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# ARTICLES



Old Harvard Hall (built by 1677) as it stood in 1726

## To Be a Man in Early Modern Society. The Curious Case of Michael Wigglesworth *by Alan Bray*

In this paper I propose to look at the reactions of certain men in early modern society confronted disturbingly with the fact of their physical desires, firstly in terms of sexual desire and then rather later in the paper in wider terms, such as those of eating and drinking. The compass of my material is therefore very small, suggestive rather than definitive; and at first sight the material may well appear to be decidedly odd. There is though I believe a pattern to be discerned in the reactions of these men and a cultural context, which illuminates much of what it was in that society to be a man. In conclusion I will make a suggestion as to the wider role such attitudes may have had in the changing social and economic history of England at the close of the seventeenth century.

### DESIRES

The first such reaction is in the diary of Michael Wigglesworth as a young tutor in Harvard in the 1650s, prompted by the sexual dreams and fantasies

that so troubled him. Michael Wigglesworth's diary is a document which is far from easy to unravel. Cautiously, he writes in guarded generalities and especially so around the details of these troubling desires. There is though one important occasion when he speaks more directly. On a Sabbath in the summer of 1653, the assurance he found in his reflections that day was painfully shattered as he was teaching his pupils some two days later when, in the warm afternoon, the troubling sexual desires returned. In an unusually clear entry he tells us that the troubling sexual thoughts were directed to the male pupils he lived with so closely. 'Such filthy lust' as he writes 'flowing from my fond affection to my pupils whiles in their presence on the third day after noon that I confess myself an object of God's loathing as my sin is of my own; and pray God make it so more to me.' For a devout man like Michael Wigglesworth such 'unnatural filthy lust' as he put it troubled him deeply and was a disturbing sign of God's dealings with him. We might though in any case have guessed the object of his sexual desires even without the help of this passage, for these young men were unmistakably at this time the focus of his emotional life. In his diary his introspection turns and turns again to the 'love I bear to these which thou hast given me' as he worries over the spiritual state of his charges and their progress in their studies and over also the pain they gave him by their disregard of his solemn warnings, those 'unloving carriages of my pupils' he writes of that 'can go so to my heart'. These concerns and his sexual desires were directed to the same insistent object.<sup>1</sup>

Yet although we might be ready to see this connection it was not one that Michael Wigglesworth was at all willing to recognise. That phrase 'fond affection' – 'such filthy lust also flowing from my fond affection to my pupils' – is misleading to the twentieth century eye. It did not attribute his lust for his pupils to an excess of loving concern for them. An 'affection' in a common seventeenth century sense was rather a passion or a lust and a 'fond' affection made explicit what the word implied: that it was a mad, an unreasoning passion. Certainly, he recognises the love in his anxious cares for his students. But throughout this diary, one looks without success for any recognition of an equivalent involvement of his will in his *sexual* feelings as there is in his loving concern. The effect is rather to hold these two apart and to leave his daytime fantasies like his sexual dreams, as things which for him were unbidden. Nor though is there any suggestion, as a European or North American today might assume, that these homosexual desires were nevertheless and whether he wished it or not a reflection of his nature. When we look for any equivalent assumptions to that there is rather an echoing silence.

Of course one might argue that this is merely a trick of the eye. He did not say such things but surely he recognised his desires as *his* feelings, in one way or another, even if he did not spell that out for us? I suggest rather that we read that absence as it appears, as part of the diary, without writing into it a gloss derived from our own culture. Michael Wigglesworth saw a reason for this, as we shall see, but it proves first easier to follow if one is aware from the onset that Michael Wigglesworth's reaction was by no means unique to him. We see

for example the same assumptions in the surviving documents concerning Casiodoro de Reina, the minister of the Spanish protestant church in London in the early 1560s, who in 1563 was alleged to have sexually abused the boy who acted as his servant and with whom he shared a bed. Reina's defence to this when first confronted was that he *had* had several emissions when the boy was in his bed but that what had happened had happened when he was asleep; and what a man does in his sleep he cannot be guilty of. It was a thing, as Reina put it, 'without the agreement of the will', a thing 'without decision' and the same assumptions appear to have been shared by the boy. In the first interviews the boy was adamant that he had indeed been abused. But he added crucially that he did not know whether at the time Reina was awake or asleep, and later when he apparently adjusted the evidence he had given he said that at the time he had not known that it was a matter of Reina being alleged *to be a sodomite*. That charge he said was put up out of hatred. The twists in the boy's evidence reflect the assumptions of Reina's own defence. Reina, as Michael Wigglesworth, places the sodomitical desire he was accused of outside his own will and personality. The sodomite willed such things, he did not.<sup>2</sup>

