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“The Fashion of Playmaking”: Cloth in Middleton’s City Comedy

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Abstract

This thesis focuses on the dramatic uses of cloth within the works of the playwright Thomas Middleton (1580-1627). In a developing urban setting within which cloth enjoyed increasing cultural significance, the evolving London cloth trade augmented Jacobean dramatists’ material lexicon. The individual and collaborative efforts of Thomas Middleton reveal a particularly dense amount of references to foreign and domestic cloth, cloth merchants, and the overall cloth trade. This project examines in detail how cloth functioned as a tangible center around which Middleton could build a common frame of reference, creating a conduit for social content and commentary. Five Middleton city comedies are discussed (two are solely authored by Middleton, three are collaborative works), based on their density of cloth references, as detailed in an appendix. These plays are: *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* (1604), *Michaelmas Term* (1606), *Your Five Gallants* (1608), *The Roaring Girl (*1611), and *Anything for a Quiet Life* (1621). This project works to demonstrate how a cloth-centered analysis allows for fruitful discussion of expectations, inconsistencies, tensions, and boundaries during the early modern period. This thesis explores the tension surrounding the expectations of patient masculinity in a commercial setting in Chapter One, the contradictory nature of a social system based on unreliable visual markers in Chapter Two, the inconsistency-generated identity of the prodigal gallant of display in Chapter Three, the tension generated by unconventional display and malleable gender expectations in Chapter Four, as well as the shifting perceptions of England’s cloth trade in a post-Cokayne climate in Chapter Five. This project endeavors to show how a focused literary analysis of cloth specifically can further advance current scholarship, allowing for increased insight into the early modern perspective in matters such as identity, gender, and commerce.

Contents

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Finally to our children. All 10 of you. Education is important. And I love you. Thank you for being patient with Mom.

Note on texts and dates

Speech prefixes in quotations from plays have been standardized throughout. In-text references to the works of Thomas Middleton and William Shakespeare use the following editions:

Thomas Middleton, *Thomas Middleton: The Collected Works.* Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino, editors. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

William Shakespeare, *William Shakespeare: The Complete Works*. Stanley Wells and Gary Taylor, editors. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1988).

These editions were selected primarily to ensure consistency. They were also utilized because of the significant amount of valuable secondary material included in these texts.

Except where indicated, in-text references to other pre-1700 works are taken from Early English Books Online, available at eebo.chadwyck.com. Original spelling has been retained.

New-style dating has been used throughout. Dates of performance throughout this work are from Alfred Harbage, *Annals of English Drama 975-1700: An Analytical Record of All Plays, Extant or Lost, Chronologically Arranged and Indexed by Authors, Titles, Dramatic Companies, &c.,* rev. S. Schoenbaum, rev. Sylvia Stoler Wagonheim (London: Methuen, 1989).

Introduction

> We then may begin to understand that the identity of a people was just as bound to the materiality of their culture as that of individuals. The material commodity of cloth was so closely linked with the abstract idea of nation that England, in effect, became knowable through the cloth industry. (Hentschell, 8)

During the first half of the sixteenth century, English wool was in the midst of a golden age. With the rising foreign and domestic demand for wool, this singular export became the cornerstone of England’s trade, economy, and national identity. Roze Hentschell discusses wool’s role in establishing England as a major force in international trade, stating, “While England’s raw wool had always enjoyed a good reputation overseas, its wool cloth began to be perceived as the finest in the world. Importantly, the English recognized that with this product came a kind of national wealth and reputation that allowed England to emerge as a player on the world stage and became a focal point for emerging national solidarity” (4-5). Through the second half of the sixteenth century, however, England’s domestic cloth trade entered into what would become a long decline, multifaceted and complex in its causes. The closure of the Antwerp market in 1585, crop failures at the turn of the century, war with Spain, increased competition from the continent—these and other issues hindered England’s once mighty domestic cloth trade, burdening the general population’s welfare, due to England’s “singular dependence on cloth as a commodity” (Hentschell, 5). Barry Supple discusses these historical developments at the turn of the century, stating that the emerging economic landscape resulted in “the growth of a new attitude of mind. Slowly, men in the seventeenth century were forced to acknowledge that they were living in a changing competitive world” (72). Sixteenth-century economic philosophy, suspicious of the insecurity surrounding the industry’s expansion, concentrated primarily on the production and regulation of the domestic wool trade; however, developments at the turn of the century necessitated an embrace of expansion and a focus on demand if England’s cloth industry was to emerge from crisis. For example, while linen permeated nearly every aspect of English society during

this same period, it was primarily an import. Alice Dolan points out, “Little linen was produced commercially in England in the seventeenth century and it was the second largest English import, after groceries” (Dolan, 267-268). Linen was not manufactured in significant quantities in England until the late seventeenth and early eighteenth century after the English government, recognizing that linen “provided a living for vast swathes of Europe” (Dolan, 20), moved to promote linen industries in England, Scotland and Ireland. Also, because French linens constituted one-third of linen imports into England, the British government placed a 1678 ban on French goods and imposed high duties on French linens in 1697 (Dolan, 21). These developments later on in the seventeenth century exemplify the new perspectives on cloth, nationalism, and economic innovation that, in Supple’s analysis, were coming into existence in the Jacobean period. Cloth’s role as a significant player in England’s import and export economies as well as an element touching upon every aspect of English society granted it a type of resonance few other material objects possessed during the early modern period. While wool’s reputation naturally had been a significant psychological rallying point for the country in the sixteenth century, its subsequent depression along with the industry’s necessary shift to address increased demand for foreign textiles in the seventeenth century left an imprint just as powerful upon the English imagination.

The influence of this “new attitude of mind” can be seen not only in the developing economic philosophy of the period, but also in emerging drama. Douglas Bruster attributes the development of early modern city comedy to what he describes as “a growing cultural preoccupation with commodity and materiality—a preoccupation developing out of a complex constellation of socio-historical developments” (*Drama and the Market*…, 64). Characterized by plots of social mobility and greed, city comedies satirized social customs and financial dealings of London’s emerging, prosperous merchant class. Jean-Christophe Agnew’s study of the marketplace within the early modern theater suggests an analysis of the intersection of staged and literal urban relations in the characteristic city comedy plot can

provide insight into the late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century London perspectives, as “the English stage developed formal, narrative, and thematic conventions that effectively reproduced the representational strategies and difficulties of the market place [and] ... furnished its urban audience with a laboratory and an idiom within which these difficulties and contradictions could be acted out” (12).

Because cloth and clothing were regarded as material forms of both personal and social identity in the early modern period, critics like Hentschell, Ann Rosalind Jones, and Peter Stallybrass agree that textiles played an essential role in crafting Renaissance culture, necessary to the making and unmaking of such concepts as gender, status, and authenticity. With the development of the early modern urban setting in Jacobean city comedy, and the tendency for cloth to, as Hentschell states, “figure most prominently in the English cultural imagination” (7), it is reasonable an evolving London cloth trade would augment the material lexicon from which early modern dramatists would draw: a lexicon that, if studied closely, possesses significant emblematic potential. The rise and fall of English wool, the dominance of linen imports from the continent, as well as the presence of sumptuary law, ensured London’s citizens possessed a basic working knowledge of the period’s most popular forms of cloth, foreign and domestic. Hardy worsted, fragile lawn, seductive silk, sturdy kersey—early modern economic, social, and political circumstances endowed cloth with significant connotations within the cultural imagination, connotations which experienced playwrights could have recognized and used to their advantage. Hentschell states of the allusory potential of these materials,

> Cloth is important as an object in and of itself in serving a vital function in the lives of subjects; it “operates” as a source of clothing, an object of manufacture, a product for international trade and thus intersects with the subject at many turns ... Cloth comes to represent something more for the subject than its mere materiality. Indeed, it dismantles epistemological certainty for the subject. And it is this space of uncertainty that allows individuals to make meaning of cloth. (7-8)

Cloth’s capability to communicate meaning beyond its material function is demonstrated in Middleton and Webster’s *Anything for a Quiet Life*, when Lady Cressingham complains to the cloth merchant,

Camlet, that the materials her husband purchased from him are “too common” (I.i.290), informing him instead of her desire for foreign goods: “I have got a Dutch painter to draw patterns, which I’ll have sent to your factors, as in Italy, at Florence and Ragusa, where these stuffs are woven, to have pieces made for mine own wearing of a new invention” (I.i.291-294). While demonstrating a simple complaint and request from consumer to merchant, the scene also alludes to the increased demand for foreign luxuries over English cloth, the existing tensions between the domestic and foreign cloth trade, as well as providing a veiled criticism of the increased English appetite for foreign cloth as the scene works to establish Lady Cressingham’s character as selfish, empty-headed and impractical. Stephen Greenblatt illustrates this kind of reverberation between arenas of meaning, stating, “Among the most resonant moments [in a dramatic work] are those in which the supposedly contextual objects take on a life of their own ... A table, a chair, a map, often seemingly placed only to provide a decorative setting for a grand work, become oddly expressive, significant not as ‘background’ but as compelling representational practices in themselves” (172). I would posit a piece of cloth or article of clothing can potentially be just as significant as a representational practice as the objects Greenblatt mentions. When a suit or a gown is featured on stage and described as a specific *type* of suit or gown—satin, kersey, or silk, for example—the additional descriptor draws upon connotations associated with these types of cloth, bringing additional meaning to who sells that suit, or wears that gown. Additionaly, because of the common practice of using secondhand clothing as costume and the circulation of costumes between theatres, additional meaning can be attached to an item of apparel based on who had previously worn a particular doublet, gown, or cloak.

As one of early modern English theatre’s most notable proprietors and managers, Philip Henslowe’s theatrical records serve as an important primary source for information about London’s theatres during this time. Henslowe’s diary illustrates clearly the significant place cloth and clothing occupied in the early modern theatrical realm, demonstrating not only clothing’s monetary value to the

company that owned it, but also that the circulation of such properties was commonplace. For example, Henslowe records his purchasing a short velvet cloak embroidered with bugles–tube-shaped beads made of glass of plastic–in 1597 (84), then apparently sells what could be the same bugle-covered velvet cloak to his company, the Admiral’s Men, in 1598 (102). This was “a carefully controlled economic practice, for the theatres were founded upon the regulated vagrancy of these moveable objects” (Jones and Stallybrass, 195). This recycling was an obvious necessity, as costumes were the most expensive part of staging a production. This is demonstrated in the record of a payment to Thomas Heywood of 6 pounds, 13 shillings for ‘A womones gowne of black velluet for the playe of A womon kylld w[ith] kyndnes’ (223), which was 13 shillings more than what was paid to Heywood for the play itself (224). Costumes’ significant monetary value also had the residual effect of giving these staged properties increased power and resonance. For example, costumes could drive future endeavors, as Jones and Stallybrass point out, “Costumes were often prior to any particular play. The stock from a previous production could shape both the subject matter and the number of plays that might be necessary to recoup the financial outlay” (196). This recycling of costumes would have then established familiarity with certain items of apparel for the audience. Tailby’s beaver hat in *Your Five Gallants*–around which some of the play’s most comical and memorable scenes revolve–would likely be recognized in the future and would still potentially carry some illicit connotations associated with Tailby’s behavior, even in a different play and worn by a different actor. Also, this practice granted costumes greater impact, as theatres “could … appropriate the clothes of aristocrats to circulate as fetishized but displaced talismans within the theatrical marketplace” (Jones and Stallybrass, 196). When the King’s Men portrayed the Spanish courtier Gondomar, in part, by dressing the actor in a discarded suit that had belonged to Gondomar himself in Middleton’s *A Game at Chess*, this character became much more “real” for the audience in a play that is perhaps Middleton’s most notable for its political content.

Cloth also possesses the potential to work as a “compelling representational practice” in dialogue, as demonstrated in Middleton’s *Michaelmas Term* when the pander Hellgill, after the country wench chooses to turn courtesan, uses cloth to describe the girl’s change in occupation and social status: “So farewell wholesome weeds where treasure pants,/ And welcome silks, where lies disease and wants” (I.i.55-56). The argument can be made, considering city comedy’s characteristically commercially-driven plots and the significant role cloth played in both foreign and domestic commercial developments during the same period, that literary criticism of such works should necessarily make room for closer consideration of the material in general and cloth in particular.

The value placed on materials in analysis of early modern city comedy has increased significantly since Helene B. Bullock confidently stated in 1927 that “[Middleton] is at one with Jonson, Dekker, Heywood, Fletcher: they all reproduced, in their realistic comedies, much the same external London; their portrayal of the manners, customs, outward life, of street and tavern and fair are the same. *There is no need to refer here in detail to Middleton’s well-known pictures of fashions, in dress and other things, of streets and alehouses, domestic interiors and shops*” (768, emphasis added). Bruster, in comparison, demonstrates the more modern viewpoint of the necessary role objects and materials played in early modern city comedy: “When we think ... of the intensive focus on the material world in such writers as Thomas Nashe, Ben Jonson, John Donne, and Thomas Middleton—to name only a few—we are forced to admit that these authors ‘theorized’ objects, and people’s relation to them, in quite complicated and compelling ways. Theirs was a culture that thought almost constantly of the material” (“The New Materialism…”, 238). Recent years have brought much more focused analysis and discussion of materials and objects across Renaissance drama, Jacobean city comedy in particular, thanks to the work of scholars like Hentschell, Jones, Stallybrass, Theodore Leinwand, and others. However, there is still a comparatively small portion of the discussion devoted to cloth. There are multiple studies that examine forms materials take, as onstage props for example, or that, like Susan Frye’s *Pens and Needles,*

specifically focus on works produced on or with cloth (embroidery, needlework, tapestries), but these works fall short of discussing types of specific cloth. Other scholars, including Valerie Forman, Aaron Kitch, and Richard Horwich, have all contributed significantly to twentieth- and twenty-first-century discussion of credit, economics, and commodities within Jacobean city comedy, but none focus precisely on particular fabrics. If one looks at the table of contents to Gary Taylor and John Lavagnino’s *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture: A Companion to The Collected Works*, it is interesting to note there is not a single editorial essay examining Middleton’s use of material objects in general or cloth, specifically. Taylor and Andrew J. Sabol contribute an essay titled, “Middleton, Music, and Dance,” while John H. Astington authors another titled, “Visual Texts: Thomas Middleton and Prints.” Other texts also address printing as well as the London book trade, early modern legal culture, censorship, even the manuscript economy, but there are no essays discussing cloth specifically or even material objects in general. Likewise, no editorial essays in *The Oxford Middleton* focus primarily on cloth, although Ralph Alan Cohen and John Jowett’s introduction to *Your Five Gallants* does discuss the general instability of property in the drama. However, even this discussion of cloth and clothing remains limited to a small part of a much larger discussion. In *Thomas Middleton in Context*, Suzanne Gossett has compiled an impressive amount of Middleton scholarship, focusing on nearly every possible aspect of Middleton’s life, his works, and how they fit inside the larger Jacobean London context. Natasha Korda contributes an essay titled, “Trade, Work, and Workers,” while Andrew Gurr authors another titled, “The Social Cartography of Middleton’s Theatres.” Other titles within the text include “Gender and Sexuality” (Caroline Bicks), “Drugs, Remedies, Poisons, and the Theatre” (Tanya Pollard), even “Middleton and the Supernatural” (Michael Neill), offering a broad discussion of myriad Middleton-related topics. However, excepting a brief listing of a household inventory in Catherine Richardson’s “Domestic Life in Jacobean London” (53) and a small section addressing items of clothing as disguise and in the role of making and unmaking gender in Farah Karim-Cooper’s “Disguise and Identity in the Plays of Middleton,” there is no

in-depth discussion of specific types of cloth in Middleton’s city comedy. This is not to say that there has been a complete neglect of the topic. *The Oxford Handbook of Thomas Middleton* does include two chapters (out of thirty-seven total) which deal with sartorial elements in Middleton’s drama. Mary Bly’s “‘The Lure of a Taffeta Cloak’: Middleton’s Sartorial Seduction in *Your Five Gallants*,” addresses specific types of sumptuous cloth and clothing as objects of desire, examining the play’s shift from traditional male-female seductive encounters to the relationship between fabric and the corporeal form beneath. Also, Eleanor Lowe’s chapter titled, “‘My Cloak’s a Stranger; He Was Made But Yesterday’: Clothing, Language, and the Construction of Theatre in Middleton,” focuses on how “Middleton dramatizes the differing forms of ‘work’ which are involved in clothing and dressing: construction of garments, dressing with assistance, undressing as a form of employment (and its implications), plus the industry of the playhouse in its use of clothing as costume” (197), but the work does not go into any specific discussion of the significance or connotations associated with various types of fabric mentioned by name in the play. While Jacobean city comedies obviously utilize much more than just cloth when crafting characterization, spaces, conflict, and tension, it is important for twentieth- and twenty-first-century literary critics not to overlook domestic and foreign materials, as cloth’s role both in dialogue and as a literal object onstage “composed an important constituent of the drama’s cultural grammar” (Bruster, *Drama and the Market…*, 65-66).

Aims and Methodology

This project originated as a comprehensive study of the relationship between English Renaissance drama and the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century cloth trade. In order to examine cloth’s role in dramatic works of the period, a list of cloth and cloth-associated terms was first compiled, gleaned from a variety of sources including sixteenth- and seventeenth-century inventories such as Jeanne Jones’ *Stratford-upon-Avon Inventories, 1538-1699*, Lindsay Boynton’s *Hardwick Hall Inventories of 1601*, as

well as Jane Lawson’s *The Elizabethan New Year’s Gift Exchanges, 1559-1603* (see Appendix). A list of 104 cloth terms was compiled, ranging from more common sorts of textiles like the very ordinary “fustian,” to more exotic cloth like the socially elevated “camlet.” Variant spellings were taken into consideration, as “cambric,” according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, could also be spelled “cameryk,” “camerige,” “camerike,” “cammeraige,” and so on. A few terms were included in the list which do not directly reference a specific type of cloth, yet still demonstrate a direct connection to cloth and cloth-related interactions, such as “ruff,” “ell,” and “mercer,” for example. The list is not exhaustive, but does represent a healthy sample of popular cloth and cloth-related terms from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Utilizing various databases and resources including EEBO, Opensource Shakespeare, and LION, the full texts of seventy-five dramatic works from the span of 1585-1668 were collected, including all thirty-seven of Shakespeare’s plays, with a particular focus on Jacobean drama. “Density studies” were then performed on the full text of each individual play in the hopes of singling out plays that were particularly dense with cloth references. Each cloth term’s number of appearances was logged, with special care taken not to incorrectly log a term if it was used in a non-cloth related form (“Holland,” when referencing the place rather than the cloth, for example). The total number of cloth terms within a text was then factored into the work’s total word count, producing a ratio of cloth terms in relation to the overall length of the work. For example, Shakespeare’s *Julius Caesar*, with 19,703 total words and the appearance of five cloth terms, yields a particularly low cloth density ratio of 1/3,940, whereas *Pericles*, with 18,529 total words and the appearance of twenty cloth terms, yields a much higher cloth density ratio of 1/926. The aim of this initial research was to hopefully identify a cluster of plays with a notably high density of references over a particular period of years or composed by a particular playwright or set of playwrights, thus narrowing the field and identifying ideal candidates for close readings.

The density studies immediately revealed city comedy as a genre in which cloth regularly played a larger role, demonstrating Bruster’s previously mentioned claim of “a growing cultural preoccupation with commodity and materiality” (*Drama and the Market…*, 64). Cloth’s frequent appearances within the genre are not surprising; as Brian Gibbons points out, “The realism of the significant [city comedy] plays ... is essentially in transforming typical elements of city life into meaningful patterns, expressing consciously satiric criticism but also suggesting deeper sources of conflict and change” (17). As one of the most “typical elements of city life,” combined with the larger upheaval of the domestic and foreign cloth trade during the early modern period, cloth possesses the potential to work as a particularly important tool in the creation of “meaningful patterns,” contributing an element of realism to the drama and working as a point where Jacobean society and Jacobean comedy intersect on stage.

After closer examination of Jacobean city comedies, the solo and collaborative works of Thomas Middleton were found to possess particularly high numbers of cloth mentions, justifying closer scrutiny. One of the early modern period’s most prolific dramatists, Middleton exhibits a playwright’s keen ability to employ what Bruster calls the “referential power” of material objects, capitalizing on their “ability to engage the reader in terms of lived, shared experiences” (*Drama and the Market…*, 38). Narrowing the discussion and allowing for a keen view of Middleton’s use of cloth in the genre, five Middleton-associated city comedies were found to be particularly dense in cloth references, making them ideal for close readings: *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* (Middleton and Dekker, 1604), *Michaelmas Term* (Middleton, 1606), *Your Five Gallants* (Middleton, 1608), *The Roaring Girl (*Middleton and Dekker, 1611), and *Anything for a Quiet Life* (Middleton and Webster, 1621). While it is necessary to acknowledge that three of these plays do not belong solely to Middleton, a discussion of authorship is included in these associated chapters in order to justify the inclusion of each of these collaborative works in a Middleton-centered study. The aim of these individual discussions of authorship in the collaborative works is to

demonstrate sufficient evidence of Middleton’s hand in crafting each dramatic system, particularly in scenes, spaces, and/or characters which utilize cloth as a meaningful frame of reference.

Ultimately this project endeavors to employ a materialist approach to create a focused exploration of Middleton’s employment of cloth’s emblematic potential, examining Middleton’s utilization of cloth to create meaningful patterns within specific dramatic systems, potentially allowing for new insights in reconciling the relationship between Jacobean city comedy and Jacobean society. To achieve this, the approach will follow the methodology advocated by Joachim Frenk, one that demonstrates “a sharpened and theoretically aware attention to early modern material culture, in the form of context-sensitive close readings of literature’s interest in objects” (253). This project adopts Frenk’s recommended approach, which is to focus on a particular object (cloth), to limit the discussion to a particular genre or group of texts (the selected five Middleton-associated city comedies), and to focus on a particular aspect (or aspects) within each text (a specific character or scene, for example), and then “analyse the complex relationship between early modern literature and material culture by means of such a case study” (39). With contributions from critics including Korda, Greenblatt, Jones, and Stallybrass, materialist studies like new historicism and cultural materialism have honed much of twentieth- and twenty-first-century literary criticism’s focus upon what Lena Cowen Orlin calls “the cultural project of things” (179). Materialist studies are based on the initial presumption that the play is not separate from the world in which it was formed. Such studies insist, as Andrew Sofer states, that “the playhouse cannot be artificially cordoned off from the symbolic economy of the culture that surrounds it” (17).

While acknowledging the value of context within literary criticism, Sofer points out some obvious inherent tensions in such an approach: “There is a strong risk that the material presence of the onstage object—its movement in concrete stage space and through linear stage time for spectators—will dissolve into the materialist analysis of the anxieties, fault lines, and ideologies that the object may

or may not have embodied for the culture” (18). It is a point well made, as admittedly the early modern audience was watching a production in real time, and the materialist approach tends to presume the audience’s mind is teeming with associated contextual materials the analysis has deemed important and audience members would have immediately, as a plot plays out onstage, plucked the essential related material from their mental libraries and made the necessary connection for the analysis to work. Sofer points out that, in this type of analysis,

> the danger is that we will lose sight of how objects worked, and continue to work, on stage as part of a discrete theatrical event ... we must remember that for actual spectators, objects (like plays) move in unidirectional stage time. There are no mental rewind, fast-forward, and pause buttons in the theater as there are in the study—a luxury that may tempt us, as text-based critics, to read more significance into a given object, moment, or gesture than a spectator could possibly have grasped consciously (and perhaps even unconsciously). (18)

While Sofer’s concerns with a material-based approach are valid, his argument targets a materialist analysis that attempts to encompass all types of onstage “things.” From chairs, to skulls, to handkerchiefs, Sofer questions the audience’s ability to comprehend all of the potential contextual allusions associated with various items on the stage as the dramatic action moves around, through, and past them. I agree with Sofer that this approach potentially invests more importance and meaning within objects than actually existed for the early modern spectator. However this project, rather than attempting to apply the same type of analysis to all “things” on the stage, will focus specifically on a single “thing”—cloth—both in its appearance onstage and when referenced in dialogue. Specifically looking at cloth, rather than “all” onstage props, avoids placing all “things” into the same analytical basket, which Sofer and similar critics of the materialist approach tend to assume is happening. Such criticism risks serious oversimplification of the resulting discussion as types of props and other items would necessarily have been received with various levels of contextual familiarity from the audience. A skull, appearing briefly onstage, may not inspire immediate and total recall of a plethora of early modern skull-related material as the action is unfolding before them. Likewise, a suit or a gown may not carry much connotation or meaning on its own for the audience, but a *kersey* suit or a *satin* gown—that

is another matter entirely. It was not uncommon for types of cloth to be employed in the role of adjective, communicating additional meaning for the noun they modified, and the audience was obviously expected to understand more clearly because the descriptor was there. Shakespeare recognized this, as is demonstrated in both *A Midsummer Night’s Dream* (“What hempen homespuns have we swaggering here” [III.i.25]) and in *Love’s Labour’s Lost* (“In russet yeas and honest kersey noes” [V.ii.413]). Given the early modern familiarity with both foreign and domestic cloth thanks to sumptuary laws, the powerful role cloth played in developing Renaissance culture, and the fact that cloth types were occasionally employed as adjectives already, it is plausible to take a materialist approach when discussing cloth’s appearances in Renaissance drama. While it is true there was not a mental pause, rewind, or fast-forward button for the audience, in the case of cloth it can at least be argued that there could be a mental “download” button. For example, it may be a bit much to expect the audience to make the connection between a handkerchief and the east Anglian cloth trade in the brief time that handkerchief appears onstage, but when a country prodigal exchanges his kersey suit for one of white satin after migrating to the city, the connotations associated with kersey, the domestic cloth recognized as keeping the English cloth trade afloat when trade with the continent slackened, versus satin, a foreign luxury condemned in numerous tracts, sermons, and economic writings, make it arguable that the mentions of cloth work as a kind of dramatic shorthand for the audience, communicating much about a character, space, or other dramatic element in particularly few words.

