comprehensible – if not believable.

The rake on stage undergoes a shift in the Restoration period, from an identity-fluid, performative master whose own performative method of cuckold-making implicitly undermines his satirical authority – his detached superiority to the other satirized characters – to a stock, recognizable and sincere character whose claims to satirical authority are explicitly undermined by other characters. This shift occurs through a fragmentation of the rake's characteristics, as Ravenscroft and Behn transfer elements of the rake's character – particularly his performative mastery – to non-rakes. Bryson's description of the rake as an anti-civil libertine remains apt even after Ravenscroft's fragmentation, as his Townly drinks excessively and hopes to beat the Watch. The staged Restoration rake also remains subversive – each rake I examine does successfully satirize at least one husband through cuckoldry. However, Ravenscroft begins to lay some groundwork for the moral reformation of the rake by having his rake Ramble conform to an opportunistic view of sex, rather than a predatory one. Behn furthers the motion towards reform in the rake by having Julia Fulbank shame her rake Gayman into chastely awaiting Julia's husband's death before pursuing Julia sexually. These pseudo-reforms reveal how playwrights in the late Restoration, even as they employed the satirical cuckoldry trope, were more committed than their predecessors to moralizing their rakes as they troubled his satirical authority.

Looking sixty years beyond Behn's *The Lucky Chance* (1686), we can see how the development which I plotted of the Restoration staged raked continued; Benjamin Hoadly's *The Suspicious Husband* (1747) reveals how by the mid-eighteenth century the rake character's satirical edge had been almost completely dulled. Hoadly's character Ranger, played by the famous actor David Garrick, displays the same rakish wealth, lasciviousness, and drunkenness as late-Restoration rakes Townly and Gayman; "Now am I in an admirable Mood for a Frolick! I have Wine in my Head, and Money in my Pocket, and so am furnish'd out for the Cannonading of any Countess in Christendom!" (3.1 p. 34), Ranger exclaims, echoing the late-Restoration rake's alcoholic, misogynist (in his assumption that women's sexual favours can be bought) and predatory pursuit of women. Ranger also attempts to cuckold Mr. Strictland, the jealous husband and titular character of *The Suspicious Husband.* However, Ranger's attempt at cuckoldry is opportunistic – he sees the ladder Jacintha has left to escape – rather than planned. In addition, Hoadly treats the threat of cuckoldry seriously; Mrs. Strictland, like Behn's Julia, values her fidelity despite her husband's ill treatment of her.

Whereas each of the Restoration comedies I examine involve cuckoldry in actuality, Hoadly's comedy only involves the *threat* of cuckoldry. Even Aphra Behn portrays the subversive act of cuckoldry to satirize her husband character, though she treats the subject of cuckoldry seriously. We can observe how Behn's comedy predicted early eighteenth-century comedies, however, in that moral seriousness; Gollapudi discusses how in the eighteenth century theatre, "Jealous husbands are not just potential cuckolds or objects of mockery, they are objects of reform" (137), looking in particular at Hoadly's Mr. Strictland. Thus, Ranger's attempt to cuckold Mr. Strictland is prevented,

and instead of laughing at the cuckold, the audience witnesses his moral reform. Furthermore, Ranger's attempt to cuckold Mr. Strictland reads more as an attempted rape than as a seduction: lines such as, "since I find you will yield to no Persuasion to your Good – I will gently force you to be grateful" (Hoadly 3.2 p. 37) reveal Hoadly's moral opposition to cuckoldry and the rake's aggressive sexuality. Cuckoldry, like jealousy in Hoadly's comedy, is as Mrs. Strictland states, "too serious an Affair to laugh at" (Hoadly 4.2 p. 51). In Hoadly's *The Suspicious Husband* we can clearly see the heightened morality of the English stage after the Restoration, which Ravenscroft and especially Behn signaled through their treatment of cuckoldry and the rake character.