No more did Michael Wigglesworth. Why then did he, unlike Reina, remain guilty? Curiously we know, from a visit Michael Wigglesworth paid to a doctor in 1655 when he was considering marriage and which he recorded in his diary in the Spring of that year. From this one can see that the purpose of the visit was to discuss what Michael Wigglesworth believed was the origin of these sodomitical dreams and unwelcome fantasies: a venereal disease he believed he had acquired in the time before his conversion, the mysterious 'weakness' he repeatedly refers to in his diary; here lay his sin. It was indeed an orthodox view of how dreams could be sinful. As the Calvinist theologian Richard Baxter explained in his *Christian Directory*:

Dreams are neither good nor sinful simply in themselves, because they are not rational and voluntary, nor in our power: but they are often made sinful by some other voluntary act. They may be sinful by participation and consequently. And the acts that make them sinful are either such as go before or such as follow after.

And the 'antecedent causes', as Baxter puts it in this account of the matter, include 'any sinful act which distempers the body'. Michael Wigglesworth's dreams were rooted, or so he believed, in just such an 'antecedent cause': in the consequence of this sexual sin of his youth. Here it was this that went before. Thus in a desperate mood in February 1655, when considering the 'hard morsel I have had to chew upon all the winter', he wrote in his diary that

A 3d exercise hath been my weakness, which sure is an affliction many ways. As first because it exposeth to sin and temptations by day which are too hard for me at some times in some degree. 2ly it exposeth unto

dreams and self pollution by night, which my soul abhors and mourns for. 3ly were it nothing else but shame and fear lest it should be judged to arise from wantonness rather than weakness by those that know not the true cause, that were some trial. But 4ly and principally because it driveth me to such a strait as I think few were ever in the like.<sup>3</sup>

It was in this 'weakness', he believed, not in his own choice or nature that the origin of these sodomitical sins lay. It was a result of 'rebellious nature' in his body, something *he* was 'overborne' by: the result of a wound inflicted on him by his sin. The reason why Michael Wigglesworth was guilty when Reina apparently was not is that while one attributes the sodomitical behaviour of his bed merely to the sleep of reason, the other attributes his sodomitical dreams and those equally unwilling (and unwelcome) daytime fantasies to his supposed venereal disease. It is his physical weakness brought on by his youthful sin which he believes has brought him to this. But each has in common the same assumption that this sodomitical behaviour was invasive of his personality.<sup>4</sup>

Michael Wigglesworth had good reason of course to distance himself from such (to him) abhorrent desires. One might well wonder if his reaction was indeed a trick of the mind to achieve that. Certainly it is the explanation most readily to hand, but I would like to raise by that possible explanation a very large question mark. Rather what I propose to do in the rest of this paper is to stand back from the curious case of Michael Wigglesworth and to attempt to place it in its wider cultural context on the basis of a number of documents from this period which I believe turn radically on what is at issue in Michael Wigglesworth's reaction to his desires. In this context his reaction proves to be neither eccentric nor unexpected. It had though a great deal to do with manliness.

## MANLINESS

In his autobiography the catholic scholar and convert Augustine Baker urges his readers to send their sons not to the universities but to study at the Inns of Court (where lawyers trained), where he says in these days of Protestantism and decay they will now find a more 'manly' education. Augustine Baker was no enemy to the universities and he is careful to distinguish what the universities should represent from their present languishing state; and as a testimony to this the catalogue of sins he recalls sharing in when he was a student in Oxford in the 1590s include gluttony, theft, and sodomy. Why though was it unmanly to be a glutton, a thief, or a sodomite? The answer was the lack of control they had over their appetites, appetites run wild, of which the sodomitical that troubled Michael Wigglesworth so was a part but no more. It is why Augustine Baker's sodomitical companions are also described as gluttons, why those in Thomas Shepard's similar memoir of his university days are described as both

sodomites and drunkards, and also why Michael Wigglesworth's contemporaries seem at times so loose in the terms they apply to the sexual appetite more generally; as when Elias Pledger, the Puritan diarist, described a would-be seducer of his young female cousin as a 'Beastly Sodomite'. The looseness of the object the 'sodomite' chooses is a ready indication of how little of the term was in the object chosen and how much in the uncontrolled appetite, of which the sodomitical appetite of Michael Wigglesworth was a ready part, but no more. It is also equally evident in the characteristic detail that when the Casiodoro de Reina I mentioned earlier was accused of sexually assaulting his servant boy he was also accused of scandalous conduct with the boy's mother: the two seemed quite akin.<sup>5</sup>

The sharp point is nicely put in this respect in John Donne's epigram

Thou call'st me effeminate, for I love women's joys;  
I call not thee manly, though thou follow boys.