Middleton, the City, and Cloth

In the opening epistle of Middleton and Dekker’s *The Roaring Girl*, Middleton (who authored the epistle himself, signing it with his own initials) notably chose cloth and cloth-making as the frame of reference to describe his life’s work, stating plainly, “the fashion of play-making I can properly compare to nothing so naturally as the alteration in apparel” (1-2). Middleton goes on in this same epistle to describe his

plays as, at times, “quilted with mighty words” and at others, “a kind of light-colour summer stuff” (4, 10). If Middleton considered cloth a vehicle with sufficient capacity for meaning to encompass his own dramatic craft, the cloth references looming large throughout many of his works certainly warrant closer scrutiny. A cloth-centric focus on Middleton’s city comedies becomes even more compelling when Middleton’s biographical links to London’s merchant community are considered, as the playwright’s biography reveals relationships and discourse circles that would have contributed to a background steeped in the knowledge of early modern cloth, trade, and city government. According to Thomas Middleton’s entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, Middleton’s father, William, “was a fairly prosperous member of the Honourable Company of Tilers and Bricklayers” and Middleton’s career was marked with multiple associations with London’s city government as well as powerful members of the dominant trade guilds of the early seventeeth century. During Middleton’s “productive association with the City of London” (Taylor, “Middleton, Thomas (bap. 1580, d. 1627), playwright”), he produced numerous works of civic pageantry that demonstrate the close relationship Middleton maintained with city government, including various powerful livery companies. Taylor writes that “Middleton was the City’s chief writer from 1616 to 1626, responsible for Lord Mayor’s parades, indoor revels, and civic celebrations of the monarchy” (“Thomas Middleton: Lives and Afterlives”, 42). Middleton authored (solely or collaboratively) seven Lord Mayor’s Pageants, productions financed by one of the twelve dominant trade guilds of the early seventeenth century in which, as Sergei Lobanov-Rostovsky points out, “the city’s merchant elite invested vast sums—as well as their considerable prestige—in carefully scripted, emblematic spectacles” (89). In addition to Lord Mayor’s pageants, Middleton authored ten *Honorable Entertainments* (1620) in which, as Anthony Parr points out, Middleton addressed to “the city government in a variety of festive and workaday contexts. The men to whom Middleton dedicated his book comprise the Court of Aldermen, the senior governing body of the City of London. They were mostly wholesale merchants, many of them having interests in overseas trade through the Levant and

East India Companies” (1432). Tracey Hill also points out these commissions as evidence of Middleton’s civic connections, stating that

> Writers who were, for whatever reason, in favour with the Corporation [of London] and/or individual Companies sometimes received other, related civic commissions at around the same time as a [Lord Mayor’s] Show. In Middleton’s case, this happened at least twice: he produced an entertainment to celebrate the opening of the New River in 1613, the year of his *Triumphs of truth*, and his *Honourable Entertainments* was printed in 1621, the same year as his mayoral Show *The sunne in Aries*. (99)

In 1622, indicating a particularly close working relationship with the Company of Drapers, Middleton’s *An Invention* was performed for then Lord Mayor Edward Barkham, a draper, at his home for the Easter holiday. Just one year previous (1621), Middleton had authored *The Sun in Aries* to mark the installation of Barkham as Lord Mayor. Besides his numerous civic productions, Middleton’s *Civitatus Amor* (1616)—the pageant celebrating the investiture of Prince Charles—demonstrates he was also given the opportunity to write for a royal occasion. Middleton was eventually awarded the distinction of becoming London’s first salaried city chronologer (6 Sep 1620), and the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* confidently states that “what Jonson was for Jacobean court masques, Middleton was for Jacobean civic revelry: its dominant, and most inventive, practitioner” (Taylor, “Middleton, Thomas (bap. 1580, d. 1627), playwright”). Middleton crafted his civic pageantry with an acute awareness of the government and merchant community surrounding his productions. The influence of a larger civic awareness is evidenced in his writing, as Parr points out:

> The pieces he [Middleton] wrote during the mayoralty of Sir William Cokayne (which must have helped to get Middleton the job of City Chronologer) frequently capitalize on the formidable reputation of this merchant prince by structuring the action around him ... But he makes no attempt to do the same with Cokayne’s successor, Sir Francis Jones, an altogether less impressive man who was known to be fiscally unreliable ... [Middleton] takes the opportunity of Jones’s inaugural dinner for the Haberdashers to exalt the Company rather than the man. (1434)

While Middleton’s civic pageantry demonstrates his success at navigating the political and economic circles of Jacobean London, the staging of his city comedies further communicates Middleton’s ability to craft stories that would engage audiences across the social strata. Unlike most of

his contemporaries, Middleton was a freelance playwright, composing plays for multiple companies housed in different venues around the city. Rather than indicating Middleton’s work was less sought after, as he was not a “housed” playwright for any single company or venue, this instead supports Middleton’s broad appeal. Scott McMillin states of Middleton that “No playwright of his time had his work performed in a greater variety of London’s stages” (77). *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* and *The Roaring Girl* were both performed at the large, open-air Fortune theatre by adult acting companies (the Admiral’s Men and their successor company, the Prince’s Players). *Michaelmas Term*, *Your Five Gallants*, and *Anything for a Quiet Life* were all performed in the smaller venues of the Blackfriars theatre and St. Paul’s. These roofed, candlelit theatres were smaller, more stylish, and home (at least when *Michaelmas Term* and *Your Five Gallants* were produced) to the popular children’s acting companies, the Children of Paul’s and the Children of the Chapel (by the time *Anything for a Quiet Life* was produced in 1621, the King’s Men had moved into the Blackfriars theatre). Open-air theatres like the Fortune drew crowds from “all areas except royalty and perhaps the Church” (McMillin, 78) with lower admission costs and a variety of seating options. Cheap and accessible to the common playgoer, “the open-air theatres … stood in an area known for brothels, taverns, and bear-baiting pits” (McMillin, 75). The much smaller, indoor theatres like Blackfriars and St. Paul’s were in a more “respectable” part of the city and liked to claim they played to a more select and choice clientele (the Blackfriars’ price of admission was over six times the price of the public houses). St. Paul’s was somewhere in between these two extremes, typically attracting audiences composed of “lawyers, booksellers, shopkeepers, and their clients and customers” (McMillin, 78). It seems an obvious point that Middleton needed to keep such a varied swath of spectators in mind as he (and his collaborators) crafted some plays to be staged in larger, open-air venues and others to be performed in more intimate and exclusive settings indoors. In *The Roaring Girl*, for example, scene iii features a feather shop, a tobacco shop, and a draper’s shop all open in a row onstage (iii). The Fortune’s larger venue would certainly have allowed for a more effective

staging of this scene as it requires more space to not only feature the three shops but also to allow for a multiplicity of interactions as characters weave in and out of these shops. Further, Middleton and Dekker are careful to avoid aligning *The Roaring Girl* too explicitly with a particular demographic, choosing instead to satirize both gallants and citizens for the more diverse population in the Fortune’s audience. *Michaelmas Term*, on the other hand, opens with a rebuke in its prologue for the legal profession, continuing with a plot that features an unflattering portrayal of a cozening draper as well as an upstart prodigal gallant. Performed on the stage at St. Paul’s by the Children of Paul’s company, which “specialized in satirizing the up-and-coming professionals of the day” (McMillin, 78), the play possesses a particular appeal for an audience generally comprised of these same types of professionals. In *Your Five Gallants*, when the five eponymous characters (and their bawds) first walk across the Blackfriars’ stage, this initial parade would have indeed been mesmerizing as the venue’s candlelight caused their costumes of taffeta, satin and silk to gleam and shimmer. Such a glittering display would have not only delighted the many gallants who frequently populated the Blackfriars’ audience, the ensuing action would also have resonated powerfully as Middleton placed these characters in some of the spectating gallants’ familiar haunts like the Mitre tavern and the middle aisle at St. Paul’s (Cohen and Jowett, 594).

Obviously, this long and prolific career “brought [Middleton] into complicated relationships with different artistic constituencies: the legal community, the City authorities, the royal court, and—beyond all those, most important and least definable—the shifting community of readers and spectators, the great laity of literature, the daily physical world which preachers and proclamations could only imperfectly regulate” (Taylor, “Thomas Middleton: Lives and Afterlives”, 41). Some of the most easily recognizable and widely understood images of the time were material, and Middleton knew he needed to employ communicative tools that would resonate with a variety of social levels. When Middleton compared playmaking to the alteration of clothing, this “son, stepson, and brother-in-law of tradesmen”

(Taylor, “Thomas Middleton: Lives and Afterlives”, 35), would have certainly understood the power of cloth and clothing to communicate meaning. Middleton’s biographical links to the merchant and ruling classes gave him the cultural vocabulary sufficient from which to create popular city comedies that were, like his own life, steeped in the multiple social and economic layers of Jacobean London.

Moving forward in this project, Chapter One focuses on Middleton and Dekker’s *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* (1604), exploring not only how cloth provides depth and context for both the linen draper’s shop and the whore’s brothel, but also how it works as an anchor between the abstract and concrete, an intersection between the two that bridges the gap between idealized and practicable behavior that highlights inevitable inconsistencies and tensions when the recommended behavior of the patient merchant meets onstage interpersonal exchange. Chapter Two discusses Middleton’s *Michaelmas Term* (1606), in which cloth is featured not as a commodity but rather as investiture, highlighting its popular role as a signifier, an outward indication of worth, intent, or authenticity. The play repeatedly illustrates how the once-reliable indicator of cloth is in fact unreliable as a visual marker, demonstrating the increased fear and distrust associated with this external marker of value at the beginning of the seventeenth century as well as exploring the fallout of its developing unreliability in realms of estimation and social mobility. Chapter Three examines Middleton’s *Your Five Gallants* (1608), a play with a particularly pointed focus on foreign cloth imports. Considering the density of foreign luxuries in this play, along with the recently repealed sumptuary orders and the prevalence of the five gallants interacting with the precise types of cloth those sumptuary laws would have forbade them access to just a few years earlier, the play is particularly interesting when read against the recent roll back of sumptuary legislation. Populated by multiple scoundrels demonstrating precisely the type of behavior numerous writings of the period associated with increased foreign consumption, *Your Five Gallants’* plot utilizes cloth not only to demonstrate a correlation between an increased access to foreign luxuries and a rise in debt, debauchery, indolence, and lust, but also to

create a potentially subversive identity known as the gallant of display. As this project moves forward with Chapter Four’s analysis of Middleton and Dekker’s *The Roaring Girl* (1611), it will make the argument that Middleton’s method in utilizing cloth and apparel shifts in this play. While this project’s first three chapters focus primarily on exploring meaning associated with references to composite materials like satin, taffeta, and silk, in *The Roaring Girl* cloth is referred to more frequently in a particular form, such as a doublet or jerkin, rather than as a composite material. Therefore, in Chapter Four the focus of the discussion shifts from *what* specific cloth is worn to *how* a particular wardrobe item or style is worn. This is demonstrated in the roaring girl protagonist, Moll Cutpurse, who uses items of clothing to consistently establish herself visually outside the circles of traditional femininity and matrimony, yet maintains a level of authenticity and authority throughout the play that no other character can match. Finally, Chapter Five focuses on Middleton and Webster’s *Anything for a Quiet Life* (1621). With a decade separating *Anything for a Quiet Life* and *The Roaring Girl*, it seems an obvious point that the utilization of cloth in this play would demonstrate a shift in style and convention, considering there is a different collaborator working with Middleton (Webster) and that Middleton had ten years to develop as a dramatist between the two works. However, what is particularly important to this project is that *Anything for a Quiet Life* appeared after one of the most tumultuous decades in English cloth trade history. Between 1611 and 1621, the Cokayne project devastated England’s domestic cloth industry, significantly shifting the economic landscape as well as perception of foreign and domestic cloth. Therefore, while *Anything for a Quiet Life*’s high density of cloth references earns it consideration in this project, this city comedy also deserves careful attention due to its contextual political and economic landscape. This final chapter will take a closer look at Middleton’s biographical connections to the cloth trade and city government, exploring systematic cloth-related differentiations between Middleton’s earlier works and *Anything for a Quiet Life*. This approach will establish how cloth in this play—more than any previously discussed—works to reveal a work informed by recent economic

disruption, demonstrating shifts in perceptions related to foreign and domestic cloth as well as the English cloth industry in a post-Cokayne[1] climate.

Limitations

While art can be a conscious criticism of the society surrounding it—of which there are many modern day examples—in the absence of a clear statement, it is impossible to argue authorial intent from over 400 years in the future with much plausibility. Literary analysis requires an admission at the outset that there remain dangers and limitations in the endeavor. While direct statements of authorial intent are absent, there are approaches that take inconsistencies, ambivalences, and conventional departures into consideration, examining how those departures interact with the society surrounding it. David Perkins calls such an approach a “systematically differentiated” mode (133). The systematic differentiation mode studies “how texts vary from their contexts in ways the context determines” (Perkins, 133), working to examine the embedded critical potential—while less than deliberate—within plays. Plays exist as versions of early modern society on display in what Taylor describes as “a place where the fictive and the actual coalesce” (“Introduction to *A Game at Chess*”, 1775).

Any cloth-based literary analysis must also recognize the inherent discrepancies that exist within the modern view of the relationship between corporeal and material forms when compared against the early modern perspective. Jones and Stallybrass point out the particularly large gap between early modern and twentieth- and twenty-first-century perspectives on cloth, clothing, and their relationship to the corporeal form, noting that the modern perspective sees fashion

> as the rapid transformation of clothing styles ... as a *dazzling* play of surfaces. In doing so, [readings based in this perspective] have repeated, even if to critique, the antithesis between clothes as the surface/outside and the person as the inside/depth ... But this opposing of clothes and person was always in tension with the social practices through which the body politic was composed. (2)

[1] post-Cokayne: The years immediately following the infamous Cokayne project (1614). This ignominious piece of legislation, authored by Sir William Cokayne and signed by James I, will be discussed in depth in Chapter Five.

Simply stating an obvious point, modern analytical readings require a concentrated shift in perception to better understand early modern contextual meaning. “To understand the significance of clothes in the Renaissance, we need to undo our own social categories, in which subjects are prior to objects, wearers to what is worn. We need to understand the animatedness of clothes, their ability to ‘pick up’ subjects, to mold and shape them both physically and socially, to constitute subjects through their power as material memories” (Jones and Stallybrass, 2). Any cloth-focused literary analysis based in this era must recognize the tendency the modern perception has to separate cloth from the body and endeavor to adopt an early modern view of an intrinsic relationship between these two elements. Such a project must acknowledge how, from the early modern perspective, one was seen as directly impressing upon and crafting the margins of the other, both as an item placed directly on the body and as one associated with a body or character, as in ownership, possession, or other interaction. Both textiles and clothing played an essential role in crafting Renaissance culture, necessary to the making and unmaking of such concepts as gender, status, and authenticity. The early modern view infused cloth with meaning, as Jones and Stallybrass point out: “it was investiture, the putting on of clothes, that quite literally constituted a person as a monarch or a freeman or a guild or a household servant. Investiture was ... the means by which a person was given a form, a shape, a social function” (2). Renaissance clothing was understood through a lens crafted by “the notion that ‘Fashion’ can be ‘*deeply* put on’ or, in other words, that clothes [or cloth] permeate[s] the wearer, fashioning him or her within” (Jones and Stallybrass, 2). Understanding this viewpoint is necessary to fully appreciate the weight of meaning within a statement like Prince Harry’s in Shakespeare’s *2 Henry IV*: “I will deeply put the fashion on,/ And weare it in my heart” (V.ii.52-53). It is also essential to appreciate the perception of a dramatic downward slide in character when, in Middleton’s *Michaelmas Term*, Thomasine Quomodo observes that Andrew Lethe “has forgot how he came up, and brought two of his countrymen to give their words to my husband for a suit of green kersey. A has forgot all this. And how does he appear to me, when his

white satin suit’s on, but like a maggot crept out of a nutshell” (II.iii.10-14). Careful consideration of the early modern perspective of the relationship between corporeal and material is indispensable because, put simply, the Jacobean view held that “fashion fashions, because what can be worn can be worn deeply. That the materials we wear work as inscriptions upon us is an insight more familiar to pre- or proto-capitalist societies than to fully capitalist ones” (Jones and Stallybrass, 3).

The goal in this cloth-centric analysis is not to determine with absolute certainty what entered an early modern audience member’s mind as they viewed the display of cloth and corporeal form onstage. Rather, the goal is to pose reasonable possibilities within the early modern perspective, with plausible contextual evidence to support those possibilities. An examination of how Middleton’s cloth references engage with the historical field will be at the heart of the project, keeping in mind it is a delicate balance to maintain what R. S. Crane describes as the literary historian’s job: to “find ways of dealing with the individual works ... that will do justice at once to their multiple historical relations and to their qualities as unique artistic wholes” (46). Engaging with this historical field illuminates the connotations particular cloth references possessed through an examination of political, economic, and sociological underpinnings. Perkins insists literary history must ask this basic question: “how—by what paths, processes, or chain of events—does the context have its impact on the text?” (132). Utilizing these social, political, and economic contexts, the “historical field ... [will be] integrated on the basis of a concept (or system of concepts) that the works are said to illustrate ... [tracing] the fortunes of a concept, its changing character, or its reception over time” (Perkins, 121). Specifically then, this project works to utilize context to trace the changing character or reception of cloth over time in the attempt to gain further understanding of the cloth’s communicative potential in Middleton’s city comedy.

Sumptuary Legislation – The Relationship between Text and Context

One example of how the “historical field” can be integrated into such an analysis is found in James I’s 1603 repeal of sumptuary legislation, which occurred just prior to Middleton’s 1604 collaboration with Thomas Dekker, *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*. In Elizabeth I’s 1587 declaration reinforcing and updating long-standing sumptuary orders from Henry VIII and later Mary I, the “unordinate excesse in apparell” was lamented as contributing “to the impouerishing of the Realme, by dayly bringing into the same of superfluitie of forreine and vnnecessarie commodities, not able to be answered with the naturall marchandise of the Realme” (England and Wales. Sovereign [1558-1603 : Elizabeth I], sig. A1r). The general citizenry were given detailed, itemized clauses within the order, making it clear which ranks could wear which fabrics, and most pointedly, which ranks could not. For example, men below the rank of Baron were forbidden, among other things, “Satin, damask, silk, camlet, or taffeta in gown, coat, hose, or uppermost garments; fur whereof the kind groweth not in the Queen’s dominions” (sig. A5r). While not the aim of sumptuary legislation, one of its outcomes was ensuring the general citizenry possessed a healthy working knowledge of both foreign and domestic cloth. As Susan Vincent states, in the last half of the sixteenth century, “the perpetual reiteration of the [sumptuary] orders and their provisions acted as a reminder of prohibition, but also published a recurring catalogue of pleasures. By disallowing certain modes and appearances, the laws also opened up a channel for illicit desire. Like all forbidden fruit, it was the sweeter for being withheld” (142). After James I’s accession, his repeal of long-standing sumptuary laws led to an even broader demand for foreign luxuries across the social strata. This, along with the opening of direct trade with Spain in 1604, further widened once-restricted trade avenues. Hentschell says of this period, “the wool broadcloth industry was tested by the increasing popularity of luxury textiles that were imported from the continent. Silks and satins from Spain, France, and Italy were seen as creating a new kind of crisis for the wool industry whereby individuals across classes rejected wool in favor of luxury goods” (6).

The primary rationale for the sumptuary laws had been economic. They were, as Vincent states, “Legal restraints aimed to ensure that English wealth did not leave the country in exchange for foreign textiles and garments. Moreover, by placing limits on allowable personal expenditure, individuals would be less tempted to over-indulge in finery and thus were better able to live within their means” (120). With the removal of these legal restraints, foreign luxuries in particular held a compelling grip over the English imagination, simultaneously resonating temptation and caution, as many saw the path to economic ruin paved with foreign consumption. This is explicitly demonstrated in the opening scene of Middleton’s *Your Five Gallants* as Frippery, the broker-gallant, sits in his shop, poring over his account book, cataloguing pawned items from numerous citizens. Reading aloud from his account book, Frippery notably lists not just the pawned items, but also the cloth from which each item is made:

> Lent the fifth day of September to Mistress Onset upon her gown, taffeta petticoat with three broad silver laces, three pound fifteen shillings. Lent to Justice Cropshin upon both his velvet jackets, five pound ten shillings ... Lent to Sir Oliver Needy upon his taffeta cloak, beaver hat, and perfumed leather jerkin: six pound five shillings ... Lent to Master Andrew Lucifer, upon his flame coloured doublet and blue taffeta hose. (I.i.6-10, 15-17, 19-20)

The connection between foreign luxuries and economic hardship is made explicit as citizens are named in a type of itemized listing of poor economic decisions, pointedly involving luxuries sumptuary legislation had previously kept beyond the average citizen’s reach. The audience, while not legally bound by these statutes after 1603, would still have had their contents fresh in recent memory. When Middleton places individuals of middle-class rank within the broker-gallant’s book—average citizens who are forced to pawn previously unavailable (to them) fabrics for cash—the audience would have certainly have recognized the legislative allusion. Obviously one of the primary purposes of the recently repealed sumptuary legislation was to protect citizenry from over-extending themselves and thus prevent “the impouerishing of the Realme” (sig. A1r). Therefore, when reading a play like *Your Five Gallants* that so centrally features many of these newly available foreign luxuries, it is important not

only to consider what the play’s characters are wearing, but also how the characters behave and the troubles they encounter now they can finally wear it.

In the aforementioned sumptuary order, excess in apparel is described not only as an economic hazard but also as a type of moral disease or decay. It states, “this infection was seene to haue made entrie amongst the youth” (sig. A1r). The association of foreign cloth with moral decline was not uncommon during this period. Consider how the merchant Gerard Malynes uses predatorial imagery to describe the influx of foreign goods in 1601:

> our merchants are inclined to buy forraine commodities, or to barter their commodities for the same, which oportunitie is not onely obserued by the Bankers, but also procured. To which end they follow by the meanes of their factors, our merchants at all places, *euen as the Eagle followeth her pray*, be it at Stoade, Hamborough, Embden, Middelborough, or elsewhere: where they will haue an especiall care to be furnished with the commodities wherein they deale: as Veluets, Satine, Silkes, Fustians, Venice gold, or such like, and that against the arriuall of any quantitie of cloth and kerseis out of England. (42-43, emphasis added)

If foreign luxuries were regarded as morally corrupting, as evidenced in Malynes’ and others’ writings, the absence of compelled restraint post sumptuary repeal was not just an economic concern within the English imagination but also a moral one. Post sumptuary repeal, “For the first time, wool cloth had real competition in the form of products that were also seen as morally suspicious” (Hentschell, 6-7). Cloth’s role in the early modern perception of moral discipline was not subtle: as Lloyd Edward Kermode points out, “prideful clothing [was viewed as] the quintessential marker of the corrupted soul” (42). This connection between outer clothing and inner corruption was frequently exhibited in writings of the period, as at the conclusion of *Michaelmas Term*, when Mother Gruel realizes her prodigal son has disguised his humble birth throughout the play with a false identity and luxurious apparel, she chastises him, “This country has e’en spoiled thee since though cam’st hither. Thy manners then were better than thy clothes; but now whole clothes and ragged manners. It may well be said that truth goes naked, for when thou hadst scarce a shirt, thou hadst more truth about thee” (V.iii.158-162). Multiple works from the years initially following the repeal of sumptuary legislation illustrate the economic and moral

concern surrounding this unprecedented access to foreign commodities, underscoring how, as Jones and Stallybrass point out, “the innovative force of fashion was associated both with the dissolution of the body politic and with the exorbitance of the state’s subjects” (1). In 1606, Thomas Dekker illustrates how such unprecedented access to foreign luxuries was not only viewed as vain or frivolous, but also treasonous in his *Seven Deadly Sinnes of London* (1606): “An English-mans suit is like a traitors bodie that hath been hanged, drawne, and quartered, and set up in seuerall places: the collar of his doublet and the belly in France; the wing and narrow sleeue in Italy; the shorte waist hangs over a Dutch botchers stall in Utrich; his huge slopes speakes Spanish; Polonia gives him his bootes” (32). Just a few years later, John Mason’s drama, *The Turke* (1610), demonstrates the continuing concern over the increased post-sumptuary availability of finery across social classes, illustrating the implied early modern connection between cloth and the corporeal, and the disturbance at the thought that cloth deceitfully labels what lies beneath: “I have seene ignorance in the shape of a citizen muffled in the scarlet of magistracy that could not write his owne name. Generally I haue noted through the whole Country great enmity betweene witt and clokes lin’d through with veluet” (sig. E4v).

Incorporating the historical field as part of a cloth-centric discussion illustrates how context can play a role in accentuating twentieth- and twenty-first-century understanding of Jacobean city comedy, and, for this project’s purposes, Middleton’s works in particular. Again, such a discussion endeavors not to use context to create what Perkins describes as a “critical machine” which “is then driven over the texts and the context too” (138), shaping the individual work along with the early modern perspective of that work into what the literary historian would have it be. Rather, this discussion endeavors to examine social, political, and economic context as underpinnings, illuminating connotation and potential allusion without blinding the reader to the “unique artistic whole” (Crane, 46).

