
CULTURAL CAPITALS

Early Modern London and Paris

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PRINCETON AND OXFORD

CHAPTER EIGHT

Sex in the City

We must hear the words that were never spoken. . . .
 We must make the silences of history speak. . . . Only
 then do the dead accept the sepulcher.

—MICHELET

What do archives have to tell us? Why have they come to occupy a privileged place in the study of letters and culture? What kind of knowledge do they offer, or rather, do we produce from them? In the case of such materials as depositions and law cases, even wills and inventories, what is their status in relation to so-called literary texts? Why have those of us working in early modern studies particularly, though not exclusively, and I count myself among them, come down with, in Derrida's translator's catchy phrase, "archive fever"? This chapter explores these questions by way of London's brothels and the Bridewell courtbooks that are the principal archival sources about them, by reading Thomas Nashe's notorious poem, *A Choise of Valentines*, and ends by turning briefly to the other side of the channel, to the notorious Parisian criminal den known as the Cour des Miracles.

My epigraph from Michelet raises the related theoretical issue with which this chapter is concerned and which has dogged social history, women's history, and literary history: what of those who cannot, in Marx's oft-cited formulation, represent themselves, the poor and vagrant, the prostitutes and petty criminals who as we have seen are effaced from the guidebooks and surveys of early modern Paris and London?¹ Almost two decades ago, early work in women's history initiated the governing metaphor for this problem: "becoming visible." The historian's work is to "recover" the traces of those who left no textual traces of their own.² The implication of the metaphor, of course, is that we can mine the depths, that we can uncover, unmask, expose, bring to light, discern, excavate lost lives. The sources for this hermeneutic endeavor are archives of various kinds waiting for our interpretive pickax, for the mask to be ripped away, to come out of hiding, so that such lives can become visible. As my diction and irony suggest, such an endeavor raises doubts, as does the opposition of the hidden and the visible, of inside and outside, on which it depends.

The rapid growth of both London and Paris during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, in terms of both population and the development of large-scale markets, fostered, as we have seen, an unprecedented accumulation

of both financial and cultural capital and promoted distinctive urban behaviors. Commercial sex was one such behavior. Prostitution would seem to be an urban phenomenon. To be sure, sexual acts for all sorts of favors—food, shelter, clothing, even money—occurred in the countryside beneath its proverbial hedgerows, but prostitution in the organized sense of sex for money that took place in brothels, or what were termed "bawdys" in early modern London, and involving bawds and procurers as well as prostitutes themselves, was a market phenomenon associated with town and, increasingly, city life.³ The courtbooks, as do pamphlets, plays, and poems, insist on the commercial character of prostitution in early modern London: it is "trade," "custom," or "traffic," prostitutes are "ware," "hackneis to lett-out to hire," and "merchandise" whose bodies were for "use," "a bargaine for any buyer." Intercourse and a woman's genitals were termed "the commodity," pimps were termed "brokers," and clients had to "deal" with prostitute or bawd.⁴ Marriage, by contrast, is conventionally imagined as eccentric to urban locales and markets, as Edenic or pastoral; even adulterous love is sometimes situated or linked metaphorically to an idyllic open air, from walled garden to forest floor.

But commercial sex is city sex. "How happy . . . were cities if they had no suburbs," exclaims Thomas Dekker in one of his many pamphlets detailing the evils of London life. In early modern London, however, though both royal edict and city authorities repeatedly banished prostitutes and brothels from within the City, both Ian Archer and Paul Griffiths, in his interesting and useful study "The Structure of Prostitution in Elizabethan London," have shown a startling number of such establishments within the City—a historical fact confirmed in numerous city comedies and contemporary pamphlets that recount prostitution taking place within the City's precincts.⁵ Following the shutdown of the Bankside stews in 1546, prostitution seems to have intensified in the City. In Dekker's *News from Hell* (1606), the speaker complains that "Bawdes . . . now sit no longer upon the skirtes of the Cittie, but iett up and downe, even in the cloake of the cittie, and give more rent for a house, then the proudest London occupier of them all."⁶

Archer, Griffiths, and others have shown that there was a crackdown on sexual crimes, including prostitution, in the 1570s and early 1580s directed not only against organized brothels and so-called casual prostitution—the expression used by historians to distinguish streetwalking from the more organized sort—but also against adultery, fornication, and women termed "bawds" for harboring pregnant single women, and finally, and most unusually, the pursuit not only of prostitutes themselves but of their clients, a state of affairs that provides a tantalizing background to Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*.⁷ Repeatedly the crackdown on brothels and prostitution is justified by the city authorities because brothels were said to harbor all sorts of petty criminals—thieves and crooks, counterfeiters, and offenders of all sorts—and thus posed a threat to public order.⁸

The Bridewell courtbooks are the principal archival source for historians, including Archer and Griffiths, working on prostitution in early modern London. The five extant courtbooks record the depositions of numerous prostitutes, bawds, and pimps and paint a suggestive picture of London's sexual underworld. The courtbooks are not complete for the period, though they extend from 1559 until 1642.⁹ Bridewell, built as a royal palace begun in 1515 between Fleet Street and the Thames, was given to the city and granted its charter in 1553, one of four London hospitals founded in the mid-sixteenth century to manage the problem of the urban poor.¹⁰ From these courtbooks, historians have produced a picture or profile of prostitution in early modern London. Commercial sex was loosely organized and widespread. The largest recorded brothel housed nine women, though others harbored no more than two or three. Fees varied, but averaged between four and five shillings, more than most women made in a week.¹¹ Prostitutes paid room and sometimes board of some four to six shillings a week, as well as handing over approximately half their earnings to the bawd or keeper.¹² Records show evidence of organized cooperation among the brothel keepers, with women being carried from one house to another when a large group of clients was expected or simply turned up.

According to Archer, many brothel keepers paid subsidies—taxes, we might say—in the top third of those levied, which put them in the ranks of, in his words, “relatively prosperous craftsmen and petty retailers” (215). Archer goes on to say that prostitution was a “service industry directed toward the gentry and visitors” and was thus often protected by the authorities, but Griffiths has shown that for the small sample of some 219 clients whose status can be identified, apprentices and servants made up the largest segment, about 39 percent.¹³ Brothel clients, however, included aristocrats, gentry, foreign emissaries and businessmen, Inns of Court men, pages, city citizens, servants, and apprentices. The Bridewell courtbooks even record the deposition of one Katherine Jones who apparently counted among her clients the son of one of the Bridewell governors. The prostitutes themselves were, and here I quote Griffiths, “mostly single young women . . . [a] high proportion of whom were given the significant age titles ‘maid’ or ‘servant.’”¹⁴

As this outline suggests, historians who study the Bridewell courtbooks use them to produce a set of facts and numbers about prostitution—how it was organized and administered, where it took place, how much it cost, who were the prostitutes, who the clients—even if they admit, as does Griffiths, the fragmentary nature of the evidence and claim only to show patterns. Rarely do they consider questions of language, affect, dress, motivation, desire, or performance. When motives are considered, it is usually those of the authorities, rarely the prostitutes themselves. The city fathers worried about public order, crime, the breakdown of households, and public morality. Griffiths rightly observes that this focus reduces “mere personal matters of motivation

to an incidental footnote.” He goes on: “However, in their own narratives the women often place a telling emphasis upon procurement, which may well have been a strategy, for by shifting the blame they could emerge as victims” (49). Repeatedly, he notes, women recount being brought by a particular man, or occasionally woman, to a brothel where a man then had “the use of her body”; they tell of being tricked by false promises of marriage or by a master or mistress, or occasionally, of having been driven to prostitution by poverty and want.