The speaker is being accused of being a womanizer and becoming womanlike because of it. The trick in the epigram is to turn the accuser's words back on himself by implying that, though he does not follow women, he does follow boys and to the same end. In this culture sexuality itself whatever its object makes a man effeminate. It is 'wantonness' itself, 'whereby occasions are sought to stir up lust' according to William Perkins's commentary on the seventh commandment which is itself 'effeminate'. But sexuality was not neatly distinguished in this cluster of ideas either in itself or from the other fruits of sensuality that an unrestrained and thus unmanly appetite could lust for. What these avowedly unmasculine figures share drunkard, glutton, fornicator, and sodomite alike is a ruinously unrestrained appetite, an appetite without 'masculine' restraint; and the sodomite's improper sexual appetite is but one expression of this.<sup>6</sup>

And such an unmanly consuming appetite could destroy its possessors; this is the point I want to draw out here, as a gloss on Michael Wigglesworth's fears. Most evidently to their neighbours it could destroy them financially and in the end as likely as not make thieves of them for such unappeasable appetites it was assumed needed financing. Augustine Baker described his sodomitical and gluttonous friends as thieves, so that they could eat the meat in Lent their colleges did not provide but their appetites lusted for. Casiodoro de Reina, the sodomite and seducer of mothers, was accused also of embezzlement.<sup>7</sup>

But his unrestrained appetites could destroy the unmanly man in less evident ways also. One of these was in his body. When Augustine Baker urged his readers to keep their sons from these unmanly sins his argument is that they should do so if they wish to have heirs in 'that the youth is in danger to become so far corrupted that he will never be able to get a child'. The fear is not that he will not *desire* to father a child but that he will not be *able* to do so. It is a physical degeneracy such an appetite could bring them to that is the object in focus here.<sup>8</sup>

Is it then surprising that Michael Wigglesworth saw the same destructiveness at work in his mind? In the end an unmanly consuming appetite could consume its owner. It was this his unmanly 'weakness' had brought him to. It was the coherence of Michael Wigglesworth's personality that he believed was being undermined by his weakness, that seemed to be being pushed aside by the dreams and involuntary fantasies from outside himself that his venereal disease, or so he believed, had brought.

### THE SCOURGE OF VILLAINY

Michael Wigglesworth's reaction reveals a manliness that recognized itself as frighteningly open to being undermined. This was no eccentricity, and indeed we can see the same assumptions set out at length in Satire VII of *The Scourge of Villainy* by the Elizabethan social satirist John Marston. In the poem the author searches for a man, as Diogenes once did, about the streets of Marston's London; but can find none. 'These are no men' he says but mere 'resemblances': the wealthy man has lost his manliness to the pleasures of the table; the soldier has lost his to drunkenness and whoring; and the man enamoured of effeminate fashion – and indeed of 'riot, lust, and fleshly seeming sweetness' – is the same. In losing their manliness, in this account these figures have also lost something which now may not seem at all a matter of gender. They have lost their souls. In Marston's Aristotelian terms, such figures have lost the rational part of their souls that distinguished them from the beasts, the same loss as in Michael Wigglesworth's frightened reference to his 'fond affection', his unreasoning passion:

He hath no soul, the which the Stagirite  
Term'd rational, for beastly appetite,  
Base dunghill thoughts, and sensual action  
Hath made him lose that fair creation.

(The Stagirite is Aristotle). Only the misleading appearance of men is left.