Even more significantly for the characterization of the theatrical rake, Hoadly uses his rake character not to disrupt household order – through the subversive act of cuckoldry – but instead to bolster it. After learning that another woman he unsuccessfully tries to seduce is actually the love interest of his friend Bellamy, he immediately ceases his attempts at seduction: "For damn me, if I do not feel more Satisfaction in the Thoughts of restoring you to me Friend, than I could have Pleasure in any Favour your Bounty could have bestowed" (3.3 p. 44). Whereas early Restoration rakes such as Horner and Hazard counterfeit their friendships as they do their appearances to pursue illicit sex, Ranger not only halts his sexual interests by virtue of his fraternal relationships, he also helps orchestrate the marriages of the comedy's romance couples. Ranger states at the end of the fifth act, "I cannot sufficiently admire at the Whimsicalness of my good Fortune, in being so instrumental to this general Happiness … Never did Matrimony appear to me with a Smile upon her Face, 'till this instant" (5.2 p. 77). Although Hoadly points to the rake character's general stance against marriage, he

has his rake facilitate the comedy's romance plot; Hoadly's rake is a supporting character who rather than provide the comedy's punitive or satirical force, actually provides some of the comedy's sympathetic or romantic elements.

I have argued in my thesis (particularly in Chapter 3) that the transformation of the rake character in theatre through the Restoration period involves the rake's more and more genuine attribution with the homosocial activities he initially merely exploited. In addition, the rake's transformation involved his more genuine involvement in romance – with Ravenscroft's rake Ramble making way for his friend's romance and with Behn's rake Gayman being motivated by love to cuckold Fulbank. Both of these transformations allowed playwrights to underplay the rake's subversiveness and to portray the rake as a potentially moral character who can be understood by other characters – whose attempts to disguise his immoral "character" are ineffective – and whose moral reformation is thus comprehensible to an audience. As the later-Restoration rake's debauchery is a symptom of his passions, and as other characters on stage can hold the rake accountable for his actions, the late-Restoration rake's moral reform is both practically possible (as other characters can recognize his moral deficiencies) and is also in line with seventeenth-century English conduct literature's rhetoric of attaining manhood "with reason, temperance, and self-control" (Shepard 30). Hoadly's comedy reveals that this trend by playwrights to moralize their rake character continues into the eighteenth century; Hoadly's rake not only makes way for his genuine friends' romances, but actually orchestrates their marriages. When we compare the early Restoration rakes Horner and Ramble to Ranger, they appear and are vastly different. However, understanding how playwrights in the Restoration "declawed" the subversive cuckold-making rake character

offers a link between these disparate rakes. As English politics and society grew more morally inclined, English playwrights reflected and responded to their shifting moral climate by more and more explicitly critiquing the rake's libertine activities, to the point where his cuckolding activity is outright prohibited. The rake becomes a morally redeemable slave to his flat, stock character, rather than an amoral master manipulator of his character.

The moral climate of England in the early eighteenth-century is certainly difficult to define. However, the heightened moral sensitivity of eighteenth-century theatre is well represented not only by the Collier controversy of the 1690s and the Society for the Reformation of Manners, but also by the Licensing Act of 1737, which Steven Daedalus Burch and David Thomas argue Walpole enacted largely in response to the political satires of the 1730s – particularly Fielding's, and those of the journal *Common Sense* (Burch 85, Thomas 95). Ashley Marshall compares Carolean satire (satire produced during Charles II's reign) to late seventeenth century satire, arguing that "the decline of nasty personal satire is disappointing for those who revel in derisive Carolean scurrility, but the falling off of lampoonery was made all but inevitable by radically altered extraliterary circumstances" (133) – that is, the vastly different court culture of James II and especially of William and Anne's made the cutting satire of the Carolean period obsolete. Matthew Kinservik describes the English change in satire: "Sympathy and moral equivalence replace punitive, judgmental superiority as the defining characteristics of the satirist" (275). Kinservik's description aligns perfectly with the trend I examine during the Restoration; the more "sympathetic" character (in Corman's terms) of the late Restoration staged rake is to the more "punitive" (again, in Corman's terms) early

Restoration staged rake what the eighteenth-century "sympathetic satirist" (Kinservik 275) is to the judgmental or "punitive" (275) satirist of the Restoration. The shift I perceive throughout the Restoration, in playwrights' characterization and treatment of their rake characters, both reflects and anticipates a more generic, morally driven shift in theatre.

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