Bruster advocates for an increased acknowledgment of economics, exchange, and commerce in Renaissance literature, and for literary criticism not to ignore “the business of representation in early

modern England” (“The Representation Market…”, 3). Placing London’s political, economic, and social dirty laundry on stage both intentionally and unintentionally expresses anxieties surrounding political, economic, and social realities of the period. Further, when the drama ends in an overly-idealistic resolution (as Middleton’s city comedies were wont to do), the incredulousness that undoubtedly follows is not only at the plot’s denouement, but also at the play’s lack of resemblance to a social system in which such reconciliation does not happen. Bruster states, “To better understand this business, we need a working model of the market in representations within which Shakespeare and others labored” (“The Representation Market...”, 4), ending his argument with a recommendation that “those interested in a closer portrait of the representations of early modern England might well focus on the details of their composition and exchange. Further research, for instance, could investigate the shapes of the representation market vis-à-vis specific months and years, writers and artists, purchasers of cultural goods, literary characters, works and genres” (“The Representation Market...”, 23). Considering the relatively small amount of research targeting the allusory potential of specific forms of cloth within city comedy, this paucity presents significant opportunity for new understanding and exploration into the works of the period. This project posits the embedded critical potential within what Frenk terms the possible “webs of significance” (19) that exist between text and context—specifically considering the meaning attached to cloth during the early modern period—acknowledging these are set forth as plausible based upon contextual forms and consistencies or inconsistencies within the genre overall and Middleton’s work, specifically.

Chapter One – *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*

This project begins with an exploration of cloth’s role in the creation of compelling representational practices within Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker’s 1604 city comedy, *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*. While a collaborative work, *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* is an unusual mixture of both Dekker and Middleton’s writing, creating a difficulty in accurately assigning authorship to either author, as Paul Mulholland states, “A peculiarity of the disposition of linguistic forms [in the play] ... is that they tend not to be concentrated in specific scenes, which defeats the task of identifying with any certainty the extent of Middleton’s contribution” (“*The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*: March-September 1604”, 351). Mulholland points out that MacDonald P. Jackson, in his examination of linguistic evidence of authorship in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, “notes the play’s metrical homogeneity and correspondence of its metrical characteristics to Dekker’s work” (351). However, Jackson also acknowledges evidence of Middleton’s linguistic style in the play, including “‘the eleven most distinctively Middletonian expletives’ ... [are] encountered only twice in six Dekker plays, [but] turn up on nine occasions in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*” (Mulholland, 351). Mulholland then quotes Jackson’s insistence that “Middleton must have had a hand not merely in the planning of the play but in the actual writing of it too” (351). While Dekker obviously played a significant role in its creation and solely authoring its sequel in 1606, T*he Patient Man and the Honest Whore* remains important to this Middleton-centered discussion due to the significant density of cloth references within the work overall, as well as the particularly pointed utilization of cloth to form the characterization and interactions of the patient merchant, Candido. Mulholland points out, in David J. Lake’s discussion of Middleton’s contribution to the play, that “like Jackson, he [Lake] finds the strongest evidence of Middleton in Scenes 5 and 7” (352). Scenes v and vii—Candido’s “pennyworth of lawn” and “carpet knight” scenes—are set in Candido’s shop and home, particularly cloth-dense and thus relevant to this

chapter’s discussion. Further justifying the inclusion of *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* in this discussion, Peter Ure insists Middleton was the primary author of the cloth merchant’s characterization in the play, largely based on a comparison with two other Middleton-crafted models of patience: Quieto in *The Phoenix* and Walter Camlet in *Anything for a Quiet Life.* Many critics like Mulholland also note the significant shift in the cloth merchant’s characterization between *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* and Dekker’s solo work, *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore II*, pointing out that while Candido remains the patient, long-suffering merchant and husband in the sequel, the characterization is a significant departure from the numerous cloth-associated references to Candido’s sexual inadequacy as well as his emasculation in the first *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*. Finally, in a direct comparison between the two plays in this project’s previously mentioned density study, it is found that cloth references in Dekker’s solely-authored sequel, while still comparatively high in relation to other plays featured in the study (sixty-three references in 27,600 words, or 1/439), appear nearly twice as often in the original *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* (ninety references in 25,708 words, or 1/286) which involved Middleton as well as Dekker.

The play opens with a staged funeral procession for the young Infelice, arranged by her father, Gasparo Trebazzi the Duke of Milan, to frustrate the marital intentions between his daughter and her devoted Hippolito. However, the love story quickly takes a tangential role to the two parallel plotlines of Candido, the unfailingly patient merchant, and Bellafront, the repentant whore seeking legitimacy and social re-integration. The majority of the play’s scenes shift between Candido’s shop and Bellafront’s brothel chamber, keeping these two characters at the forefront for much of the plot. Candido’s wife, Viola, vexed at her husband’s inability to become angry, complains to her brother, Fustigo, “No loss of goods can increase in him a wrinkle, no crabbed language make his countenance sour, the stubbornness of no servant shake him; he has no more gall in him than a dove, no more sting than an ant. Musician will he never be, yet I find much music in him, but he loves no frets, and is so free from anger that many

times I am ready to bite off my tongue” (ii.80-86). She then enlists Fustigo’s help in her attempts to rile Candido to anger, stating her tongue “wants that virtue which all women’s tongues have, to anger their husbands” (ii.87-88), even alluding to a connection between Candido’s mildness and sexual inadequacy, stating that her husband “has not all things belonging to a man” (ii.68). The play is filled with failed attempts by Viola, Fustigo, and even some mischievous customers to bring Candido to anger, each situation growing more outrageous than the last. Candido remains ever mild in the face of increasing humiliation and emasculation, eventually forced to dress as his own apprentice and finding himself committed to Bedlam. Bellafront, who begins the play a confident, self-assured courtesan surrounded by male admirers, is quickly humbled when the gallant, Matteo, brings the grieving Hippolito to her quarters. Bellafront is immediately drawn to Hippolito, but he spurns her, lecturing the whore at length on her despicable state:

> You have no soul:
> That makes you weigh so light; Heaven’s treasure bought it,
> And half a crown hath sold it, for your body,
> It’s like the common shore that still receives
> All the town’s filth. The sin of many men
> Is within you. (vi.374-379)

Hippolito’s chastisement stirs Bellafront’s conscience—and her desire for him—causing her to divorce herself from her previous occupation and attempt a return to respectable society. Bellafront initially seeks Hippolito’s romantic interests, a notion he soundly rejects as he continues to mourn his believed-dead Infelice. Following Hippolito’s refusal, the repentant whore firmly redoubles her contrition, declaring, “Hated! This must not be; Some means I’ll try./ Would all whores were as honest now as I” (vi.507-508). However, Bellafront’s continued attempt to travel the road of the penitent back to mainstream society is troubled and she eventually recuses herself to Bedlam. Much of the play shifts back and forth between Candido’s shop and Bellafront’s quarters, but Infelice and Hippolito’s frustrated courtship is eventually revisited, as the two lovers learn the truth of the Duke’s manipulations and

escape to Bedlam for a secret wedding, bringing the three plotlines together for the play’s final scene within the asylum itself.

This chapter explores how *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* utilizes cloth in Frenk’s previously mentioned “webs of significance” (19) between text and context to add depth to the commercial shop space as well as the whore’s brothel space, to establish expectations for both the merchant’s shop as well as the cloth merchant himself, and finally to act as a bridge between abstract idealization and practicable interchange, exposing the inevitable tension that exists when idealized expectations for the patient merchant stereotype break down. It is important to acknowledge that the play is set in Milan, theoretically making Candido an Italian cloth merchant; however, there are multiple references in the play to London sites that fuse the two settings (Bedlam/Lombard Street), allowing for a plausible examination of Candido as representative of the London cloth merchant. While other scholarship on *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* views the patient merchant as a representation of a decline of the nostalgic ideal of civic stability, as found in Korda (80), or as a foil for other male characters’ stereotypically aggressive masculinity, a perspective demonstrated in Mulholland (“Introduction to *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore”*, 281), these interpretations seem to ignore the particular care taken to craft Candido’s long-suffering and forbearance. They also ignore the significant focus the play devotes to exploring to what extremes this embodiment of patient masculinity will allow himself to be taken, rather than emphasizing the aggression demonstrated by other male characters. Rather than a foil for aggressive masculinity or a nostalgic metaphor, Candido is an exploration of the idealized form of the long-suffering merchant, particularly as it relates to or operates within the commercial space, and cloth is key to this exploration. Inconsistencies are made glaringly apparent when this romanticized model of masculine patience interacts onstage in various cloth-centered exchanges that showcase not literal, realistic interaction but rather highlight contradictions and discrepancies that exist between the realms of idealized form and interpersonal exchange.

Holland, Cambric, Lawn and the Shop Space

When the early modern stage opened upon Candido’s shop or Bellafront’s chamber, it would have been fairly free of scenery. However, as Jonathan Gil Harris and Korda point out, this is not to say that the Jacobean stage was completely bare. To craft the necessary ambience, early modern theatres and dramatists relied heavily upon staged properties, as Harris and Korda point out: “the public stage was populated not just by extravagant costumes, but by other eye-catching objects as well” (3). Cloth played a role not just as costume but, when appropriate, as an onstage prop or referenced in dialogue, becoming a potentially significant player in converting the blank slate of the stage and establishing context for the audience. While the onstage space of a cloth merchant’s shop, for example, may not have been crafted with extensive shelving stacked high to the ceiling with bolts of fabric, the cloth that was utilized in the scene—whether literally (a commodity held by the merchant or admired by the customer), or referenced (in a shop call or referenced in a commercial exchange)—would have been particularly important in helping to establish “where” the onstage action is happening. Cloth, both as a literal prop and through verbal references, can contribute as an important element in forging expectations for the types of interactions and characters the audience will encounter within a scene and in Candido’s shop, cloth—specifically holland, cambric, and lawn—plays an important role in forming the characterization of the patient merchant, Candido, as well as establishing context for his associated shop space.

Cloth makes its initial appearance in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* as scene v opens upon Candido’s shop for the first time, with Candido’s wife and three apprentices onstage. The first lines spoken in the scene establish expectations for a typical shop space by featuring direction and complaint about the shop’s featured wares between Viola and Candido’s three apprentices. Viola criticizes the care (or lack thereof) the apprentices take with the shop’s merchandise, scolding, “Come, you put up your wares in good order here, do you not think you? One piece cast this way, another that way?” (v.1-3).

One of the apprentices, George, then complains to his comrades in response, whispering, “we have a curst mistress” (v.4-5). Immediately following these opening lines, the gallants Castruccio, Fluello, and Pioratto enter the draper’s shop and all three apprentices join together in the typical shop call: “what do you lack? What is’t you buy?” (v.2-13). A common practice of the time, the apprentices immediately follow their “what do you lack?” shop call with a list of some of the shop’s wares: “See fine hollands, fine cambrics, fine lawns” (v.13-14). While holland, cambric, and lawn could obviously be replaced by any number of fabrics in this shop call to help establish the onstage setting as a linen draper’s shop, it is important not to overlook the types of cloth pointedly selected to be called out as the stage opens upon this commercial space for the first time. The fabrics called out from Candido’s shop work to establish the status of the merchant who owns that shop as well as the audience’s expectations for the interactions and boundaries they anticipate encountering within the shop space. The question that must be asked, then, is “Why holland, cambric, and lawn?”

While calling out these (or any) fabrics with a “What do you lack?” obviously establishes the onstage setting as a linen draper’s shop, there is much more communicated by holland, cambric, and lawn than a simple verbal signaling of a commercial space. It is an obvious sales strategy, as a draper would most certainly want to showcase his most appealing and tempting wares to bring traffic into his shop. Such a strategy is recommended for drapers in Pasquil’s 1619 work, *Pasquils palinodia*:

> Then let his shop be stuft on euery side
> With new additions to increase vaine pride,
> And he shall see, great Gallants with huge Broaches,
> Light at his dore from Male and Female Coaches. (sig. B4v)

In a 1531 warrant addressed to Sir Andrew Lord Windsor, Master of the Great Wardrobe, holland, cambric, and lawn are all specifically requested for Princess Mary’s wardrobe (“The Princess Mary”), demonstrating the desirability of these fabrics. One particularly helpful text in providing insight into specific fabrics’ esteem during the late-sixteenth and early-seventeenth century is Lawson’s *The Elizabethan New Year’s Gift Exchanges, 1559-1603*, which is a collection of the recorded gifts presented

annually to Elizabeth I throughout her reign. It is important to note that all three of these shop-call fabrics—holland, cambric and lawn—are not only mentioned repeatedly in the *Exchange* text, but also that they are all, at various times, presented by members of lower nobility in particular, sometimes exclusively and other times along with those in society’s upper echelons. This can provide insight not just into a fabric’s desirability but also its accessibility or availability to members of different social strata. Holland, for example, is listed in the *Exchange* text as given to Elizabeth I seventy-seven times between 1559-1603. It was never presented to Elizabeth I by upper nobility such as dukes, duchesses, or lords and was rarely a gift from a baroness or marquess. Rather, it was given primarily by gentlewomen and ladies, indicating this fabric to be finer than the average broadcloth or kersey, but not exclusive to the upper echelons of nobility. This cloth was never given by Elizabeth I, and when presented as a gift to the Queen it was most often in small forms by lower ranks of nobility, most frequently in the form of a smock (thirty times), pillowbere (thirteen times), or handkerchief (nine times). It was primarily presented by Gentlewomen (forty-two times), Gentlemen (eleven times), and Ladies (fifteen times), although it also occasionally appears as a gift from a Marquesse (three times) and a Baroness (two times). This indicates holland was fine enough to be an appropriate gift for the Queen (as the phrase “fine holland” is a common descriptor in many texts of the period), but not so fine that its expense placed it outside the reach of the gentry.

Cambric was a foreign import associated with wealth and luxury. Clearly a socially elevated fabric, cambric is reported as given by Harry Huttoft in 1533 for “a present to the King’s highness” ("Harry Huttoft to Cromwell”), as well as a preferred fabric for King Henry VIII’s shirts, as recorded by the King’s Privy Purse in 1530: “xxiij ells of cameryk for vj shirtes for the King” (Beck, 46). Further evidence associating cambric with social esteem is found in Peter Lowe’s 1597 work, *The Whole Course of Chirurgerie,* in which Lowe, a surgeon, after recommending using linen to cover a wound, recommends,“for persons of higher dignitie take layre or camerige” (367). It appears 199 times in the

Exchange text, given to the Queen most frequently as a bolt of material (forty-five times), followed by the forms of a handkerchief (thirty-one times) and pillowbere (twenty-nine times). Like holland, it was primarily presented by Gentlewomen (seventy-five times), Ladies (forty-one times), and Gentlemen (twenty-six times), although it was given to the Queen three times by a Lord between 1559-1603. This indicates it was a finer fabric and, like holland, considered a suitable gift from one of the lower ranks of nobility but was not given by those of higher ranks like an Earl, Baroness, or Duchess, for example.

Lawn, the final fabric featured in the shop call, is the most luxurious of the fabrics called out by Candido’s apprentices. An expensive commodity fine enough for a royal gown, lawn had clear associations with nobility and luxury. Lawn is mentioned 267 times in the *Exchange* text and appears to be the finest of these three featured fabrics as it was presented to the Queen more frequently by the upper echelons of nobility than either holland or cambric. It was most often given to Elizabeth I by Gentlewomen (forty-eight times), Ladies (thirty-three times), and Gentlemen (twenty-one times), but it was also presented to the Queen by Earls (three times), Marquesses (eight times), Baronesses (eight times), Lords (three times) and once by a Duchess. Lawn appears in more variant forms in the *Exchange* text than either holland or cambric, given to the Queen in the form of sleeves, pieces, gowns, nightclothes, ruffs, waistcoats, and scarves, among others. It was presented to Elizabeth I most frequently in the form of a ruff (forty-nine times), as a simple piece (forty times), or as sleeves and a partelett (twenty-two times). Additionally, of these three fabrics, lawn is the only one which appears to be a fine enough material to split between two people as a shared gift, as in the case of Lord and Baroness Hunsdon, who in 1588 each gave to the Queen “Parte of a valle of Lawne pynched up Striped with a small passament of venus golde” (370, 371). Obviously the mention of lawn at Candido’s shop door would prick the ears of anyone in the market for foreign luxuries. Holland and cambric may grab a potential customer’s attention, but the final calling out of lawn in the shop call is its most enticing mention. If holland and cambric do not draw shoppers in, then certainly including lawn will at the very

least impress potential buyers, hopefully tantalizing them into entering the commercial space with wares “to increase vaine pride,” as Pasquil describes. What Lawson’s *Exchange* text also demonstrates is that while holland, cambric, and lawn were desirable commodities, they were not completely beyond the reach of the lower ranks of nobility. When Candido’s apprentices call out holland, cambric, and lawn to passersby, these fabrics are selected not just because they are luxuries, but because they are also somewhat *attainable* luxuries.

In addition to demonstrating the commercial practice of utilizing the allure of accessible luxury to draw in customers, these fabrics also help to more clearly define Candido’s shop space, as holland, cambric, and lawn are frequently associated with the language of commerce in writings of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Simply put, in the absence of elaborate scenery, calling out these fabrics help to make Candido’s shop “feel” more like a shop. For example, a 1546 proverb by John Heywood, listed in *A dialogue conteinyng the nomber in effect of all the prouerbes in the englishe tongue*, states, “He that will selle lawne, er he can folde it, He shall repent hym er he haue solde it” (sig. C1r), clearly demonstrating lawn’s association with merchants, with commerce and with the commercial shop space. Cambric and lawn are also mentioned specifically in the previously mentioned *Pasquils palinodia,* as the author describes the world of trade, particularly addressing the use of attractive women to call out to passersby and draw them into the shop:

> If she this open course had kept before,
> And out of sight her shops had not withdrawn,
> Doubtlesse her takings would haue been much more,
> For points, gloues, garters, cambric-smocks and lawn.
> The man of trade which doth the world begin,
> Seldome growes rich if he keepe shop within:
> For by this meanes no custome can be gotten,
> And ere he sell his wares, they will be rotten. (sig. B4v)

Another example that utilizes cambric, lawn, and holland as stereotypical commodities for the man (or woman) of trade is found in Richard Niccols’ 1614 book of epigrams, *The Furies: With vertues encomium*, in which the author explains the successful sales strategies of a Mistriss Malbella:

> Mistris malbella beares away the bell,
> And doth more holland, Lawne and cambric sell,
> Then all her neighbours, not because her stall
> Shewes better ware, or boyes doe lowder call,
> What lack yee Gentlemen? But for her faire
> Is farre prefer’d before their better ware. (Epigram XXV)

This passage, while describing the success an attractive woman can bring to a draper’s shop, also exemplifies an early modern work endeavoring to paint a typical shop space. While the “What lack yee?” shop call is one feature repeatedly found in numerous texts of the period when staging a typical early modern commercial exchange[2], this passage also shows these three specific fabrics from Candido’s shop call would have appeared in other texts to build or underpin the context of a cloth merchant’s shop.

In addition to tempting passersby and helping to establish the context of the onstage commercial space, the mention of holland, cambric, and lawn as available commodities in this shop also communicates Candido’s economic status and success as a merchant. From the beginning of the play, Candido is established within the parameters typically associated with a successful cloth merchant. He is described as successful and intelligent, as Viola admits to Fustigo that Candido “has wealth enough, and wit enough” (ii.63-64), even conceding, “I want nothing that a wife can wish from a husband” (ii.66-67). Calling out holland, cambric, and lawn from Candido’s door—fabrics that not only turned heads, but also had previously been financially (and at times legally) out of bounds for many in the English cloth trade—further underscores this element of Candido’s character as a merchant of substance in a trade of broadening opportunity for procurement. For example, in early modern household inventories such as the previously mentioned *Stratford-Upon-Avon Inventories (1538-1625)*, cambric and lawn never appear, and holland is only seen in limited amounts in a select few wealthier households. Consider specifically the 1586 shop inventory for John Browne, a successful cloth merchant, which lists sundry

[2] The “What lack ye?” shop call will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Five.

items of broadcloth, kersey, bay, cotton, and frieze (Jones, Vol. 1, 64-74). However, there is no mention of any holland, cambric, lawn, or any other fabric Candido possesses in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* within the inventory of John Brown or any other cloth merchant in the *Stratford* inventories. Lawn’s availability in Candido’s shop pointedly establishes Candido as a particularly successful cloth merchant, as John Browne’s most expensive piece listed was a piece of broadcloth in a “sad new color” valued at 6s and 8d a yard (Jones, Vol. 1, 69). This is nowhere close to Candido’s stated price of “eighteen shillings a yard” for his lawn (v.63). This is particularly significant when Candido adds that the entire piece of lawn he is showing totals seventeen yards (v.66), indicating a substantial increase in inventory spending for the early seventeenth-century cloth merchant and the availability of luxuries to the consumer. Lawn, along with holland and cambric, helps establish Candido not just as a cloth merchant, but a particularly prosperous one, as illustrated in Viola’s statement that she, as Candido’s wife, “wants for nothing” (ii.66). The specific calling out of holland, cambric, and lawn from Candido’s “Italian” shop with a London locale—the Holy Lamb in Lombard Street—clearly signals to the audience the cloth merchant has extended his reach beyond sturdy English broadcloth, kersey, and frieze and his shop now stretches across the sea to bring customers foreign commodities. This rise is documented by Supple:

> In 1606 the annual stint allowed to the members of the [Merchant Adventurers] company was increased, which presumably reflected the high level of exports in that year [126,000 shortcloths by English merchants from London] and in 1607 there were even signs that Blackwell Hall, the London repository of cloths to be exported, was becoming overcrowded. Altogether, the cloth industry [during this period] enjoyed a transitory Indian summer. (29)

As previously stated, while wool, silk, kersey, velvet, or any number of foreign or domestic fabrics could have been called out by Candido’s apprentices to signal to the audience that the scene is opening upon a linen draper’s shop, the choice of holland, cambric, and lawn does much more than that. Not only do these fabrics, frequently associated with the language of commerce in texts of the period, “color” the commercial space more precisely for the audience, they also demonstrate the sales

tactic of tempting customers to enter the space with desirable, yet accessible luxuries, as well as communicating the status and purchasing power of the merchant who owns them. These fabrics help set the scene for Candido’s shop, adding additional depth and richness to the scene’s ambience, while simultaneously contributing to the characterization of one of the play’s central characters.

Silk, Velvet, Satin, Taffeta and the Brothel Space

While obviously utilizing cloth both in dialogue and in onstage interaction would play a significant role in helping to “set the scene” for Candido’s shop, the brothel scene that immediately follows provides an excellent example of how cloth does not necessarily need to be a central “player” in the associated space to contribute to the ambience of the staged setting. Silk, satin, velvet, taffeta, even a ruff and poker (the straight, metal rod that was heated and used to set the ruff’s folds) all emerge at some point within Bellafront’s brothel scenes and, like the materials of commerce in Candido’s shop, all work with either a literal presence onstage or in dialogue to contribute in building a more robust context for the onstage space. When the play initially opens upon Bellafront’s brothel space, the first exchange is between Bellafront and her pander, Roger. The conversation immediately focuses on material objects as Bellafront asks Roger about her “boxes of complexion” (vi.6-7) while preparing herself for her waiting suitors. In this initial exchange, the first specific reference to cloth is made as Roger informs the whore, “I’m drawing up a hole in your white silk stocking” (vi.4-5). Later in the same scene, as Bellafront sits surrounded by admirers jockeying for her attention, the gallant, Fluello, mentions taffeta specifically as a gift to curry favor with the whore: “the knight, Sir Oliver Lollio, swore he would bestow a taffeta petticoat on thee but to break his fast with thee” (vi.117-119). Later in scene viii, Mistress Fingerlock, Bellafront’s bawd, urges Bellafront to prepare herself to meet “the sweetest, prop’rest, gallantest gentleman ... his pocket full of crowns, flame-colour’d doublet, red satin hose, carnation silk stockings”

(viii.32-34). In scene ix, after Bellafront has chosen to turn from her life as a whore, silk and velvet are specifically named as she sings of the occupation she has chosen to leave behind:

> The citizen’s son’s riot,
> The gallant’s costly diet:
> Silks and velvets, pearls and ambers
> Shall not draw me to their chambers. (ix.5-8)

Just as holland, cambric, and lawn help to establish and develop Candido’s commercial space with elements of luxury, desirability, and wealth, the fabrics that appear literally and in dialogue within Bellafront’s brothel have connotations that help set the tone for a space associated with seduction, temptation, and lust.

