

HOLD YOUR TONGUE: FEMALE SPEECH AND MALE ANXIETIES
IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

by

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ABSTRACT

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For early Modern England, containing female speech was essential to maintaining order. Women's speech was supposed to be non-existent, and excessive verbosity indicated a woman who could not or would not submit to societal patriarchal authority. Through their speech, women could raise questions of patriarchal power and potentially subvert that power. The frequency of this trope in literature, educational handbooks, dramatic works, and public documents shows that there indeed was a great apprehension about what exactly speech and the tongue could accomplish. As a result of this need to contain female speech, the female tongue became a common literary

trope and was used as a metaphor for many problems and issues within the culture. This thesis analyzes two body politic metaphors in which the female tongue as a character wreaks havoc on the social body. Thomas Tomkis and William Averell write two very different body politic metaphors. Tomkis's *Lingua* is a comedy that communicates with rhetorical discourses, while Averell's *Mervailous Combat of Contrarities* is written as a serious dialogue communicating with both anti-Catholic and print discourses. I argue that male authors' utilization of the female tongue illustrates male anxieties not only about the place of women, but about their own places within the strict hierarchy of Early Modern English culture.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.....	vii
Chapter	
1. SILENCE IS GOLDEN: AN OVERVIEW OF THE FEMALE TONGUE IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND.....	1
2. UPHOLDING NATURAL ORDER: A DISCOURSE ON WOMEN AND RHETORIC	18
3. SERIOUS BUSINESS: CATHOLICS, PRINT, AND THE TONGUE.....	38
4. IN CONCLUSION: SPROUTING WINGS	56
REFERENCES	59
BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION.....	62

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure		Page
1.1	“The Tongue, which every secret speakes, Is like a Barell full of leakes.” (Wither 246)	11
4.1	“No Heart can thinke, to what strange ends, The Tongues unruely Motion tends.” (Wither 42)	58

CHAPTER 1

SILENCE IS GOLDEN: AN OVERVIEW OF THE FEMALE TONGUE IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

In his discussion of male sexual jealousy in the Renaissance, Mark Breitenburg states: “the identities of men are upheld by the construction of women as other, thus producing a gendered subject/object relationship in which female desire and sexuality is simultaneously (in a mutually validating way) construed as either nonexistent or excessive” (382). While sexuality and jealousy are not the main subjects of this thesis, Breitenburg’s point rings true regarding female speech as well. Women were often defined by their speech acts, and female sexuality was tied to female expression. Women’s speech was supposed to be non-existent (much like female desire), and excessive verbosity indicated a woman who could not or would not submit to societal patriarchal authority, a female beyond the control of social power structures. In a society where women were often regarded as male property, speech was one aspect that men had extreme difficulty controlling. The tongue and speech arise as a trope in literary texts, educational works, and public documents, often functioning as metonymy, standing in for women and the dangers and power issues raised through their speech. This trope illustrates cultural and social anxieties deeply rooted in Early Modern England regarding female power and control. In the texts examined in this thesis, the

woman's tongue becomes an actual character seeking to destroy both the natural and social bodies; a verbose woman of the worst kind.

Patricia Parker's *Literary Fat Ladies* and Wayne Rebhorn's *Emperors of Men's Minds* argue that "rhetoric is deeply implicated in the social and political order that produces it," an idea that is central to this thesis (Rebhorn 12). If rhetoric and literary texts are deeply imbedded in the society that produces them, then the occurrence of the woman's tongue in these texts shows how important controlling women's speech was for this society. The woman's tongue as a literary trope shows that there was not only a male unease surrounding the potential power of women's speech, but also that there was a male fantasy of controlling women that this trope helped to justify. According to Parker, "one of the chief concerns of the tradition that portrays women as unflappable talkers is how to master or contain such feminine mouthing" (26). As a trope, the female tongue becomes a stand-in for rebellious women; creating outspoken female characters that need to be punished for transgressing their societal boundaries enabled male authors to show the danger of an outspoken woman and the benefits of controlling such women. I will also argue in this thesis that the uncontrolled woman functions not only as a warning against the verbose woman, but also stands in for other societal institutions outside the authors' control, such as academic and print cultures.

In order to understand the anxiety surrounding the outspoken woman, an understanding of authoritative speech is necessary. The authority held by the English government often relied on the spoken word to control and subdue their subjects whether sermons, speeches, judicial proceedings, or even the everyday speech of

government officials. In *Foreign Bodies and the Body Politic: Discourses of Social Pathology*, while discussing the poisonous, medicinal, and rhetorical properties assigned to the woman's tongue, Jonathon Gil Harris states: "the tongue was available to Tudor and Stuart writers as a somewhat unstable figure for the exercise of political and patriarchal authority, as well as its subversion" (108). These writers and their governmental representatives depended on the ability of speech to quiet the masses and punish transgressors, but had to contend with the association between the spoken word and the evil, woman's tongue. As a source of power for the state, the authoritative tongue functioned as the "proper" use of the tongue by patriarchal authority. Authorities believed they could easily manipulate the common person through the power of the spoken word. In *Wilson's Arte of Rhetorique*, Thomas Wilson asks "what greater delite doe wee knowe, then to see a whole multitude, with the onely talke of man, rauished and drawne whiche way he liketh left to have them"(A^v). However, they had to carefully use the tongue of authority and avoid speech that could be characterized as excessive or unnecessary and hence womanly. Because of these dual roles assigned to the tongue, this "little member" of the body, literal and politic, was a source of great anxiety and power for the Elizabethans and Jacobeans.

The most famous and often used example of proper "authoritative" speech was Menenius Agrippa's "belly fable." Cited in Cicero's *De Officiis*, Menenius' famous speech was utilized by rhetoricians and other authors as a great example of perfect rhetoric. Menenius' belly fable in which the members of the body rebel against the belly is employed by authors like Quintilian, Shakespeare, and Thomas Wilson to

illustrate how the social body should work together to function as a whole. The body members claim that the belly is hoarding food without giving any to them. As a solution, the body members refuse to feed the belly, not realizing that they will cause their own demise through this rebellion. They eventually realize that the belly does know what is best for the body and halt their rebellion. The fable intends to teach people about how they should function within the social body. In this body politic metaphor, the belly represents the government and the monarchy and the rebelling body parts represent the lower members of society. The fable taught people of all social classes that they were to obey people of higher social and governmental ranks to maintain the proper order of society. Rebelling against people and authorities that were above one would only cause the downfall of the entire social body.

As we see from this example, Early Modern England placed high importance on the “proper” order of society. In a culture with a clearly defined hierarchy where men were considered superior to women, an outspoken woman overstepped the proper societal boundaries. According to Henry Peacham in the *The Garden of Eloquence*, a rhetorical handbook first published in 1577, “which order is naturall, as when we say: God and man, men and women, Sun and Moone, life and death” (118-19). Peacham describes the ideal power structure of the time, a power structure where God was above man and man above woman. Men must submit to God, and women must submit to men. Peacham also illustrates this in his book of emblems, *Minerva Britannia*. In an emblem depicting a plume of feathers, Peacham compares the plume to the proper order of society stating: “Whereas each feather keeps his ranck and fall: So should that state”

(Peacham, *Minerva* 164). The plume illustrates the proper order of society, where each person stays in his or her place to keep society working properly. Through speech, women could upset and even potentially alter this proper order. Jonathon Gil Harris states “tongues whose unrestrained physicality of utterance possesses an innate transformative power, a capacity to intervene in and change the existing order of things” (108). For male authors, the woman’s tongue had the ability to influence and alter “natural” order by placing women above men or otherwise altering the “correct” order of society.

The woman’s tongue also represented social evils other than the uncontrolled woman. Jonathon Gil Harris shows that the woman’s tongue caused a problem in the “gap” it represented; the tongue became a place for infiltrations of diseases and evils for literal and social bodies (108). According to the still-prevailing Galenic medical ideas of the time, most disease and sickness emerged from within the body. Galenic medicine believed that an imbalance of the humors caused illnesses, not infiltration by a foreign body, an idea that can also be applied to the body politic (Harris 22). Harris states, “Social disease here emerges from within the natural body as a consequence of its constituent members failing to maintain their preassigned positions within a ‘natural’ order” (20). By stepping outside of their natural boundaries, members of the social body can cause great harm to society. For women, and their speech, the “natural boundaries” remained inside the home. Public speech or even excessive speech or scolding within the home became a danger for society as it usurped the place of male speech and attempted to take over the role of the tongue of authority.

The uncontrolled woman who does exceed her “proper” boundaries appears in many Early Modern English texts in the form of the chattering or scolding woman. According to Lynda Boose in “Scolding Brides and Bridling Scolds: Taming the Woman’s Unruly Member,” “one can speculate that a ‘scold’ was, in essence, any woman who verbally resisted or flouted authority publicly, and stubbornly enough to challenge the underlying dictum of male rule” (192). In Early Modern England, a woman unwilling to submit to male authority and unable to be married off created a rift in the power structure. According to the patriarchal hierarchies of the time, the man was given superiority over the woman through God. By refusing to submit to male authority, the woman was subverting the natural order of English society.