That lustre wherewith nature's Nature decked  
Our intellectual part, that gloss is soiled  
With staining spots of vile impiety  
And muddy dirt of sensuality.  
These are no men but apparitions  
Ignes fatui, glow-worms, fictions,  
Meteors, rats of Nilus, fantasies,  
Colosses, pictures, shades, resemblances

Marston is using 'meteors' in the once more common sense of the insubstantial phenomena of the air, like lightning, the rainbow, or the ignes fatui, the deceptive lights that appear to hover over the marshes and mislead unwary travellers. Such men, he tells us, have no more true substance than

the seeming animals produced by the flooding of the Nile, mere confections of mud. To the eye, they may seem to possess the endurance of a colossal statue (before it falls); but in truth are no more than pictures, insubstantial images, mere resemblances.<sup>9</sup>

Clearly neither Marston nor his readers thought London was populated wholly by ghosts. A 'satirist' was expected to exaggerate and rail, but satires were expected also to sting and to do so had to make sense in the assumptions of their readers. Marston's *Scourge of Villainy* did, for Satire VII was the logical conclusion of much of what this culture believed about manliness.

It was not necessarily though what everyone thought; indeed I think that unlikely. What we have here seems to me rather the language of the magistrate and the minister and those who followed them: a fear of an aggressive manliness, fighting drunk, and the prospect of the social disorder such an unrestrained manliness could conjure up.

But for a moment it gives us a glimpse into the private fears of a man of Michael Wigglesworth's time and culture. It says something of the fear that for a man might accompany the pleasure of a sexual act: immensely desired and yet potentially carrying a terrible price. It also says something of the (to our contemporaries) unsettling lack of distinction there could be in the pleasures of the senses, where sexuality lacks the carefully labelled categories of a later period and is scarcely distinguished from other sensual pleasures, of eating or of getting drunk or dressing up, perhaps even of fighting or going to bed. But perhaps most of all it gives us an understanding of how a sense of masculine gender in that culture might not be thought of as of something that exists of itself, but rather as something that was always threatened and contingent.<sup>10</sup>

The assumptions about consumption evident in Michael Wigglesworth's diary were though a way of thinking that would not find it easy to survive in England in common credence much beyond the end of the century. The birth of a 'consumer society' in eighteenth-century England and the effect on England's eighteenth-century economic growth of new and positive attitudes appearing then to consumption has been a much visited debate among historians since the publication by Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J.H. Plumb in 1982 of their work *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England*. The ultimate origins of this thesis lie in the economic statistics collected by Deane and Cole in their *British Economic Growth 1688–1959: Trends and Structure* published in 1962 and in the highly influential paper by Elizabeth Waterman Gilbody 'Demand as a Factor in the Industrial Revolution', first published in 1932. The model in this argument is that the take off in England's eighteenth century economy was fired by an increase in *demand*. Cultural change – in a rise in consumption standards and a spread of new wants through the population – would have played a major role in bringing about such a changing economic environment; and much persuasive work has since appeared arguing along these lines, notably the major collection of essays



*Consumption and the World of Goods* in 1993 edited by John Brewer and Roy Porter.

Only recently though has consideration been given to the effect changing gender differences might have had on these changes: in work such as that of Lorna Weatherill, Amanda Vickery, and the literary critic Laura Brown on patterns of distinctively female consumption and the meanings these could impart to the objects women collected and preserved. Illuminating though this work certainly is in bringing out the distinctive ways women consumed and to what ends, a difficulty with generalizing from this work to England's eighteenth-century economic growth is that the behaviour and meanings we see being brought out by this work are not necessarily *new*. In the stereotypes of eighteenth-century satire women remained fully as much consumers as they had been in social satire a century or more before. Pope's poetical description of the enticing contents of Belinda's female toilet, with its 'Puffs, Powders, Patches, Bibles, Billet-doux', with its Arabian perfumes and Indian gems, its suggestive disorder and hints of sexuality, would have been familiar material to any seventeenth-century satirist.

The question I would like to raise is the possibly distinctive (and changing) role played by men in this economic change. In the consumer economy of eighteenth-century England, would not that image of the unmanly consuming man ultimately destroying himself, the image which has been at the heart of this paper, have become a curious and outmoded object? Would a change in comparison to what came before not have lain rather elsewhere, in the idea that now a *man* might also be a consumer and still be a man and in doing so know nothing of that old crisis which had arisen when a man had been perceived as a consumer? This is not of course to say that men in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries did not get drunk, celebrate violence, dress extravagantly, eat to excess when they could, and fornicate. They certainly did all of these things. Rather my point is that for men in that period there could be a cultural fear accompanying consumption – one of an undifferentiated and potentially apocalyptic nature – in which the feared outcome of the lack of selfcontrol such things risked could be a man's radical undoing. Part of the necessary test of manliness had been successfully to essay that risk.