There exists much contextual support in early modern writings that demonstrates the association of these fabrics with wealth and luxury. In the *Exchange* text, for example, silk, velvet, and satin are given to Elizabeth I more than any other fabric, presented to the Queen in extravagant forms including gowns, cloaks, and kirtles by nobility’s highest ranks (Earls, Marquesses, Counts, Countesses, Lords and Ladies). These fabrics’ clear associations with wealth are demonstrated in Richard Grafton’s *A chronicle at large and meere history of the affayres of Englande and kinges of the same* (1569) when Grafton, describing the suffering of Sir Thomas Cooke after being accused of treason under Edward IV, notes Cooke’s loss of “sondry riche merchaundises, as cloth of Gold, Syluer, Veluet, Satten, and other silkes” (672)[3]. However, creating the desired ambience for Bellafront’s brothel space relies upon these featured fabrics also possessing associations with temptation, seduction, and deceit, of which there is considerable evidence in writings of the period. For example, in several of Middleton’s own works (both individual and collaborative), these fabrics carry connotations that would align with the context of a whore’s chamber. Silk is used to communicate connotations of deceit and decay in *Michaelmas Term,* when the country wench chooses to turn courtesan, stating she will turn to “silks where lies disease and

[3] These fabrics’ association with wealth and luxury are explored in much greater detail in the discussion of taffeta and satin’s role in crafting the indulgent gallant of display in Chapter Three.

wants” (I.iii.56). Also in *Michaelmas Term*, a harlot appears in a silk gown (I.iii). In *The Roaring Girl*, these connotations remain intact as silk is worn by deceitful gallants, their silk stockings used as a disguise for their “villainous splay feet” (iv.8). In *Your Five Gallants*, silk is directly associated with whores as it is mentioned as a gift for the bawd gallant, Primero (II.i.32). Similarly, other Middleton-associated works align satin with connotations of lust, extravagance and foolishness. In *The Roaring Girl*, for example, satin is referred to in a slightly mocking tone, when it is wondered if men wearing it have any money in their pockets: “’Tis a question whether there be any silver shells amongst them, for all their satin outsides” (x.282-283). In *Michaelmas Term,* it is a harlot’s fabric (I.iii), described by Goldstone as fit for his courtesan’s gown (III.i), and worn by the spurious character, Lethe (II.iii.14). In *Your Five Gallants*, a desperate woman pawns her satin gown to the broker gallant, Frippery, which is then pawned to the previously mentioned bawd gallant, Primero. Also in *Your Five Gallants*, a suit of satin is pointedly presented as a furtive gift from Mistress Cleveland to the whore gallant, Tailby (Interim I, 10-11). Later, Fitzgrave refers to Frippery’s satin suit with mocking, sarcastic respect, exclaiming, “What man so savage-spirited durst presume/ To strike down satin on two taffetas cut,/ Or lift his hand against a beaver hat?” (IV. ii. 27-29). Similarly, velvet in Middleton’s other works is frequently associated with being outwardly showy, in possession of wealth, acting as a mark of status without substance. In *A Trick to Catch the Old One* (1605), velvet is used by Hoard to describe “worshipful gentlemen” (IV, iv. 13) who will help him lord his triumph over his rival. *The Roaring Girl* refers to a “velvet cap” (v. 14), associating it with swaggering wealth. In his *Father Hubbard’s Tales: or the ant and the nightingale* (1604), Middleton associates taffeta with bawds, panders, and overdressed prostitutes, describing,

> a very fantastical sponge that licked up all humours, the very ape of fashions, gesture, and compliment—one of those indeed (as we learned afterward) that fed upon young landlords, riotous sons, and heirs till either he or the Counter in Wood Street had swallowed them up; and would not stick to be a bawd or pander to such young gallants as our young gentleman, either to acquaint them with harlots or harlots with them, to bring them a whole dozen of taffeta punks at a supper. (576-583)

Many examples also exist outside Middleton’s work that also demonstrate these fabrics as having associations with a lack of authenticity, character, or virtue. Thomas Dekker’s *Patient Grissill* (1603), for example, features an indirect association of silk with inconstancy or infidelity as it is silk Dekker features in Farneze’s complaints to his fellow suitor Urcenze of “changeable Silke gallants … [who] reade no bookes but a looking glasse … [and] marrie sir their accontrements, are all fantasticke fashions” (sig. C1v). Similarly, in Christopher Marlowe’s *Edward II* (1595), silk is utilized to communicate an opposition to genuine or legitimate worth when King Edward II salutes the nobles Warwick and Lancaster, stating, “Warwick shall be my chiefest counseller:/ These siluer haires will more adorne my court/ Then gaudie silks, or rich imbrotherie” (sig. C4v). Satin’s association with a lack of character or wit is demonstrated in John Marston’s *Scourge of Villanie* (1598), which complains against “lewd censuring” from “Each sattin sute,/ Each quaint fashion-monger, whose sole repute/ Rests in his trim gay clothes” (sig. B1r). This same sentiment is also exhibited in Thomas Dekker’s 1603 work, *Wonderfull Yeare*, which, in its initial passage “To the Reader,” laments what a “man in print” must endure: “the stinking Tobacco-breath of a Sattin gull, the Aconited sting of a narrow-eyd Critick” (sig. A3r). This association of satin with indolence and empty pleasures continues several decades later in Francis Quarles’ *Emblemes* (1645), which warns against sacrificing the cares of the future for indulgences of the present—“To night we swim in wealth, and lend; To morrow,/ We sink in want, and find no friend to borrow”— and the nation becoming “A land, where each embroydred Sattin word Is lin’d with Fraud” (V.vii.270). In Ben Jonson’s *Cynthia’s Revels* (1601), the association with taffeta and satin as gifts exchanged between gallant and whore is also reinforced, as Mercury describes for Cupid the behavior of a type of indolent gallant:

> He is a great proficient in all the illiberall Sciences, as Cheating, Drinking, Swaggering, Whoring, and such like…The oaths which he vomits at one supper, would maintain a Towne of garrison in good swearing a twelue-moneth: One other genuine quality he has, which crownes all these; and that is this; to a Friend in want, he will not depart with the weight of a soldard Groat … Mary, to his Cocatrice or Punquetto; halfe a dozen Taffata gownes or Sattin Kirtles, in a paire or two of moneth’s. (sig. D3r)

Velvet at times is used as a common pejorative term when referring to deceit or moral decay, as in Robert Abbot’s 1623 sermon, *A hand of fellovvship, to helpe keepe out sinne and Antichrist*, which warns of “the Proctors of Antichrist veluet-mouthed, and like heauen in appearance” (sig. L3r). Abbot further warns against the insincere, ineffectual type of religion he describes as “an outward seruice glorious in shew, to stop the mouth of conscience for a time,” stating of such practices, “They haue golden and veluet, silken and taffatie Images for the eye” (sig. S1r). In George Chapman’s *Eastward Ho* (1605), the gallant Quicksilver’s behavior (before he turns from vice) is described in in a way that also associates velvet with lasciviousness and idleness: “O, the royallest fellow, that euer was bred vp i’the Citie. He would play you his thousand pound, a night at Dice; keepe Knights and Lords Companie; go with them to baudie houses; had his fixe men in a Liuerie; kept a stable of Hunting horses; and his Wench in her veluet Gowne, and her Cloth of siluer” (sig. I1r). Such writings of the period demonstrate there was an undeniable undercurrent of association that connected these types of luxurious foreign cloth with a brand of moral corruption that would have been quite at home in creating a space of moral decay.

This is, of course, not to say that only whores, courtesans, or prodigals wore silk, satin, velvet, or taffeta; such fabrics were obviously desired and worn by England’s wealthier, nobler social ranks. However, these fabrics still retained emblematic potential alluding to qualities like corruption, deceit, and lasciviousness that were, in the early modern perspective, decidedly “un-English.” Therefore, the connotations utilized to create the desired ambience for Bellafront’s brothel scene exist not only in what these types of luxurious fabrics are, but also what they are not. There are examples in writings of the period that portray these types of luxurious fabrics as being in direct contrast with domestic cloth and thus by association in contrast with honest, “English” behavior. For example, Thomas Heywood’s 1641 *Captives* contrasts satin’s lack of substance against a simpler, “English” character type when the fisherman Gripus sings of “The pesent wth his homespoon lasse,/ as many merry howers may passe/ As coortiers wth there sattin guirles” (IV.i.439-441). Similarly, taffeta and silk’s association with indulgence,

superfluity, and manipulation in contrast with a homegrown brand of integrity is nowhere more clearly illustrated than in Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labour’s Lost* (1598) when Berowne swears an end to his deceptive attempts at wooing Rosaline:

> Taffeta phrases, silken tearmes precise,
> Three-piled hyperboles, spruce affectation,
> Figures pedantical; these summer-flies
> Have blown me full of maggot ostentation:
> I do forsweare them, and were protest,
> By this white Glove (how white the hand God knowes)
> Henceforth my wooing minde shal be exprest
> in russet yeas and honest kersie noes. (V.ii.406-413)

Like Thomas Heywood’s use of the homespun English peasant type to contrast against satin-clad courtiers, *Love’s Labour’s Lost* uses russet and kersey—two domestic fabrics made from sturdy, English wool—to represent a brand of trustworthy, domestic behavior that is meant to exist as the foil to taffeta and satin’s (and similar fabrics) “maggot ostentation.” This contrast is also found in Samuel Rowlands’ *Democritus, or Doctor Merry-man his medicines, against melancholy humors* (1607), which tells of “A Mony-monger” having to choose between “A countrey-fellow, plaine in russet clad:/ ... The stockings that his clownish Legs did fit,/ Were kersie to the calfe” and “The other surety of another stuffe,/ All silke and Veluet, in his double Ruffe” (sig. B2v), granting the loan to the more gallantly dressed of the two. When time comes for repayment of the loan, this “silken knaue” is nowhere to be found and the russet-clad “Clowne ... was rich, and had good lands” (sig. B2r). Whether directly associated with lasciviousness and lust, or placed in contrast against the quiet humility and virtue embodied in domestic cloth like russet and kersey, the treatment of these foreign luxuries in early modern writings make it clear why these fabrics are mentioned or utilized in the context of Bellafront’s brothel space as their associated connotations help set a scene of indulgence, idleness, superfluity, and moral corruption.

While not involving a specific type of fabric, the appearance of the ruff and poker in scene vi warrants mentioning as it further reinforces how the use of the material (both literally and in dialogue) can help to establish clear parameters for the onstage space. As the scene opens, Roger busies himself

with Bellafront’s surrounding materials, specifically informing Bellafront of her ruff and poker “engendering together upon the cupboard” (vi.17-18). This sexually charged reference is an excellent example of the power of the material in setting the tone for a space. While it is never stated from what type of specific fabric the ruff is made, it is a material object employed to intensify the sexualized tone needed as the play’s action shifts from Candido’s shop to Bellafront’s brothel space. Gordon Williams notes the term, “Ruff,” was a common slang term for female genitalia, frequently featured in early modern writings along with some type of poking-stick “as a parody of coitus” (1177). This is demonstrated in the anonymous 1609 work, *Euerie woman in her humor,* when the Hostess and the City Wife participate in a highly sexualized interchange:

> Hostess: You haue a prettie Ruffe, how deepe is it?
> City Wife: Nay this is but shallowe, marrie I haue a Ruffe is a quarter deepe, measured by the yard.
> Hostess: Indeede by the yard!
> City Wife: By the standard, you haue a pretty set too: how big is the steele you set it with?
> Hostess: As bigge as a reasonable sufficient—(sig. C1r)

This interchange illustrates not just the use of “ruff” in this sexualized metaphor, but Williams’ previously mentioned use of a poking-stick to set it with, “steele” being an interchangeable term with “poker”: “a metal rod heated to form folds in a ruff” (1177). The term, “poker,” was common slang for the penis, an allusion demonstrated in Thomas Heywood’s 1606 drama, *The second part of, If you know not me, you know no bodie*. When the characters Pedler and Tawnie-coate enter the merchant Hobson’s shop, Hobson eagerly inquires of the men, “What newes i'the Countrey? what Commodities Are most respected with your countrie Girles?” (sig. B1r). Tawnie-coate gives a response that not only speaks of shifting tastes in fashion but is also laden with sexual connotations:

> our Countrey girles are a kin to your London Courtiers, euery month sicke of a new fashion, the horning buske and silken bridelaces are in good request with the Parsons wife, your huge poking sticke, and french perewig, with Chamber-maides, and waiting-gentlewomen, now your Puritans poker is not so huge, but somewhat longer, a long slender poking sticke is the all in all with your Suffolke Puritane, your silkband, halfe farthingales, and changeable Fore-parts are common, not a wench of thirteene but weares a changeable forepart. (sig. B1r)

When Roger informs Bellafront, “Your ruff and your poker are engendering together upon the cupboard” it works, along with the change in onstage setting, to signal even more clearly for the audience “where” they now are.

Middleton and Dekker’s decision to have Candido’s apprentices call out cambric, holland, and lawn from the door of Candido’s shop helps build the context for the formal economic space, while choosing silk, satin, taffeta and velvet for the flirtatious exchanges within Bellafront’s brothel space helps to fill the stage with connotations of seduction, temptation, and moral decay. It is an oversimplification to assume these fabrics were casually selected by the playwrights, as the associations connected to different fabrics add depth and meaning to the space the playwrights are trying to create. However, while cloth’s contribution of ambience to the onstage space is significant and important to this project’s discussion, cloth’s role in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* looms much larger than merely adding intensity or context to its associated onstage setting. As the rest of this chapter demonstrates, cloth also works to establish Candido within the framework of the idealized patient merchant and to highlight inevitable inconsistencies embedded within the expectations surrounding this character.

The Patient Merchant Ideal

Mulholland states *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* “establishes the paradoxical basis of ‘the patient man’” (“Introduction to *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore”,* 281). It is important for this chapter’s discussion to establish that there was an emerging association of patience with the idealized form of the merchant and that Candido is representative of this type. An ideal merchant was perceived as much more than simply a great accumulator of wealth. While post-Restoration literature praised merchant qualities such as industry and frugality, Laura Stevenson points out in her excellent exploration of the sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century merchant ideal that “Diligence and thrift ...

were simply two among many virtues in which the more responsible members of the elite believed” (154). Portrayals of the merchant moved beyond the singular perspective of the merchant-as-usurer stereotype during the Jacobean period and the ideal merchant became more than one who simply accumulated wealth. When discussing the developing perception of the ideal merchant, Stevenson notes that the ability to work hard and accumulate wealth were just part of a larger view of what was known as “great-spiritedness.” Stevenson states the virtues associated with this emergent view of the ideal merchant were “charity, hospitality, courtesy, liberality, temperance, social duty and justice” (154). Stevenson goes on to state that “if Deloney, Heywood, Dekker and the lesser writers who celebrated businessmen applied the virtues of diligence and thrift to their heroes, they applied them along with the other virtues which were, as yet, inextricably linked with them” (154). While Stevenson is discussing the eventual separation of diligence and thrift from other idealized behavior to the merchant ideal post-Restoration, this passage also makes the point that the ideal merchant was, during this time period, beginning to be assigned the type of forbearance, patience, and moderation so prevalent in Candido’s behavior. It is also interesting to note that Stevenson describes these celebrated businessmen as “heroes,” as in Thomas Deloney’s *Jack of Newbury* (1597). However, while Candido’s behavior lands him squarely in this idealized framework, he would never be categorized as the play’s hero. It is precisely this inconsistency that makes an exploration of this characterization (established with cloth’s help), so intriguing.

This staging and exploration of such city-generated types like the patient man or the patient merchant onstage in early modern city comedy was not uncommon, as Leinwand points out:

> The plays considered here dramatize not the way things are in the City, or some objectively arrived at zeitgeist, so much as the ways Londoners typed one another. In contemporary pamphlets, proclamations, sermons, and ballads, prejudices and stereotypes serving particular interests were formulated and then repeated. Plays enacted, exaggerated, parodied, questioned, or endorsed what was already common coin. (*The City Staged…*, 4)

When Pioratto, Castruccio, and Fluello enter Candido’s shop as customers at the beginning of scene v and the shop call is given, almost as a type of greeting, commercial expectations are established for the audience. The audience naturally anticipates seeing an exchange within a typical draper’s shop, along with the onstage appearance of the particularly successful merchant whose shop this is. As previously stated, the shop call communicates much with regards to Candido’s space, his wealth, and status, but several expository interactions prior to Candido’s initial appearance provide further context for this character. Descriptions of Candido are careful to categorize the draper as not only commercially successful, but to also specifically mark his characterization as a form of hyperbolized long-suffering and patient merchant. In scene ii, as Viola speaks of her husband to her brother, Fustigo, this brief exchange helps to establish Candido’s character early on as a successful draper. Viola tells her brother, “I am married to a man that has wealth enough, and wit enough” (ii.63-64), to which Fustigo replies, “A linen-draper I was told, sister” (ii.65). Viola then continues, describing her husband’s sobriety and success: “[he is] a grave citizen; I want nothing that a wife can wish from a husband” (ii.66-67). Anticipated from Fluello’s initial description as “the mirror of patience” (iv.18), and Viola’s corroborative statement that “No loss of goods can increase in him a wrinkle, no crabbed language make his countenance sour, the stubbornness of no servant shake him; he has no more gall in him than a dove, no more sting than an ant” (ii.80-83), Candido is clearly established as a commercially-focused iteration of this hyperbolized form of the patient man. Additionally, the patient Candido is sympathetically crafted through the utilization of Christ-like imagery, which frames his characterization with positive connotations while simultaneously including a sense of over-idealization or unattainability. The amazement and disbelief other characters exhibit when they witness Candido’s extreme forbearance is demonstrated in Fluello’s reaction to Candido’s calm demeanor after the patient merchant willingly cuts a penny’s worth of lawn from the middle of the bolt at the demand of Castruccio:

> O, but the hateful name of a pennyworth of lawn
> And then cut out i’th’middle of the piece!
> Pah, I guess it by myself: ’twould move a lamb—
> Were he a linen-draper, ’twould, i’faith. (v.124-127)

This association between Candido and Christ-like imagery is echoed later in scene vii as Candido leaves for the senate-house clad in his makeshift carpet gown, after which George tells Viola, “he went away like a lamb” (vii.264). The lamb, in addition to being a metaphor for Christ, is also the obvious source of wool, a common symbol for the domestic cloth trade, emphasizing Candido’s role as a sympathetic English merchant. When explaining his long-suffering nature to the Duke, Candido uses imagery that associates his behavior within idealized, Christ-like, parameters:

> Patience ... ’tis the soul of peace
> Of all the virtues, ’tis near’st kin to heaven.
> It makes men look like gods; the best of men
> That e’er wore earth about him was a sufferer:
> A soft, meek, patient, humble, tranquil spirit
> The first true gentleman that ever breath’d. (xv.526-531)

Korda discusses Candido’s fitting into the framework of the sympathetic cloth merchant, stating, “As his name suggests, Candido is an ‘honest dealing’ (v.60) tradesman, whose wares are of a ‘true weave ... far from falsehood’ (v.61)” (80). While Mulholland is correct that the work does emphasize the paradox inherent in Candido’s long-suffering masculinity (Viola emphatically states of her husband, “he who cannot be angry is no man” [ii.74]), Mulholland misses the mark in his interpretation of Candido as a type of foil for “true” masculinity:

> The other male characters are more conventionally susceptible to rage. Most appear in circumstances in which they succumb to the promptings of hot blood and surrender rational control. Seen against such eruptions Candido’s imperturbable patience calls in question violent, aggressive behaviour construed as a sign of manliness as well as its ideological construction in proverbial form. (“Introduction to *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore”,* 281)

Mulholland’s interpretation of Candido’s role as calling into question violence and aggression as the hallmarks of masculinity, while contributing valuable insight, unfortunately ignores the significant amount of attention the play devotes to the patient merchant as opposed to the other more “typical”

masculine characters. Scenes that emphasize Candido’s forbearance are much more central to the play’s focus than any that feature the more aggressive or swaggeringly boastful male characters. This would better support this chapter’s claim that Candido is carefully constructed not to act as a foil for stereotypical masculinity, but rather to act as a focused embodiment of a different, emerging type: the patient merchant. Candido is not, as Mulholland claims, a contrast for the stereotypical male; rather he is an exploration of idealized masculine patience particularly in relation to the commercial space. Candido’s characterization as an idealized, even-tempered and tolerant merchant demonstrates an emergent stereotype that would become more widespread in writings in the years following *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*.

While there is not a great deal of evidence of the patient merchant ideal in writings before *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, its increased appearance in writings in the years following indicate this was a developing type in the early modern imagination, one which would eventually become a significant fixture of the period. Nicholas Breton demonstrates this framing of the patient merchant ideal within the parameters of patience and civility in a 1633 letter, “To my very good Cousin I.D.,” in which Breton observes of the merchant, “Whose apparel more comely, whose diet more dainty? And whose carriage more commendable? Valiant without quarrels, merie without madnesse, bountifull in their gifts” (79). William Scott’s popular treatise, *An Essay of Drapery* (1635), describes the desirable qualities of a cloth merchant as modesty, sobriety and a pleasant demeanor, stating that the ideal masculine merchant “may carry himselfe, Justly, Pleasingly, and profitably” (11). These descriptions, demonstrating a perception of the long-suffering merchant that existed throughout the first half of the seventeenth century, could easily work to describe the remarkably accommodating characterization of the “wonderfully tempered Signior Candido” (iv.31) who “has no more gall in him than a dove, no more sting than an ant” (ii.82-83). In addition to being a model of patient endurance, the early modern merchant was also perceived as beneficial to the realm, a viewpoint articulated by Breton when he

wonders of the merchant, “how many poore do they relieue at home? What Colledges? What Hospitals? What almshouses haue they builded? And in effect, what Cities haue they enlarged and what Countries haue they enriched?” (79). Thomas Gainsford’s 1616 work, *The Rich Cabinet Furnished with varietie Of Excellent discriptions,* also lauds the patient merchant as benefiting his country, stating, “A citizen is a professor of ciuilities; and liuing in a glorious quiet, maketh the Common-wealth to flourish” (sig. E3r). Such writings demonstrate why Louis B. Wright asserts the romanticized English merchant type eventually became viewed as a “sum of all the civic virtues” in early modern culture (31).

An association between onstage characters and recognizable types was not unfamiliar, as Leinwand states: “Londoners borrowed conventional dramatic types to characterize contemporary merchants and ... playwrights availed themselves of familiar stereotypes to shape their play merchants” (*The City Staged…*, 5). Therefore, while Candido may have been demonstrative of an emerging stereotype of the period rather than a long-established one, Middleton and Dekker still had the ability to captalize on this characterization to compete with assumptions regarding proper masculine behavior. Because Candido is established as a successful, even-tempered merchant, it would seem the audience could reasonably expect such a character to be sympathetically received with appreciation in return for the necessary commercial role he plays. It is important to recognize Candido’s embodiment of this emerging patient merchant stereotype in order to appreciate how the expectations for his character—which cloth helps to establish—eventually go unmet. This is a key point because Candido’s cloth-associated interactions highlight not a “redefinition of the codes of virility” (Mulholland, “Introduction to *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore”,* 281), but instead a gap between the recommended and the real with regards to patient masculinity, particularly in the realm of commerce. Stevenson states the works of writers of the period “formed a popular history of merchants which showed that businessmen had a long tradition of service to the commonwealth and, more particularly, to the crown” (107). In *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*’s conclusion, the Duke’s declaration that Candido will “teach our

court to shine” (xv.551) is a similar type of recognition of the patient merchant ideal as working for the larger national benefit, a sentiment echoed in Fluello’s description of Candido’s remarkable, even noble, stability and patience: “Thou art a bless’d man, and with peace dost deal;/ Such a meek spirit can bless a commonweal” (v.237-238). As Trish Henley states, “in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, Middleton writes a character that in important ways resembles Christ, but shows that these exemplars—men who turn the other cheek—seem ridiculous and pathetic within the patriarchal economy of Jacobean London” (274-275). Henley’s claim is easily supported, as the play’s action and dialogue continually reinforce Candido’s characterization as the long-suffering, honorable merchant ideal. However, it quickly becomes clear that Candido’s insistence to remain patient in all circumstances is going to generate not admiration but rather conflict for the long-suffering merchant. Henley states, “[*The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*’s] dialogic structure demonstrates the inherent contradictions within patriarchal ideology” (279). The earliest mentions of Candido emphasize the merchant’s patience and long-suffering yet simultaneously fall markedly short of a whole-hearted endorsement of this type of behavior. When Castruccio first speaks to his companions about Candido, his description emphasizes his patience yet also categorizes him as an oddity: “the patient man, nay, the monstrous patient man” (iv.8-9). Candido’s long-suffering patience should work for him, as his behavior squarely identifies him as a paragon of admirable behavior. Even the frustrated Viola acknowledges in scene ii, “I am sure my husband is a man in print” (ii.75). Castruccio excitedly encourages his companions to participate in a scheme that will torment the famously long-suffering Candido, telling them, “a pretty sportive conceit new crept into my brain will move excellent mirth” (iv.4-5), which Fluello and Pioratto are most eager to hear. Castruccio excitedly anticipates the amusement he and his companions will have at the patient man’s expense, stating, “think what sport it will be to make this fellow, the mirror of patience, as angry, as vex’d, and as mad as an English cuckold” (iv.17-19). Similarly, Viola, after admitting to her brother that she loves her husband and wants for nothing, expresses her dissatisfaction with Candido,

complaining, “he loves no frets, and is so free from anger that many times I am ready to bite off my tongue, because it wants that virtue which all women’s tongues have, to anger their husbands” (ii.85-88). Seeds of tension are planted as Viola confesses her discontent, alluding to the patient man’s emasculation as she complains to her brother, “he [Candido] has not all things belonging to a man” (ii.67-68), “he who cannot be angry is no man” (ii.74), even hinting at sexual dissatisfaction: “I long, yea, verily do I long” (ii.93). When the gallant Fluello is frustrated at his inability to move Candido to anger at the end of scene v, he informs the patient merchant that he and his companions will take the merchant’s beaker and leave the shop, hoping Candido will bristle at such an explicit challenge to his authority and blatant theft of his property. To this threat the long-suffering linen draper calmly responds, “You know me, sir: I am not of that sin [anger]” (v.173-174). After the mischievous gallants make good on Fluello’s threat and depart with Candido’s beaker, Viola erupts in anger at his mildness, crying, “Why, fool, why, husband, why, madman” (v.184-185). Candido, unperturbed in comparison, sends his apprentice, George, to retrieve his property, sending him away with calm instruction:

> Come hither, George; hie to the constable,
> And in calm order wish him to attach them.
> Make no great stir, because they’re gentlemen,
> And a thing partly done in merriment.
> ’Tis but a size above a jest, thou know’st,
> Therefore pursue it mildly. (v.189-194)

Another example of Candido’s idealized behavior earning a negative response occurs later in scene vii, when Fustigo enters Candido’s shop posing as Viola’s lover in an orchestrated attempt to anger the merchant. During this exchange, Fustigo continually berates Candido, alluding to an illicit sexual rendezvous with Viola and responding to Candido’s welcome with an insulting retort, “The devil’s dung in thy teeth: I’ll be welcome whether thou wilt or no” (vii.25-26). Fustigo even threatens Candido, stating, “I’ll so batter your crown that it shall scarce go for five shillings” (vii.61-62). To all of this Candido remains unmoved, with a meek and humble, “you’re welcome” (vii.24). When Fustigo later wrenches a ring from Viola’s finger and asks Candido if this upsets him, Candido replies evenly, “Angry? Not I”

(vii.33). Candido consistently and ardently establishes himself within the framework of patient masculinity in the face of all poor treatment, even explicitly stating his commitment to patience and mildness: “Let the world say what it can,/ Nothing can drive me from a patient man” (v.246-247).