Shakespeare’s *The Taming of the Shrew* presents a well-known example of the shrewish woman. Kate pursues this fault of excessive speech to a greater degree through her position as a scold. She not only talks too much, but assumes power over men through her outright refusal of male authority. Kate stubbornly refuses to do anything her father tells her to do. When Baptista tells Kate she may stay outside, Kate responds brusquely, stating, “Why, and I trust I may go too, may I not?/ What, shall I be appointed hours, as though (belike)/ I knew not what to take and what to leave? Ha!” (*Shrew* 1.1.102-4). Kate will not submit to even the smallest command. Instead, she must exercise her own judgment and do what she wants to do. She refuses to obey Petruchio after their wedding as well, responding to his desire to leave with “Do what thou canst, I will not go today,/ No, nor to-morrow – not till I please myself” (*Shrew* 3.2.207-8). While Petruchio begins to “tame” her at this point, Kate still refuses to be

told to do anything, and often does the opposite out of spite. At other times, Kate's response to male commands becomes physically violent. When Hortensio, disguised as the music instructor, attempts to correct her fingering on the flute, he repeats that Kate "with a most impatient devilish spirit/ [...] strook me on the head,/ and through the instrument my pate made way" (*Shrew* 2.1.151-4). She not only clutches male power through her speech, Kate takes it one step further by exercising authority over a male body. Kate oversteps her bounds by protesting her lower social status and trying to assume power over men, which was unacceptable. A woman was *supposed* to get married and *supposed* to submit, first to her father and then to her husband. At the beginning of the play, Kate is willing to do neither, which proves to be problematic for the patriarchy, as Kate's unwillingness to submit does upset the hierarchy of society. Through her unrestrained tongue, Kate has the ability and capacity to upset, and even alter, the social hierarchies of "God and man, men and women" (Peacham, *Garden* 118-19).

While Kate serves as a representative of the female tongue subverting the proper order, Queen Elizabeth upheld and reinforced the proper order of society. However, instead of furthering the place of women, Elizabeth was often presented as an exception to the rule. Texts presented Elizabeth's strength and rule in terms of extreme praise that seem to be more of an afterthought to the negative implications of female speech (Parker 60). Queen Elizabeth's own speeches and public documents also emphasized her position as an exception while coding herself as male and reminding the audience of

her male ancestry. One of Elizabeth's most famous speeches illustrates this perfectly.

Within the speech given to the troops at Tilbury Camp in 1588, Elizabeth states:

I know I have the body but of a weak and feeble woman, but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a king of England too, and think foul scorn that Parma, or Spain, or any Prince of Europe should dare to invade the borders of my realm, to which rather than any dishonor shall grow by me, I myself will take up arms, I myself will be your general, judge, and rewarder of every one of your virtues in the field. (77)

By first calling attention to and then disregarding her female body, Elizabeth reorders herself as masculine. She plays upon her place as sole ruler of England, and distinguishes her ruling presence as masculine.

While Elizabeth managed to code her body as masculine, other women weren't as lucky, as the excesses of the tongue were often tied to excess in bodily fluid and functions. In *The Body Embarrassed: Drama and the Disciplines of Shame in Early Modern England*, Gail Kern Paster shows that many texts were participants in a discourse that "inscribes women as leaky vessels by isolating one element of the female body's material expressiveness – its production of fluids – as excessive, hence either disturbing or shameful. It also characteristically links this liquid expressiveness to excessive verbal fluency" (25). Speech became another incontinence comparable to the excesses of menstruation, urination, and sexual desire. Paster argues that these "incontinences" provided medical backing for the widely held cultural belief that women were inferior to men.

Patricia Parker also broaches this subject in *Literary Fat Ladies: Rhetoric, Gender, and Property*, a book that draws connections between issues of power, gender, and property raised in rhetorical and literary works from the Early Modern period. Parker argues that the female body and its incontinences are a reflection of a male need of mastery and control over the female. Like Gail Kern Paster, Parker also concludes that Early Modern England connected speech and sexuality, stating “female speech or mouthing [...] is not only in this misogynist tradition the representative of the infuriating opposite of Silence but [...] inseparable from the vice opposed to the corresponding virtue of Chastity, as both are ranged against Obedience” (26). Silence, obedience, and chastity were the three virtues every woman should have. A babbling woman violated all three of these principles. Through her inability to control her tongue, she was disobeying the male hierarchy. The openness of her mouth also signified other types of openness, such as sexual openness, which also constituted a form of disobedience. This connection is also seen in *The Taming of the Shrew*. Kate’s unwillingness to submit to male authority and hold her tongue causes her to become associated with other bodily incontinences, more specifically, sexual incontinence. In their initial meeting, Petruchio teases Kate with several sexual puns, suggesting her sexual openness: “Women are made to bear, and so are you” implying as a woman Kate needs sex to fulfill her duty of bearing children (*Shrew* 2.1.200). An even bawdier pun soon follows with Petruchio’s “confusion” and subsequent suggestion of “my tongue in your tail,” a sexual innuendo still grasped by modern audiences today (*Shrew* 2.1.217).

The connection between speech and female “leaking” can also be seen in *The Revenger’s Tragedy*, first published in 1607. Vindice states, “Tell but some woman a secret overnight,/ Your doctor may find it in the urinal i’th’ morning”(Tourneur 1.3.85-85). Emblem books of the time, like George Wither’s *A Collection of Emblemes, Ancient and Moderne* published in 1635, also connect female speech with leaking. One such emblem depicts a leaking barrel (Figure 1.1), warning men of:

The trustlesse nature of a *whorish woman*,
For, shee to all displays her wantonnesse
And cares to keepe her secrecies, from no man.
Within her bosome nothing long she keeps,
But whatsoever she conceives or knows,
Streight, from the heart, up to her tongue, it creeps. (Wither 246)

The leaking barrel and Vindice’s urinal comment both connect the leaking body to the open mouth. The association shows that prevailing thought of the time believed that the leaking body constituted a leaking mouth, an inability to control speech.

The Tongue, which every secret speakes,
Is like a Barrell full of leakes.



ILLVSTR. XXXVIII.

Book. 1

THe Barrell, from whose bottome, sides, and bung,
The liquor (as in this our Emblem) flowes,
May fitly typifie the babling Tongue,
Of him that utters ev'ry thing hee knowes.
For, such as are their taskes, who strive to fill
An ever-leaking Vessel, to the brim;
Ev'n such are his, who laboureth to fill
A tasters tongue; for, paines are lost on him.
This Figure, also, serveth to expresse,
The trustlesse nature of a whorish woman;
For, shee to all displayes her wantonnesse,
And, cares to keepe her secrecies, from no man.
Within her bosome, nothing long shee keeps,
But, whatsoever shee conceives or knowes,
Streight, from the heart, up to her tongue, it creeps;
And, round about the Citie, then, it goes.

Bee warned therefore, and commit thou not
Thy person, state, or fame, to such as these;
Lest, they thy Reputation doe bespot,
Consume thy Substance, or thy Minde diseate.
But, most of all, bee wary, lest the crime,
Which here wee doe reprove, thy mind infect:
For, Vice, like weeds, will grow in little time,
And, out-grow Vertues, if wee them neglect.
The surest way to keepe such errors out,
And, in our selves true Vertues to maintaine;
Is, to bee hoopt with Temperance, round about,
And, our out-flowing humors to restraine.

If thus we practise, 'twill prevent the wrongs
Of our owne errors, and of others tongues.

How

Figure 1.1 “The Tongue, which every secret speakes, Is like a Barrell full of leakes.”
(Wither 246)

The shameful connections between speech and the uncontrolled female body extend beyond the literature and into punishments given to women who surpassed the boundaries of speech; women who spoke out of place often received harsh punishments for their actions. Because of the connections between the uncontrolled tongue and the uncontrolled body, punishments designed for the tongue often inflicted harm upon the body. One such punishment was the scold's bridle. Resembling a horse bridle, the scold's bridle fit around the woman's head and contained a bit, often including barbs or spikes designed to cut the tongue. The woman was then pulled through town by a rope attached to the front of the bridle. Every pull of the rope gagged and/or cut the woman further often causing knocked-out teeth and shattered facial bones (Boose 205). According to Lynda Boose, records of the use of scold's bridles are, at best, sketchy. However, she argues that the sheer number of scold's bridles recorded in 1858 by an antiquarian, along with first-hand accounts of the use of scold's bridles and the references to the bridles in other works, shows that this was a prominent form of punishment for a chattering or scolding woman (Boose 179-213).

The references to bridling women's tongues occur in a wide variety of Early Modern English texts, from literature to sermons to medical books. "A Homily of the State of Matrimony" published in *The Book of Homilies* as part of the official homilies of the Church of England in 1632, refers to bridling a woman when discussing a wife's obedience to her husband. It states, "This let the wife have ever in minde, the rather admonished thereto by the apparell of her head. Whereby it is signified that she is under covert or obedience of her husband. And as that apparell is of nature so

appointed, to declare her subjection” (*Homilie Matrimonie*). This veiled reference to the scold’s bridle almost reads as a threat. If the woman does not obey her husband, the scold’s bridle (“the apparell of her head”) will force her to obey.

Another common punishment for an outspoken woman was the cucking stool. For this punishment, the woman would be placed on a cart or cucking stool, drug through town to a local water source, and then dunked under water several times (Boose 186). Direct reference to and encouraging of the use of cucking stools occur in the *Book of Homilies* in the homily “Against Strife and Contention.” The homily states “because this vice is so much hurtfull to the society of a common wealth, in all well ordered cities, these common brawlers and scoulders be punished with a notable kinde of paine: as to be set on the cucking stoole, pillory, or such like” (*Homilie Strife*). The presence of both the cucking stool and the scold’s bridle in church and state-sanctioned homilies shows just how prevalent these punishments must have been.

These punishments designed to control the tongue through bodily harm also had one other thing in common: shame. Just as women’s speech was associated with shameful bodily functions and incontinence, these punishments were designed to shame and humiliate the woman: “the cucking of scolds was turned into a carnival experience, one that literally placed the woman at the center of a mocking parade”(Boose 189). One can assume that the bridling of scolds served a similar function as the woman was dragged through town by a lead rope. Records of scold’s bridles that were brightly painted or otherwise decorated also remind one of the carnivalesque nature of the punishment (Boose 208). According to Lynda Boose, “Because scolds were seen as

threats to male authority, their carnivalesque punishments of mocking enthronement partake of ‘world-upside-down’ rites” (190). The patriarchy used mocking the scold to take back any authority she had assumed through the use of her tongue, enabling a return to the natural order of men above women. The prominence of punishments designed for the “real” female tongue, such as scold’s bridles and cucking stools, shows that the literary examples were a symptom of a larger cultural unease surrounding female speech.