By the eighteenth century in England that set of ideas had fallen into history. They would have been ill placed in England's eighteenth-century consumer economy. This was an economy created in substantial part by its distinctive new skills of advertising and its creation of the art of 'puffing' in the hands of promotional geniuses like the entrepreneur Josiah Wedgwood. But such promotion turned on a different and now positive language of consumption and aesthetics, in terms of choice and discerning taste. Did the positive distinction it encouraged in consumption not free the consuming man from an old fear? Was the new consumer of eighteenth-century England specifically a man?<sup>11</sup>

## NOTES

1 I have used the edition in 'The Diary of Michael Wigglesworth' in *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts* Vol 35, Transactions 1942–1946, Boston, 1951, pp. 311–444, ed. Edmund S. Morgan. This is cited below as 'Diary'. There is also *The Diary of Michael Wigglesworth, 1653–1657: The conscience of a Puritan*, New York, 1965, ed. Edmund S. Morgan. The manuscript is in the care of the Massachusetts Historical Society: Wigglesworth papers, 15.7. It relates to the years 1653–1657. Dreams: 'Diary' pp. 369 and 324. Fantasies: 'Diary' pp. 322, 323, 350, 399, 406. Both are referred to in more general terms at 'Diary' p. 398, quoted below. The quotations in this paragraph are to 'Diary' pp. 350, 322; 323; 322.

Quotations, whether from modern or original editions, are given according to the following rules. Spelling and obsolete forms of words generally (other than verb forms) have been modernised, as have punctuation and the use of capitals. Abbreviations have been expanded, except where they serve a metrical purpose. Dates are given with the year beginning on the 1 January. I have not preserved italic type. Titles of books have been similarly modernised in the text but not in the notes. Documents not in English are given in translation.

Richard Crowder was strictly right in his claim that Wigglesworth nowhere details the subject matter of his sexual dreams, Richard Crowder, *No Featherbed to Heaven: A Biography of Michael Wigglesworth, 1631–1705*, Michigan, 1962, p. 62. Wigglesworth *did* though detail the contents of his worrying sexual fantasies (or perhaps part of them), both at 'Diary' p. 350 as I discuss (and in the phrase 'unnatural filthy lust' at 'Diary' p. 322); and it is not unreasonable to link the two, as Wigglesworth does at 'Diary' p. 398. My attention was first drawn to the sodomitical nature of these comments by Jonathan Ned Katz in his *Gay/Lesbian Almanac* New York, 1983, pp. 94–100.

This paper has been given in a number of earlier versions as a seminar paper and I have greatly benefited from the discussion of the participants. I owe a particular debt to Margaret Hunt, who commented on the paper at an early stage and to the trustees of the Georges Lurcy Fund at Amherst College, Massachusetts, who generally assisted me with my visit to the USA to give this as a paper.

2 The main sources for this are transcribed by A. Gordon Kinder in his *Casiodoro de Reina: Spanish Reformer of the Sixteenth Century*, London, 1975, Appendix III, pp. 99–112 (discussed by him at pp. 27–36.)

'Without the agreement of the will': absque consensu voluntatis, Kinder p. 105. 'Without decision': absque determinatione, Kinder p. 109. The boy on whether Reina was asleep: Kinder p. 106. The boy's later evidence: Kinder p. 33 note 66.

3 Doctor: 'Diary' p. 405. Baxter: Richard Baxter *A Christian Directory* London, 1673, p. 407 (Part I, Chapter VIII, Part 7, Paragraphs 1 and 2.1). Also in Cynthia Griffin Wolff 'Literary Reflections of the Puritan Character', *Journal of the History of Ideas* 29:1, January–March 1968, p. 20. February 1655 quotation: 'Diary' 398.

4 'Diary' pp. 406, 399.

5 *Memorials of Father Augustine Baker* ed. Dom Justin McCann and Dom Hugh Connolly, London, 1933, pp. 41–44. At page 34–35 he adds fornication and drunkenness to the list of the sins of the universities and contrasts the present state of the universities with what they ought to be: 'the seed or fountain of all virtue for the whole kingdom'.