The etiological mode is so ubiquitous as to suggest that such origin stories, rather than merely a strategy for shifting blame, as Griffiths suggests, may have been solicited in response to some judicial version of the age-old question, “How did a girl like you end up in a place like this?” In *Dust*, her wonderful book about archives, Carolyn Steedman looks at similar records of magistrates in the nineteenth century that she shows are constructed by “the legally required questions.”¹⁵ In these written accounts produced by questioning, the interlocutor has been removed in transcription, but Steedman nevertheless goes on to argue that “apart from not being written down by the liver of the life presented, these brief narratives fulfil the criteria for autobiographical narration” (48). Similarly, Griffiths assumes that, though written down by recorders, what we find in the archives are, in his words, “their own narratives,” the women’s voices and lives we are searching for. Though he recognizes the courtbooks are mediated, nevertheless he asserts that “as we read the depositions . . . we are perhaps closer to the authentic voice of the bawd and prostitute” than we are in the fictive works of Dekker, Greene, Nashe, and the rest: “pamphlet, ballad and play,” he declares, “must adopt a supporting role to the courtbook.”¹⁶ In other words, despite the obligatory acknowledgment of fiction in the archives, as his words suggest, Griffiths assumes the courtbooks represent a level of truth the literary cannot. According to him, the literary documents concerned with prostitution “are pervaded with a profound didacticism and a preoccupation with the conventional pattern of authority and social relations.”¹⁷

But from the perspective of literary studies, both claims are suspect. First, the so-called literary texts often fail at their wonted didacticism, a point to which I shall return when we turn to Nashe’s poem; and second, the Bridewell courtbooks themselves, read *rhetorically* or *literarily*, tell a somewhat different story, certainly not one of women’s “own narratives” and of “authentic voice.” The Bridewell records are judicial; that is, they are concerned with law and punishment and offer only traces of other aspects of prostitution found in the literary record. Each of the courtbooks begins with pages and pages of lists of names—the names of all those deposed. Both men’s and women’s names, since persons were committed to Bridewell for many reasons, not just sexual crimes—for vagabondage, theft, and other petty offenses. The records are written in a succession of secretary hands, some open and expansive, even

slapdash, others crabbed, neat, and precise. Reading these records, one is struck not with a sense of the personal narratives of those arraigned but of their formulaic character—in the double sense of character—and then of the mannerisms, rhetoric, and diction, in short, the personal style, of the various scribes and recorders themselves. They are written in the third person and always begin with the name of the person arraigned. We learn where the accused was apprehended, that he or she was brought before the governors or “into this house” on a particular date, and often at the commandment of some particular person, and sometimes there is a deposition of the accused.

Almost invariably the name of the accused is followed by an identifying phrase to place him or her in the urban social hierarchy—apprentice of, draper journeyman, wife of, daughter of, tapster, goldsmith, shoemaker, waterman, but also common harlot, common bawd, common beggar, common drunkard, plain vagabond, and naughty vagabond. The ubiquitous *common* insists on the preoccupation with status and degree, with hierarchy, that characterized early modern social relations.

Each scribe has different formulas for describing prostitution. In the early books that are preserved from 1559 to 1562, following each name, the recorder begins almost every entry concerned with commercial sex “a lewd harlot,” a “common harlot,” “a common bawd,” “a lewd woman.” The usual length is seven or eight lines, though one later scribe—and here, we ask, is the instigator the scribe or the governors themselves—tends to record longer depositions, though there are occasional lengthy accounts throughout. The telling or titillating detail is rare indeed, and its citation by social historians or literary critics may tell us more about the narratives we are writing than about the general character of early modern prostitution. Several scribes use the expression “the use of her body,” but others employ the phrase “committed whoredom.” Prostitutes are rarely termed “whores,” which, as Laura Gowing has observed, is a common term of derision that rarely means prostitute;¹⁸ instead, they use “harlot,” and in the seventeenth-century books, “nightwalkers” and “strumpet.” Reading the courtbooks, one is hard put to imagine the voice of any of the deponents; women who may have described the sexual acts for which they were detained and brought to Bridewell with that repeated phrase, “the use of my body,” used a semilegal formula. In fact, the phrase seems more likely to have been the recorder’s term of art, if you will, to cover the multitude of ways women must have admitted to the sexual acts for which they were being paid and arraigned. And interestingly, despite the prominence such information takes in historians’ accounts of prostitution, economic references to payment of any kind are relatively few. In other words, the facts and patterns we draw from archives and texts of all kinds depend, of course, on the questions we pose. And though that lesson may seem an old one, long since learned and commonly acknowledged, the temptation to seek the mar-

ginal voice or lost women’s speech, to read records as conveying the real the literary cannot, frequently overcomes better judgment.

On the one hand, Thomas Nashe’s *Choise of Valentines* corroborates much of what we learn from the Bridewell courtbooks and other evidence about prostitution in early modern London. But it also offers a strikingly different view of the sex trade and early modern sexual practices and desire. As many commentators have noted, *A Choise of Valentines* begins with a pseudo-Chaucerian opening:

It was the merie moneth of Februarie
 When yong-men in their iollie roguerie
 Rose earelie in the morne fore breake of daie
 To seeke them valentines so trimme and gaie;
 With whom they maie consorte in summer sheene,
 And dance the heidgeies on our toune-greene.¹⁹

The young man of the poem, one Tomalin, leaves the countryside in which the poem opens for the city where he seeks and finds his valentine, one Francis, working in an urban brothel. Their initial attempt at sex is apparently foiled by Tomalin’s premature ejaculation, which is quickly followed by a successful but, unhappily for Francis, short-lived coupling that disappoints his lady, who fortunately is prepared to satisfy herself with a handy dildo. Nashe makes use not only of Chaucer but also of Ovid’s then popular *Amores* just translated by Marlowe, and the *louche* ovidianism popular among young writers and readers in the 1580s and 1590s, one that provoked numerous erotic poems sometimes marked by bold, even grotesque comedy.²⁰ Nevertheless, modern readers of Nashe’s poem have been preoccupied with its psychosexual effects, with Francis’s resort to the dildo with its presumed impact on male subjectivity or the male ego.²¹

The poem circulated only in manuscript in Nashe’s lifetime, though the controversy it generated with Gabriel Harvey, and references to the poem in print by others, suggest it may have been widely known and read in literate circles.²² The poem seems to have been first printed only in 1899 and, then, “privately printed for subscribers only.”²³ Its nineteenth-century editor opines that it would not be “accorded the dignity of print” but “that the world cannot afford to lose any ‘document’ (a word that first editor puts in scare quotes) whatsoever which bears, or *may* bear, in the slightest degree . . . on the reconstruction . . . of the life and times of the immortal bard of Avon” (vii). In other words, we ostensibly owe the preservation in print and Victorian publication of this piece of Elizabethan pornography to Shakespeare and bardolatry. Ronald McKerrow, who edited Nashe’s works at the beginning of the twentieth century, did not include *A Choise of Valentines* in his edition, but F. P. Wilson added it to his reedition of McKerrow in the 1960s. The poem is prefaced by a dedicatory poem “To the right Honorable the lord S” long

apparel of the said Mistress Hibbens. And further this examinant saith that the said Mistress Hibbens hath always lying in her house ready of her own divers suits of apparels for women viz. silk gowns of several colors. . . . when any other sorts of people do come to her house, she will array such wenches for them as she thinketh they will be in liberalitie towards her.²⁹