In this thesis, I will argue that these views of speech/the tongue were problematic because of the questions of power raised by women’s speech. Through their speech, women could raise questions of patriarchal power and potentially subvert that power. The frequency of this trope in literature, educational handbooks, dramatic works, and public documents show that there indeed was a great apprehension about what exactly speech and the tongue could accomplish. I argue that male authors and the patriarchal culture obviously felt a need to attempt to control women’s speech, proving that the male centered culture did not hold the degree of power over women that they would have liked to. Thus, defining the woman’s body and tongue as uncontrollable not only gave women a certain degree of power, but also created a need for society to create a discourse designed to control and to hold onto the uncertain power over women. If the patriarchy was certain about the power held over women and women’s speech, the female tongue would not be so prominent in so many texts

Through analyzing the use of this trope’s manifestations in different literary texts, I will be able to illustrate the power and control issues that are raised through the

use and punishment of the female tongue in body politic allegories. Body politic allegories illustrate what society should be like and, often, how society should deal with problems within. In both Thomas Tomkis's *Lingva, or the Combat of the Tongue and the Fiue Senses for Superiority* and William Averell's *A Meruailous Combat of Contrarities*, the female tongue seeks control and power beyond what the male characters are willing to allot her. As a result, the tongue wreaks havoc in the body through her use of speech to manipulate the other characters. However, a return to the status quo and a punishment of the female tongue occur before these texts end. These authors approach this metaphor somewhat differently, and their drastically different purposes illustrate contrary lines of attack on women's speech. Tomkis's text is a "pleasant comedy" intended for an academic audience, while Averell's text intends to help wage the English war against Catholics. An illustration of how *Lingua* participates in a discourse with rhetoric will demonstrate the power issues and use of the trope of the woman's tongue in academic and rhetorical discourses, while a close reading of Averell's text will show how these power issues and this trope were applied to seemingly unrelated issues like Catholic infiltration. Averell's text also communicates with the problems and anxieties surrounding authors in a politically charged climate where wide-spread printing was still a relatively new phenomenon. While the texts have differing purposes and applications, all involve control. The male authors use the trope of the tongue to illustrate the problems outspoken women cause for patriarchal authority. By tying together the similarities and problems of the woman's tongue inherent in these works as well as how these texts communicate with other texts and

discourses, this thesis will illustrate ways in which male authors used the woman's tongue not only as a way to control women, but also as a substitute for other social and cultural anxieties.

In Chapter 2, I discuss how Thomas Tomkis's *Lingua* and Thomas Wilson's *The Arte of Rhetorique* negatively portray, not only rebellious women, but women in general. These negative examples seek to reinforce the status quo by discouraging any rebellious or otherwise "womanly" behavior, while simultaneously reinforcing ideas of what that "womanly" behavior is. I will argue that the male authors and audiences for these works seek to reinforce status quo and patriarchy through the utilization of rhetorical concepts and negative stereotypes of women. These works show a continuing male discourse that served to uphold the "natural" order through the subjugation and negative portrayal of women. Both texts not only show women's proper place, but also reinforce these cultural ideas and stereotypes by implanting them into the next generation of scholars and rulers.

Rhetorical handbooks such as Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique* and plays like *Lingua* illustrated the dangers inherent in an unnatural order that would occur if women's speech and the woman's tongue went unchecked. In Chapter 3, we see a similar world turned upside-down in the idea of an English return to Catholicism. William Averell uses a similar body politic allegory to incite his fellow Englishmen into action against the Catholic threat. The female tongue becomes a stand-in for the dangers Catholics present to Queen Elizabeth and England as a Protestant nation. Despite his use of an allegory, Averell refuses to allow readers to interpret his allegory, by including an

exhortation explaining his purpose is to show the dangers presented by Catholics. His insistence on correct interpretation of his text and his use of the trope of the woman's tongue showcase not only the Catholic threat, but also the problems raised by the shift to a print culture. The exhortation shows Averell's distrust of his readers as well as the worry of the negative consequences of misinterpretation. Averell seems very aware that textual misinterpretation could cause him financial and bodily harm.

CHAPTER 2

UPHOLDING NATURAL ORDER: A DISCOURSE ON WOMEN AND RHETORIC

Throughout *The Arte of Rhetorique*, first published in 1553 and reprinted several times thereafter, Thomas Wilson utilizes rhetorical examples negatively portraying, not only rebellious women, but women in general. A need for examples that illustrate the concepts set forth in “the first complete rhetoric in the English language” makes sense (Wilson Aii). Wilson had to demonstrate for his readers not only the what, but the how of his rhetorical precepts. Literary texts, like Thomas Tomkis’s play *Lingva, or the Combat of the Tongue and the Fiue Senses for Superiority*, first performed at Cambridge in 1607, also utilized negativism in the portrayal of women. These rhetorical and literary texts raise questions about this culture. What purpose do these examples serve? Why do Wilson and Tomkis repeatedly portray women in a negative light? What do these examples tell us about the culture? The admonishing of women in both rhetorical handbooks and literature shows the existence of an ongoing discourse seeking to reinforce the status quo by discouraging any rebellious or otherwise “womanly” behavior, while simultaneously reinforcing ideas of what that “womanly” behavior is. I will argue that in the texts by Wilson and Tomkis the characterizations of women and the overlap of rhetorical precepts show that these texts illustrate male

anxieties about the place of women while seeking to maintain and reinforce negative female stereotypes.

The discourse continued by these texts can be classified as a male discourse; the authors and audiences were almost exclusively male. Rhetoric especially was traditionally a male dominated field. In *Rhetoric Retold: Regendering the Tradition from Antiquity Through the Renaissance*, Cheryl Glenn states, “the female sex has been both excluded from and appropriated by the patriarchal territory of rhetorical practices and displays” (1). Wilson’s text fits into this tradition; few women would have read or had access to his text. As a result, the negative exempla describing women commission the female body and mind for a male readership to pass judgment on. In *The Education of a Christian Woman*, Juan Luis Vives contends that a woman “has no need of [eloquence],” supporting an exclusion of women from the learning of rhetoric (74). The original production of *Lingua* was also able to exclude women. While it is a drama and we know women attended the theatre, it was written and performed at Cambridge, a bastion of male academia. Women were most definitely not a part of the intended audience. Thus, these texts became a part of a “boys’ club” that sought to not only exclude, but to marginalize women. However, these texts were both written in the vernacular which does raise some further questions about their readership. If the texts had been written in Latin, the language of the educated, it could be taken for granted that only men would read the texts. As vernacular texts, more women would have access to and understanding of them. Consequently, women may have been part of the actual audience even if the author did not intend for them to be.

Rhetorical texts and literature often reflect and reproduce the culture that created them, and Wilson and Tomkis are no exception to this rule. In *The Emperor of Men's Minds*, Wayne Rebhorn argues that Early Modern literature was written by authors with a formal training in rhetoric, and so the literature of the period displays and utilizes rhetorical concepts. He states, “[literature] presents a direct modeling of rhetorical situations [...] [it] refines concepts, exposes contradictions, criticizes assumptions, and revises conclusions from the discourse of rhetoric. It has, in short, an active and critical relationship to that discourse” (Rebhorn 18). According to Patricia Parker in her discussion of rhetoric and gender hierarchies:

Actual definitions of figures, schemes, and tropes, moreover – in contexts which appear to be governed by the simple motivation of the example or by the desire to explicate rhetorical matters to an audience in need of instruction – frequently begin instead to turn into illustrations of the social order the figure would rhetorically reflect. (99)

The negative examples that use women as their basis not only illustrate and elaborate on rhetorical ideas; they also reveal the ideas of the larger culture. As both a product and producer of the culture, and consequently the social order, Wilson's exempla participate in a discourse that seeks to uphold the natural order, the natural hierarchies, as believed in Early Modern England. One must stay within one's God-given rank whether that rank be King, courtier, man, or woman. Wilson states, “Order is of twoo sortes, the one is, when the worthier is preferred and set before. As a man is sette before a woman” (Wilson 111^v). Many of Wilson's exempla serve to uphold the monarchy and

patriarchy while admonishing those who would upset these hierarchies integral for the Early Modern society.

Lingua takes rhetorical concepts and ideals seeking to establish the ideal social order, and manipulates those concepts into a hypothetical situation that ultimately reinforces the status quo. Set in “Microcosmus,” with characters representing the tongue, the senses, memory, and common sense, the body politic metaphor is inherent. Or as Francis Bacon puts it in *The Advancement of Learning*, “the nature of this great city of the world and the policy thereof must be first sought in mean concordances and small portions” (178). To see how larger society functions, one must analyze smaller units of that society, such as husband/wife relationships. In a time and place replete with body politic metaphors, this device would have been easily understood by the audience. Tomkis’s text then serves as a representation of Wilson’s rhetorical examples that seek to show what may happen to a social body if rebellious women are allowed to undermine natural hierarchies.

In *Lingua*, the character *Lingua*, representing the tongue, seeks to disturb one such natural hierarchy of the body through her desire to become classified as a sense. As stated in the first chapter, part of the danger in the female tongue lay in its supposed ability to transform and alter the existing order. *Lingua* utilizes this power to its full extent. Through her devious, manipulative words and actions, she succeeds in pitting the normally congenial senses against each other. She succeeds in distracting them from her desires to move up in the body while debasing them, showing they are not as dignified and proper as one in their place should be. Wilson seems to agree that the

tongue has the power to transform and change men: “Suche force hathe the tongue, and such is the power of eloquence and reason, that most men are forced even to yelde in that, whiche most standeth againste their will” (A3). Lingua hopes that turning the senses against each other will help her achieve her goals of becoming a sense.