The principal source for Thomas Shepard's life is his autobiography 'The Autobiography of Thomas Shepard' in *Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts* Vol 27, 1927–1930, pp. 343–400 cited below as 'Autobiography'; also in *God's Plot: The Paradoxes of Puritan Piety*, ed. Michael McGiffert, Manchester, 1972, pp. 33–77. Thomas Shepard's memoir is the piece entitled 'An: 1639' and which begins 'The good things I have received of the Lord:', written in the same manuscript as that containing his autobiography. It is an account of his conversion and vocation, and is given in 'Autobiography' op cit pp. 393–395 (and in McGiffert's version also pp. 71–74). The passage I am referring to is in 'Autobiography' p. 393:

He is the God that began to strive with me . . . although I oft resisted the Lord and neglected secret prayer and care of his ways a long time and . . . followed my bowling loose company until I came to that height of pride that for their sakes I was once or twice dead drunk and lived in unnatural uncleannesses not to be named and in speculative wantonness and filthiness with all sorts of persons which pleased my eye (yet still restrained from the gross act of whoredom which some of my own familiars were to their horror and shame overtaken with)

'Bowling': in the obsolete sense of excessive drinking. 'Loose': unchaste. Shepard then goes on to illustrate first the one and then the other; 'unnatural uncleannesses not to be named' is an

indirect expression for sodomy, as in Edward Coke's 'Of Buggery, or Sodomy' in *The Third Part of the Institutes of the Laws of England*, London, 1644, p. 58: 'a detestable and abominable sin amongst Christians not to be named'. In this last, the reference is to his intimate friends ('familiaris'). 'Gross' cannot be a defining adjective; Shepard would scarcely have recognized degrees of wickedness in whoredom. It serves to intensify the disapproval of whoredom rather than to restrict the term to any particular act. The contrast is between the actions of his friends and his easy acceptance of what he saw ('speculative' – obsolete: in vision), something which pleased his eye. There is a parallel passage to this in 'Autobiography' op cit p. 361 (and in McGiffert p. 40–41). Pledger: Cynthia Giffin Wolff 'Literary Reflections of the Puritan Character' *Journal of the History of Ideas* 29: 1, January–March 1968, p. 18. The boy's mother: Kinder op. cit. p. 105; see also p. 35.

6 John Donne, *The Satires, Epigrams and Verse Letters* ed. W. Milgate, Oxford, 1967, p. 52. On the wordplay in Donne's epigrams see: Frank S. Caricato, *John Donne and the Epigram Tradition*, Fordham University Ph.D. dissertation, 1973, although I have read the sexual innuendos here differently and M. Thomas Hester in 'Donne's Epigrams: A Little World Made Cunningly' in *The Eagle and the Dove: Reassessing John Donne* ed. Claude J. Summers and Ted-Larry Pebworth, Columbia, 1986, pp. 80–91, on the verbal tension in the epigrams which problematizes their material. Perkins: William Perkins, *A Golden Chaine: Or, The Description of Theologie in The Workes of. . . M. W. Perkins* Vol 1, Cambridge, 1608, p. 60.

7 Baker: *Memorials of Father Augustine Baker*. p. 43. Reina and embezzlement: Kinder, *Casiodoro da Reina*, p. 113–114.

8 *Memorials of Father Augustine Baker*. pp. 34–35.

9 *The Poems of John Marston* ed. Arnold Davenport, Liverpool, 1961, pp. 140–146. My comments on individual words are partly derived from Davenport's excellent notes. I have modernized the quotations following the rules in note 1. There is a perceptive discussion of the place of the sodomitical in Satire VII in this respect in Bruce R. Smith, *Homosexual Desire in Shakespeare's England: A Cultural Poetics*, Chicago, 1991, Chapter Five, esp. pp. 180–181.

The woman that appears in the poem is the very epitome of deceitful appearance that the other figures have been reduced to. But while they have fallen to this state, she has not; the woman is what they have become.

10 The ideas about manliness I have described in this paper are related to those in Stephen Orgel's sensitive discussion of the love of women in English Renaissance theatre as threatening to a perilously achieved male identity, in Stephen Orgel 'Nobody's Perfect: Or Why Did the English Stage Take Boys for Women?' *South Atlantic Quarterly* 88: 1, 1989–1990, pp. 7–29 and in Thomas Laqueur's discussion of the reaction in the Renaissance to effeminacy in a man as entailing a sort of phantasmagoric dissolution of his being, Thomas Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1990, especially pp. 125–6 and 123. I am much more wary though in drawing conclusions about femininity from the material I have used for this paper, in line with the conclusions Stephen Orgel and Thomas Laqueur have drawn about femininity from their own material: that in such a culture a woman did not exist as an ontologically distinct category, that she was in effect an incomplete male. Although I appreciate that much of the material I have used can be read in this way I think this would be mistaken, firstly because these texts do deal centrally with manliness and therefore make a very shaky basis for drawing indirectly conclusions about femininity. The source of the tension I see in them is rather between manliness and unmanliness generally than between being a man and being a woman. Secondly, as I indicate in the paper I think the assumptions in these texts have their own social niche and lack the general significance Thomas Laqueur writes of. It seems to me very probable that the ideas I have described here also rubbed along with other and contradictory ideas of what it was to be a man.