Similarly, a deposition of 21 January 1578 concerning a brothel in Clerkenwell tells of one Marye Donnelley, who had “a silke gowne & was ther abused & kept especially by gentlement & welthe men with velvett gaskens & such apparell & not for the common sorte.” In the words of another deposition, prostitutes had to be trimmed “wth swete water & calles & cotes & thyngs for the purpose fitt for the degree of them that use them.”³⁰ The courtbook depositions offer occasional glimpses of the link among dress, sexuality, and degree; sometimes clothing served merely to identify the deponent, but at others, to enhance the market transaction, to match or meet the desire or status of a given client, and to articulate significant currents of social desire. The frisson of transvestism in early modern England would seem to be not a crossing of gender boundaries but a status masquerade, a flaunting not so much of femininity as of what we now call class. The prostitute does not adopt the sexuality of the other but simulates a sexually charged status or degree.³¹

In Nashe’s poem, the speaker is driven wild by Francis’s “ratling silks” and “sweet linyng,” or linen, which he personifies, asking its permission to raise it to reveal first her legs, then her knees, and finally her “mannely thigh.”³² “Smock, climbe a-pace,” he cries in an exaggerated anthropomorphism reminiscent of Ovid. Francis’s ravishing silks and manly thigh have been read as gender reversals that threaten Tomalin’s masculinity, and certainly they foreshadow her willingness to take her pleasure into her own hands, but there is little sense at this point in the poem of sexual anxiety. When her sexual parts are revealed, Tomalin says the sight surpasses heaven and paradise alike and offers a conventional pastoral description:

A prettie rysing wombe without a weame,
That shone as bright as anie silver streame;
And bare out lyke the bending of an hill,
At whose decline a fountaine dwelleth still,
That hath his mouth besett with uglie bryers
Resembling much a duskie nett of wyres. (109–14)

This final couplet is arguably the only negative allusion to women’s sexuality in the poem. As mentioned earlier, Tomalin’s member “dye[s] ere it hath seene Jerusalem,” a state of affairs brought on not, however, by his sight of her “uglie

bryers” like a “duskie nett of wyres,” but quite explicitly by his excitement at grasping her “loftie buttock barred with azure veine’s.”

When after her ministrations Tomalin is aroused again, the poem engages in a long description of their intercourse in which Nashe plays with Petrarchan rhetoric and with rhythm—the lovers keep “crochet-time, / And euerie stroake in order lyke a chyme” (185–86). Each time Tomalin is about to reach orgasm, Francis exhorts him to “Togeaether lett our equall motions stir / Togeaether let us liue and dye my deere.” Tomalin, again nearing the little death, Francis begs him to hold out but an hour, but half an hour, nay but a quarter—in short, what Francis desires is to prolong their *joint* pleasure, and as my quotations suggest, the poem is at comic pains to emphasize their shared efforts toward that goal. When Tomalin does come, Francis laments, “Adieu faint-hearted instrument of lust / That falselie hast betrayde our *equale* trust” (*italics mine*). She turns instead to her “little dilldo ... / That bendeth not,” and goes on to detail the pleasure that instrument will supply.

“Dildo,” the *OED* tells us, is a “word of obscure origin, used in the refrains of ballads”; the dictionary attributes the word’s first usage meaning “artificial penis” to Nashe’s poem. The second usage cited is from Florio’s Italian-English dictionary, where a “pastinaca muranese” or a “murano parsnip” is defined as “a dildoe of glasse.” In Nashe’s *Choise of Valentines*, the dildo is described at length; it is hollow, can be filled with hot water or milk to simulate ejaculation, is made of glass, and is said to work by means of “forraine artes.” Recent critics have emphasized that it represents a socially censured, threatening, nonreproductive sexuality and a bid for female agency whether represented in positive or negative terms.³³ But perhaps more significant is the dildo as a marker of a certain urban and mercantile sophistication. Dildos would have been known to Nashe and his contemporaries literarily through Aretino’s dialogues, and though these sexual prostheses of glass, as opposed to leather, may have been a fantasy of pornographic writing, they may well have been available locally, not merely via literary allusion.

We know that Murano glass objects were imported to England as early as the fourteenth century. In 1549 a group of Muranese glassmakers settled in London and produced Venetian glass for several years, and in 1571, a Muranese glassmaker named Jacapo Verzelini emigrated from Antwerp, where he had worked for many years; he received a royal patent to produce Murano glass, brought additional recruits from Italy, and manufactured Venetian glass in London for at least fifteen years—his work survives, dating from 1577 until the 1590s.³⁴

In Nashe’s poem the dildo is associated with foreign parts and stands for foreign pleasures, what Ascham earlier in the century in warning young men from traveling in Italy called the enchantments of Circe. The Italian dildo blown from Venetian glass, perhaps manufactured in London, illustrates the

xenophobic English view of exotic and commercial sexual practices and their fruits. For London writers of the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, not only sexual prosthetics but prostitutes themselves were frequently from somewhere else—they were Dutch courtesans and bawds, Welsh whores, and, closer to home but still eccentric to the City proper, Hackneys and Westminster whores. Similarly, lust is Dutch, and places of sexual resort were associated with the foreign: Paris Garden and Holland's Leaguer, and the pox, of course, was French. At the end of Nashe's poem, Tomalin asks for exotic, unaffordable "Druggs and Electuaries of Indian soile, / That strengthen wearie members in their toile,"³⁵ and in *Christs Teares*, Nashe complains of "veneriall machavie-lisme." And despite his own poem which gives the lie to his claim about Italian venery, he maintains that the English "have not words to unfold" what goes on in the stews: "Positions and instructions have they [the Italians] to make their whores a hundred times more whorish . . . waters and receipts, to enable a man after he is spent."³⁶ Italian, French, Dutch, Indian—all these displacements seek to distance, if not save, the English from sexual pollution.³⁷

Jonathan Crewe first remarked the confusion of pronoun reference in Nashe's poem that sometimes makes it difficult to determine who is speaking.³⁸ At line 245, Tomalin apparently begins to speak again and to complain "how he [the dildo] usurps in bed and bowre." The dildo is personified, first by Francis and then by Tomalin, who calls him "my Mistris page," "this womans secretarie" and "a ladies chamberlaine," all labels out of context for the country Tomalin and his only-just-arrived-in-the-city female companion. They signal the poet's intervention toward the end of the poem with conventional stereotypes about higher-status women's use of their male servants—page, secretary, chamberlain—for sexual purposes.

Rather than emphasize, as have other recent critics, the poem's psychosexual thematics, which assume a reader's identification with Tomalin's initial sexual difficulties and fear of Francis's sexual aggressiveness,³⁹ the end of the poem calls attention to the author's distanced control over its entertaining eroticism and the ways in which the prostitute's body and her pleasure are displayed as a cultural production, as a poetic performance with erotic effects for its readers. Masculine sexual limitation is safely confined to the comical rube Tomalin, whose country origins, crude lust, and naïveté inhibit identification with the sophisticated, knowing, possibly mostly male audience to which the poem is pitched. The last seventy-five lines move away from the narrative and appeal more directly to the poem's readers and their assumed salacious enjoyment of the dildo's action, which is said to "alter [its] pace," "For, who in pathe's unknownen, one gate can keepe?" The poet operates the dildo for the reader's entertainment and as a reminder of labile, sexual possibility rather than anxiety about male sexual performance.⁴⁰

In its last two quatrains, the poem segues from Tomalin's account of paying the bawd and leaving the brothel, to the poet's reflections on its reception:

What can be added more to my renowne?
 She lyeth breathlesse, I am taken doune,
 The waues doe swell, the tydes climbe or'e the banks,
 Iudge gentlemen if I deserue not thanks,
 And so good night unto you eue'rie one,
 For loe, our threed is spunne, our plaie is donne. (311–16)