Because of this transformative and dangerous power of the female tongue, Wilson reproaches women who cannot remain quiet:

What becometh a woman best and first of all? Silence. What seconde? Silence. What third? Silence. What fourth? Silence. Yea, if a man should aske me, till Doomes daie, I would still cry silence, silence: withoute the whiche, no woman hath any good gift, but having the same, no doubt she must have many other notable giftes, as the whiche of necessitie, do ever follow suche a vertue. (103)

Despite his own repetitive babbling about women’s speech, Wilson believes a woman who cannot control her tongue is incapable of having any other virtues or gifts. A babbling woman becomes essentially useless to society. The babbling woman again becomes tied to other crimes as well, even if her only crime is verbosity. An association of verbal incontinence with sexual desire and sexual incontinence was fairly common. Lingua, again, fits this belief. Her verbosity leads her to be accused of numerous crimes. In addition to accusations of being a “backbiter [...] an *incontinent* tel-tale [...] a scold [...] and a flatterer,” Lingua becomes convicted of sexual crimes as well (Tomkis F3^v). Lingua’s accusers state that “she’s a common whore and lets every one lie with her;” she “maintains [...] smooth tongu’d bawds;” and that she “hath most viyle prostituted the [...] misteries of unknowne languages” (Tomkis F3^v). In *Lingua*,

the sexual and verbal incontinences are so interrelated and inseparable that a conflation between the two occurs; *Lingua* becomes a pimp of language. For the Cambridge audience that would have seen the first production, this prostitution of language was another worry. With vernacular English replacing Latin as the language of academia and the Church, and more and more people in lower social standings gaining access to such works, scholars worried about what would happen to the Latin language as well as the corruption as texts were translated into the vernacular. The mysteriousness surrounding Latin was being brought into the light and exposed for all to see. For educated male authors, their privileged place as the gatekeepers of knowledge was not just being questioned; the very walls surrounding knowledge were eliminated.

Lingua's excessive speech inscribes her as a "leaky vessel," verbally and sexually. Like the inability to contain urine and other fluids, women's speech cannot be withheld. As I discussed in the first chapter, women as leaky vessels became part of the rhetorical tradition that depicted women as weaker vessels. Because women were considered weaker than men, physically and mentally, they were more susceptible to "leaking." Wilson's rhetorical examples illustrate the concept of the female body as a weaker vessel. According to Wilson, "To bee borne a manchild, declares a courage, gravitie, and constancie. To be borne a woman, declares weakenes of spirite, neshenes [softness or weakness] of body, and fikilnesse of minde" (F^v). Wilson also states, "It is evill puttyng strong Wine into weake vesselles, that is to say, it is evill trusting some women with weightie matters"(104). Yet another of Wilson's examples declares "Many people are described by their degree [...] a woman bablyng, inconstant, and readie to

believe al that is tolde her”(95^v). Wilson’s rhetorical examples upheld the societal beliefs that women not only had weak, incontinent bodies, but also weak, incontinent minds – an idea further reinforced by Lingua’s actions and speech throughout the play. She is called no less than “an incontinent Tel-tale” and ends up giving away her plot through her inability to keep quiet in her sleep (Tomkis F3^v and M³).

While Lingua may be associated with incontinence and usurpation of power, her campaign to become a sense also causes the actual senses to seek higher places in the hierarchy of the body. By planting a robe and crown inscribed with the words, “Hee of the five that proves himselfe the best,/ Shall have his Temples with this Coronet blest,” Lingua has sown the seeds that will cause the strife between the senses (Tomkis C3). As a result of Lingua’s crown and robe, the senses begin to battle over who deserves the honor of “best.” Her deception upsets the natural hierarchy of the body. As Lingua attempt to advance in the hierarchy, her “womanly” actions cause the senses to attempt to overstep their bounds as well. As long as Lingua controls the action of the play, the senses are no longer content with their place in the hierarchy. Lingua’s actions and words do not go against the wills of the senses, but rather play upon the senses’ own desires to achieve greater power and status in the body. Lingua’s plans are so effective that the senses are able to reconcile only through the intervention of other male allegories, Common Sense and Memory. The cultural anxiety implicit in the play and in Wilson’s exempla, is the belief that if one part of the natural order is compromised, the whole order could tumble.

In expressing his imaginary wanderings of what would happen were he to own the crown and robe, Tactus, touch, states, in a classic rhetorical idea, that he will “tie up men’s tongues, and loose them,/ Command their lives, their goods, their liberties,/ And captivate the world with chains of gold” (C). These “chains of gold” refer to rhetoric, and more specifically to the rhetorical abilities of Hercules.¹ Emblem books and rhetorical treatises often used the idea of gold and amber chains extending from Hercules’ mouth to the ears of his listeners (Alciati 208), symbolizing Hercules accomplishment of having “all men lincked together by the eares in a chaine, to draw them and leade them even as he lusted”(Wilson Ai^v). Hercules’ rhetorical abilities were so great that he was able to convince men to do his will, even if it went against their own desires. Hercules as an orator “became a symbol of both inspired eloquence and political power” (Reborn 66). As we can see, Tactus is thus overstepping his natural boundaries as a sense in his wish to control men through the eloquence and political power possessed by Hercules. Tactus does not inhabit the proper political place, nor does he have the same rhetorical skills as the legendary Hercules.

No matter how much Hercules symbolized eloquence and political power, the Hercules legend has darker undertones, namely his enslavement to a woman, Omphale, who owned him not only as a slave, but also as a lover. Henry Peacham’s *Minerva Britanna* published in 1612 includes an emblem depicting this “negative” side of the Hercules legend, Hercules in women’s clothing with a distaff, spinning wool. This

¹ The reference to chains of gold could also have a second connection that would have been readily understood by Tomkis’s audience. In this time period, gold chains were given to Chancellors as seen in depictions of Sir Thomas More. For Tactus this would also have been a desire outside of his proper role within the social body.

emblem warns men that “Loves affection, did disgrace and shame,/ His virtues partes. How many are there more,/ Who having honor, and a worthy name,/ By actions base, and lewdness loose the same”(Peacham, *Minerva* 95). Hercules becomes “the figure of the man dedicated to higher things who cannot [...] ultimately escape the power of women” (Parker 56). Wilson chooses to ignore this part of the Herculean myth when he states, “What other thyng are the wonderfull labours of *Hercules*, but that reason shoulde withstande affection, and the spirite for ever should fight, against the fleshe?” (Wilson 105). The Omphale period of the Hercules myth shows that, for a time, even Hercules allowed affections to rule over reason. The feminization of Hercules, the ultimate man’s man, serves as a representation of the fear surrounding what may happen if women were to be in control and that even the most rational, reasonable man can become a servant to his affections.

The Hercules myth shows that while women are in control, men will become effeminate. We see this feminization of male characters occur in *Lingua* while *Lingua*’s plans are in action. Her upsetting of hierarchies causes male characters to be associated with “feminine leakiness.” Tactus attempts to delude Olfactus, smell, with dissembling speeches and through associations with the feminine. While Tactus cannot lie as deftly as *Lingua* does (he literally “hems and haws” to spit the lies out), Tactus does tell Olfactus, “I am an urinall I dare not stirre/ For fear of cracking in the Bottome” (Tomkis B3^v). Through his lying and associating himself with bodily “leaks” Tactus becomes effeminized. While Olfactus feels Tactus is momentarily mad, he is actually succumbing to *Lingua*’s manipulation. As Tactus seeks to overstep his hierarchical

boundaries, Lingua, in actuality, controls and purposely upsets the hierarchies in her attempt to create a new hierarchy. Harris explains that because speech could be seen as a “phallic incursion” into the listener’s ear: “for a number of writers, the specific danger presented by the female tongue was its potential confusion of gender categories, its usurpation of a patriarchal prerogative” (113). Lingua refers to her speech in terms of a phallic incursion (and again gold chains come into play) when she states: “How oft hast thou bene ravisht with my words, So that a speeche faire fethered could not flie: But thy eares pit-fall caught it instantly” (Tomkis A3^v). This “ravishing” of others causes Lingua’s words and use of speech to become coded as masculine. Lingua succeeds in confusing gender as her actions cause her to gain male power, while causing the male characters to become associated with the feminine.

While male speech and actions become effeminate when Lingua dominates the action of the play, the senses are able to regain their manhood and proper rhetorical expression when Common Sense takes control. Common Sense exercises his authority and immediately halts the battle, saying, “command the Senses upon their alleageance to our dread Sovereigne Queen Psyche, to dismisse their companies, and personally to appeare before me without any pretence of excuse” (Tomkis E^v). While Queen Pysche never appears in the play and her representatives are doddering old fools, the senses realize that any decisions or advancements must occur within the proper hierarchies to make them binding. Pysche’s representatives and her lack of physical appearance shows that the Queen is not in control of the body she is governing if this turmoil occurs under her power and she must send male characters to straighten things out. In the

proper order of the body, Common Sense is placed above the senses, and therefore has the position and proper power to make the decision for the senses. Rebhorn states, “eloquence thus creates paternal authority and bespeaks paternal rule. It makes men accept not their equality as citizens, as in Cicero’s version of the myth, but their inequality, their subjection beneath a supreme orator who benevolently continues to guide them” (29). Because of Common Sense, the senses realize that rather than continue their fruitless battle, it is in their best interest, and the best interest of the body, to defer the decision of who receives the crown and robe to Common Sense, Queen Psyche’s representative.

For Common Sense to decide which of the five senses best deserves the crown and robe, the senses each appeal to him using rhetorical speeches and pageantry to demonstrate their virtues and the benefits they give to the body. Each sense describes the meaning behind the pageant they have chosen to enact, displaying not only rhetorical ability, but reason as well. The use of reason is a key factor in rhetoric. As Wilson states, “I thinke in this one point they [men] passe all other Creatures livynge, that they have the gifte of speache and reason”(Aiii). Because they are obeying the authority of Common Sense and Lingua no longer controls the action, the senses utilize reason and oratory to prove their points. The rationality of the speeches and the fact that they occur within the proper hierarchy helps to make them effective.

These orations and pageants also demonstrate gender issues associated with rhetoric. When Tactus must present his oration, he is troubled as his pageant players are not ready; “five houres ago I set a dozen maides to attire a boy like a nice

Gentlewoman” (Tomkis I2^v). He continues by describing fashions, mirrors, clothing items, and jewelry that are required to get a gentlewoman ready. The attiring of the boy for the pageant brings the association of rhetors as women to the forefront. Emblematically, rhetoric and eloquence were most often portrayed as forceful women associating rhetors with being under the rule of a woman, and hence womanly themselves. The character of *Lingua* also brings up gender issues as a boy actor would have played the role. The androgynous nature of the boy further confuses gender as the boy is not yet a man and blurs the fine lines between boy and man, masculine and feminine.