11 Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, and J. H. Plumb *The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England* London, 1982. Phyllis Deane and W. A. Cole *British Economic Growth, 1688–1959* Cambridge, 1962. Elizabeth Waterman Gilbody 'Demand as a Factor in the Industrial Revolution', in *Facts and Factors in Economic History: Articles by former Students of Edwin Francis Gay* ed. Arthur H. Cole et al., Cambridge, MA, 1932, pp. 620–639, reprinted in *The Causes of the Industrial Revolution* ed. R. M. Hartwell, London, 1967, pp. 121–138. *Consumption and the World of Goods* eds. John Brewer and Roy Porter, London and New York, 1993.

The views in these papers have subsequently been significantly modified in detail; of particular relevance here is the tendency to shift the perspective from the last quarter of the eighteenth century to the later seventeenth century and the early part of the eighteenth. This

was raised in the initial reception of *The Birth of a Consumer Society* in reviews by B. A. Holderness, *The English Historical Review*, 99, 1984, 122–124 and Peter Borsay *British Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies* Vol 8, 1985, 235–236 and later reinforced by Lorna Weatherill, *Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain 1660–1760*, London, 1988 and Beverly Lemire, ‘Consumerism in Preindustrial and Early Industrial England: The Trade in Secondhand Clothes’ *Journal of British Studies*, 27: 1, January 1988, 1–24. There is a valuable review of the continuing debate at that time in Joseph P. Ward ‘Reinterpreting the Consumer Revolution’ in *Journal of British Studies* Vol 29, 1990, pp. 408–414, and there are still dissenting voices on the fundamental economics: Joel Mokyr ‘Demand vs. Supply in the Industrial Revolution’ in *The Journal of Economic History* Vol 37, 1977, No 4, pp. 981–1008; there is a response to Mokyr’s article in Ari Y. Ben-Shachar in *The Journal of Economic History* Vol 44, 1984, No 3, pp. 801–805 and a reply in *The Journal of Economic History* Vol 44, 1984, No 3, pp. 806–809.

Lorna Weatherill ‘A Possession of One’s Own: Women and Consumer Behaviour in England, 1660–1740’ *Journal of British Studies* 25: 2, April 1986, 131–156. Amanda Vickery, ‘Women and the world of goods: a Lancashire consumer and her possessions, 1751–81’; *Consumption and the World of Goods* pp. 274–301. Laura Brown, *Alexander Pope* Oxford, 1985, especially Chapter 3 ‘The Ideology of Neo-Classical Aesthetics *Epistles to Several Persons* (1731–5)’ pp. 94–127 and ‘Reading Race and Gender: Jonathan Swift’ *Eighteenth-Century Studies* Vol 23, 1989–1990, No 4, pp. 425–443. These authors have not suggested that the ‘consumer economy’ was prompted by female consumption alone but rather that there were differences in the way men and women consumed. This is particularly so of Amanda Vickery. I was prompted to some of these thoughts by a talk Roy Porter gave at the Institute of Historical Research in London in January 1990, when in commenting on eighteenth-century English medicine, he contrasted the eighteenth-century concern with the disease of ‘consumption’ with the negative attitude of the Christian Humanism of the previous century to consumption as excess. This talk was later reproduced in *Consumption and the World of Goods*, pp. 58–81.

Belinda: ‘The Rape of the Lock’ Canto I, line 138, in *Pope: Poetical Works* ed. Herbert Davis, Oxford, 1966, p. 91.

I have concentrated largely (although not entirely) in this paper on masculine consumption in terms of consumables rather than durable objects. These were at least as important as durable objects in the eighteenth century’s economic take off, as Carole Schammas has argued persuasively in ‘Change in English and Anglo-American Consumption from 1550 to 1800’ in *Consumption and the World of Goods* pp. 177–205.