The poem would seem to end, then, with Nashe's bravura assertion of the powerful erotic effects of what Pepys was later to term "one handed reading." Judge, gentlemen, if I deserve not thanks, he says, as the waves swell and the tides climb o'er the banks. Interestingly, in one of the manuscript copies at the Bodleian (Rawlinson MS. Poet. 216, fols. 96–106), the "gentlemen" of line 314 reads "gentlewomen" and thus posits a female readership, or instead perhaps seeks to enhance the poem's sensational appeal to men.⁴¹

Nashe's poem, then, safely distances its elite readers from sexual anxiety whether about male performance or female sexuality. The commercial world of prostitution is packaged for an elite urban readership that can enjoy Nashe's literary tumbling act from his parodic religious diction to his hyperbolic Petrarchism to his imitation of Ovid. Though there is a great deal more to be said about this poem, which ends with a short epilogue in which Nashe claims Ovid as his poetic precursor and promises more serious praise of his patron now that his "mynde [is] purg'd of such lascivious witt," I want to turn instead briefly to a similar appropriation of urban crime for the delectation of a Parisian elite before returning to the question of archives with which this chapter began.

Like London's Southwark suburbs where prostitutes and all kinds of petty criminals sought refuge, Paris too had its criminal quarter, the so-called *Cour des Miracles*. Literally, *cour* refers to a dead end or cul-de-sac, and the *cour des miracles* where urban poor, beggars, criminals, and prostitutes lived. In seventeenth-century Paris, the *Cour des Miracles* was located between the rue Montorgueil, the convent of the Filles-Dieu, and the rue Neuve-Saint-Sauveur. There, according to the late seventeenth-century memoirist and antiquarian Henri Sauval, in a square of considerable size that he described as stinking, muddy, and unpaved, all the criminals of Paris were gathered in another world with their own laws, vocational training, religious practice, customs, and behaviors.⁴² Young boys were said to be initiated into the fraternity of pickpockets and cutpurses, girls and women "les moins laides se prostituoient pour deux liards les autres pour un double, la plupart pour rien" (the least ugly prostituted themselves for two liards, others for a double, but most for nothing at all). Of particular interest to Sauval and other chroniclers of the *cour des miracles* were the stories of simulated injury, sickness, and poverty—con men and women were said to pretend to be blind, deaf, crippled, ill while they plied their trade, but to return to the *cour* at night, transformed in an instant, healed, as Sauval ironically notes, without recourse to miracles.⁴³

As in London, such tales of an urban counterculture, a world turned upside down with its own laws, its own language, its own government, were popular. Such legends allowed the better-off to forgo charity and inspired Louis XIV to establish the Hôpital Général in which to incarcerate paupers and criminals.⁴⁴

Stories of the Cour des Miracles and the metamorphoses that took place there were so fashionable that ballets were presented at court for the king in 1653 and 1655 with courtiers playing the parts of the "Concierge & les Locataires de la Cour de miracles" (concierge and inhabitants of the court of miracles). The ballet begins by representing a scene of elite consumption in which gallants and coquettes alight from coaches to buy ribbons and jam, reminiscent of Corneille's *Galerie du Palais*, then shifts to an episode in which two bourgeois de Paris are attacked by "filous" or thieves, as in Berthaud's poem *Paris burlesque*, and finally a scene set in the Cour des Miracles itself, where beggars, cripples, and amputees are miraculously healed to dance a *gaillarde* and sing a serenade.⁴⁵ The spectators seem to have judged it a huge success. The king's ballet aestheticizes the fear the elite felt in response to urban crime summed up in a passage from the bourgeois Pierre de l'Estoile's diary in his description of the new year in January 1606:

Force meurtres, assassinations, voleries, excès, paillardises, et toutes sortes de vices et impieties, régnèrent en ceste saison extraordinairement. Insolences de laquais à Paris jusques aux meurtres, dont il y en eust de pendus; faux monnoyeurs pris et descouverts; deux assassins qui avoient voulu assassiner le baron d'Aubeterre en sa maison, roués tous vifs en Grève; ung soldat des Gardes pendu pour avoir tué son hoste, afin de lui voler dix francs qu'il avoit; ung merchant venant à la Foire, tué d'un coup de cousteau qu'on lui qu'on lui laissa dans la gorge, trouvé en cest estat le long des trenchées des fauxbourgs Saint Germain: sans dix neuf autres qu'on trouve avoir esté tués et assassins, en ce seul mois, par les rue de Paris don't on n'a pu descouvrir encore les meurtriers. Pauvre commencement d'année, nous menassant de pire fin.

So many murders, assassinations, robberies, excesses, debaucheries, and all sorts of vices and impieties reign in this extraordinary season. The insolence of lackeys in Paris, even to murders for which they have been hanged; counterfeiters arrested and discovered; two killers, who had wanted to assassinate Baron d'Aubeterre in his own house, set on the wheel alive in the Place de Grève; a soldier of the Guards hanged for having murdered his host to steal ten francs from him; a merchant coming to the Fair killed by one stab of a knife they left in his throat, found like that in the ditches just outside St. Germain: and that doesn't even take into account nineteen others killed or assassinated, in this one month, *by the streets of Paris*, in which you may still find the murderers. A poor beginning to the year which threatens us with an even worse end. (trans. and italics mine)⁴⁶

De l'Estoile's journal entry records the fears of an urban elite in the face of seemingly uncontrolled crime. The aristocracy and the bourgeoisie under attack, murderous lackeys above the law, loyalty and hospitality transgressed, merchants unable even to reach the foire Saint-Germain to conduct their business, killed in cold blood and left in a ditch, acts perpetrated by the "the streets of Paris" in which the killers still roam free, and worse to come. De l'Estoile goes on, in time-honored fashion, to blame the times. No one fears God any longer, and today He is no longer to be found among men. By making the streets of Paris the perpetrator of the many crimes that take place in the city, de l'Estoile reveals the panic produced by the mix of persons that was an important feature of the urban environment. The court ballets featuring imagined scenes in the *cour des miracles* demonstrate at one and the same time the fear and fascination provoked by the spatial assembly of the poor, the vagrant, of prostitutes and cutpurses, in Paris.

The archive fever that has taken hold in literary studies threatens the study of literature with a renewed historicism of a distinctly old rather than new type. Both historians and literary scholars claim to have learned Natalie Davis's lesson concerning fiction in the archives, but as Griffiths's willingness on the one hand to allot a truth value to the Bridewell courtbooks and the so-called voices they record, and on the other to reject so-called literary evidence demonstrates, archives remain a privileged repository, a place of facts from which truth can be teased out. Literary historians and critics have increasingly found sanctuary in the archives, relieved to leave "theory" behind; we have taken refuge in paper remains in the name of scholarship, and the desire to claim for ourselves the privilege and authority of truth and science. The stories of women who left no textual remains of their own and whose stories Griffiths calls "their own narratives" and their "authentic voice" are to be "recovered" from archives, emancipated somehow from the dark confines of interpretation. But this chapter has endeavored to show how the depositions and cases, records and statutes, fears about public order, even the topography of the urban brothels join *with* plays and pamphlets, poems and fictions, ballets and masques, in a hermeneutic flood that enables us to constitute meaning through the act of writing.⁴⁷ We claim to know archives are shaped by genre, custom, and trope, by ideology and hierarchy, habit and authority, but we remain reluctant to accept that the meanings they give up are not self-evident, but the result of reading and interpretation as surely as any literary text.