The speeches given by the senses not only raise gender issues, but also bring up the never-ending battle within rhetoric of Attic versus Asiatic style. Throughout the history of rhetoric, rhetoricians have battled over which was the better and more proper style for rhetoric, plain, simple, clean Attic style or highly ornamented, flowing, flowery Asiatic style. Proponents of the Asiatic style often compared stylistic ornamentation to clothing, to dressing the speech in the finery of tropes, figures, and order as in *Lingua*. Wilson phrases this idea as such:

Now, when we are able to frame a sentence handsomly together, observyng number, and keeping composition, such as shal lyke best the eare, and doe knowe the use of Tropes, and can applie them to our purpose: then the ornaments are necessarie in an Oration, and sentences would bee furnished with moste beautifull figures. (94^v)

The problems Tactus has in getting his “Gentlewoman” ready signify the real problems of creating a stylistically-sound oration. The litany of items gone through in the attempt to attire the boy as a gentlewoman shows the rhetor’s struggle in choosing what figures and tropes to use, as well as how to place those figures and tropes to create a beautiful oration. According to Tactus, “a Ship is sooner rigd by farre, then a Gentlewoman made ready” (Tomkis I2^v). The use and placing of stylistic ornamentation of an oration proves to be a difficult and arduous task.

While the male characters succeed in utilizing style to their advantage and find concordance when they submit to the natural order of the body, Lingua refuses to do so. Lingua’s appeal to Common Sense does not use the rational, well-organized rhetoric employed by the senses. Lingua instead makes “Rhetorique wanton, Logicke to babble” (Tomkis F3^v). Her rhetorical speech is rather a hodgepodge of examples that show actions she has taken that benefit the body, but don’t prove her worth as a sense. Common sense tells her, “your service and dignitie we confesse to be great, nertheles these reasons prove you not to have the nature of a sense” (Tomkis F3). Lingua’s speech produces the opposite of the desired effect, convincing Common Sense that her nature does not lend itself to the duties of a sense. One must note the irony contained in the idea that the tongue cannot effectively use rhetoric in this play to achieve her goals. The senses bungle through their speeches with rave reviews from Common Sense, yet the actual rhetor, Lingua, cannot persuade Common Sense to look in her favor at all. Implicit in her ineffective use of rhetoric is Lingua’s status as a woman. Because she is a woman, she does not have the rational mind required to effectively use rhetoric: “the

Renaissance [...] identified women as irrational beings who were governed by their appetites and excelled at deception” (Rebhorn 148). Lingua’s irrational nature causes her speech to be ineffective and irrational. She is unable to prove her point because she does not have reason on her side; all she has is deception and feminine wiles. This becomes evident in Lingua’s second plot against the senses. She has no clear goals or objectives for drugging the senses, yet does it anyway out of revenge and spite.

According to Wilson’s treatise on rhetoric, Lingua’s oration also contains another major flaw. For Wilson, an important part of effective oratory is plainness of speech. He supports the Attic style. First and foremost a rhetor must learn to speak plainly and carefully: “this should first be learned, we never affect any strange inkehorne termes, but so speake as is commonly received; neither sekying to be over fine, nor yet livying over carelesse, using our speache as most men do, and ordering our wittes, as the fewest have doen”(Wilson 86). Wilson warns against using affected and foreign terms as this achieves the opposite of its intent; it makes the orator seem unlearned and prone to affectation. The beginning of Lingua’s speech to Common Sense serves as a perfect example of Wilson’s “inkehorne termes” and affected speech. Lingua starts with a polyglossial address that mixes Greek, English, Latin, French, and Italian. While facetiously claiming “the *Imbecillatas* of my feeble sexe might draw mee backe from this Tribunall,” Lingua utilizes all the affected and foreign terms she can think of (Tomkis F2). It is obvious that Lingua doesn’t really believe that her womanliness makes her stupid, by affecting stupidity and playing into the stereotype of

the feeble woman, Lingua believes she will be able to manipulate Common Sense into doing what she desires.

However, this feigned feebleness and polyglossial address designed to make her appear intelligent and learned backfires immediately. Common Sense knows what a proper oration should contain, and “inkhorne termes” and foreign affectations are not a part of an oration. He chastises Lingua for her affected speech calling it a “Gallemaufry of speech” (Tomkis F2). Her attempt at “sounding smart” actually makes Common Sense turn against her, saying, “I am perswaded these same language makers have the very quality of colde in their wit, that freezeth all *Heterogeneall* languages together, congealing English Tynne, Graecian Golde, Romaine Latine all in a lumpe” (Tomkis F2). This metaphor of melting languages together as you would mix metals shows how mixing languages will debase them. According to the play, languages should remain pure and remain free from any crossover. The mixing metals metaphor functions similarly to Common Sense calling Lingua’s speech a gallimaufry, mixed languages or hodgepodge of rhetorical tropes both go against the rules set out for “proper” rhetoric. Common sense lets Lingua know that this type of language is improper for an oration, and makes her look foolish. Lingua’s speech serves as a representation of exactly what one should avoid in an oration. Not only does her polyglossial attempt make her appear unlearned, it also turns her audience away from her purpose.

The “reward” Lingua receives for her efforts is not exactly what she was wanting. Common Sense declares that because there are five bodies in the Universe, the heavens and four elements, there can only be five senses in the body. However,

Common Sense allows Lingua to be a sense in women: “all women for your sake shall have six *Senses*, that is seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, touching, and the last and feminine sense, the sense of speaking” (Tomkis L3^v). This assigning of speech as a sense for women coincides with the female stereotypes mentioned earlier. If speech is a sense for women, it becomes an involuntary action, for senses are involuntary reactions within the body and cannot be consciously controlled. Because of Common Sense’s decision, women thus completely lack the ability of control their speech. Lingua’s reward reinforces the stereotype that women have no control over their tongues.

While the play could be finished at this point – the senses have reconciled and Lingua denied her request – a complete act still remains. Tomkis uses Act 5 to further yet another stereotype, the vengeful woman. As irrational beings ruled by appetite, women were considered to be more prone to revenge than men, and Lingua again proves the rule. As revenge was also considered to be upsetting the natural hierarchies, for a second time Lingua purposefully attempts to reverse order and cause chaos. Francis Bacon demonstrates the harmfulness of revenge in a typical view from the time period, in the essay “On Revenge.” Bacon discusses how revenge keeps wounds fresh that would otherwise heal with time, the idea that two wrongs don’t make a right, and that private revenge in its secretiveness is more harmful than public revenge. According to Bacon, revenge takes judgment and retribution out of its proper place, God and state, and puts it in the hands of the revenger (Bacon, *Revenge* 347-48). Wilson concurs, stating that: “revengemente belongeth to God alone” (65). The secretiveness inherent in most revenge is also problematic as it was often associated

with sedition, treason, and other acts whose purpose was to upset the order of the state. The deviousness of the secret also meant that your enemy was unaware of your intent to harm him, and thus unable to defend himself: “Offences are ever the more grevouslye punished, the more closlye, and more craftelye they are committed” (Wilson 68^v). An awareness of one’s enemies allows one to be aware of the malice they bare. However, secret enemies, such as revengers, do greater damage because they catch you off-guard and unprepared.

Lingua’s revenge against the senses does exactly that; she catches them off-guard by drugging wine to make the senses “stare, and sweare, and fume, and brawle” (Tomkis K2^v). As we saw earlier in the play, when the female character controls the action, the world becomes turned upside down, with the male characters forgetting their proper place. Under the influence of Lingua’s wine, Visus thinks he is blind; following his earlier fantasies, Tactus believes he is Hercules; and Auditus and Olfactus are brawling. While this scene probably produces quite the comedic effect, Lingua’s revenge seems to have no clear motive or desired result: “suche a woman spittes fire” (Wilson 70^v). Lingua merely wishes for the senses to be at odds with each other. This follows the idea expressed above that women are rule by appetite and deception. Because appetite rules Lingua, her revenge doesn’t need to be rational. Merely being a woman is enough for Lingua to want to enact revenge, and she momentarily succeeds.

However, as part of a male discourse and a comedy, the play must restore natural order by the end. For this to happen, Lingua must be punished. One of the problems implicit in the association of women with irrationality and incontinent speech

involves figuring out how to punish or otherwise subdue or stop the uncontrolled female tongue. According to Parker, “one of the chief concerns of the tradition that portrays women as unflappable talkers is how to master or contain such feminine mouthing” (26). For Wilson, slanderers are worse than thieves, as “There are lawes and remedies to subdue theves; but there is no lawe agaynste an evyll tongue” (64^v). As described in the first chapter, the need to harshly punish the female tongue was based in the idea that a chattering female upset the natural order. Because the crimes of the malicious female tongue had an extra element of criminality, the upsetting of order, punishments for the female tongue, such as the scold’s bridle or the cucking stool, were often designed to shame or humiliate the woman to force her to submit and return to her proper place in the hierarchy. According to Linda Boose in “Scolding Brides and Bridling Scolds: Taming the Woman’s Unruly Member,” “because scolds were seen as threats to male authority, their carnivalesque punishments of mocking enthronement partake of ‘world-upside-down’ rites” (190). Through mocking the verbose woman, the patriarchy was able to take back any authority she had assumed through the use of her tongue and return to the natural order of men above women.