Candido’s patient masculinity, then, is repeatedly received not with respect or admiration, but rather as a peculiarity or oddity, a quality worthy of abuse or criticism. Appreciating this disconnect or tension between expectation and pragmatism is key, as it can affect one’s understanding of Candido’s significance. This is demonstrated in Leslie Thomson’s discussion of Candido in which she recognizes Candido’s behavior as undermining audience expectations, yet fails to appreciate Candido as representative of the patient merchant ideal. Rather, Thomson describes Candido’s failure to become angered during Fustigo’s attempts to seduce Viola as simply due to the fact that “the avowedly ‘patient’ Candido is either too dim or too phlegmatic to be gulled” (“‘As proper a woman as any in Cheap’…”,153). Leinwand addresses the importance of recognizing this staging of types as it grants the early modern audience a new perspective on such commonly accepted generalizations:

> When a spectator comes to see a stage gallant as a stage merchant can never see him (both are types, and at any one moment either may be typecasting the other, or both may be simultaneously victims and victimizers), he awakens to the tyranny of stereotyping. And when the exaggerated types that populate a city comedy’s intrigues suggest the discrepancy between merchant-as-type and merchant as a bundle of flesh-and-blood particulars, the play challenges its audience’s self-serving prejudices. (*The City Staged…*, 7)

I would further posit that the tension generated between the expectations surrounding Candido’s embodiment of the emergent patient merchant stereotype and other characters’ response to his behavior awakens the audience not just to the “tyranny of stereotyping” as Leinwand claims, but also to the inconsistencies that exist within the expectations associated with this ideal. *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore,* then, ultimately explores the inherent tension that occurs when the idealized patient merchant meets interpersonal exchange. Leinwand describes city comedy’s ability to highlight inconsistencies inherent in readily accepted assumptions as “Comedy’s angled mirror [that] catches the seams and edges of accepted truths. It sets prejudices and authorized accounts in the foreground,

allowing us to see that these are imperfect fits” (*The City Staged…*, 14). Interestingly, however, while Leinwand’s discussion of Jacobean comedy’s staging of types has been useful in this chapter’s attempt to establish Candido as a recognizable type, serving to show that the tension generated by “the discrepancy between merchant-as-type and merchant as a bundle of flesh-and-blood particulars” (*The City Staged…*, 7) would have allowed for an examination of readily accepted assumptions, Leinwand’s own discussion of Candido fails to view the patient merchant within this framework. Rather, Leinwand’s treatment of Candido is somewhat dismissive: “for all his patience, we come to see Candido as a successful shopkeeper. His patience is something of a strategy: we are fond of him for it, and he loses nothing by it” (*The City Staged*…, 70-71). While Candido does assert his patience as a type of commercial strategy (“Oh, he that means to thrive with patient eye/ Must please the devil if he come to buy” [v. 135-136]), and the Duke does restore Candido’s independence and authority at the play’s conclusion, neither of these points mean the patient merchant “loses nothing” throughout the play’s events, and recognizing those losses are key to appreciating the “imperfect fit” that happens repeatedly as the patient merchant ideal meets practicable interpersonal exchange. Leinwand does point out Candido’s rejection by mainstream society, stating “Candido is intolerable as a man of patience ... the Fortune audience is asked to applaud his patience at the same time that it is expected to laugh at it” (*The City Staged…*, 71). Leinwand, then, seems to be acknowledging the paradox that exists as the patient man is rejected by his peers, while simultaneously maintaining that Candido loses nothing as his patience repeatedly leaves him personally and commercially vulnerable to the manipulations and schemes of others. Such opportunities are capitalized on by Viola, Castruccio, and others in ways that do cause the patient merchant loss, as the upcoming examination of the “pennyworth of lawn” and “carpet knight” scenes will demonstrate. Leinwand’s failure to explore what Candido loses throughout his personal and commercial interactions keeps his discussion of *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* from examining one of the very elements of city comedy his own text identifies as significant to the genre. Dismissing

Candido’s characterization too quickly and ignoring the awkward, even alarming reactions to his extraordinary forbearance means the “imperfect fit” that works to emphasize the inconsistency between what is recommended and what is practicable is missed and the overall discussion of the play and of Candido in particular suffers as a result. Not only is it important to acknowledge the loss experienced by Candido as he strives to navigate his personal and commercial exchanges with long-suffering and patience, but particularly relevant to this project is the fact that cloth is at the center of these exchanges, helping to bridge the gap between the ideal and the practical. Cloth becomes the catalyst that highlights these inconsistencies, demonstrating why a long-suffering, patient merchant may seem ideal in theory, but in practice this behavior makes way for much anxiety, dissatisfaction, and loss.

Intersecting Idealism and Pragmatism: Cloth and the Patient Merchant

The cloth-related interactions inside Candido’s shop work to keenly emphasize the tension that exists when idealized expectation meets practicable interaction. Demonstrating the legitimacy of Viola’s struggle with her husband’s behavior, the idealized patient man is manipulated, humiliated, and emasculated while he navigates both personal and commercial interaction. First, it is not the male shopkeeper who initially appears in the shop, it is Viola who takes the stage and authoritatively scolds Candido’s apprentices as they tend to the shop’s wares: “Come, you put up your wares in good order here, do you not think you?” (v.1-2). In addition to shouting orders at George and the other apprentices, she openly criticizes her absent husband’s patience for “spoiling” the servants (v.8), explicitly undermining Candido’s authority within the shop. After the gallants enter and begin to inquire as to the nature and quality of the available cloth in the shop, Candido’s fabrics are described as passive, desirable objects, presented to Castruccio, Fluello, and Pioratto as submissive, even personified entities, introducing the gallants first to “a meek, gentle calico” (v.24). When Castruccio asks, “let’s see a lawn, a choice one, sirrah” (v.20), the exchange notably shifts from a formal, masculine, commercial interchange

to a feminized, highly sexualized one in the patient merchant’s space. The lawn takes a passive, feminized role, as it is described by George and “inspected” by the customers using highly sexualized, brothel-esque language: “purest that ever you fingered” (v.30), “look how even she is, look how clean she is” (v.31-32), “has he fitted your French curse?” (v.38), “compare virgins with harlots ... you shall not find better for your body” (v.40-41, 45), “Is she rough? But if you bid pox on’t sir, ’twill take away the roughness presently” (v.36-37). This sexualizing of Candido’s wares, along with his lack of authority within his space, creates more passive and vulnerable connotations for the patient merchant’s shop, inconsistent with the expectations associated with the romanticized ideal of the successful, forbearing English merchant.

This gap between idealized behavior and practicable exchange is underscored further due to the choice of lawn as the fabric around which the commercial interaction is centered. Multiple texts of the period demonstrate lawn’s associations with delicacy, transparency, and femininity, as demonstrated in a 1596 text attributed to an author only noted as C.M., entitled, *The second part of the historie, called The nature of a woman contayning the end of the strife betwixt Perseus and Theseus*. In this text, the author describes how “Roses through transparent lawne sets out their sweete substance by their fayre shewes” (4). Gonzalo de Cespedes y Meneses demonstrates lawn’s association with femininity in his 1622 work, *Gerardo the unfortunate Spaniard. Or A patterne for lasciuious louers*, as he describes a woman with a “transparent smocke of pure Lawne” (376). Robert Chester further illustrates lawn’s connotations of both femininity and delicacy as he writes of Uther and Igrene in his *Anuals of Great Brittaine* (1611), stating Uther took Igrene’s “lawne-like hand” (44). Lawn’s obvious associations with femininity and fragility help to set the scene in Candido’s shop as sexualized, open, and vulnerable. As a result, when Candido enters at this point in the scene, the shop of the famously patient merchant has already failed to meet the expectations associated with traditional masculine commercial exchange. Candido’s role becomes correspondingly passive and emasculated as he begins to participate—notably,

with a gallant named Castruccio—in the commercial interaction with this same open, vulnerable, sexualized piece of lawn.

The Pennyworth of Lawn

When Candido enters the shop, Castruccio, Fluello, and Pioratto attempt to rile the patient merchant by demanding he cut a “whole pennyworth” (v.70) from a bolt of lawn. The gallants’ request for a single penny’s worth of lawn sets in motion an important, cloth-centered exchange that is key in illustrating how the expectations associated with the idealized patient merchant are dismantled when hyperbole meets reality. Castruccio’s informing Candido he intends to buy just a single penny’s worth of lawn utilizes the cloth to bring the hyperbolized forbearance of the patient merchant squarely into the parameters of commercial exchange. When Candido asks for clarification regarding Castruccio’s initial request for just a penny’s worth to be cut from the bolt of lawn, Castruccio mocks his query, stating, “’Sblood, dost not hear? A whole penn’orth! Are you deaf?” (v.74-75). When Candido replies with a patient explanation, “our wares seldom meet such customers” (v.77), Castruccio dismissively replies, “you and your lawns be so squeamish” (v.78). Candido consistently addresses Castruccio and his companions with respect throughout the humiliating scene, using terms like, “I beseech you” (v.81), “pray, signior” (v.80), and “kind gentlemen,” (v.58). When Castruccio then makes overtures about leaving the shop, to which Candido mildly requests, “Pray stay, a word, pray, signior. For what purpose is it I beseech you?” (v.80-81), Castruccio disdainfully replies, “’Sblood, what’s that to you?” (v.82). As Candido calmly takes a penny from Castruccio and prepares to cut a small square of lawn from the bolt, Castruccio then inflates his unreasonable demand further, stating, “I’ll have it just in the middle, or else not” (v.90). Not from the corner or edge of the bolt, but from its center, a demand that would constitute a significant economic loss for the merchant, as the entire bolt is stated to measure seventeen yards total (v.66). As stated previously, lawn was a rare luxury item which makes acquiescing to such a request

no small cost, which Viola’s dismay illustrates as she exclaims in disbelief, “will he spoil the lawn now?” (v.94). Yet the patient merchant relents, cutting a small square from the center of the bolt, taking the penny from Castruccio while maintaining the recommended long suffering, measured countenance, even asking the departing gallants to return in the future: “Pray, know my shop; Pray, let me have your custom” (v.108-109).

Not only has lawn played a role throughout this scene in emphasizing vulnerability and femininity within Candido’s space, its well-established recognition as a rare luxury item creates a much larger impact throughout this interaction as it highlights the inevitable tension when the idealized form of the patient merchant is inserted into commercial exchange. Candido upholds the codes of patient masculinity lauded in print by Breton and Gainsford, yet he is neither revered nor honored in return. Further, it is the lawn that emphasizes this gap. Expectations break down as the audience realizes that ruining an expensive bolt of lawn for the price of a single penny is obviously no way for a successful draper to run his shop; however, to adhere to the idealized form of the patient merchant, Candido must, as he states, “please the devil if he come to buy” and cut the small square from the delicate fabric, accepting both the customer’s penny and their derision, asking them kindly to return in the future. Candido has become emasculated as he is passive in the manipulations of his customers to damage his cloth and it is that cloth that plays a significant role in framing both the shop as a sexualized, fragile, vulnerable space, and the patient merchant within it as emasculated in the face of manipulative customers.

The Carpet Knight

Another key interaction in which cloth works to highlight the dramatic flaws inherent when idealized long-suffering meets practicable interaction occurs at the close of scene vii, when Candido is informed by an officer that he is expected at the senate-house, to which Candido responds by sending George

straightaway to fetch his senate gown (vii.191). George immediately returns without the gown, telling his master he has not the proper key to retrieve it (vii.197). Viola, seizing this opportunity to drive Candido to anger, refuses to relinquish the key in an exchange contrasting her petulance against the merchant’s forbearance:

> Viola: Come not to me for any key.
> I’ll not be troubled to deliver it.
> Candido: Good wife, kind wife, it is a needful trouble,
> But for my gown.
> Viola: Moths swallow down your gown!
> You set my teeth an edge with talking on’t.
> Candido: Nay, prithee, sweet, I cannot meet without it;
> I should have a great fine set on my head.
> Viola: Set on your coxcomb: tush, fine me no fines!
> Candido: Believe me, sweet, none greets the senate-house
> Without his robe of reverence, that’s his gown.
> Viola: Well, then y’are like to cross that custom once:
> You get nor key, nor gown, and so depart. (vii.198-209)

Viola then exits, leaving Candido and George to discuss the matter. George advises Candido to break open the chest that holds his gown, but even that act of violence is too much for Candido’s mild humor and he adamantly refuses:

> Oh, no. Break open chest? That’s a thief’s office.
> Therein you counsel me against my blood:
> ’Twould show impatience that. Any meek means
> I would be glad to embrace. (vii.218-221)

What happens next clearly illustrates the depths to which the patient man will allow himself to be driven, as up to this point in the plot, the merchant has only endured the manipulations of others within his own private shop space. Candido’s solution will require he endure humiliation in public as well as in the senate-house, among his respected peers. Candido instructs George:

> Go, step up, fetch me down one of the carpets–
> The saddest colour’d carpet, honest George–
> Cut thou a hole I’ th’ middle for my neck,
> Two for mine arms. (vii.222-225)

As George begins to realize his master intends to wear, as a garment to the senate-house, a piece of cloth typically used under foot, under knee, frequently knelt upon by a supplicant in humility, meekness, and abasement, he immediately responds with an incredulous, “I hope you do not think, sir, as you mean” (vii.226). The unflappable Candido ignores George’s disapproval, placing the carpet on his body and a nightcap on his head, hoping to appear “as if my health were queasy” (vii.242). After dressing in his carpet, Candido removes any question of his mental acuity as he demonstrates both cognizance and acceptance of his humiliation and requests of George, “Do not laugh at me till I’m out of sight” (vii.253).

The fact that Candido must wear something other than the prescribed senate gown is a significant departure from custom as it removes the visual signifiers allowing others to identify Candido according to his social status. However, his appearance in carpet specifically is an excellent example of cloth’s role in emphasizing a particular characterization point. Viola’s refusal to grant Candido access to his own property undermines his masculine authority while simultaneously emphasizing the patient merchant’s remarkable self-control. However, the fact that it is carpet Candido chooses to use as a substituting material to place upon his body explicitly stresses, as does lawn, the level of manipulation and humiliation this character will willingly endure rather than allow his temper to flare. It is important to point out that carpets, in most forms, were luxury goods, as demonstrated in Christopher Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine, Part Two* (1588):

> The pavement underneath thy chariot-wheels
> With Turkey-carpets will be covered,
> And cloth of arras hung about the walls,
> Fit objects for thy princely eye to pierce. (I.iii 42-45)

However, the wording in this scene, as well as the reactions to Candido’s appearance while wearing the carpet, pointedly demonstrate this carpet as possessing more humble and low associations. After choosing to wear his makeshift carpet-gown to the senate, rather than becoming angry at his wife, Candido congratulates himself for electing to react to his wife’s manipulations with an even temper, stating, “Out of two evils he’s accounted wise/ That can pick out the least” (vii.229-230), noting that he

“Preserv’d [his] patience, foil’d her desperate wit” (vii.234). However, as is borne out in the ensuing action, Candido’s demonstration of idealized long-suffering results in what is perceived as highly illogical behavior in interpersonal exchange, earning the merchant not admiration or appreciation but rather scorn and ridicule.

Further crafting an emasculated identity for the patient merchant, carpet also possessed effeminate, subjugated, and unproven associations. As George helps Candido place the carpet on his body, he alludes to its effeminate connotations, stating, “It must come over your head, sir, like a wench’s petticoat” (vii.238-239). According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, carpet, “became an attribute of luxury and effeminancy ... of the chamber, drawing room, or court, as opposed to the camp or field” (“carpet, n.”). This connection of carpet with emasculated, untested connotations is illustrated in multiple early modern works, such as Henry Cockeram’s *The English Dictionarie* (1623), which, in the section titled, “Men that were Captains,” describes the Greek hero, Paris, stating that, “Homer describes him to be rather a Carpet Captaine, rather then a Warriour” (sig. H8v). In Anthony Munday’s *Zelauto: The Fountaine of Fame* (1580), Munday uses this term to describe the extorting usurer, Signor Truculento, in effeminate terms: “This carpet Knight, hauing pounced him selfe vp in his perfumes, and walking so nice on the ground, that he would scant bruse an Onion” (130). A disdain for such an untried masculine element is exhibited in Phillip Massinger’s *The Bashful Lover* (1655), when Uberti states to Matilda, “I rejoice, rare Princess, that you are not to be won/ By Carpet-courtship, but the sword” (I.i.336-337). Samuel Ward, in his 1618 sermon, *Iethro’s iustice of peace*, laments of “our straight buttoned, carpet and effeminate Gentry, wanting, cannot indure to hold out a forenoon or afternoone sitting without a Tobacco baite, or a game at Bowles, or some such breathing to refresh their bodies and mindes, litle acquainted with the tediousnes of wise and serious businesse” (17). George makes this allusion clear as he observes, “Now looks my master just like one of our carpet knights” (vii.258-259). Combined with the pennyworth of lawn exchange, this image of the patient merchant, separated from

his senate robes and forced to dress in a manner that would cause his own servants to laugh at him, is one of emasculation and subjugation both in the commercial and domestic realm. The patient man, while idealized in print, is explicitly demonstrated to be significantly lacking, particularly in the realm of commercial practice, and cloth is the bridge which then can bring idealized form to realistic interaction, forcing the inevitable tension when romanticized characters transition into staged interpersonal exchange.

Cloth Ownership

The contradiction made obvious between idealized behavior and interpersonal exchange creates situations that are awkward for Candido’s character at best and at worst, hazardous. Besides causing the patient merchant embarrassment or commercial loss, Candido’s behavior—particularly in relation to cloth—eventually categorizes him so significantly as an “other” that the merchant, emasculated and removed from his autonomy, is forcibly committed to Bedlam. Because of the nature of the typical comedic plotline, there is the expected restoration for Candido at the play’s finale—a restoration in which cloth again plays an important role. Cloth ownership is brought to the forefront as the Duke visits Bedlam and questions Candido about his odd behavior. Candido is able to regain his masculine identity and his autonomy as a citizen only after he reaffirms his ownership of the fabrics most directly involved in his questionable behavior: the lawn and the carpet. Candido affirms to the Duke that the reports of his odd behavior are correct, referring specifically to his actions in relation to the lawn and the carpet: “I did cut out/ Pennyworths of lawn, the lawn was yet mine own;/ A carpet was my gown, yet ’twas mine own” (xv.508-510). While acknowledging he has acted unconventionally with cloth in particular, Candido follows each admission with a clear establishment of his ownership of those materials. After hearing Candido’s explanation and declaration of ownership, the Duke believes this reconciles the

tension and confusion surrounding Candido’s character, restoring his identity and autonomy as a stable shop owner and the head of his household:

> Who dare say
> He’s mad whose words march in so good array?
> ... Come therefore, you shall teach our court to shine;
> So calm a spirit is worth a golden mine. (xv.547-551)

While Candido’s behavior in cloth-related interactions plays a primary role in his emasculation and is apparently sufficient evidence to commit him to the asylum, Candido’s sovereignty over these same materials becomes the final determinant in the question of his sanity and stability. Candido’s patience has allowed the merchant to be manipulated, humiliated, and controlled to the point where he has lost all autonomy over his property and his person, yet the deciding factor in his fate is that his is the name on the proverbial deed. The shop is his, as is the cloth within it, so the patient merchant is restored in the end to a position of masculine authority. Cloth provides a tangible anchor for the concept of ownership as it establishes a kind of paradox of authority for the patient merchant. For Candido, cloth ownership leaves the owner vulnerable to the manipulations of others, potentially emasculating him, yet ultimately it is what earns him his eventual freedom and legitimacy.

While the conclusion of *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* appears to be one of harmony and reconciliation, when viewed with a more careful consideration of cloth’s role in crafting compelling representational practices it reminds the audience of the inconsistencies and tensions underpinning the ideal of masculine patience and the social re-integration of the “other.” The play concludes with a sympathetic endorsement of patient masculinity, simultaneously recognizing value in the ideal while admitting its lack of feasibility. The Duke qualifies his own affirmation of Candido’s lucidity—“Who dare say/ He’s mad whose words march in so good array?” (xv.547-548)—with the recognition, “’Twere sin all women should such husbands have,/ For every man must then be his wife’s slave” (xv.549-550). Elevated at times to a Christ-like figure, lamb imagery establishes the patient merchant as an allusion to Christ as well as a representative figure of England’s national identity instrinsic to wool. Yet, even these

allusions are qualified and shy away from a full endorsement of the recommended behavior for the patient merchant. As Mulholland states, “Although the Duke proposes to use him as an example to ‘teach our court to shine,’ Candido’s accommodation into the play world is conditional on a recognition that he is unique” (“Introduction to *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore”,* 285). Other characters’ descriptions of Candido, like Fluello’s “Oh, wondrous man, patient ’bove wrong or woe” (v.137) and Viola’s exclamation, “I have a saint and not a man” (xii.186), while sympathetic, reiterate the idea that this idealized form of patient masculinity, while admirable, remains outside the norm, always reiterating this separation between the recommended and the real, the ideal and the actual. The patient merchant is an idealized form, yet when *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* puts recommended behaviors into practice, cloth becomes the catalyst to bridge the gap between ideal and real and something is inevitably lost in translation. Rather than appreciated and revered, Candido is perceived as emasculated and experiences significant impediments within what should be normal commercial interactions, as the integration of the ideal within an admittedly non-idealistic society is not seamless.

From *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*’s beginning, cloth obviously plays a significant role in what Greenblatt calls “compelling representational practices” (172). Cloth establishes expectations for the patient merchant and his shop, explicitly exhibits a significant breakdown of those expectations as it works as a catalyst that brings the idealized character type into realized interaction, and finally works to reestablish that same merchant’s identity, with an explicit recognition that such a man, while ideal, cannot be a literal expectation in interpersonal interaction.

Chapter Two – *Michaelmas Term*

While there is twentieth- and twenty-first-century scholarship that addresses Middleton’s use of character types in *Michaelmas Term* to embody stereotypical fears and cautionary tales associated with London’s streets, most does not include cloth in the discussion. Leinwand mentions the play’s animation of stereotypes such as Quomodo’s cozening draper and Lethe’s prodigal gallant, but his discussion does not include cloth’s role in “animating the ideologies that inform tropes and types” (“Introduction to *Michaelmas Term*”, 336) within the play. Leinwand’s account of “the interplay of desire and calculation, of pleasure and discomfort, stimulated in and by *Michaelmas Term*” (336) is an excellent description of the play’s machinations of plot to vivify these character types associated with the landscape of the city, yet the cloth that is frequently the focus of these exchanges, the material that helps to highlight pleasure and pain, gain and loss in London’s streets and shops, is not mentioned. Leinwand points out *Michaelmas Term* is a drama focused on the “predatory system” of the city (336); however, ignoring the villain’s primary commercial weapon—cloth—fails to examine the very tools of this “predatory system.” Bruster points out that, “although these plays are not only about objects, the physical props of Elizabethan and Jacobean farce nonetheless composed an important constituent of the drama’s cultural grammar” (*Drama and the Market…*, 65-66). *Michaelmas Term*, at its core, is a drama entrenched in commercial scheming in which cloth finds itself consistently center stage in those interactions. The cozening merchant’s success, the naïve country gentleman’s ruin, the prodigal gallant’s advancement, the country wench’s corruption, all hinge upon cloth in some way. Quomodo’s cloth-based interactions are central to his attempts at status climbing as he cozens Richard Easy, schemes which are only available to the conniving draper due to his access to and ownership of cloth. The immediate shift in the prodigal Lethe’s status, repeatedly framed within the parameters of a change in his apparel from a suit of kersey to a suit of satin, is also not mentioned in Leinwand’s discussion. The cozening draper, the

prodigal gallant, and the country wench-turned-courtesan are significant to *Michaelmas Term*’s communicating the pitfalls of the city, of greed and vice, but without a discussion of the cloth so frequently playing a role within these characters’ interactions throughout the play, a discussion of Middleton’s use of stereotypes seems incomplete.

While *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* utilizes cloth to bridge the gap between idealized behavior and praticable interaction, *Michaelmas Term*, a city comedy that emerged between late 1604 and early 1606, features cloth primarily in a sartorial role. Utilized both as literal investiture—apparel—onstage and repeatedly referenced as various items of clothing in *Michaelmas Term*’s dialogue, cloth works to animate the characters associated with the “man-devouring city” (II.ii.21). These types, with their identities and fortunes forged and/or lost at least in part due to cloth’s role as a visual marker demonstrate cloth’s emerging association with unreliability and suspicion. Middleton’s plot with a cozening woollen draper at its center highlights cloth’s ability to act as an external signifier of status, worth, and/or character while simultaneously demonstrating the increased fear and distrust associated with this external marker of value at the beginning of the seventeenth century, exploring the fallout of its developing unreliability in realms of estimation and social mobility.