EPILOGUE

Paperwork

Footnotes historicize what scholars do. They remind us and our readers that writing is “a concrete series of acts carried out under particular circumstances . . . against the ideologies that tempt us out of time.”¹ The preceding chapters are filled with notes to myriad historical studies on early modern London and Paris: on bridges and landmarks, on urban demography and migration, on streets and transport, trade and consumption, pollution and sewage, travel and reading, sex and death. Though my notes inevitably call upon the authority of such studies, the purpose of this book is the reading of literary and cultural texts: street literature, the poetry of Isabella Whitney, Nashe, Donne, and Boileau, the drama of Shakespeare, Jonson, Middleton, and Corneille, topographies, guidebooks and pamphlets, the novels of Scudéry and Furetière. Presumably, the endnotes on the history of London and Paris, which far outnumber those to a particular edition or critical essay on the texts I analyze, allow us to judge the literary and cultural artifacts that are my subject against the “real events” or “facts” of history, or, as Natalie Zemon Davis insists, “their fidelity to ‘real events,’ or at least to the same events as recounted by others.”² The “others who recount” are not only various contemporary accounts preserved in archival sources but the versions of those events produced and published by both recent historians and literary scholars.

This problem of the relation between “fact” and “fiction” has particularly dogged studies of urban writing that have focused on what we might term, anachronistically, “realist” texts, texts that purport to represent everyday urban life and social relations. A case in point is the recent handbook, Blackwell’s *Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture*, which, as its title declares, claims to be a reader’s guide to early modern literature and culture. The chapter entitled “The Literature of the Metropolis” offers a curious view of urban writing.³ It begins by noting the vast demographic shifts from country to city that made London a metropolis. Whereas the court defined itself through the masque, the author observes, the ruling city elite did so through the Lord Mayor’s inaugural pageants. He goes on, still in his opening paragraph, to note in a sentence or two that numerous genres represented London’s development as a metropolis. The article ends ten pages later where a reader might have expected it to begin, with a brief discussion of John Stow. But the bulk of the entry purporting to survey the literature of the metropolis for both students and scholars is devoted entirely to the London underworld

and to debates about the status of historical evidence and literary and cultural texts on that topic. A student or reader unacquainted with the multiple genres associated with urban writing would imagine that London was represented only as a city of crime, “a threatening unofficial realm inhabited by tricksters, parasites, and rogues of all kinds.”⁴ There is no mention of English city comedy, nor of satire or urban/e poetry; there are no ballads or broadsides, no popular narratives such as Nashe’s *Unfortunate Traveler*—in short, the manual article presents a skewed account of metropolitan literature. Its slant reflects current critical and popular preoccupations with subcultures and the outlaw, with poverty and the dispossessed, preoccupations to be found in the work of various disciplines at the present moment, from anthropology to social and urban history.⁵ In the preceding chapters I have tried to present a broader perspective of “metropolitan literature” that encompasses the multiple genres and forms of writing that represented both early modern Paris and London.

Instead of the kind of broad survey appropriate to the demands of a handbook or manual,⁶ John Twynning’s article focuses almost exclusively on cony-catching pamphlets, which he uses to rehearse the debates that have dogged the literature of London’s underworld for the last century: are cony-catching pamphlets and other representations of London crime “factual accounts”? Do they offer an authentic “contemporary view of crime in Tudor England”? Twynning takes a balanced view shared by most critics currently writing under the broad rubric of new historicism or cultural materialism: because “urban fact and literature correspond . . . does not mean we should simply read such texts as straightforward evidence. Despite the correspondence between fact and fiction, they should not be collapsed into one another. . . . The cony-catching pamphlet was both an authentic description of a social fiction and a fictive account of a cultural fact.”⁷ More interesting for my purposes than the narrow focus on the London underworld, or than the debate itself, however interesting, are the seemingly inescapable terms within which the debate is cast: the eternal binary fact/fiction and the seemingly inevitable chiasmus: authentic description/fictive account: social fiction/cultural fact. Both the binary and the chiasmus *are* powerful and inescapable, for me as for others; but the preceding chapters have sought at least to trouble those oppositions by focusing on the rhetorical operations and tropes that structure our reading and interpretation.

In the United States, New Criticism, and specifically the work of its best-known proponents, John Crowe Ransom, Allen Tate, and Robert Penn Warren, was a reaction against scientific positivism and narrowly conceived philological study that suppressed the materiality and productivity of language.⁸ Similarly, poststructuralism challenged the positivist emphasis on rational meaning and, famously for some, notoriously for others, insisted on textuality, on the play of language and the signifier. The recent, trumpeted return to history does not reinstate a long-lost history ignored by empty formalisms,

as is sometimes alleged, for neither New Criticism nor poststructuralism, as practiced by its best proponents, ignored or forgot history. Instead, all too often the turn to history over the last twenty-five years has been, as Tate noted with regard to historical method long ago in his essay "Miss Emily and the Bibliographer," an attempt on the part of literary studies to imitate the scientific method. Too much recent work in literary studies has embraced the descriptive and the instrumental, as comfortable as an old shoe, and turned away from the work of reading.

In his elegant meditation on history writing and its inevitable literariness, *Les noms d'histoire*, or *The Names of History*, Jacques Rancière writes of the paradox of our having found the "other"—women, the poor and dispossessed, the queer, the colonized—at the very moment history has turned away from the proper name. Within the French context, he analyzes the shift represented by the *Annales* school in which not only the proper name is lost, sunk, drowned in the *longue durée*, but even papers and archives, with their anecdotes and details, their idioms and rhetorics, are refuted, displaced in the name of economic and social history represented instead by graphs, charts, grids, tables, diagrams, maps, and numbers.⁹ At the very moment that the discipline of history turns its back on papers as lies, as fictions in the archive, we in literature, and I emphatically include myself, embrace that very morass of paper—what Rancière ironically terms *paperasse*, always a pejorative term in French that means bureaucratic paperwork, what deserves the dustbin, musty piles of useless files and papers. Literary critics and commentators feverishly scour the records of kings and princes, of diplomats and clerics, of guilds and hospitals, to claim a scientificity history itself no longer accords such archives.

My readings of city texts have attempted to demonstrate that a history of urban subjectivity, of feeling and affect, motivation and ethics, is not to be found in statistics on marriages or births, or in the analysis of wills or court-books. What we can know "authentically" and with certainty about crime, beggary, and prostitution, and the women, and no doubt men who were its practitioners, is not to be found any more in depositions or records than in other sorts of texts. We decipher hands, transcribe them, read microfilms, go blind, so we can recover a *paralepsis*, that which is omitted, those who, in Marx's time-honored formulation, "cannot represent themselves." Thus my epigraph for chapter 8 from Michelet's journal: "We must hear the words that were never spoken. . . . We must make the silences of history speak. . . . Only then do the dead accept the sepulcher."¹⁰ Rancière reminds us with irony of the hubris of such claims: "Their speech is full of meaning, but they know nothing of that meaning—the role of the historian is to deliver this voice" in a kind of necrophiliac fantasy (63). There is history, as Rancière puts it, "because there is an absence of things in words," "a twofold absence—of the thing itself, and the more fearful absence of truth in language—its metaphoricity, its literariness, which the counting and tables and numbers and charts seek to

avoid," from which too often not only historians, but literary and cultural critics as well, turn away in our own recourse to archives. What must be avoided is merely reversing the lesson—fiction in the archives—by saying there is history in our fictions. We need to use the operations of reading—of language, figure, and rhetoric—to tell different stories. Otherwise we occupy the merely "subaltern role of explaining residual phenomena" (81).