While these real punishments work through shaming the woman into submission, Common Sense decides *Lingua*’s punishment must place her under direct control of the patriarchy, so she won’t have the chance to transgress again: “I commit you to close prison, in *Gustus* his house, and charge you *Gustus*, to keep her under the custody of two strong doores, and every day till she come to 80 yeares of age, see she be well guarded with 30 tall watchmen, without whose licence she shall by no meanes

wagge abroad”(Tomkis N) Lingua will forever be locked up in the mouth, closed in by the lips and guarded by the teeth. Lingua’s punishment echoes punishments for the tongue seen in other works, like William Averell’s *A meruailous combat of contrarieties*, and even medical texts of the time. In his *Mikrokosmographia*, an anatomy text published in 1616, Helkiah Crooke mirrors the language used by Tomkis and Averell when he states:

Our wise Creator hath defended [the tongue] with many Teeth,
with Lippes, and restrained it with a bridle, that being so
carefully attended it might not runne before the minde, which
first ought to consulte and deliberate before the tongue pronounce
anything. (628-29)

If we agree with Crooke’s medical assessment, Lingua’s punishment puts her in her proper place, where patriarchy can watch over her to prevent any further transgressions.

As we have seen, the text of *Lingua* works to prove Wilson’s statement of “What a greate mischief an evill tongue is, what a poyson it is” (64^v). The male authors and audiences for these works cause the texts to seek to reinforce status quo and patriarchy through the utilization of rhetorical concepts and negative stereotypes of women. With an academic audience at Cambridge, women would not have a chance to respond to the accusations against them. Tomkis demonstrates rhetoric and these negative stereotypes in practice, while Wilson reinforces the same stereotypes and the natural hierarchy through his use of rhetorical examples. Analyzing the ways in which these texts reflect Early Modern English culture or the ideals of that culture, shows the

modern reader how women were seen and portrayed in literary and rhetorical works. These works show a continuing male discourse that served to uphold the “natural” order through the subjugation and negative portrayal of women. Both texts not only show women’s proper place, but also reinforce these cultural ideas and stereotypes by implanting them into the next generation of scholars and rulers. These texts help to assure that the “proper” hierarchy and order of Early Modern English society would remain.

CHAPTER 3

SERIOUS BUSINESS: CATHOLICS, PRINT, AND THE TONGUE

In *A Mervailous Combat of Contrarieties*, first published in 1588, William Averell uses an allegory of the body politic to show his readers the dangers of Catholic sedition and infiltration. More specifically, his body politic metaphor showcases a now-familiar character, the dangerous tongue and its effects on a social body. While the woman's tongue in Averell's text does have similarities to the woman's tongue in Thomas Tomkis's *Lingua*, for Averell the stakes are considerably higher. Tomkis wrote a "pleasant comedy" to be performed at Cambridge. Averell wrote his pamphlet as a dialogue with the primary purpose being to prepare "all true English heartes, that love God, *their Queene, and Countrie*" for war against Catholics (D3^v). The woman's tongue is no laughing matter for Averell; souls and his country are at stake. Rhetorical handbooks such as Wilson's *Arte of Rhetorique* and plays like *Lingua* illustrated the dangers inherent in an unnatural order that would occur if women's speech and the woman's tongue went unchecked. For Averell, a similar world turned upside-down was inherent in the idea of an English return to Catholicism.

Averell includes a lengthy exhortation explaining exactly how his audience should interpret his metaphor. In the exhortation, Averell interprets the meaning of his text for his readers. Rather than allow readers to misinterpret his allegory, he explains

that its purpose is to show the dangers presented by Catholics going as far as stating that Catholics, “seeke your blood, and not yours alone, but of your wives and children” and thanking God because he has “purged our stinking channels of Popery” (Averell C2 and F2). His insistence on correct interpretation of his text and his use of the trope of the woman’s tongue showcase a serious matter occurring in England at the time. Between Jesuit priests infiltrating the country and the Spanish Armada looming on the horizon, the threat of Catholic invasion was very real for the English during this time. Associating the woman’s tongue with Catholics allowed Averell to make a clear point about the dangers they presented for Early Modern England. Averell’s text illustrates the abundant connections between the woman’s tongue as a trope and other prominent discourses of Early Modern England. By utilizing the common trope of the woman’s tongue as a metaphor for Catholic infiltration, Averell was able to play on his readers fears of loss of power and control that I have associated with the use of the woman’s tongue as a trope while also illustrating his own fears and concerns about the use and potential abuse of the printed word.

While there are many different manifestations of the woman’s tongue in English literature, Averell’s version of the body politic metaphor had deep roots in Early Modern England. As discussed in the first chapter, the allegory of the tongue beginning a rebellion against the belly for hoarding food can be traced back the ancient Roman orator, Menenius Agrippa, and was well known by Averell’s Early Modern audience, with many rhetorical handbooks, including Wilson’s *Arte of Rhetorique*, showcasing this story as an effective use of rhetoric to calm a riotous mob (201). The story was

even popular enough to be included in Shakespeare's *Coriolanus*, where Menenius is featured as a character and uses this famous metaphor to quiet a rebellion (*Coriolanus* 1.1.96-151). Sir Philip Sidney also brings up the Menenius Agrippa story but does not expand on it stating "the tale is notorious." (Sidney 86). For Sidney the story is so well known, to explain it would be pointless as everyone already knows it. Other texts, such as George Whetstone's *The English Myrror*, refer to this type of allegory in passing: "For a perfect common wealth resembleth a well proportioned man" (83). The body politic should be as a perfect man, with every body part working together for the good of the entire organism.

By the end of the sixteenth century, with the rise of Protestantism the allegory was deployed in other ways, making it less focused on the spiritual body and more focused on the social one. According to Jonathon Gil Harris in *Foreign Bodies and the Body Politic: Discourses of Social Pathology in Early Modern England*, the body politic metaphor shifted focus from seeing spiritual connections between body, state, and God to a focus on the connections between the state and its institutions in relation to the overall body politic (33). Averell's pamphlet fits with this changing definition of the body politic. The differences between Tomkis's and Averell's use of the body politic allegory demonstrate another shift in allegory. Tomkis's allegory remains one dimensional, utilizing the classic body politic metaphor strictly for comedy, while Averell utilizes the classic metaphors and allegory and adds the secondary topical aspect by tying it to the Catholic threat. As the threat of the Spanish Armada and a possible invasion by a Catholic foreign power loomed large in the English imagination

in 1588, William Averell used this allegory with the intention of inciting his fellow Englishmen into battle against the Catholic enemy, an enemy perceived to be inside England as well as a foreign threat. Averell attempted to utilize the body politic metaphor and the woman's tongue to effectively show his readers the inherent dangers of a Catholic invasion and the dangers of Catholics already within England's borders.

Averell manages to take a classic allegory that everyone would know and put his own twist on it. As in other versions of this allegory, the Tongue begins the rebellion by using her rhetorical abilities to convince the Hand and Foot to rebel against the Belly and Back, the superior members of the body. The Tongue persuades the Hand and Foot that the Belly and Back "regarde not our benefit, but theyr owne profit"(Averell A3). As a result, Hand, Foot, and Tongue all refuse to feed the Belly, clothe the Back, or submit to any of their commands. The Tongue has succeeded in upsetting the "natural" order. This inversion of order spearheaded by the Tongue can only cause the downfall of the entire body, real or social. The allegory shows that the Tongue, representing external and internal Catholics, has the ability to undermine the English government and convince lower members of society to rebel against the proper government and proper social order. While it is evident that the Hand, Foot, and Tongue represent citizens of lower social standing and the Belly and Back represent the government, it is not readily obvious as to which parts of the government the Belly and Back represent. Averell seems to purposefully leave the Queen out of the allegory, much as Tomkis does, with the Belly and Back possibly representing the Queen's advisors or Parliament, governmental entities that could be at odds with each other without upsetting the

“proper” order. Averell’s reverence of the Queen becomes clear in the exhortation as he lets his countrymen know that Elizabeth “hath beene a loving mother unto you in her carefullnesse, and a diligent nurse in continuall painfullnesse” (Averell C3). Elizabeth gets her own metaphors that seem to place her not at the head of the body politic, but as a separate entity entirely as she mothers and nurses England.

While the Hand and Foot do not realize that they will be causing their own deaths by refusing to obey, the Belly and Back do know the consequences of the rebellion. As the proper masters of the body, they know this rebellion will cause the death of the body: “not the body alone dooth consume and pine away, but the members themselves do consequently perish”(Averell A3^v). As the governing forces within the body, the Belly and Back have the wisdom of the consequences of the rebellion, and should be able to work together to halt the rebellion. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Instead of working together to stop the rebelling body parts, Belly and Back spend almost a third of the dialogue bickering about which of them is more at fault for the rebellion. Because the Tongue, Hand, and Foot are not cooperating with the governors of the body, the governors are at odds with each other, not only about how to stop the rebellion but also who is to blame for the rebellion beginning. The allegory works here to show the reader how an internal rebellion by lower members of the social body can cause a schism in the government. It also, perhaps inadvertently, illustrates that the government may not always present a united front.

Eventually, the Belly and Back do agree on who is at fault for the rebellion and blame the Tongue, who is punished, as in *Lingua*, by being locked inside the mouth.

The Hand and Foot realize the problems inherent in following the Tongue – death and disorder – and receive no punishment. They hold the Tongue responsible for enticing them into the rebellion and, of course, her rhetorical abilities and deceitful nature that were no match for the simple Hand and Foot. The Back states, “believe not the unfaithfull tongue, that swelleth with envy at your peace, and therefore would faine disturbe your tranquillitie, not caring to harne her selfe, so she may hurt you, therby to bring destruction to you all”(Averell C2^v). Averell uses the allegory to show that Catholics will hurt themselves, or even kill themselves, if it helps in the destruction of the English Commonwealth.