Michaelmas Term follows the scheming of Ephestian Quomodo, a rich cloth merchant, whose obsession with social advancement leads him to create an elaborate scheme to cozen Richard Easy, a gentleman from Essex, out of his lands. The play highlights the moral decay associated with London’s streets, following the wicked and duplicitous behavior of Master Quomodo and his associates Shortyard and Falselight as they cheat the trusting country gentleman out of his inheritance. After Easy arrives in the city and immediately commits himself to hosting a dinner for his newly-met fellow gentlemen, he visits the dice tables and promptly loses all of the cash he has on hand. Shortyard and Falselight convince the gullible youth to ask Master Quomodo for a loan, which Easy does. Quomodo, after claiming all of his money is tied up in other debts, offers to loan Easy two-hundred pounds worth of

cloth, assuring him he can sell it to any cloth merchant in town and quickly obtain the cash he so readily requires, so long as Easy signs as a guarantor on the note. Thanks to the nefarious plotting of Quomodo and the help of Shortyard and Falselight, multiple duplicitous roadblocks follow that plunge Easy deeper into debt and prevent him from obtaining any cash on hand until, to keep himself out of prison, the naïve gentleman has no other option but to sign over all of his lands to the scheming cloth merchant. In addition to the cozening of Easy, the play also follows the upstart Andrew Lethe, who, after abandoning his original surname (Gruel) and identity as a poor “tooth-drawer’s son” (II.i.158), becomes an adept social climber with new clothing and “sudden fortunes” (I.ii.215). Lethe’s pander, Hellgill, is sent to the country to find a maid to become Lethe’s whore—which Hellgill does—while Lethe simultaneously schemes to marry Master Quomodo’s daughter, Susan. Quomodo’s wife, Thomasine, distrusts Lethe and feels he is unworthy of her daughter’s hand, calling him “A base, proud knave” (II.iii.10). Thomasine supports her daughter’s other suitor, the gallant Rearage, who has been banned from visiting Susan’s home by Master Quomodo as the corrupt merchant unsurprisingly supports the upstart Lethe’s suit for his daughter’s hand. Meanwhile, Lethe’s mother arrives in the city to find work and, after she fails to recognize her prodigal son in his rich apparel, Lethe hires her as his drudge to do his bidding. After obtaining Easy’s lands, Quomodo then fakes his own death to discover how his assets will be managed after his passing and how well he will be mourned by his family. This proves to be a monumental error as Quomodo finds his son, Sim, remembers him with shame, calling his father “a lewd fellow” (IV.iv.42). Additionally, Quomodo discovers Sim has allowed himself to be cheated out of the inheritance his “deceased” father left him by the scheming Shortyard. Thomasine also does not genuinely mourn her husband’s passing, marrying Richard Easy immediately following the funeral and telling Easy and the authorities all about the swindling schemes of Shortyard, Falselight, and Quomodo. Quomodo then enters, disguised as a beadle and ignorant of the new marriage, requesting payment for his services at the funeral. Thomasine pays him and Quomodo signs a memorandum with his real name—Ephestian

Quomodo—stating he is owed nothing further by Richard Easy. After revealing himself to his wife and discovering her marriage to Richard Easy, Quomodo brings the matter before a judge in the play’s conclusion. The judge, after seeing the memorandum signed by Quomodo, takes the document as sufficient proof that the merchant is owed nothing further from Richard Easy. In addition to meting out Quomodo’s punishment, the judge banishes Shortyard and Falselight “ever more the land” (V.iii.167) and forces Lethe to marry the country wench whom Hellgill convinced to turn courtesan. Lethe’s true identity is also revealed to his mother, who remarks how thoroughly corrupted her son has been by the city, exclaiming, “This country has e’en spoiled thee since thou cam’st hither” (V.iii.168-169).

Shifting Apparel

Despite its central role in this commercially driven plot, no cloth is actually “sold” in *Michaelmas Term*. While Quomodo, like Candido in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, does make the traditional shop call, “What lack you, gentlemen?” (II.iii.104-105), advertising broadcloth and kersey from his shop’s door (a mention that will be explored later in this chapter), this particular draper is never depicted in the actual act of selling any cloth, nor is cloth prominently featured as a sales commodity. While *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* utilizes cloth as a commodity to help provide context and depth for the merchant’s commercial space as well as Candido’s characterization, *Michaelmas Term* features cloth specifically in a habilimental role. Middleton’s use of investiture in his work has been explored in modern scholarship, but such discussion primarily emphasizes the playwright’s use of clothing as disguise, as when Karim-Cooper states, “Middleton’s use of disguise reveals a preoccupation with the enactment of gender and the materials that enable it” (280), further observing that such a utilization of apparel demonstrates “the transferable properties of clothing in the making and unmaking of gender” (283). While this type of analysis is particularly helpful when discussing plays like *The Roaring Girl* (which this project examines in Chapter Four), it is limiting to consider Middleton’s use of apparel solely in the

role of disguise. While some view the communicative potential of investiture lying primarily in the realm of masquerade, it is not the only role for investiture in Middleton’s (or others’) dramatic works nor is it the only form in which cloth can communicate significant meaning within these dramatic systems. While disguise is employed repeatedly in *Michaelmas Term* by both Shortyard and Falselight to deceive Richard Easy, and the former Andrew Gruel dons a satin suit and changes his name to Andrew Lethe, disguise is not clothing’s central role in this work. Rather, shifting apparel is repeatedly featured to signal a change in status, purpose, or wealth, as when the personified Michaelmas Term changes his robes or the country wench casts off her humble “weeds” for a more luxurious gown. Even Lethe’s shift from a suit of kersey to one of satin seems to be perceived less as a disguise and more as an attempt to advance himself, hoping his clothes will communicate a newfound wealth and others will accept his new identity. This attempt obviously fails, as multiple characters repeatedly remind the “upstart” Lethe of his humble beginnings throughout the play. Thomasine Quomodo, for example, scorns Lethe in Act II, scene iii, stating Lethe “has forgot how he came up, and brought two of his countrymen to give their words to my husband for a suit of green kersey. A has forgotten all this. And now does he appear to me when his white satin suit’s on’ (II.iii.10-14). While Lethe’s mother does not recognize her son, making Lethe’s satin suit an effective disguise in these interchanges, everyone else in the play repeatedly recognizes and reminds the “tooth drawer’s son” that he has just recently advanced up the social ladder. If the play, then, does not feature disguise as much as it emphasizes a shift in apparel, twentieth- and twenty-first-century analysis of *Michaelmas Term* would benefit from an increased focus on this transition in clothing as demonstrative of the relationship between investiture, social mobility, and esteem much more prominently.

For example, *Michaelmas Term*’s first three scenes all either require an explicit onstage change of attire or feature dialogue that emphasizes the transformative power inherent in the putting on or removal of apparel. In the play’s introductory scene, a personified Michaelmas Term takes the stage

with “*a Boy bringing his gown after him*” (I.i.0 SD). Before any of the drama’s dialogue, this entry focuses the audience’s attention squarely on a shift in apparel. As Michaelmas Term prepares to head to London for “this silver harvest” (I.i.10), he acknowledges the role of clothing both as a ceremonial display and as an outward signifier of inward intent, telling his boy, “Give me my gown, that weed is for the country,/ We must be civil now, and match our evil” (I.i.2-3). He notes specifically, as he places the “civil black” (I.i.4) upon his body, that his focus is now upon a more selfish intent. From the moment the personified Michaelmas Term’s clothing has changed, he acknowledges a new awareness of where he is, as though the clothing helps the character triangulate his space, stating, “So, now I know where I am” (I.i.5). This shift in apparel marks an immediate focus on power and monetary gain in the dialogue, as Michaelmas Term describes his “contentious fathom [power],” exulting, “my hand’s free,/ From wronger and from wronged I have fee,” and wonders if there is sufficient profit to be gained: “Come they [litigants] up thick enough?” (I.i.7-8, 13). A change in clothing marks a change in activity, responsibility, pursuit, and frame of mind. Michaelmas Term’s change of attire is the precursor to the scene’s discussion of power, money, gain, and exploitation. However, before any of this conversation happens, the embodied Term must first “lay by [his] conscience” (I.i.1) and put on the “civil black.” Following this change of clothing, nefarious purposes are frequently described when discussing Michaelmas Term’s expected activities, as when the other three personified Terms state,

> May much contention still keep with thee.
> Many new fools come up and see thee.
> Let ’em pay dear enough that see thee.
> And like asses use such men,
> When their load’s off, turn ’em to graze again. (I.i.36-40)

While this exchange likely says more about stereotypes surrounding lawyers and litigation than clothing, it is important to note throughout the interchange that clothes are used to represent the results of such cunning, as the double entendre of “suit” is featured repeatedly: “Many a suit, and much neglect” (I.i.42), “You shall have suits come sixteen times about” (I.i.52). Obviously the legal meaning of “suit” is

the primary intended association in these instances, but the subtle association with apparel exists as well. Note the verb used to describe the “poor fellow’s” advancement communicates suspicious connotations, stating he “*Crept* up in three Terms” (I.i.32, emphasis added). By the end of this initial scene, cloth has been repeatedly established as an outward attributor of inner qualities; however, its association with suspicion and uncertainty are deliberately featured as well.

In scene two, when London gallants Rearage and Cockstone discuss the rise of the Scottish upstart Andrew Lethe, they frame Lethe’s transformation with similar references to a change in clothing, using the same verbiage as in the introductory scene: “One Andrew Lethe, *crept* to a little warmth” (I.ii.65, emphasis added). Rearage describes Lethe as “now so proud that he forgets all storms; ... now shines bright/ In rich embroideries” (I.ii.66-69). Shifts in apparel continue to be associated with a change in circumstance or status in the play’s third scene when the pander, Hellgill, persuades the country wench to turn courtesan. Echoing the famous scene from Marlowe’s *Tamburlaine, Part One* (1588) when the hero removes his shepherd’s attire to reveal armour beneath: “Lie here ye weeds that I disdain to wear!” (I.ii.41), the country wench embraces her new identity using cloth to mark her change in occupation and social status: “So farewell wholesome weeds where treasure pants,/ And welcome silks, where lies disease and wants” (I.iii.55-56). The country wench, putting aside her “wholesome weeds,” also casts aside her virtue, surrendering herself to her new role as she chooses to place on her body silks, “where lies disease.”

The association of a shift in status with a shift in apparel continues in Act II when Thomasine Quomodo describes the transformation of Andrew Gruel into Andrew Lethe. After arriving in the city, Thomasine describes “Gruel” as begging her husband for “a suit of green kersey”(II.iii.12), which he was given, and not long after this, the prodigal gallant changes his name and his social status, finally appearing with “his white satin suit’s on” (II.iii.13-14) as a suitor for Quomodo’s daughter. The play continues to depict or discuss the putting on or removal of clothing in Act III when the country wench

enters according to the stage directions, “*[as a Courtesan] with a new fashion gown*” (III.i.0 SD). As the country wench enters, the pander Hellgill lauds luxurious clothing’s power to give and take away social clout, exclaiming of this transformation, “What base birth does not raiment make glorious? And what glorious births do not rags make infamous?” (III.i.2-4). While Hellgill’s statement is indicative of a much more positive perception of what such a “new fashion gown” can do for the country wench-turned-whore than the country wench’s earlier acquiescence that she will “welcome silks, where lies disease and wants,” both statements associate a shift in apparel with a shift in circumstance or status. This continues in the play’s final scene when Mother Gruel, after recognizing her son, immediately questions his new clothing: “is this a suit fit for thee?” (V.iii.157). Concerned, she chastises him, calling his new identity, “spoiled” and, as mentioned in the Introduction, she laments how he has changed, now possessing “whole clothes and ragged manners” (V.iii.158,160). Mother Gruel then states, “the truth goes naked, for when thou hadst scarce a shirt, thou hadst more truth about thee” (V.iii.161-162). By the play’s end, the audience has seen multiple characters gaining nefarious or undeserved social advancement described utilizing the framework of a change of apparel.

Sartorial Display and the Negation of Birthright

As cloth possessed a long-established role in helping London’s inhabitants visually determine status, wealth, and authority, *Michaelmas Term*’s repeated depiction of the taking off or putting on of clothing as characters participate in their nefarious or undeserved advancement animates post-sumptuary repeal-related tensions and unease surrounding cloth, visual credibility, as well as the larger issue of social mobility. Middleton’s use of shifting apparel to highlight shifts in status or virtue or wealth for his characters emphasizes the rising distrust associated with visually-based social capital while simultaneously demonstrating the negation of birth. Mathew Martin describes the increasing tenuousness associated with status and birthright, stating that the “cycles of accumulation and

consumption ... transform [the characters’] birth, the boundary between citizen and gentry ... into an empty sign incapable of signifying” (par. 7). The desire to address and regulate apparel in a society so heavily dependent upon sartorial display for determining social status is understandable, as the ability to ascertain class and authority would have been considerably inhibited by a rise in wealth and procurement of luxury commodities by the lower classes. These orders of apparel were periodically revised and reissued in an attempt to address this confusion, as demonstrated in Elizabeth I’s 1588 proclamation, which states, “The Queenes Maiestie hath considered into what extremities a great number of her Subiects are fallen by the vnordinate excesse in apparell, contrary both to the good lawes of the Realme, and to her Maiesties former admonitions by her Proclamations, and to the confusion of degrees of all estates” (13 February 1588, 30 Elizabeth I). While this discussion of cloth in *Michaelmas Term* requires an appreciation that the perception of cloth as a reliable outward indicator of worth or intent was undergoing a significant change during the period, it also necessitates an understanding as to why this shift was happening. As discussed briefly in the Introduction, England experienced a transition in the monarchy at the turn of the seventeenth century with the death of Elizabeth I in 1603. Negley B. Harte discusses the decline of long-held sumptuary legislation, stating these laws were “repealed in 1604 for political and constitutional reasons rather than because of any opposition to the principle of state control of dress” (148). Bly’s reiteration of the events surrounding the repeal is particularly helpful in gaining a clearer picture of precisely how this was achieved in the House of Commons:

> On 24 March, a bill was introduced into the House of Commons that repealed previous statutes involving apparel, including those that gave the King the right to regulate dress by proclamation (as Elizabeth had done). It was vigorously debated, and rejected. On 22 June, a different apparel bill was introduced, this one a conventional law designed “To restrain the excessive Wearing of Cloth of Gold, Cloth of Silver, Gold and Silver Lace, &c.” After being, as the Journal of the House of Commons noted, “much disputed,” the bill was put aside, only to be disputed again on 23 June. The bill that finally passed the Commons was close to the first bill, as the record notes that it passed “only upon this Reason; that it repealeth all former Laws touching Apparel.” Apparently the first bill that was rejected by the Commons was passed by the Lords and then resubmitted to the Commons and passed into law. (591)

Maria Hayward states that this repeal was largely due to pressue from the increasingly wealthy and powerful merchant classes as well as the influence of the new King’s lower-born Scottish favorites (25). These changes, along with the cessation of conflict with Spain following the Anglo-Spanish treaty of 1604, were but a few of numerous other significant social and economic evolutions at the turn of the seventeenth century; however, with regards to cloth’s availability and use among London’s citizens and its ramifications upon social mobility, these shifts were seismic. Supple points out the significant expansion the cloth trade experienced during this period: “the last years of Elizabeth ... were followed by a decade of expansion and prosperity in the cloth trade ... For England the opening of the markets of Spain and Flanders, the easing of the sea routes to the Levant, and the elimination of most of the heavy risks of trade occasioned by marauding privateers, all provided a better environment for commerce” (28-29). Early seventeenth-century London, then, was experiencing a major cultural shift as James I’s repeal of long-standing sumptuary legislation, along with a rise in the purchasing power of the middling sort, granted access to luxury goods to a much broader demographic than ever before. As Martin states, “the social mobility concentrated in London transformed consumption, formerly the exclusive mark of those born into the upper reaches of society, into a signifier subject to appropriation and manipulation by anyone with enough money or enough wits to obtain the credit to finance his or her social performances” (par. 5). The availability of previously forbidden forms of cloth to this wide range of social classes naturally led to an increased susceptibility to and potential for deception and nefarious advancement, in which cloth played an inevitable role. Martin discusses the expansion of access to previously forbidden commodities and the resulting ramifications in the realm of conspicuous consumption, stating, “The developing capitalist forces reshaping England’s economy, then, broadened the possibilities for theatrical modes of existence, played out most visibly on the nation’s largest stage, London ... Conspicuous consumption privileges social appearance over innate social essence: being seen to consume is what is important, and London provided the largest audience available” (par. 5). While

Supple is accurate in his assessment of the cloth industry’s boom during this period, Martin points out these developments resulted in an obvious expansion of availability and the ensuing procurement and display was not seen by all as a social positive. Sumptuary legislation had been intended to ensure fiscal restraint and responsibility, placing limits on indulgence, and to prevent English wealth from pouring into foreign coffers, in addition to ensuring what Martin calls an “ideal social language” (par. 6) in which outward signifiers could communicate clearly and quickly one’s place within the echelons of London society. While the increased availability of luxury goods across the social strata generated concern that associated foreign cloth with economic hardship and moral decay (as will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter Three), it also increased suspicion in relation to cloth’s role in visual distinction. The removal of this barrier forbidding the general citizenry access to numerous material luxuries along with the rising purchasing power of the merchant class only magnified the concern Philip Stubbes expressed several years earlier in *Anatomie of Abuses* (1583):

> now there is such a confuse mingle mangle of apparell in Ailgna, and such preposterous excesse therof, as euery one is permitted to flaunt it out, in what apparell he lust himselfe, or can get by anie kind of meanes. So that it is verie hard to knowe, who is noble, who is worshipfull, who is a gentleman, who is not: for you shall haue those, which are neither of the nobylitie gentilitie, nor yeomanry, no, nor yet anie Magistrat or Officer in the common welth, go daylie in silkes, veluets, satens, damasks, taffeties and such like, notwithstanding that they be both base by byrthe, meane be estate, & seruyle by calling. This is a great confusion & a general disorder. (sig. C3r)

Martin points out that, while Stubbes articulates an early modern association of extravagant dress with sin and pride, his concern with the broader availability of modes of dress was “not merely a function of Stubbes’ moral severity. For Stubbes, dress as a mode of conspicuous consumption was the most visible register of the disruptions and displacements afflicting birth and the modes of social perception founded on it” (par. 6). Just as Stubbes was concerned with the moral fallout associated with luxurious dress, or “the execrable sinne of Pride, and excesse in apparel” (sig. B1v), he was similarly dismayed at the “great confusion & a general disorder” which he lays at the feet of conspicuous consumption. After the repeal of sumptuary legislation—twenty years after the first publication of *Anatomie of Abuses*—concern with

this “great confusion & general disorder” grew, focusing pointedly on the breakdown of the ability to accurately assess birthright by using once reliable visual cues. Simply put, this shift created an increased suspicion of previously trusted methods for assessing and granting esteem and authority, methods that were grounded in appearance and almost entirely cloth-based.

Early modern writings document this developing distrust associated with cloth’s role in social mobility and its potential for superseding of the significance of birthright in the years immediately following James I’s repeal of sumptuary legislation. Henry Crosse expresses this concern in *The Schoole of Pollicie: or The araignement of state-abuses Directing magistrates, adorning the court, and beautifying the whole common-wealth* (1605):

> Euery base Tapster or Oastler, will be as fine as a Gentleman. we shall see Pride ruffle in base Rustickes, for euery one wil be in the fashion, howsoeuer they come by it; the seruant cannot be knowne from the Maister, the maide from the Mistris, nor scarce any mans estate distinguisht by his apparell; but euery slouenly seruingman, and greasie scrape-trencher will exceede the boundes of his calling, and creepe into acquaintance with veluet, sattin, and such costly stuffe, too high I wisse for their lowe estate, and laie all they can rap and rend on their backes, in swaggering and vaine apparel, to seeme a clout of lowsie gentilitie. (sig. L1r)

Another example demonstrating this apprehension with the awarding of status or credibility based in appearance during these years is illustrated in Richard West’s 1608 text, *Wits A.B.C. or A Centurie of Epigrams*:

> Folly hath lately crowned Fashion king,
> Fashion commands, fashion rules euery thing.
> In court, in countrey, in cittie, and towne,
> Old, yong, men, women feare fashions frowne.
> For aske your Sattin swaggring Caualiere,
> Wherefore his purse containes scarce one deniere? (sig. B1r)

The perception of cloth’s power as a visual marker had transformed from reliable indicator of what lies beneath to a tool to cozen, to deceive, to advance without merit. Crosse laments the greed and undeserved advancement of the age, demonstrating the perception of cloth’s role in social deception, complaining, “And to what end serueth this greedie desire of gaine, but to make logger-head the sonne, march before the cormorant his father in some worldly pompe, and to couer his fine daughter Sib, with

Cobweb-lawne to catch butterflyes: this is not the high-way to honour” (sig. I2v). Yet another example of this concern is found in Robert Pricket’s *Times Anotomie. Containing: the poore mans plaint, Brittons trouble, and her triumph* (1606),

> Let vertue in a poore man cleerely shine,
> A guilded gull is counted more diuine.
> A sattin suite, be dawb’d with siluer lace,
> Beyond desart, doth vildest clounship grace.
> Immodest talke, and shameles ribaldry,
> With monstrous oathes is court like blasphemy.
> In mony now there is such wondrous might,
> As that a clowne will striue to be a knight. (sig. C1r)

The notion that one’s birth could no longer be accurately communicated by one’s investiture took one of the staples of class designation and turned it on its proverbial head.

Achieving an increase in esteem or authority based in commodified self-fashioning was characterized as unstable, unnatural, contrary to the natural order of things. One who achieves such social mobility was regarded in some writings of the period as undeserving and unworthy, having avoided the necessary responsible steps required to earn legitimate advancement. This is expressed in John Mason’s drama, *The Turke* (1610): “I have seene ignorance in the shape of a citizen muffled in the scarlet of magistracy that could not write his owne name. Generally I haue noted through the whole Country great enmity betweene witt and clokes lin’d through with veluet” (sig. E4v). Cloth’s role in ill-gotten esteem continued to be an issue of complaint over the next several decades, as demonstrated in Martin Parker’s *Knauery in all Trades, Or, Here’s an Age would make a man mad* (1632):

> Men now make no conscience of oaths,
> And this I may boldly say,
> Some Rorers doe were gallant clothes,
> For which they did neuer pay:
> The rich shall a Saint be made,
> Though his life be neuer so bad,
> *All honesty is decay’d,*
> *here’s an age would make a man mad*. (412, emphasis added)

Martin discusses the rise in significance for what he terms “theatrical existence” and the associated fallout for status and birthright, stating, “As the nation’s political and economic capital London was the ideal home or terminus for the socially mobile, and as a developing centre of conspicuous consumption London did not merely accommodate but positively encouraged theatrical existence” (par. 5). Middleton’s utilization of cloth in *Michaelmas Term* to establish various characters as generalized types—such as the prodigal gallant, Lethe, in his new satin suit—demonstrates how such a “theatrical existence” enabled a negation of birthright. If cloth is recognized as a visual marker of status and/or authority, and that recognition is then used to award credit or advance in social rank (however unreliable or deceptive), then categories can potentially become elevated to encompass a character’s identity. Reliance upon cloth results in categorizations of character rather than individual reality. Identity based in visual marking in *Michaelmas Term* negates the body beneath and what remains is merely a type, a flattened entity. Martin articulates this point well as he explores the significance of clothing in forming and interpreting the characterizations that inhabit *Michaelmas Term*’s commercially-focused plot, pointing out, “‘Birth’ [in *Michaelmas Term*] is emptied out into appearances and becomes wholly a product of commodified self-fashioning” (par. 16). Bruster terms this “the commercial inscription of identity” (*Drama and the Market…*, 69). Birth retained an importance, of course, but it shifted into what Martin describes as “an exchangeable commodity” (par. 13). No longer did birth guarantee social currency, nor did it exclude one from the possibility of obtaining it. Martin states that *Michaelmas Term*’s focus on this negation of birth and the escalation of identity based in appearance or investiture becomes “the play’s enabling comic presupposition and the focus of the play’s skeptical analysis of birth’s ideological inadequacy and illegitimacy. In *Michaelmas Term*, Middleton deploys city comedy’s doubleness (things are rarely what they seem to be) ... to produce a play that insistently queries birth’s status as an innate social essence” (par. 7). This malleability of the body’s identity at the whim of sumptuary display is demonstrated by Hellgill’s previously mentioned

observation after the country wench has been transformed in the clothes of a courtesan: “You talk of an alteration; here’s the thing itself. What base birth does not raiment make glorious? And what glorious births do not rags make infamous? Why should not a woman confess what she is now, since the finest are but deluding shadows begot between tirewomen and tailors?” (III.i.1-5). Martin correctly points out, “The Country Wench’s natural birth is superseded and rendered irrelevant by her sartorial self-fashioning” (par. 16). George E. Rowe also discusses this sacrifice of individual identity to the clothing that covers the body:

> Instead of being grounded in lineage or in an orderly pattern of behavior, identity becomes a matter of appearance, or, more specifically, of clothes ... It is no accident that *Michaelmas Term* begins with a change of raiment in the introduction, that the central character in the comedy is a draper, and that the plot takes place in a boom season for the clothing industry (II.iii.210-213). Indeed, it might be said that clothes literally make the man in *Michaelmas Term*. (101)

Stubbes’ (and others’) concern with this “great confusion & a general disorder” exists, as Martin points out, because “The link between signifier and signified has been rendered uncertain and open to manipulation” (par. 6). This vulnerable and untrustworthy “link,” as *Michaelmas Term* clearly demonstrates, is cloth. As characters remove and put on articles of clothing in their frequently and easily shifting circumstances, *Michaelmas Term* is continually emphasizing cloth’s power to transform the body that wears it, as in the previously mentioned introductory scene when the personified Michaelmas Term describes the upward social advancement of “A fellow/ Shrugging for life’s kind benefits, shift and heat,/ Crept up in three Terms, wrapped in silk and silver” (I.i.30-32). In the following scene, Rearage complains that the prodigal gallant Lethe, as he rose in status and wealth, “crept to a little warmth,/ And now so proud that he forgets all storms; ... now shines bright/ In rich embroideries” (I.ii.65-69). Finally, the pander, Hellgill, speaks of bringing the country wench to London from “a poor thrummed house i’th’country in such servile habiliments” (I.iii.5-6) with the promise to transform her and make her “pass for a gentlewoman i’th’city” (I.iii.6-7), reassuring her that “thou shalt deceive the world that gentlewomen indeed shall not be known from others” (I.iii.12-15). Cloth is repeatedly utilized to

demonstrate not only a shift in social status for these characters, but a nefarious shift. *Michaelmas Term*, then, explores some of the symptoms that infect this “age [that] would make a man mad,” as clothing marks the bodies it covers, and yet the play repeatedly works to remind the audience that it remains an unreliable indicator, thus rendering the cloth-generated esteem, advancement, or credit attributed to that body suspect. The fact that this social mobility is emphasized through the putting on or removal of a garment reinforces the transience and instability of that marking and whatever social advancement was procured at its hand. Cloth may have “transformed” the esteem or authority of the body it covered, rendering birthright irrelevant or at least less important, but this transformation was not permanent. Cloth had become not only an unreliable marker, but also an unstable one.