"The production of the *hidden* is a poetic operation," says Rancière, "essential to the constitution of knowledge in historical study" (52). This study has attempted to address Rancière's observation in the context of literary studies. However old the lesson, even the truism for those several generations trained as new critics or formalists in close reading and deconstruction, that the production of knowledge is always a poetic operation, it bears repeating precisely because it is so difficult to enact. We may know and agree that language is at once a bearer of truth and of lies; the problem comes about as we work to perform that knowledge in the context of writing cultural criticism. *Archives*, as Derrida reminds us, is etymologically related to authority—the *arkhē* was the place where high magistrates lived; and the *archontes* were both the guardians of the official documents deposited there and their interpreters.¹¹ The archive is, in his resonant phrase, the "prosthesis of memory," our own handy dildo to satisfy unfulfilled desire.

In Derrida's consideration of the archive he locates "mal d'archive," or archive fever, as the English translator renders his title, in a moment in Freud in which the good doctor wonders—in writing, of course—if the publication of his papers, their archivization, is pointless, a worthless, wasted effort. Derrida reads in this speculation, in this modesty topos, a manifest resistance to psychoanalysis on Freud's part.¹² At the moment of its archival institution is resistance, repudiation, the death wish, for without the Freudian archive, Freud and psychoanalysis would not exist. Our appeal to the archive and its fantasies of fact represents a manifest resistance on our part to writing and its insistent assertion of the impossibility of ever providing "just the facts."

and Paris there was competitive consumption and “a flourishing tradition of monumental commemoration, that may indeed have reached new heights of elaboration and expense” in the period (275).

45. For recent work on the implications of early modern accounting practices, particularly with reference to gender, see Mary Poovey, *A History of the Modern Fact* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), chap. 2. Among the numerous seventeenth-century memorials are those of many London guilds, ambassadorial memorandums, memorials on coinage and credit (William Davenant), and so forth. In the preface to the reader of *Religio Medici*, Browne uses the term “memorial” interestingly in protesting that essay’s unauthorized publication: “the intention was not publick: and being a private exercise directed to my selfe, what it delivered therein was rather a memorial unto me then an example or rule unto any other” (Keynes, *Works of Sir Thomas Browne*, 9–10); as so often in Browne, the phrase resonates with the many meanings of “memorial.”

46. Nora, *Les lieux de mémoire*, xxvii; see also Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002), for a similar argument: “Working-class people, their image, their appurtenances, were used to tell . . . some kind of story of the bourgeois self” (127).

CHAPTER EIGHT SEX IN THE CITY

1. Jules Michelet, *Mother Death: The Journal of Jules Michelet, 1815–1850*, trans. and ed. Edward K. Kaplan (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), 121–22, quoted in Jacques Rancière, *Les noms d'histoire* (Paris: Seuil, 1992), trans. by Hasan Melehy as *The Names of History: On the Poetics of Knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994), 62–63.

2. See Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz, *Becoming Visible: Women in European History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977). This chapter began as a paper to address issues raised by a session at the 2000 Shakespeare Association meeting entitled “Feminist Historiography and Shakespeare’s London: Rewriting Women’s History.” The session’s charge begins from the assumption that “much recent work on gender has focused on women who have left textual traces of their lives and activities (i.e., letters, books, manuscripts . . .). Yet there were women living in [early modern] London whose lives are not so easily discernible . . . or whose ‘told histories’ mask a more complex situation. . . . What are the challenges facing feminist historiography as it attempts to ‘recover’ this history?”

3. See Martin Ingram, *Church Courts, Sex and Marriage in England, 1570–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 284. See also Ruth Karras, “The Regulating of Brothels in Late Medieval England,” in *Sisters and Workers in the Middle Ages*, ed. J. M. Bennett, Elizabeth Clark, Jean F. O’Barr, A. Viden, and S. Westphal-Wihl (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976; repr., Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 100–134; Leah Lydia Otis, *Prostitution in Medieval Society: The History of an Urban Institution in Languedoc* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1985); and Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage in England 1150–1800* (New York: Harper, 1979) on what he terms “casual, semi-amateur prostitution” prac-

ticed by both single and married women who, according to Stone in a remarkable locution, had sex in the field “partly to earn money, and partly, it would seem, for mere pleasure” (391). On the fluid patterns of sexual behavior and definitions of prostitution in London, see Faramerz Dabhoiwala, “The Pattern of Sexual Immorality in Seventeenth and Eighteenth-Century London,” in *Londinopolis: Essays in the Cultural and Social History of Early Modern London*, ed. Paul Griffiths and Mark S. R. Jenner (Manchester, UK: Manchester University Press, 2000), 86–106.

4. On commercial sex and its vocabulary, particularly in the context of the work of Thomas Dekker, see John Twyning, *London Dispossessed: Literature and Social Space in the Early Modern City* (New York: St Martin’s Press, 1998).

5. Ian Archer, *The Pursuit of Stability: Social Relations in Elizabethan London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); and Paul Griffiths, “The Structure of Prostitution in Elizabethan London,” *Continuity and Change* 8 (1993): 39–63. See also Robert Shoemaker, *Prosecution and Punishment: Petty Crime and the Law in London and Rural Middlesex 1660–1725* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991).

6. Thomas Dekker, *News from Hell* (1606), sig. Bii. Commentators have claimed that in the nineteenth century, “as a result of women’s revised relation to space, her new ability to ‘wander’ (and hence to ‘err’). Most significantly, the prostitute ostentatiously exhibited the commodification of the human body.” Early modern prostitution gives the lie to the putative newness of this relation to urban space. See Mary Ann Doane, *Femmes Fatales: Feminism, Film Theory, Psychoanalysis* (New York: Routledge, 1991), 263.

7. Archer, *Pursuit of Stability*, 211. On male reputation and sexuality, see Bernard Capp, “The Double Standard Revisited: Plebian Women and Male Sexual Reputation in Early Modern England,” *Past & Present* 162 (1999): 70–100.

8. Griffiths disputes this claim on the basis of the Bridewell courtbooks; “The Structure of Prostitution in Elizabethan London,” 48.

9. Vol. 1, 1559–62; 2, 1574–76; 3, 1576–79; 4, 1597–1604; 5, 1604–10; 6, 1634–42.

10. On the founding of Bridewell, its powers, and jurisdiction, see Griffiths, “The Structure of Prostitution in Elizabethan London,” 41–43. For an excellent discussion of Bridewell in a literary context, see William Carroll, *Fat King, Lean Beggar: Representations of Poverty in the Age of Shakespeare* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1996).

11. On the difficulties of ascertaining an average fee, see Griffiths, “The Structure of Prostitution in Elizabethan London,” 47.

12. See Archer, *Pursuit of Stability*, 211–15.

13. Griffiths, “The Structure of Prostitution in Elizabethan London,” 55.

14. *Ibid.*, 49.

15. See Carolyn Steedman, *Dust: The Archive and Cultural History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 47.