While the Tongue is deceptive in many texts written in this time, in *Combat of Contrarieties* this deception becomes much more planned and purposeful. Tomkis gives the reader the impression that the tongue’s deception is instinctual or innate, as if the Tongue cannot help but be deceptive and often is unaware of her deceptions and the harm those deceptions inflict on the body. In *Combat of Contrarieties*, the Tongue has a much greater understanding and awareness of her deception and duplicitous nature as well as its consequences on the body. Averell’s tongue details the deceptions she has performed, stating she has executed them at the behest of the Belly and Back: “I tell lyes, I sewe seditions, I stirre up Traytors, I slaunder Princes, under cullour of trueth I beguile and deceive” (Averll A2). In *Lingua*, a similar list of crimes against the tongue was outlined; however, there is one key difference. In Averell’s text, the Tongue herself lists these deceptions and crimes unapologetically, while in Tomkis’s work the other body members describe the misdeeds of the Tongue. In this text, the Tongue’s

awareness of her deception makes her more dangerous than the woman's tongues we have seen in other texts. Her awareness of her actions and their consequences and her subsequent disregard for their negative effects threatens the core of society because she purposefully and deliberately attempts to overturn the "natural" order. For Averell, Catholics also paid no heed to the negative effects they would have on the social body, and were deliberately duplicitous.

This duplicitous nature connects strongly with one particular type of Catholic: the Jesuit. For Averell, and the English government, Jesuits were the worst type of Catholics. Suspected of being behind most of the plots that sought Elizabeth's life, Jesuits were thought to have allegiance not to Elizabeth, but to the Pope or Spain. According to Arthur F. Marotti, "If English Catholic laymen were regarded as potentially traitorous and secular priests as actually traitorous, the Jesuits were, in effect, archtraitors, so thoroughly alienated from their native country as to work tirelessly on behalf of its enemies, particularly Spain" (52-53). This alienation from the English people and government helped create stereotypes and paranoia regarding the Jesuits that mirrored many of the ideas surrounding the trope of the woman's tongue. Like the woman's tongue, Jesuits were also associated with deception, and more specifically with equivocation. Laws passed against Jesuits and Catholics furthered this connection with deception. One 1584 law required "Jesuits, seminary priests, and others who had entered the Catholic priesthood since 1559 to depart the realm within forty days [and] prohibited their return on pain of treason" (332). This law, and others, made the mere presence of Jesuits in the country a deception. If Jesuits were caught in

England, they would have been forced to lie and deceive to even get inside the country, deceptions that would not help them in treason trials if they were caught. Because deception would have been required for Jesuits to enter the country, their intentions and business were suspect and it was assumed further deception would follow.

At Jesuit treason trials, the Jesuits argued they were not being tried for any real deceptions or treasonous acts, but for their religion. Anti-Catholic discourses wanted to distance the English government from this idea of religious persecution, which would make the Jesuits martyrs. George Whetstone's *The English Myrror* states, "If you joyne the hypocritical, subtill and alluring [speeches] of these Jesuites, you shall easily perceive that they came rightly armed for rebellion: and in their schollers habit, procured more danger to her Majesties person than could an armed Armie, with twentie thousand Launces" (161). Whetstone and other anti-Catholic authors sought to show that "religious persecution" was just another Jesuitical deception as the Jesuits had every intention of murdering the Queen. From the trial and execution of Edmund Campion in 1581 and continuing through the Stuart dynasty, the association of Jesuits with equivocation and deception was a main point in accusations of Jesuitical treason and in anti-Catholic works. Authors describe Jesuits as bragging, seditious, ungracious, and slandering (Whetstone 161-62). Because English culture was still predicated upon a man's word as truth, equivocation and deception further alienated the Jesuits from their fellow Englishmen and helped ensure their place as undesirable, troublesome, and thence a danger as well as a perfect scapegoat. Whetstone also describes Jesuits as having the ability to use pleasant speeches to lure men into damnation: "They with their

malitious and untrue perswasions, bring men into the snares of destruction, out of which they cannot deliver themselves” (166). Jesuits were seen as being extremely adept at luring Protestants to Catholicism and ensuring their damnation. John Donne utilizes this idea in *Ignatius, His Conclave* when he describes Ignatius Loyola, the founder of the Jesuits, as “More subtil then the *Devill*, and the verier *Lucifer* of the two” (40).

By giving their allegiance to the Pope, Catholics and Jesuits were seen as no longer abiding by the “natural” order; they were believed to be attempting to help the Pope or other Catholic leaders, like Philip II of Spain, depose Elizabeth in order to place a Catholic ruler on England’s throne. Whetstone states “Under the protection and banner of the Pope, al thieves, murtherers, traitours, envious, ambitious, and discontented persons arme them selves againste their Prince, and peace of their countrey” (94). The Papal Bull of 1570 excommunicating Elizabeth and declaring her Catholic subjects have no allegiance to her threw open the door for fears and paranoia of Jesuits and other Catholics attempting to usurp the “natural” order by overthrowing or murdering Elizabeth. Donne’s *Ignatius, His Conclave* states the idea that Catholics were inclined to deposing Princes when it states “whereas [Pope] *Boniface* his successors, awakened by him, have ever been fruitfull in bringing forth new sinnes, and new pardons, and idolatries, and King-killings” (Donne 10). Donne links the Pope with encouraging Catholics to commit regicide and to overthrow governments in other ways.

The associations of Catholics with deception and inversion of the “natural” order enabled Averell to utilize the woman’s tongue as a metaphor for the Catholic

threat in England. Accusations against Jesuit priests echo the crimes the Tongue is accused of by the Belly:

For she is the sower of distentions, and the causer of all discorde, she is more slippery than an eele, more pearcing than an arrowe, she delighteth to make strife betweene friendes, and to make all men enemies, she raiseth braules, procureth bloodshed, causeth warres, stirreth up treasons, and provoketh traitours, it is she that setteth the subjects against their lawfull Prince, and maketh mutinies in a peaceable government, it is she that would overthrow a happy state, in making the members at deadly variaunce. (Averell C3)

The tongue and Jesuits had much in common in the popular imagination when it came to lying and deception. These connections and associations made the woman's tongue the perfect instrument for Averell to showcase the dangers of Catholic infiltration and sedition. The common beliefs regarding the evil, deceptive woman's tongue helped Averell's audience understand his purpose and the dangers of Catholicism he was attempting to portray. Viewed in terms of Averell's allegory, Catholics were purposefully attempting to cause rebellions and overthrow the government with a complete awareness of the chaos their actions could cause. For Averell, overthrow of Queen Elizabeth would lead to the death of the social body, just as refusing to feed the Belly or clothe the Back would lead to death of the natural body. Without a rightful, Protestant leader, England would not survive. The world turned upside down is not a world that can function. The Back illustrates this concept when he states, "in a

politique state diverse men have diverse duties, where of some are of greater importance than the other, for some are wrought by subtilty of wit, others by agilitie of the members, others by strength of the bodie: so in a naturall bodie each member have his severall dutie” (Averell C3^v). Averell’s pamphlet seeks to show his readers the dangers and problems inherent in a social body that has inverted power structures as well as demonstrate the necessity for the “natural” order to remain. If each member of the social body remains in their proper place and serves the Queen and government as he should, the social body will remain healthy and vital. Averell wanted to convince his audience that the Catholic threat would harm or even kill the social body if members of that body followed the Catholic ideas.

Infiltration of foreign Catholics into the English social body was not the only concern for Averell. He also utilizes the Woman’s tongue to show the dangers of Catholics already within England. According to Averell, “You [Englishmen] are all knit together in one common wealth, as it were members in a natural bodie, beware therefore of the envious tongue that laboureth still to confounde your peace.” (Averell C2). The Tongue represents the English Catholics who appear to be a functioning part of the social body, but may really be working to overthrow society. In the Exhortation explaining how to apply his pamphlet, the Tongue in Averell’s text becomes connected to infiltration by both foreign and domestic Catholics (D3^v-F^v). Here, the Catholic dangers arise from outside of the body politic seeking to infiltrate and destroy the social body from within. Averell attempts to show his readers how easily Catholics could penetrate the English body politic and undermine society. Recusant Catholics as a part

of English society and foreign and alienated English Catholics were infiltrating society, and then using the power of their tongues to spread Catholicism. Averell ends up coding the woman's tongue as both a Catholic member of English society and a "gap" through which foreign Catholics could enter. Averell attempts to warn his countrymen of the need to be vigilant against both foreign and domestic Catholics.

Averell's text not only gives insight into anti-Catholic texts, but also informs and interacts with the discourse surrounding the printed word at this time in England. In a culture shifting from an oral to a print culture, where the printed word increasingly defines and categorizes the author, Averell showcases an example of an author trying to solidify his words and avoid misinterpretation. Averell's text contains a feverish, almost obsessive, application and exhortation on exactly how the reader should interpret and understand his version of this body politic allegory. The dialogue of the allegory is a mere 24 pages, while the application and exhortation are another 19. Averell felt it necessary to include a detailed and lengthy exhortation for a popular, well-known allegory that his audience would have known and understood. While Averell may have needed some sort of explanation to tie his version of the allegory into the Catholic threat, his Exhortation and Application are almost as long as the text itself. Averell's need to interpret his text for his readers reflects the permanence of the printed word, the serious consequences that may result from misinterpretation, as well as its communication with anti-Catholic discourse.

As the end of the sixteenth century neared, England's place as a print culture was solidifying. The amount of printed material from this time period is staggering as

the Elizabethans wrote and printed books, pamphlets, plays, dialogues, broadsides, official documents, and so on. This large amount of printed material resulted in connections being made between the author's physical body and his textual bodies. This association also connects the author's physical person to the interpretation of his texts. In a culture where a textual body stating the "wrong" ideas could get the author's literal body killed, proper interpretation was key. John Kerrigan states that authors were "wary of abandoning their works to misconstruction. That could lead to imprisonment, or worse" (112). Authors had to be wary of the dangers of misinterpretation and of writing views that would be looked at unfavorably by the government. Averell, and other authors, had to worry not just about writing a text that people would read (a concern still relevant today), but he also had to worry about pleasing his patron and the government, and worry about the threat of misinterpretation that could land him in jail or even at Tyburn.

Due in part to the large number of Catholic books still circulating throughout England, Averell's need to interpret his text for the reader makes sense. Averell had to be sure his text could not be viewed as a Catholic (or Catholic-sympathetic) text. Illegal Catholic presses were set up within the country, and many other Catholic books were being smuggled in (Marotti 54). Still other books contained hidden sympathies to Catholics that the clever official could pick out. The government had to suppress such books as Catholic books were seen as a presenting two major dangers in that they could help to spread Catholicism and incite Catholics to violence against the government or the Queen.