Cloth, Types, and City Comedy

Cozening, prostitution, gambling and other stereotypical perils associated with the city gave rise to its associated character types, which were featured frequently in city comedy and other writings of the period. As Wright points out, “Ridicule of the vices that lead to bankruptcy became conventional in ballad literature, especially as the middling sort grew increasingly articulate in the seventeenth century. London poets were fond of picturing the disasters befalling the spendthrift, the prodigal, or the countryman who is caught in the toils of the city’s dissipations” (427). Early modern literature exhibits an increased awareness of the typified perils of city life, demonstrated as stereotypical characterizations associated with those perils, designed to caution against falling prey to the city’s vices. This is illustrated in Parker’s previously mentioned *Knauery in all Trades*:

> One tradesman deceaueth another,
> And sellers will conycatch buyers,
> For gaine one will cheat his own brother,
> The world’s full of swearers and lyars. (412)

Works like *Michaelmas Term* utilize such cultural stereotypes to depict London as a “man-devouring city” (II.ii.21), and cloth plays a key role as the characters manufacture onstage enactments of the city’s

consuming features. Middleton’s removal of cloth from the role of commodity highlights investiture as a means to an end, key to the advancement of the merchant, the upstart gentry, and the country wench.

Cloth is an instrument for social mobility, animating the character types of this age “that would make a man mad.” To argue city comedies like *Michaelmas Term* simply recreate onstage the corrupt merchant, the gullible gentry, or the foolish country wench-turned-courtesan, oversimplifies the play’s content, as well as dismisses the audience’s ability to critically self-examine. Leinwand explains this clearly, stating that while plays “are informed by the social and economic reality in which playwrights found themselves ... this does not mean that we turn to these dramatizations for a mirror image of the time. London is not reflected on the stages and scaffolds ... Surely the relationship between the theater and extratheatrical reality, at any moment in history, is more subtle than this” (*The City Staged…*, 3). *Michaelmas Term*’s characters—with cloth references embedded within their characterization—are brought beyond the simple boundaries of plot and play a much grander role within Greenblatt’s “compelling representational practices” (172). Leinwand points out the introspection such stereotypes in city comedy would have generated: “The picture of unprecedented social mobility ... for the period between 1540 and 1640 suggests what is perhaps the most coherent explanation of the flowering of city comedy and the debate over social roles that it refracts, analyzes, and satirizes” (*The City Staged…*, 39). Every association with cloth in *Michaelmas Term*, from Lethe’s disdainful insult to his mother: “Scurvy murrey kersey!” (I.ii.251), to Hellgill’s description of the country wench’s abrupt turn from virtue to harlotry: “welcome silks, where lies disease and wants” (I.iii.6), illustrates the animation of a type. If, as Hentschell states, England “became knowable through the cloth industry” (8), then a city comedy set in everyday London with cloth and a cloth merchant at its center becomes a complex display of urban sociology during a period of increased reflection upon stereotypes and role boundaries. Cloth becomes a vehicle not just of plot, but perhaps even social commentary; if not commentary, then at least exposure, working to display not a literal cozening draper or prodigal gallant, for example, but the stereotypical

bounds Londoners used in assessment and categorization and perhaps, through that display, inspire questions within the audience about those assumptions.

The Cozening Draper

If city comedy characters work as what Leinwand calls “social integers that gather to themselves contemporary prejudice ... [miming] the imprisonment of the public in its multiple social parts” (*The City Staged…*, 12), the dramatist must ensure the audience will clearly understand which type a particular character represents. The cozening draper was a familiar construct for audiences during the early modern period. A predatorial view of merchants is exhibited in many writings of the period, as when Robert Greene, in *A quip for an Upstart Courtier* (1592), recommends a cautious eye be directed toward the cloth merchant. He describes London merchants as guilty of the exact scheme that Quomodo uses to cozen Easy, with the singular aim to “fetch in young Gentlemen by commodities under the colour of lending money” (sig. C3v). Another example appears in the 1612 sermon, *The White Devil,* in which preacher Thomas Adams asserts that drapers’ “insufficient wares” will “appeare good to the buyers eye” because these merchants have both “a darke window and an impudent tonugue”, further complaining, “Sophistry is now fled from the schooles into the shops” (sig. G2r). William Scott’s *An Essay on Drapery* cautions against these corrupt practices by corrupt men: “It is to bee lamented, that men have too darke, shops: but more, that they have too darke minds” (sig. C4r). All of this supports Hentschell’s assertion that, “In his creation of the deceptive woollen draper, Middleton stages his culture’s stereotypes and fears about that occupation that were prevalent in other kinds of texts” (134). Establishing this characterization clearly is important, as several different dramatic forms existed for cloth merchants at the time. Leinwand discusses these incongruous categories, pointing out that in *Eastward Ho,* “Chapman, Jonson, and Marston poke fun at citizen self-righteousness and at the merchant’s disdain for the gentry. Less subtle men attacked the merchants for precisely the opposite

reason, arguing that all merchants were in fact would-be gentlemen, or, less generously, thieves, usurers, and what Henry Brinklow referred to as ‘rich jolly crackers and braggers’ [Brinklow, 98]” (*The City Staged…*, 30).

Quomodo’s embodiment of the stereotypical cozening draper begins to be established with cloth-related references in his first appearance onstage, as his first line of the play requires he call after his two apprentices: “O my two spirits [chameleon-like assistants], Shortyard and Falselight, you that have so enriched me” (I.ii.79-80). Quomodo’s calling these two characters by name early in the play places him soundly within the cultural framework of the corrupt draper, as their names are deliberate associations with stereotypical cloth-related strategies for deception. “The drapers’ dark shops, where falsely measured and deceitfully finished cloth was sold to the consumer, were ground zero for complaints against all those involved in corrupt manufacturing of wool” (Hentschell, 138). Nearly every early modern complaint against cloth manufacturers and merchants involve what the names “Shortyard” and “Falselight” encompass. “The early modern draper was accused of several iniquities, but perhaps none was as pervasive as keeping his shop or stall poorly lit” (Hentschell, 134). Stubbes complained of these types of corrupt practices, stating, “They have their shops and places where they sell their cloth commonly very darke and obscure, or purpose to deceive the buiers ... They mean deceit, and lay snares to intrap the feet of the simple” (sig. D7v). These practices are alluded to elsewhere in Middleton, as in *Anything for a Quiet Life*, when Camlet’s wife, Rachel, accuses Camlet, “your shop-wares you vend/ With your deceiving lights” (II.ii.50-51). Quomodo himself addresses this common stereotype, telling his wife, Thomasine, “my shop is not altogether so dark as some of my neighbours’” (II.iii.36-37). Another example of cloth working to help categorize Quomodo as an embodiment of the cozening draper is found, similarly to *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* and *Anything for a Quiet Life*, in the merchant’s shop call. When customers enter his commercial space, Quomodo cries out the familiar, “What lack you, gentlemen? See good kerseys or broadcloths here” (II.iii.104-105), mentioning

specific commodities to be found in his shop. However, rather than calling out the most desirable and rare commodities from his shop door, as was common practice and demonstrated in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* and *Anything for a Quiet Life*, Quomodo names hardy, domestic staples in his shop call: “good kerseys or broadcloths here” (II.iii.105). In contrast, other more sympathetic Middleton drapers—Candido and Camlet—call out foreign wares like lawn, silk, and cambric to attract their customers. While it is plausible to explain away this difference in the shop call materials as due to the different settings for *Michaelmas Term* (London/domestic) versus *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* (Milan/foreign), the references to sites specifically connected to London in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* (Bedlam, Lombard Street) keeps this play “feeling” as though it is in London, rather than Milan, as discussed previously in Chapter One. Additionally, Camlet’s shop in *Anything for a Quiet Life* is set in London, yet foreign wares are called from his shop’s door, rather than the domestic broadcloth and wool featured in Quomodo’s shop call. As explained in the previous chapter, a successful cloth merchant would obviously highlight the fabrics most desirable, the highest in demand, or the rarest luxuries to call out from their shop door and seduce customers in from the street. Yet, Quomodo chooses to call out the more humble wares of kersey and broadcloth, wares that were neither rare, expensive, nor luxurious. For example, in Lawson’s previously mentioned text, *The Elizabethan New Year’s Gift Exchanges, 1559-1603*, kersey and broadcloth never appear once in the entire gift exchange records. This indicates both fabrics were too common to be presented to, or by, royalty, even in the years prior to broadcloth’s great decline. However, in Jones’ previously mentioned *Stratford-upon-Avon Inventories, 1538-1699*, the 1586 inventory of the Stratford-Upon-Avon draper, John Browne, lists kersey and broadcloth as making up half of his shop’s inventory (64-74). It is apparent that, while kersey and broadcloth were too humble a cloth to present at the Elizabethan court, they were both domestic fabrics commonly used among the lower classes. Quomodo, when he calls out these humble, domestic wares from his shop’s door, is affecting the guise of a similarly plain and honest trader, much like the

modest wares he is selling. However, there is much more communicated about Quomodo in this scene. The merchant is trying his best to appear the humble, domestic draper, yet he calls out these wares as he stands outside his shop that is known by its “sign of Three Knaves” (II.iii.103-104) with Shortyard and Falselight continually close by. The “Three Knaves” mention communicates connotations of gambling and suggests underhanded behavior, as this reference would have been easily recognized as an allusion to cards, gambling, and cozening. References to card tricks and gambling were common, with phrases like “Three Knaves” appearing in numerous writings of the period like Robert Greene’s *A Notable discouery of coosenage* (1592), in which Greene repeatedly uses this reference as it describes a stratagem for con-artistry:

> Now sir saith he, you see these three Knaues apparantlie, thrust them downe with your hand, and cut where you wil, and though Single they be so farre asunder, Single make them all come together ... So the verser drawes, and al the thrée knaues come in one heap: this he dooth once or twice, then the cony wonders at it, and offers a pinte of wine to be taught it. Nay saith the verser ile do it for thankes, and therfore mark where you haue taken out the four knaues, lay two together aboue, and draw vp one of them that it maybe seen, then prick the other in the midst, and the third in ye bottom, so when any cuts, cut he neuer so warily, three knaues must of force come together, for the bott Single letterm knaue is cut to lie vpon both the vpper knaues. I marrie saith the setter, but the three knaues you shewed come not together. True said the verser, but one among a thousand mark not that, it requires a quick eye, a sharp wit, and a reaching head to spie at the first. Gramercie for this trick saith the cony, ile dominere with this among my neighbors Thus do the verser and the setter seem frendly to the Cony, offering him no shew of cosenage, nor once to drawe him in for a pint of wine, the more to shadow their villanie, but now begins the sport: (sigs. B2r, B2v)

One can almost see Quomodo wink at the audience as he shouts of humble, domestic wares alongside Shortyard and Falselight, beneath the “sign of Three Knaves,” signaling clearly to the audience this merchant’s target is about to be taken down the proverbial rabbit hole.

Comparing Quomodo’s actions in climbing the social strata as well as his character in general—aggressive and morally questionable—against the treatment of other Middleton cloth merchants clearly illustrates the various stereotypical constructs surrounding this commercial role, and into which of these constructs Quomodo should be placed. Differing perspectives of the draper are illustrated when Quomodo first takes the stage in Act I, scene ii, when Rearage exclaims fearfully, “’Slid, Master

Quomodo!” (I.ii.75), to which Cockstone incredulously expresses amazement, stating, “How then, afraid of a woollen draper?” (I.ii.76). The different constructs available within the early modern cultural schema are evidenced in these significantly different reactions from Rearage and Cockstone upon Quomodo’s initial onstage appearance. For one member of the gentry, Quomodo is the form of the powerful, intimidating, usurious cloth merchant. For the other, who has yet to interact with the draper, Quomodo falls within the more passive form. Quomodo establishes himself further within the boundaries of the cozening draper when, as the plot progresses, he pursues an advance in status by targeting Easy and his lands, acting in the role of a “grasping Tradesman” (Leinwand, *“*Introduction to *Michaelmas Term*”, 335). *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore’s* Candido and *Anything for a Quiet Life’*s Camlet never involve themselves in such scheming. Both are victims, rather than masterminds, of manipulation. In *Anything for a Quiet Life*, for example, Young Franklin hatches a scheme against Camlet: “I have a project/ Reflects upon yon mercer. Master Camlet/ Shall put us into money” (I.i.250-252). Similarly, Candido is at others’ cruel mercies in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, as in the “pennyworth of lawn” scene, discussed in detail in Chapter One. Quomodo, in contrast, is not viewed as a potential target. Quomodo hatches a scheme along with Shortyard and Falselight to obtain lands and legacy. Quomodo’s own words endorse the self-serving opportunist:

> Give me the man
> Who out of recreation culls advantage,
> Dives into seasons, never walks, but thinks,
> Ne’er rides, but plots. (I.ii.99-102)

Also, consider the aggressive language Quomodo utilizes to describe his stratagem against Master Easy:

> I mean his title: to murder his estate,
> Stifle his right in some detested prison.
> There are means and ways enough to hook in gentry,
> Besides our deadly enmity, which thus stands:
> They’re busy ’bout our wives, we ’bout their lands. (I.ii.108-112)

Quomodo’s statement, with its allusion to both financial and sexual competition between merchants and gentry, places his character squarely within the framework of aggression and competition. These

are qualities only this Middleton incarnation of the corrupt draper exhibits because only Quomodo typifies this character type as he plots and wins social advancement. Without his possession or use of cloth as his medium, the cozening draper would remain ineffective in his attempted manipulation of yet another character type: the naive country gallant. It is important to note that it is Quomodo’s relationship with cloth that reinforces the power imbued within this particular form. Cloth works to reinforce the cloth merchant, Quomodo, within the framework of this stylized characterization, marking the power associated with that sterotype within the early modern imagination. As Henstchell points out,

> In insisting that Quomodo is representative of the corrupt citizen, a sort of usurious everyman, critics have ignored what is particular about his mode of corruption. While Quomodo may certainly be seen as representative of the swindling London merchant ... Middleton attends carefully to his particular profession *as a draper* and that his trade is central to the play’s action. Quomodo’s duping of the country gentleman, then, must be read in the context of the means by which he does so: through an elaborate commercial transaction based on the exchange of cloth. (132)

Cloth does not act in a personified role in Quomodo’s shop, as it does in Candido’s. Cloth is not spoken of as an item that acts, as in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*. *Michaelmas Term*’s Quomodo demonstrates a different kind of hazard: the hazard of interacting with those who own cloth. The patient Candido’s ownership leaves him vulnerable, yet the cozening Quomodo’s makes him dangerous. Quomodo “successfully models urban and financial cunning ... an inns man’s nightmare metonymy for the ‘man-devouring city’ (II.ii.21)” (Leinwand, *“*Introduction to *Michaelmas Term*”, 335). Cloth marks the cozening draper with power—power to deceive, to purchase, and to lend—and that power inspires caution and intimidation. While at the play’s beginning, a character described as a “woollen draper” could fall within the realms of several different commercial “types” for the period, cloth works to clearly establish the framework for which “type” of draper this Master Quomodo is. Not a literal representation of a draper, but rather a characterization of a particular type that was associated with the larger pitfalls of the city.

The Prodigal Gallant

As satisfying as it may have been for the audience to see a gallant-hero type such as we find in *Your Five Gallants*’ Fitzgrave outwit and deceive Quomodo in his machinations, there is none to be found in *Michaelmas Term*. Middleton does, however, craft two other types of gallant: the naïve gallant Richard Easy and the prodigal gallant Andrew Lethe, both at the whim of the degenerate city. While Easy’s naïve gallant is important and necessary to establish the depths to which the villainous Quomodo will descend to satisfy his appetite for advancement, it is the representation of the prodigal gallant that is most important to this chapter’s discussion of cloth’s role in establishing characterization in *Michaelmas Term*. The upstart, Lethe, formerly known as Gruel, is the tooth-drawer’s son who is described in the previously mentioned introduction as having “Crept up in three Terms, wrapped in silk and silver” (I.i.32). Having adopted a new name that appropriately connotes his forgetfulness, Lethe has conveniently abandoned his name, his family, and his past in his rapid rise in the social strata. Lethe’s transformation is referenced multiple times in *Michaelmas Term*, with the fabrics kersey and satin always central to his speedy transition to wealthy gallant (II.iii.12-14). Throughout the play, when Lethe’s transformation is described, his humbler, “kersey” beginnings are consistently referenced as the more modest, yet more appropriate outfit for his character. Lethe attempts to distance himself from his kersey beginnings, at one point in the play physically threatening his unknowing mother in an attempt to silence her reading Thomasine Quomodo’s letter that reminds the prodigal, “You ha’ forgot ... in what pickle your worship came up, and brought two of your friends to give their words for a suit of green kersey” (III.i.255-257). The language describing Lethe in his “kersey” days is humble yet sympathetic: “when thou hadst scarce a shirt, thou hadst more truth about thee” (V.iii.161-162). In contrast, the language is markedly different when Thomasine Quomodo describes the satin-clad Lethe as “A base, proud knave!” (II.iii.10). Later, when Lethe’s own mother recognizes her prodigal son in the play’s final

scene: “This country has e’en spoiled thee since thou cam’st hither. Thy manners then were better than thy clothes; but now whole clothes and ragged manners” (V.iii.158-160).

The concern over prodigality and its association with the city is exhibited in numerous texts of the period. John Carr, in his 1573 work, *The Ruinous fal of Prodigalities: with the notable examples of the best aprooued authours which hath bin written of the same*, states, “I doo write this to the intente that they should not spend that whiche they haue, in superfluite, as in gaminge, in gay apparel, in keppynge of such companie as are edicted vnto riotousnesse” (sig. B2v). Further, Richard Johnson’s *Looke on me London I am an honest English-man, ripping vp the bowels of mischiefe, luring in thy sub-vrbs and precincts* (1613) warns young men against gambling, usury, and bawds, should they come to London. Consider also the ballads, *A merry Progresse to London to see Fashions by a young Country Gallant, that had more Money than Witte* (1620) and *Dice, Wine, and Women Or the Unfortunate Gallant gull’d at London* (1625), the latter featuring a Cornish gallant who, after sowing his wild oats in the city, returns to his native heath with a warning:

> Now to my countrey doe I hie:
> London and fashions I defie:
> Farewell damd dice and strong waters cleare:
> Farewell all punks and double beere:
> I am for Cornwall freely bound:
> For London doth my state confound:
> There by these three I was made poore:
> The Dice, Strong Waters, and a whore. (Rollins, 241)

While the country upstart who moves to the city to rise in social rank was a common stereotype of this time, this cultural representation did not find sympathetic treatment in writings of the period. Note the sarcasm in Thomas Wright’s 1604 observation in *The Passions of the Minde in Generall* that, “our Northern and Welshmen, when they come to London, are very simple, and unwary, but afterward, by conversing a while, and by the experience of other men’s behaviours, they become wonderful wise and judicious” (sig. A4v).

As with the corrupt woollen draper, Middleton uses cloth to establish Lethe within this cultural stereotype of the prodigal gallant, using two specific types of cloth to describe Lethe before his rise (as Gruel), and after (as Lethe). The repeated mentioning of Lethe trading in his “suit of green kersey” for a “white satin suit” is an excellent example of what Frenk describes as happening when “The material object that has traditionally figured as a marginal detail metamorphoses into an ‘oddly expressive’ item, a semantically changed signifier of the way in which early modern culture regulated meaning and thereby power” (20). Utilizing kersey and satin to illustrate Lethe’s transformation is particularly interesting when one examines other early modern texts which place these two fabrics alongside one another. William Whately’s 1609 sermon, *A caveat for the couetous. Or, A sermon preached at Paules Crosse, vpon the fourth of December, out of Luke 12:15*, demonstrates just how broad the distance was between the perception of bodies wearing kersey and those donning satin. Whately, speaking of the commonalities men share across social strata, uses these two fabrics to represent the distant poles between high and low born: “hee is as free from colde that goes in frize or carsey, as he that is in sattin and veluet” (116). Lethe’s trading in his kersey suit for a satin one is meant to signify social mobility; however, other characters’ perception of him remains focused on the discrepancy between the quality of his clothing and the quality of his character. Quomodo’s wife, Thomasine, compares the satin-clad Lethe to “a maggot crept out of a nutshell” (II.iii.14), similar to when Flamineo describes Camillo in John Webster’s *The White Diuel, or, The Tragedy of Paulo Giordano Vrsini* (1612), as “An excellent scholler, one that hath a head fild with calues braynes without any sage in them ... is hee not a courtly gentleman,—when he weares white sattin one would take him by his blacke mussel to be no other creature then a maggot” (sig. B3v). Satin is similarly treated in Thomas Dekker’s *Northward Ho* (1607), in which Greenshield states, “these maskes are foiles to good faces, and to bad ones they are like new sattin out-sides to lousie linings” (sig. G3r). Middleton’s city comedies feature satin as a material to hide what rots beneath—a soured soul who has lost his or her character in a London immersion. This loss of

character is reinforced in Thomasine Quomodo’s observation of Lethe: “A has forgot how he came up” (II.iii.10).

Middleton’s choice to have the prodigal gallant discard a kersey suit for a satin one is a precise device working not only to signal Lethe’s character type, but also to direct audience sympathies in relation to that cultural representation. The Scottish-born Lethe arrives and begs for a suit of kersey in an attempt to assimilate himself into English society. English kersies—coarse, woolen cloths—were widely exported in this period and helped support the English cloth industry when trade in heavier English broadcloth slackened. Kersey became infused with a sense of nationalism during the late sixteenth and early seventeenth century, giving associated characters a certain amount of laudable national identity as well as individual authenticity. *Michaelmas Term* was first performed in the years immediately following James I’s repeal of sumptuary legislation, when there was concern English wool would be further rejected for foreign luxuries by a large cross section of the population. Kersey played a significant role in this back-and-forth battle for trade superiority, as Supple describes,

> Indeed the Italian textile industry had been extremely prosperous at the end of the sixteenth and very early in the seventeenth century. The cloth industry of northern Italy had, for instance, provided effective and crippling competition for the shipments of Hampshire kersies to the Mediterranean. But the development of the new English fabrics, often imitative of Italian colours and produced more inexpensively (albeit more flimsily), soon changed this situation. As early as 1610 it was said that, in Turkey, “the vent of our cloths, kersies ... is more and more uttered.” (159-160)

Lethe’s casting aside of his kersey suit for one of satin demonstrates the Scottish upstart’s continual attempt at upward mobility. The kersey was necessary to help Gruel adopt a more “English” look about him when he arrived from the country. But he quickly moves beyond that, as he casts his kersey suit aside, even referencing kersey as an insult toward his mother in Act I: “Scurvy murrey kersey[4]!” (I.ii.251). In *The Oxford Middleton* footnote, this is described as “a term of contempt” (Taylor and Lavagnino, 342),

[4] Murrey kersey is a purplish-red cloth, also a term of contempt for a woman (Taylor and Lavagnino, *The Oxford Middleton*, 342).

which it certainly seems to be. However, a closer examination of the cloth reference perhaps reveals more than merely a common insult of the period. This “Scurvy murrey kersey!” slur might also work to emphasize Lethe’s own lack of honour, highlighting his refusal to show proper respect to his mother as he also fails to properly respect good English cloth, using it instead as an insult. The satin-clad Lethe, hurling the “Scurvy murrey kersey!” slur at his mother precisely when she first takes the stage, may be less about hurling contempt and more about directing criticism and disdain towards the cultural stereotype of the upstart gentry as well as engendering sympathy for his unassuming mother. The kersey-satin dichotomy illustrates well not just a prodigal gallant, but one who has turned away from his humbler, more honest origins. A. L. and M. K. Kistner examine *Michaelmas Term*’s treatment of a world in transition as the traditional, land-based social hierarchy gives way for a new economic system based on liquid assets. Describing Lethe’s rise from penury, Kistner and Kistner state, “Lethe has come up in the world, from poverty to the outward shows of wealth and position, through influence peddling, and these parasitical acts have cost him his identity” (64). While this is true, Middleton’s specific, repeated description of Lethe’s exchange of his kersey suit for one of satin makes the prodigal gallant’s transformation significantly more complex than this discussion allows. The shift from kersey to satin illustrates clearly what he has become. The prodigal gallant’s prodigality is encompassed in this exchange. Kistner and Kistner commit a similar over-simplification when discussing the transformation of the country wench:

> It is frequently stated that Country Wench is a direct parallel to Easy, that like him she has abandoned a simple and virtuous life in the country to find a more exciting existence in the city. The parallel is exact in that both Easy and Country Wench attempt to become what passes in the city for gentleman and gentlewoman, empty beings with fine clothes and a show of wealth. Both lose their true wealth and their identities in the city. Country Wench’s alteration, effected by her loss of chastity and acquisition of satin gowns, is such that her own father cannot recognize her ... Like the presenter, Michaelmas Term, she has doffed her country conscience and donned the false garb of a city dweller. (63)

It is true that the country wench loses her identity when she accepts Helgill’s offer, but the exchange of her “wholesome weeds” for “satin gowns,” when one understands the multiple associations of satin

with lechery, disease, lust, and depravity, becomes much more significant a fall. Likewise, Lethe’s choice to wear satin instead of kersey signals not just an advance in status or an accumulation of wealth, but also a loss of virtue, of morals. His “parasitical acts” haven’t just cost him his identity, they have cost him his integrity, his soul. Without including cloth in the discussion, the prodigal gallant’s form (and others’) loses some of its impact.