16. Griffiths, “The Structure of Prostitution in Elizabethan London,” 41, 53.

17. *Ibid.*, 40. Plays, poems and pamphlets often corroborate the evidence of the courtbooks about the organization and practice of prostitution in early modern London: as the prostitute Luce boasts in *Westward Ho!* of the Inns of Court men who are her clients: “I will suffer one to keepe me in diet, another in apparel; another in Phisic; another to pay my house rent” (4.1.71–73). One problem with Griffiths’s account, which is attentive to the discrepancies between the so-called literary texts and historical documents, is that he looks at courtbooks only between 1559 and 1610, but at literary

assumed to be the Earl of Southampton whose taste for witty, Ovidian erotic verse prompted a host of such efforts in the 1590s, but Wilson argues that Lord S is Fernandino Stanley, Lord Strange, fifth Earl of Derby, poet himself and patron to whom Nashe also dedicated *Pierce Penniless*. Recent commentators have accepted that attribution.²⁴

Tomalin, who is the poem's initial speaker, represents his quest for Francis as a religious pilgrimage: "Euen on the hallowes of that blessed Saint / That doeth true lovers with those ioyes acquaint," he, a "poore pilgrim" goes "to my ladies shrine, / To see if she would be my valentine." He discovers that she has been driven from the village by "Good Justice Dudgeon-haft" and has "shifted to an upper ground" and "house of venerie." Both Wilson and the Penguin editor, J. B. Steane, note that "upper ground" refers to Upper Ground Street in London, "a street of low repute in Southwark" that ran (and runs) parallel to the river between the notorious Paris Garden and the Bankside, an area rife with brothels and other seamy urban commerce and activities.²⁵ There Tomalin meets a bawd and asks if she has "hackneis to lett-out to hire." The poem spins out the initial comparison of brothel to shrine: Tomalin can enter the "Oratorie" only after he has paid his "offertorie." Disappointed in the bawd's initial offerings, he demands "fresher ware" and "gentle mistris Francis," for whom the bawd demands a higher price in gold.

Francis's shift to London offers another perspective on "betterment" migration, as it has been called, from the country to the city, a perspective perhaps best expressed in the bawd's lines from Dekker's *The Honest Whore, Part II*: "We want tooles, Gentlemen, to furnish the trade: they weare out day and night, they weare out till no mettle bee left in their backe; wee heare of two or three new Wenches are come up with a carrier, and your old Goshawke here is flying at them" (3.3.4–7).²⁶ Dekker emphasizes prostitution as a trade with prostitutes as its tools; the aptly named Goshawke preys upon the unsuspecting, newly arrived immigrants to the city. Nashe takes a different tack in that Francis seems to have been already practicing her trade informally in the village, which prompts the village authorities to chase her away. When Francis finally appears, her appearance "in her velvet gounes, / And ruffs, and peri-wigs as fresh as Maye," witnesses a feature of prostitution in early modern London traces of which appear in the Bridewell courtbook depositions, but which historians seldom remark. Prostitutes are repeatedly associated with sartorial extravagance, with transgressing sumptuary laws and dressing beyond both their appropriate social and financial means, in silks and velvets, ruffs and white holland smocks, wigs and jewels. In fact, such costumes, and I use that word intentionally, would seem to be linked in both literary and archival sources to affect and desire. Here is Nashe on Francis's entrance:

Sweeping she coms, as she would brush the ground,
Hir ratling silke's my sences doe confound.

Oh, I am ravish't: voide the chamber streight,
For I must neede's upon hir with my weight. (77–80)

Here in the boldly rhymed couplet we find the bold, comic effects that characterize the poem. Tomalin is aroused by the sound of Francis's rustling silk gown; her silks, in fact, seem to be potent—they have the power to "ravish." Francis's extravagant dress endows her with sexual power and makes her both more expensive and more desirable, a state of affairs common to much writing about prostitution in the period. In Greene's contemporary pamphlet printed in 1592, the date usually given for Nashe's poem, *A Disputation between a Hee-Conny-Catcher, and a Shee-Conny-Catcher, whether a Theefe or a whoore, is most hurtful in Cousonage to the Commonwelath*, in the section entitled "The Conversion of an English Courtesan," a young woman recounts her fall from a good family and initial seduction into a brothel and prostitution by saying simply "As my apparel was costly, so I grew to be licentious." In Nashe's own contemporaneous *Christs Teares over Jerusalem* in which he lambastes prostitution instead of presenting it, as in *A Choise*, as a titillating and amusing joke, the speaker asserts that "the ende of gorgeous attyre, (both in men and women,) is but more fully to enkindle fleshly concupiscence, to assist the devil in lustful temptation."²⁷ In Thomas Cranley's *Amanda: or the Reformed Whore* (1635), Amanda's gowns, jewels, ruffs and muffs, fans, and perfume are part of her prostitute's paraphernalia, which the speaker sees in her chamber; at her conversion, she says to him, "Take my clothes and sell them all away," and having detailed them once again at length, for the reader's pleasure of course, she ends, "They are for Ladies, and for wives of Earles."²⁸ Prostitutes not only wore the clothes of gentlewomen; like Moll Flanders, they apparently disguised themselves "Proteus-like" and went, according to the reformed Amanda, "in black, as chambermaid, as country wench, neat habit of a citizen, [and] Lady" (F2). Such "severall formes, and shapes" served both as disguises when on the run and also, as with Eliza Haywood's heroine Fantomina, to provoke, enhance, or reawaken desire.

But such costumes did not always serve. From the Bridewell courtbooks, 17 February 1599, we find another Frances, Frances (Lat. franc, free) apparently being a common name for prostitutes, one Frances Baker, working in the house of a Mistress Holland, who is sent for to another house, that of Mistress Hibbens, where two gentlemen "had the use of her body," but one refused to pay her because Mistress Hibbens had promised him a gentlewoman:

Mistress Hibbens did cause this examinant to put off all her own apparel and put on one suit of apparel or other either silk, or silk rashe or stuff gowns . . . and put on a white holland smock with a durance petticoat of two or three yards of velvet, and the cause why the gentleman aforesaid would give this examinant no money was because he knew the apparel which this examinant had on her back when he used her body to be the

texts dating mainly from the 1590s through the seventeenth century, and well into the eighteenth, a broad swath he would never cut with archives. There are courtbooks, in fact, for as late as 1642.

18. Laura Gowing, *Domestic Dangers: Women, Words and Sex in Early Modern London* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1996), 59.

19. Ronald B. McKerrow, ed., *The Works of Thomas Nashe*, 5 vols., reprinted from original 1904 edition with additions by F. P. Wilson (Oxford: Blackwell, 1966). All references are to Wilson's updated edition.

20. On Ovid and ovidianism in the late sixteenth century in England, see William Keach, *Elizabethan Erotic Narratives* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1977).

21. See Ian Moulton, "Transmuted into a Woman or Worse: Masculine Gender Identity and Thomas Nashe's 'Choice of Valentines,'" *ELR*, 27 (1997): 57–88; M. L. Stapleton, "Nashe and the Poetics of Obscenity: 'The Choise of Valentines,'" *Classical and Modern Literature: A Quarterly* 12 (1991): 29–48; and recently Katherine Duncan-Jones, "City Limits: Nashe's *Choise of Valentines* and Jonson's *Famous Voyage*," *Review of English Studies* 56 (2005): 247–62. An exception is Jonathan Crewe's *Unredeemed Rhetoric: Thomas Nashe and the Scandal of Authorship* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1982).

22. There are six known extant copies in miscellanies dating from the first quarter of the seventeenth century, only three of which were known when the text was added to McKerrow. Wilson based his text on the Petyt MS 538, vol. 43 (Inner Temple Library) written in a remarkably clear and beautiful italic hand and still considered the preferred text. It appears among a varied group of literary sundries, all in the same hand, in a larger miscellany. Immediately preceding it are short verses against tobacco and three dramatic monologues in response to a prince's request for advice from his counselors; a dialogue between constancy and inconstancy said to have been spoken before Queen Elizabeth at Woodstock follows it. Also among the poetic materials in the group are several of the Countess of Pembroke's translations of the Psalms and Petrarch's *Trionfi*.