Catholics knew full well what the printed word could do for their cause. Robert Parsons, the companion of Edmund Campion in the Jesuit mission of 1580, stated “There is nothing which helps and has helped and will protect in the future and spread of our cause so much as catholic books, whether of controversy or of devotion” (qtd. in Carrafiello 770). When Campion and others were tried, one of Campion’s companions admitted Catholic books helped incite him to treason: “The traitor Somervile confessed that he was moved to kill her Majestie, by the incitements of certaine of his kinsmen, and Allyes, and also by sundrie seditious vile books lately published against her Majestie” (Whetstone 162). Catholics were also able to re-interpret and appropriate non-Catholic works to fit into their cause. This over explanation of his text illustrates the problems and concerns faced by an author at this time. Averell’s detailed exhortation prevents Catholics from appropriating his text for their cause; the clear anti-Catholic message in the exhortation would prevent his allegory from being taken out-of-context in a way that could get Averell in trouble. Catholic appropriation of his text was clearly not intended by Averell, and his exhortation would prove it. The proliferation of Catholic texts in England also works with Averell’s allegory. The number of Catholic books, as well as people, again illustrates a tongue that won’t keep quiet. Even when forced underground, the female tongue of Catholicism keeps on jabbering. Averell’s tongue gets caught once and receives a slap on the wrist. She continues her wicked ways, much like the Catholics of Early Modern England. When caught again, the Tongue receives a much harsher punishment. The punishment of Averell’s tongue illustrates that Averell felt that a harsher punishment was needed to

deter Catholics and stop their tongues from inflicting further harm on the English body politic.

While Averell is able to effectively use allegory to showcase the dangers of treacherous Catholics, he also seems to recognize the deception inherent in allegory. With the text itself a metaphor in its entirety, it was up to the reader to decipher what the author intended. As a result, reader interpretation could vary greatly. Allegory requires an active reader to interpret meaning: “To introduce a symbol [...] is to omit the thing that the symbol signifies and to produce unintended meanings through the play of other signifiers” (Dobranski 216). His decision to write this pamphlet as an allegory opened the door to a myriad of reader interpretation. Averell’s extensive exhortation and application shows a desire to eliminate varied reader interpretations; he tells the reader exactly how to interpret his text. The exhortation goes into great detail, telling the reader who each body part represents and what the reader should take away from the text. Averell wanted his readers to see the Tongue as a representative of a Catholic threat to the English social body, a cunning, deceptive member of the social body able to manipulate others and cause strife in the government, the Belly and Back. By including an exhortation and application with a heavy emphasis on “proper” interpretation of his words, Averell gives the modern reader insight into anti-Catholic thought and how the woman’s tongue was appropriated for various discourses.

As a result of all this explanation, Averell takes all of the mystery out of the allegory. Allegories encouraged reader interpretation and active reading. Readers become engaged in allegories because they can put their own ideas and thoughts into

the meaning. Averell does not allow this to happen. This would lead one to question why Averell chose to use an allegory. While he does take much (it not all) of the mystery out of the allegory, as a vehicle for his message it still works. First of all, it is a story, and according to authors such as Sir Phillip Sidney and Thomas Wilson, everyone understands a story. Even if the overall message is hidden, the general audience will still understand the story (Sidney 74). Using the allegory allowed Averell to reach a broader audience and ensure their understanding of his message. Readers would have been very familiar with allegory in general and this one in particular. Audience familiarity with the body politic metaphor helped Averell to write a text that a reader would have understood and been engaged in while allowing Averell to change the metaphor to suite his purposes.

While reader familiarity helps Averell get his point across, his exhortation shows distrust in his readers' ideas and conclusions. He refuses to allow the reader to draw their own conclusions; which is an impossible feat. In *Readers and Authorship in Early Modern England*, Stephen B. Dobranski argues that authors' omissions give authority to both author and reader; textual omissions encourage the active reader to draw their own conclusions while the author receives some of his authority through allowing the readers to interpret the "gaps" (211). Rather than showcasing the dangerous female tongue and the dangers of Catholics, Averell's own babbling tongue and his inability to stop explaining his meaning confuses the readers, who have already drawn their own conclusions, whether he wanted them to or not. The exhortation may guide or color some reader interpretations, but it cannot control them. Averell's need to

be in charge of his readers' interpretations illustrates his own anxieties regarding his position in Protestant England; it shows a desire to control not only his text, but how he is viewed as an author and as a good Englishman.

If the tongue functions in this allegory as a body member spreading Catholicism through her speech, silencing the Catholics within England will prevent them from further infecting other members of the English body politic with their dangerous thoughts and actions. Keeping the tongue shut in will also help to prevent the "gap" that allows foreign Catholics to infiltrate the country. Stopping the tongue's speech and locking her up works as a perfect metaphor for both preventing Catholic persons and their texts from further infecting England's body politic. As punishment for her rebellion, the tongue is punished much like *Lingua*. In Averell's text, the Foot states that the Tongue should be punished in the following way:

as Nature hath inclosed her in with a double wall, and shut her up as in a prison, so let us charge the teeth and lippes to lock her up, and according to their office set a bolt before her for walking at large, and of these cannot containe her in dutie, then will we make the handes helpers by violent force to holde her in. (C3^v)

Averell's punishment advocates stricter laws and penalties to prevent Catholic people and their books from spreading. If laws and allegiance to the Queen cannot prevent Catholics from entering the country or publishing seditious texts, then violent force will.

The use of the woman's tongue as an idiom for the threat of Catholic invasion, from within and without, allowed Averell a way to communicate to his audience what

may occur if this were allowed. Despite his detailed exhortation, Averell's text does more than merely show the anti-Catholic sentiment of 1588. Averell's use of the tongue communicates on different levels with anti-Catholic discourses and discourses of the use of printed material allowing the modern reader greater insight into these discourses and how these discourses were able to utilize and appropriate the trope of the woman's tongue in unexpected and, often, surprising ways.

CHAPTER 4

IN CONCLUSION: SPROUTING WINGS

This analysis of male anxieties and the female tongue has barely scratched the surface of the richness and complexity of this trope in Early Modern English culture. Female speech and the female tongue are used as a metonymy in literature, plays, poems, educational texts, dialogues, pamphlets, songs, and public documents. This trope pervaded the culture to the extent that authors like Tomkis and Averell could utilize the tongue in body politic allegories without needing to explain the metaphor. It was understood. However, the need to control women's speech extended beyond the literature and into people's lives, often with harsh consequences for women.

As this culture struggled to rationalize these stereotypes while maintaining allegiance to the strong unmarried queen, male authors such as Tomkis and Averell, avoided broaching the subject of the queen's right to speak by leaving the body politic head out of the metaphor. Their solution was to avoid the exception or code her as masculine. Don't think this stereotype died with these authors and this culture, we still see remnants of it today. Outspoken, strong women are still frowned upon. We still think of such women, like Hilary Clinton, Margaret Thatcher, or Janet Reno, as somehow masculine or we think their husbands are hen-pecked and effeminate. Women are still portrayed in the media as gossipy and/or needing a man to keep them

under control. The female tongue has not gone away. It now simply manifests itself in more subtle and underhanded ways.

As the stereotypes surrounding the female tongue evolved and changed, the tongue sprouted wings and flew away from its authors. In 1635, George Wither's *Collection of Emblemes* included a depiction of a flying tongue (Figure 4.1) and warned that we must be aware of what we let our tongues speak as the tongue can and will get away from its owner and tell lies, sow seditions, and utter curses among other things. This warning echoes the list of crimes of the female tongues in both Tomkis's and Averell's texts. Today, this emblem does more than warn us about the dangers of the tongue, it serves a secondary purpose. This emblem shows us how the female tongue really did sprout wings and get away from its creators. The stereotypes surrounding the tongue became so ingrained in Early Modern and Modern culture, that the stereotypes surrounding the female tongue cannot be contained.

No Heart can thinke, to what strange ends,
The Tongues unruly Motion tends.



ILLVSTR. XLII.

Book. I.

❧ **E**ill-worthy of our better Heeding were,
 That *Holy Pen-mans* Lesson, who hath sayd,
 We should be slow to Speake, and swift to Heare;
 If, well, the nature of the *Tongue* we waigh'd.
 For, if we let it loose, it getteth *Wings*,
 And, flies with wanton Carelesnesse, about;
 It prateth in all places, of *All things*;
 Tells *Truth* and *Lyes*, and babbleth *Secrets* out.
 To speake, of things unknowne, it taketh leave,
 As if it had all Knowledge in Possession;
 And, *Mysteries* (which no Man can conceive)
 Are thought fit Objects for the *Tongues* Expression.
 With *Truth* it mixeth *Errors*; sayes, unsayes;
 And, is the *Preacher* of all *Heresies*.
 That *Heart*, which gives it motion, it betrayes;
 And, utters *Curses*, *Oathes*, and *Blasphemies*.
 It spreads all *Slanders*, which base *Envie* raiseth;
 It moveth *Anger*, and begetteth *Hates*:
 It blameth *Vertue*; filthy *Deeds* it praiseth;
 And, causeth *Vproares*, *Murthers*, and *Debates*.
 Yea, tis the chiefest *Factor* for the *Devill*;
 And, yet, with speeches feignedly-sincere,
 It otherwhile reproveth what is *Evill*,
 And, will in *Lowly-words*, a *Saint* appeare.
 Now this is knowne; we, next of all, should learne,
 How we may shunne the *Mischiefe* being knowne;
 How, we bad *Tongues*, in *Others*, may discerne;
 And, how to guide and moderate our *Ownes*.
 And, reason good; for, none can apprehend,
 What *Mischiefe* doth an *Evill Tongue* attend.

The

Figure 4.1 “No Heart can Thinke, to what strange ends the Tongues unruly Motion tends” (Wither 42)

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