23. Thomas Nashe, *The Choise of Valentines*, ed. John S. Farmer (London: 1899).

24. "It seems always to have been supposed that the Earl of Southampton is meant, but surely Lord Strange is a much more likely person. The dedicatee was, as we learn from the sonnet which follows, a 'sweete flower of matchless Poetrie' and the 'fairest bud the red rose ever bare' i.e., I suppose, a connexion of the royal family. Lord Strange was known as a poet, and was, by his mother, descended from Henry VII"; McKerrow/Wilson, *Works of Thomas Nashe*, 4:141.

25. *Ibid.*, 3:481; and J. B. Steane, *The Unfortunate Traveller and Other Works* (New York: Penguin, 1972).

26. On "betterment" migration, see chapter 1; Twynning, *London Dispossessed*, 55, discusses this passage from Dekker and the practice of preying on new immigrants.

27. Thomas Nashe, *Christs Teares over Jerusalem* (London, 1593; repr., London: Scholar Press, 1970), S2^v; as do many of his contemporaries, Nashe argues *in utramque partem*.

28. Thomas Cranley, *Amanda: or the Reformed Whore* (London, 1635), K2^v.

29. Bridewell Hospital Records, Guildhall Library, BCB 4 (microfilm), fols. 64, 46^v, printed in Patricia Crawford and Laura Gowing, *Women's Worlds in Seventeenth-*

Century England (London: Routledge, 2000). Cristine M. Varholo reads this case and others based on her work with the courtbooks in "On Their Backs: Clothing and the Early Modern London Sex Trade" (unpublished manuscript). A longer version of this paper is forthcoming in the *Journal of Popular Culture*.

30. Bridewell Courtbooks, book 3, 279^v, and book 3, 280; I am grateful to Paul Griffiths for this reference and transcription.

31. See Joan Rivière's "Womanliness as Masquerade," in *Psychoanalysis and Female Sexuality*, ed. Hendrik M. Ruitenbeek (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1966).

32. Both Wilson and Steane gloss "lyning" as "leman"; Farmer as "Ladye," but "lyning" is an archaic form of the word "linen" and the speaker is clearly addressing Francis's smock, asking leave to raise it.

33. Moulton, "Transmuted into a Woman or Worse," 81.

34. On Murano glass in England, see Hugh Tait, *The Golden Age of Venetian Glass* (London: British Museum, 1979); Luigi Zecchin, *Vetro e vetrai di Murano*, 3 vols. (Venice: Arsenale, 1987); and W. Patrick McCray, *Glassmaking in Renaissance Venice: The Fragile Craft* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 1999).

35. On the trade in exotic drugs, see Jonathan Gil Harris, "I am sailing to my port, uh! uh! uh!": The Pathologies of Transmigration in *Volpone*," *Literature and Medicine* 20 (2001): 109–32.

36. Nashe, *Christs Teares*, W1^v.

37. On the international character of prostitution, see the early printed book *Le miroir des plus Belles Courtisanes de ce Temps* (1631), the title page of which claims it appeared as well in Dutch and German, and the first engraving of which shows a man smoking before the fire being shown a picture of a courtesan while another stands nearby looking at portraits in a gallery. The remainder of the book details the women available from all over Europe with portraits in which their costume and headdresses, and so forth, signal their national origins; it includes brief verses on a variety of topics.

38. Crewe, *Unredeemed Rhetoric*, 51–54; Crewe argues that "the poem stages a radical dislocation and consequent loss of ontological security, not only for its speaker, but for love poetry as such."

39. See Moulton, "Transmuted into a Woman or Worse," 71–86.

40. In an excellent study of the poem, Helga Duncan, "Body of Ideology: The Image of the Prostitute in Thomas Nashe's *The Choise of Valentines*," argues that the poet "uses" Francis's body, which performs "on cue for the reader" and is thus disciplined by discourse and poetic operations (unpublished paper).

41. Moulton points out that the only one of the six extant manuscripts of the poem known to have belonged to a woman, British Library Add. MS 10309 [fols. 135^v–139^v] omits all reference to the dildo and ends instead with Francis's sexual frustration; the dildo ending is also missing from two others, Dyce No. 44 and a manuscript in the Rosenbach collection in Philadelphia. Moulton interprets this omission as "a step toward the reductive and perversely utopian male fantasies characteristic of the later genre of pornography"—at once the removal of "the emblem of male anxiety" and the erasure of "a source of female pleasure" ("Transmuted into a Woman or Worse," 87–88).

42. Henri Sauval, *Histoire et recherches des antiquités de la ville de Paris*, 3 vols. (Geneva: Minkoff, 1973), 511–16.

43. The notion of the sturdy beggar “miraculously” healed was also widespread in England and perhaps most famously represented in the Simon Simpcox plot of 2 *Henry VI*, in which Simpcox, who pretends to be both blind and lame, is exposed when he is whipped and jumps over a stool and runs away. Stage directions call for “follow and cry, ‘A miracle! A miracle!’” On the sturdy beggar, see particularly Carroll, *Fat King, Lean Beggar*.

44. On the relation between charity, urban crime, and the elite, see the work of Craig Dionne and his essay, “Fashioning Outlaws, the Early Modern Rogue and Urban Culture,” in *Rogues and Early Modern English Culture*, ed. Craig Dionne and Steve Mentz (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2004).

45. M-Françoise Christout, *Le ballet de cour de Louis XIV (1643–1672)* (Paris: Picard, 1967).

46. Pierre de l’Estoile, *Mémoires-journaux* (Paris: Librairie des Bibliophiles, 1880; repr., Paris: Tallandier, 1982), vol. 8, 208.

47. See Susan Bernstein, “Freud’s Couch” (unpublished manuscript).

EPILOGUE

PAPERWORK

1. Michael Fischer, “The New Criticism in the New Historicism: The Recent Work of Jerome J. McGann,” in *The Cultural Politics of the New Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 323.

2. Natalie Zemon Davis, *Fiction in the Archives: Pardon Tales and Their Tellers in Sixteenth-Century France* (Stanford, CA: Polity Press, 1987), 5.

3. John Twynning, “The Literature of the Metropolis,” in *A Companion to English Renaissance Literature and Culture*, ed. Michael Hattaway (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 119–32.

4. *Ibid.*, 120.

5. See chapter 1, note 22, for a brief bibliography.

6. See Lawrence Manley’s *Literature and Culture in Early Modern London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995) for a detailed and encyclopedic survey of urban writing. For a fine, carefully delimited study of London theater, see Janette Dillon, *Theatre, Court and City 1595–1610: Drama and Social Space in London* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000).

7. For the most comprehensive review of these debates, see Linda Woodbridge, *Vagrancy, Homelessness, and English Renaissance Literature* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001).

8. Mark Jancovich, *The Cultural Politics of the New Criticism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 142.

9. Jacques Rancière, *Les noms d’histoire* (Paris: Seuil, 1992), translated by Hassan Melehy as *The Names of History: On the Poetics of Knowledge* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994). Rancière’s book is a polemical assault on the claims of the *Annales* school. For a survey of *Annales* history and the arguments it has provoked among historians, though he does not include Rancière, see Peter Burke, *The French Historical Revolution: The Annales School 1929–89* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1990).

10. Jules Michelet, *Mother Death: The Journal of Jules Michelet, 1815–1850*, ed. and trans. Edward K. Kaplan (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1984), 121–22, quoted in Rancière, *Les noms d’histoire*, 62–63.

11. Jacques Derrida, *Mal d’archive* (Paris: Galilee, 1995).

12. See Carolyn Steedman’s brilliant “materialist” reading of Derrida’s *Archive Fever in Dust: The Archive and Cultural History* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2002), 1–37.