The Paradox of Visually-Based Estimation

The cozening draper and his deceptive associates utilizing a cloth-based swindle on a naïve country gallant reveals the tension and distrust associated with the cloth trade and its more powerful players and unfortunate victims. In addition, cloth’s role in the attempts at self-fashioning and social mobility in the prodigal gallant, country wench and the cozening draper characters highlights the unreliability and transience of self-fashioning that is based in the material. In addition to this, *Michaelmas Term* also highlights cloth’s unreliability in the estimation of the body beneath it, with commercial exchange shaping that subjectivity. Kitch explores how this subjectivity was explored onstage in city comedy, stating, “London’s commercial theaters offered a particularly important model for Middleton’s exploration of the construction of characters whose worth was measured by their believability, as expressed in terms of money” (411). If, as Kitch points out, “Doubt and distrust of appearances weaken traditional networks of trust and credit demanding new strategies for determining formal credit relationships” (412), then cloth becomes both an onstage signal of status as well as a warning to beware. The paradox that cloth both reveals and hides at the same time creates a much more complex communicative tool in establishing characterization and maneuvering plots based in economic stratagem, as Middleton’s city comedies (like *Michaelmas Term*) typically were. Lethe’s satin suit works to communicate his newfound wealth and status. However, the instability and lack of authenticity in the prodigal gallant’s elevation in the social hierarchy is emphasized when, as Lethe tries to utilize this

appearance of wealth to negotiate an advantageous marriage for himself, his satin suit is criticized by Thomasine Quomodo as deceptive and distrustful: “how does he appear to me when his white satin suit’s on, but like a maggot crept out of a nutshell, a fair body and a foul neck: those parts that are covered of him, looks indifferent well, because we cannot see ’em. Else, for all his cleansing, pruning and paring, he’s not worthy a broker’s daughter” (II.iii.13-18). *Michaelmas Term*’s primary utilization of cloth as investiture on the bodies of stylized character types with no particular depth emphasizes the idea that the status these fabrics once communicated, or the esteem they helped to garner, now carries connotations of fantasy or intentional deception. Socially mobile characters suddenly have the potential to be many different things and yet nothing at all.

If Middleton’s characters are less the result of in-depth characterization and more embodiments of generalized representation, it could be argued that this renders cloth’s ability to define or categorize the self irrelevant in *Michaelmas Term*, simply because the cozening draper, the naïve gallant, the country wench-turned-courtesan, and the prodigal gallant are less individuals than stylized types. On the contrary, far from rendering cloth’s power to mark irrelevant, the use of cloth’s role in visual categorization on these generalized forms emphasizes this power further. Cloth plays a significant role in the play as it demonstrates the shifting status these stylized types experience, highlighting the role of cloth in defining the body—any body—particularly emphasized if that body is one with no significant human depth. Cloth’s power to mark identity visually on such generalized characterizations almost renders the corporeal form irrelevant in *Michaelmas Term*, as demonstrated when Lethe’s mother, upon meeting her son, looks only at his clothing and not his face or body. If the corporeal form is less important than the clothing that dons it, then generalized forms associated with London society are an ideal way to demonstrate the body’s passive role in its own evaluation, compared with the significance of the investiture placed upon that body. When the prodigal gentleman Lethe asks his mother if she recognizes him, hoping she will not, she states she “never saw such a glorious suit” (I.ii.280-281). The

suit is her assessment of the man himself, encompassing the whole of his identity. Her statement on his clothing is her statement on him. The prodigal gallant is nothing more and nothing less than the clothes on his back. Lethe’s satin suit defines his margins of the self since leaving his home and family. He has taken a different identity, a different status, and the suit veils him from his responsibility, disguising him from convention, propriety, and a son’s duty, as Lethe observes,

> she knows me not, my glory does disguise me;
> ... I may employ her as a private drudge
> To pass my letters and secure my lust
> And ne’er be noted mine, to shame my blood,
> And drop my staining birth upon my raiment. (I.ii.282, 285-288)

Another demonstration of the body’s passivity in the face of cloth’s marking occurs in the previously mentioned introductory scene as the three personified terms, Hilary, Easter, and Trinity enter, according to stage directions, with “*a fellow poor, which the other two [terms] advance, giving him rich apparel*” (I.i.29.1-3 SD). Cloth is featured deliberately as an outward signifier of advancement or gain, as the personified Michaelmas Term tells the tale of “A fellow/ Shrugging for life’s kind benefits, shift and heat,/ Crept up in three Terms, wrapped in silk and silver” (I.i.30-32). This reversal of fortune is mimed for the audience, showcasing cloth’s role in working as a visual marker for an inward shift—whether that be a shift in conscience, intent, or status—as well as the active role cloth plays in that shift, demonstrating cloth taking an active role upon the passive body. While this “poor fellow’s” change of clothing reflects a change in fortune or luck—“a happy gale that blew him hither” (I.i.34)—he is not shown as actively changing his own circumstances. Even his change of attire is performed by others. The stage directions call for this “fellow” to be wrapped in rich apparel by the accompanying personified terms, not for the individual to put it on himself. Cloth actively shifts identity, which then has the power to shift circumstances, all which the generic body passively accepts.

The connection between cloth and body as well as cloth’s priority over the corporeal in defining character is demonstrated further when Lethe instructs his mother to stand “Two pole off at least”

(I.ii.312) from him as his drudge, to which she protests, “I am a clean old woman” (I.ii.313). Lethe then responds, “It goes not by cleanness here, good woman; if you were fouler, so you were braver, you might come nearer” (I.ii.315-317). What clothes the corporeal form is given a higher priority than the actual condition of the form beneath. Mother Gruel acknowledges this as a widely accepted practice, admitting, “that be the fashion” (I.ii.318). Cloth is treated as representative of the body beneath it and almost as an extension of that flesh. This physical connection between cloth and the body is demonstrated in the drapers’ shops onstage during exchanges between mercer and customer in both *Michaelmas Term* and *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*. During these exchanges meant to mimic typical London sales practices, touch reveals quality. Cloth is spoken of in reference to the tactile; customers are always encouraged to touch, as when Quomodo shows his cloth to Easy, encouraging, “Feel’t, nay, feel’t and spare not, gentlemen; your fingers and your judgment” (II.iii.239-240). To which Easy, after touching the cloth, observes, “By my troth exceeding good cloth; a good wale [texture] t’as,” (II.iii.242). In *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, cloth is treated as a body—a female one—as the apprentice, George, confidently assures customers the shop’s lawn he has placed in front of them is “the purest she that ever you fingered” (v.30) as they take the material in their hands, determining its quality through touch. These commercial interactions demonstrate the necessity of the kinesthetic in cloth’s evaluation, showing the customer must physically come into contact with a cloth to determine its worth or quality. The combination of cloth and body has become a means to evaluate the quality of the cloth inside the draper’s shop, and a means to evaluate the quality of the body outside the draper’s shop. This reinforces in the audience’s mind this common early modern perspective that cloth imbues the wearer with qualities that then allow for a triangulation of character.

While these interchanges demonstrate that cloth was an obviously important element in establishing quality or awarding esteem, there remains the paradox that cloth—relied upon so heavily—was, in fact unreliable. John Fletcher expresses the inevitable tension that existed within a society that

relied so heavily on the visual while simultaneously recognizing the unreliability of those elements in his 1618 play, *The Loyal Subject*, when Honora speaks of her constancy and fidelity to Archas: “Shall wee seek Virtue in a Sattin-Gown,/ Imbroider’d Virtue? Faith in a well-curl’d Feather?/ And set our Credit to the Tune of Green Sleeves?” (37). Such an allusion combines cloth’s resonance of meaning with unreliability inherent in estimation based in appearance, underscored further with the reference to greensleeves, a popular tune which the *Oxford English Dictionary* notes as associated with a faithless woman (“greensleeves, n.1”). The utilization of character types in *Michaelmas Term*, then, not only emphasizes the flattening out of birth as investiture infuses the body with noble or base qualities, they also work (with cloth’s help) to highlight tension as these generalized representations engage in interpersonal exchange with a social mobility that was highly dependent upon visual cues. Kitch states that “The paradox of the crisis of value in Middleton is that ... one’s language, one’s status, one’s ‘countenance’ are at once more suspect and more crucial for determining character” (411). I would add to Kitch’s point that one’s clothing must also necessarily be included in this paradox. This ineffectuality of traditional visually-based estimation of character or value based in appearance is illustrated in Act III, scene iv, when the scheming Shortyard pretends to reassure his conspiratorial partner, Falselight, of Easy’s trustworthiness, “I like the gentleman’s face well; he does not look as if he would deceive us” (III.iv.236-237). Such appearance-based methods of estimation are also referenced in Act II, scene iii, when Easy laments to Quomodo that he has invited several gallants to dine with him, and yet has no money to provide the meal. Easy points out his situation will obviously be embarrassing, exclaiming, “’Twill be my everlasting shame, if I have no money to maintain my bounty” (II.iii.143-144), but the country gallant also points out that his inability to establish himself with the outward trappings of wealth and abundance will affect his ability to establish credit and esteem, stating, “It stands upon the loss of my credit tonight, if I walk without money” (II.iii.167-168). Shortyard echoes this point, stating of the loan from Quomodo to provide Easy the money to outwardly establish his social identity, “tis more

for the continuing of this gentleman’s credit in town” (II.iii.176-177). This demonstrates the type of visually-based social ethos Martin describes: “Conspicuous consumption privileges social appearance over innate social essence: being seen to consume is what is important” (par. 5). Easy and Shortyard’s descriptions of Easy’s circumstances allude to the country gallant’s inability to be “seen” possessing wealth and how this lack of being seen to consume would be a roadblock to his advancement in his social circles. Credit-based relationships of bargaining and contract which, in *Michaelmas Term*, are centered on cloth, became methods of establishing not just one’s ability to pay one’s debts, but also to enjoy interpersonal sociability. And yet, ironicially, the respect or clout earned in this visual display is highly unstable and transient. According to Martin, “Memory, like cloth, can be bought and sold. Its integration into Jacobean London’s exchange economy creates a new commodity compounded of knowledge and power: recognition” (par. 21). To “recognize” another who seems to possess wealth or social status, grants that individual social (and sometimes economic) currency. Martin further points out that this “commodification of memory extends beyond the individual social self” (par. 21) and becomes something “attached” to the “type” of person one is determined to be, typically by utilizing visual (unreliable) methods for categorization. “Even such apparently interior dimensions of the self as memory are flattened into the surface of commodified appearances” (Martin, par. 21). Even Lethe’s newly fashioned name suggests a crafted memory, alluding to the river of forgetfulness and oblivion in Greek mythology, implying that a fashioned memory is a necessary companion to a fashioned self. Lethe states,

> I have received of many, gifts o’er night
> Whom I have forgot ere morning. Meeting the men,
> I wished ’em to remember me again;
> They do so, then if I forget again,
> I know what helped before, that will help then.
> This is my course; for memory I have been told
> Twenty preserves, the best I find is gold.
> Ay, truly! Are you not knights yet, gentlemen? (I.ii.181-188)

Lethe’s nefarious advancement highlights the transience and instability of this type of fleeting social currency that exists within a circle of appearance-based esteem. Cloth is suspect. Cloth is then placed on a body and presents a visual of unfounded credibility, and esteem or value is granted based on that unfounded credibility. Self-fashioning happens as one takes that appearance-based esteem to gain credit and purchases more cloth for one’s empty or undeserving form beneath, which then earns yet another increase in estimation, and more is made possible. It is a vicious cycle with cloth at its center. Martin points out,

> One of [*Michaelmas Term*’s] fundamental comic principles is that birth and inheritance are no match for the instability of social position across generations. Even in Elizabeth’s reign, the pace of social mobility, especially gentrification, was enough to render it disturbingly visible. Thomas Smith in *De Republica Anglorum* (1586) notes that “as for gentlemen, they be made good cheape in England” (27). In James’ reign they had become much cheaper. (par. 8)

A popularization of the notion of “self-fashioning,” or, that a man (or woman) could “fashion” himself or herself into something outside the categorization of their birth made possible in large part due to conspicuous consumption was at once an exciting and dreadful proposition. William W. Slights points out that “Middleton, then, was adapting the older, Elizabethan dramatic mode of celebrating flexibility of self to the new urban world of credit, profit, and fashion” (89). While true, I would add to this statement that Middleton was doing more than merely adapting this “celebrating flexibility of self” to this new urban landscape. By utilizing investiture in particular to emphasize the cozening draper and the prodigal gallant—commonly associated with this “world of credit, profit, and fashion”—Middleton was also emphasizing the instability and transience of this highly subjective and unreliable world. The potential for great gain and great suffering existed simultaneously in establishing one’s status based on his or her clothing. Cloth underscores the tensions or unease associated with the rise in social mobility emphasized with even greater force with the types of cloth used, such as an exchange of a suit of kersey for one of satin, or “wholesome weeds” for silk. *Michaelmas Term* highlights the problem with the

reliance upon cloth as a signifier to award esteem or credibility, and the resulting self-fashioning that can happen due to the conspicuous consumption that undeserved social currency then “bought.”

When discussing Middleton’s city comedies, it is tempting to read them as communicating some assessment of or reflection upon the economic and social dilemmas these works navigate. Slights, for example, endeavors to unearth Middleton’s views with regards to self-fashioning, stating, “A critical problem with Middleton’s comedies, and one that has been only half-perceived, is knowing what the author wants us to make of the witty and unscrupulous tricksters who invariably get the lead roles in these plays. Is their keen interest in self-image-making their forte or their flaw?” (85-86). But is this something we really can know, and does it have to be one or the other? Perhaps more important to keep in mind, and what Middleton’s carefully fashioned characters help to underscore, is that their rise and/or fall does not necessarily communicate Middleton’s approval or disapproval of the situations they navigate, or the manner in which they navigate them. As Martin states of *Michaelmas Term*: “the issue concerning self-fashioning in the play is not, as Slights argues, Middleton’s moral evaluation of the process but rather his examination of the ideological consequences of the increasing underwriting of status by capital which enables his characters to fashion themselves” (par. 13). If cloth works to play out a fantasy upon the blank canvas of the human shape like the cozening draper, prodigal gallant, or country wench-turned-courtesan, it may then be argued that this is evidence these characters were never intended to be representations of actual people. As Amanda Bailey states, “Unlike like earlier satirical modes, these plays did not seek to expose the hypocrisy of their characters, but rather merely paraded a series of affected types before the audience” (273).

While an examination of Middleton’s animation of character types like the cozening draper and the prodigal gallant illuminates a deeper appreciation of cloth’s potential to communicate meaning in early modern drama, what makes Middleton more compelling is that, rather than generating social commentary as he utilizes cloth to establish character types in *Michaelmas Term*, his use of such forms

possesses the potential to inspire self-reflection within the audience. Leinwand states, “Such figures do not ‘represent’ pride or greed or wit; rather they are elements in city comedy’s staging of relations in the City. Their activities spring from the ways men thought of one another in the City, and they point to the fears and aspirations of the contemporary theater audience” (*The City Staged…*, 131). John Webster’s commendatory poem prefacing the third part of Anthony Munday’s *Palmerin of England* (1602) exhibits an early modern perspective that allows fictional works the potential to inspire self-examination. Webster states, “Nor for the fiction is the worke lesse fine: Fables haue pith and morall discipline” (sig. A4r). Leinwand supports this potential for introspection in city comedy, stating, “We have seen that in skillful hands, the dramatization of such types as the merchant-usurer or the city gallant challenges the audience to reexamine the prejudices that such figures embody” (*The City Staged…*, 123). With a plot centering around a corrupt merchant, his deceitful spirits, and his role in perpetuating the prodigal and cozening the gentry, it seems reasonable to allow *Michaelmas Term* the potential to enable the audience to reflect upon assumptions that underpin these representations. These types—the cozening draper with the low-lit shop, the prodigal gallant whose own mother does not recognize him in his luxurious apparel, the “man-devouring city”—are embedded within the early modern cultural imagination. Yet Middleton’s display of these characters does much more than provide entertainment or social commentary. If city comedy inspires in the audience what Leinwand calls “a critique of [London’s] ideology” (*The City Staged…*, 18), it is plausible that Middleton’s characterizations inspire not a direct correction, but at least a re-examination of “the prejudices that such figures embody” (*The City Staged…,* 123). Consider, for example, how the merchant’s necessity to the realm is always maintained in *Michaelmas Term*, even when Quomodo is brought to account for his actions in the play’s finale. The stereotype of the cozening draper as a dishonor to the nation is challenged, yet the dishonest merchant is allowed to maintain his position. Consider Scott’s recommendation for a type of reasonable honesty in merchants:

> In some cases my Citizen may mingle profit with honesty, and enter into a composition with both: he must never turne his back to honesty; yet sometimes goe about and coast it, using an extraordinary skill, which may be better practis’d then exprest; something which may be done openly, must be done secretly, because of the misconstruing world; (sigs. G3v, G4r)

While typical forms of deception such as those embodied in Shortyard and Falselight are rejected in the treatise, Scott’s recommendations of moderation are important to consider when, at *Michaelmas Term*’s conclusion, the corrupt draper remains unmoved. In the play’s conclusion, a judge rules to banish Shortyard and Falselight “ever more the land” (V.iii.167); however, Quomodo—the “famous coz’ner” (IV.iii.12)—while not allowed to keep his ill-gotten lands, is not banished and has his wife returned to him. When speaking of tradesmen, Scott states, “Dissimulation is a thing more tolerable with a citizen” (27). Scott goes so far as to paraphrase scripture in this matter, stating “as the Apostle said, Be angry but sin not: So I say, Flatter, but sin not, *if that be possible*” (26, emphasis added). He also recommends “Lying then is to be banish: but this rule must be observed; as we may not lie, so we need not speake all truth” (34). It is, as Middleton seems to remind his audience, an imperfect world that must be content with imperfect solutions and imperfect people. The patient Candido and the cozening Quomodo may work well as London-associated types onstage, but the world is much more complex than these stereotypes allow. If every crooked draper were thrown in jail, there would be no drapers left, it seems, and that is a cog without which the economic wheel cannot turn. The cozening draper tricks the naïve country gallant out of his land, aiming “to murder his estate” (I.ii.108), while the prodigal gallant abuses his mother and seeks a profitable marriage, to “secure [his] lust” (I.ii.286). Both are fitting activities within this “man-devouring city” (II.ii.21). If, as Korda points out, *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*’s Candido “represents a nostalgic ideal of civic stability among tradesmen” (80) that was viewed in its decline during the period, then Quomodo represents a stereotypical fear of what the trade, and city, were becoming. Perhaps *Michaelmas Term* is less a call for industry reform—banishing all fraudulent practices from the land is a bit impracticable—and more an invitation to reflect on these comical representations onstage of the mental boxes into which Londoners inserted one another and,

more importantly, *how* they determined which individuals deserved which boxes. This makes it easier to understand Leinwand’s statement that “Middleton’s city comedies ... are not directed against status groups so much as they examine the effects of a status society itself under pressure” (*The City Staged…*, 18). The pressures of slackening trade, competition from the continent, blurring class boundaries, and social mobility were edging Londoners into crafting role definitions both stereotypical and comical in the extreme. Middleton uses cloth to craft characterizations well-established within cultural stereotypes and these onstage depictions reinforce the outlandishness of such constructs for the audience. The unreliable and unstable display of “typical” citizens possesses the potential to inspire self-examination, perhaps allowing the audience to come to the realization that cultural types exist in full only on London’s stage, and not in her streets.

Chapter Three – *Your Five Gallants*

Both *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* and *Michaelmas Term* employ cloth—literally and figuratively—to emphasize inconsistency. Whether that inconsistency lies in a gap between expected and actual behavior, or between visual marker and what (or who) is being marked, both plays use fabric to help demonstrate tensions associated with recognizable forms within an evolving cloth trade. Both works prominently feature cloth merchants (Candido and Quomodo), and both contain multiple scenes depicting commercial interaction and discussion inside the drapers' shops as well as some type of cloth-centered commercial or usurious exchange within both spaces. By contrast, in Middleton's *Your Five Gallants* (1607), no character enters a cloth merchant's shop and no character speaks of purchasing any wares. There is no actual business done with any merchant, no generation of product or income. The drama features a figure associated with the cloth trade only once, when the cheating gallant, Goldstone, brings a tailor onstage to aid in a pretended manipulation to appease a whore's demands for a satin gown (III.iv). Cloth is featured post-purchase as the play highlights the misadventures of the five indolent gallants as they navigate the city's more disreputable haunts, vying for the hand of a Knight's orphaned daughter, Katherine. The gallants continually pawn cloth, steal cloth, lose cloth, give and receive cloth all while navigating the avenues of theft, gambling, lechery, and cozening, yet no cloth commodities are ever bought or sold in this play. While *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* and *Michaelmas Term* emphasize tension and inconsistency surrounding cloth-associated exchange and early modern display-based methods of establishing credit, *Your Five Gallants* shifts its focus from commercial exchanges within the draper's shop towards consumer behavior after cloth is in their possession. The seduction of a whore with a satin gown, the loss of a beaver hat at a dice table, the gift of a satin suit to an illicit lover, the pawning of assets like a taffeta petticoat or a velvet jacket to a pawn broker to gain access to

capital all showcase cloth in a manner that highlights its association with debt, indolence, and lust after it has moved beyond the merchant’s shop into the consumer’s hands.

Written and performed in the years immediately following James I’s repeal of long-standing sumptuary legislation, it is tempting to read *Your Five Gallants* as a one-dimensional morality tale, demonstrating a correlation between the increased availability of luxury commodities to the lower classes and a rise in debt and disreputable behavior. The evidence for such a discussion is certainly there, as the play pointedly opens upon Frippery’s pawn shop, with the broker gallant taking careful note of his inventory: “Lent the fifth day of September to Mistress Onset, upon her gown, taffeta petticoat with three broad silver laces: three pound fifteen shillings. Lent to Justice Cropshin, upon both his velvet jackets: five pound ten shillings ... Lent to Sir Oliver Needy upon his taffeta cloak, beaver hat, and perfumed leather jerkin: six pound five shillings” (I.i.6-10, 15-17). Not only does Frippery list the garments that have come into his possession, the broker gallant also takes careful note of the specific fabrics from which each garment is made, for how much money each item was pawned, and the name and social rank of the citizen who pawned it. After opening with this explicit display of cloth-related debt, the drama moves from Frippery’s shop to meet the other four gallants, establishing them, along with Fitzgrave, as suitors seeking the hand of a recently deceased Knight’s daughter, Katherine. The play follows the five gallants as they navigate various encounters designed to exhibit each gallant’s particular vice: Frippery tallies debts, Tailby is involved in tawdry affairs and loses at dice, Goldstone cheats and dissembles, Pursenet steals from unsuspecting citizens’ pockets, and Primero manipulates his bawds. Fitzgrave, after disguising himself and arranging for the unsuspecting five gallants to perform for Katherine in a masque, tricks the gallants into revealing their true natures to Katherine and successfully secures the Knight’s daughter’s hand for himself. However, the Fitzgrave-Katherine love plot takes a clear back seat to these five personified forms of vice as they move in and out of multiple settings with ease, permeating some of London’s familiar haunts like the Mitre tavern (II.iv) and the middle aisle of St.

Paul’s Cathedral (IV.iv). *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* and *Michaelmas Term* may exhibit cautionary displays of different stereotypical forms associated with cloth merchants and gallants, but *Your Five Gallants* presents much more explicit and personified images of gambling, usury, lasciviousness, and thievery, moving through the city while dressed in luxurious apparel. *Your Five Gallants* takes the audience past the merchant’s shop to the city’s seedy underbelly, utilizing cloth post-purchase in a demonstration of what seventeenth-century economist Thomas Mun lamented when he gave evidence to the Trade Commission in 1622, published posthumously in 1664 as *England’s Treasure by Foreign Trade*. In the chapter titled, “Of somme different effects, which proceed from Naturall and Artificiall Wealth,” Mun complains of men’s improvidence and carelessness, describing English citizens as living in “Pride, monstrous Fashions, and Riot, above all other Nations” (sig. N1v).

While *Your Five Gallants* does possess an undeniable cautionary element (which part of this chapter explores), it is more than a mere didactic evaluation of consumer behaviors, and any analysis that relegates *Your Five Gallants* to this oversimplified interpretation is only considering one facet of a potentially complex kaleidoscope of meaning. Including cloth more pointedly in the discussion helps to generate a broader understanding of the communicative potential in *Your Five Gallants*, as there is a more complex allure to these five scoundrels and their navigation of the city’s more disreputable settings. *Your Five Gallants* certainly exploits knowledge of sumptuary law and newly accessible luxuries to create an onstage spectacle that demonstrates a connection between luxurious apparel, financial liability, and inglorious behavior, but it also uses these specific types of fabrics to craft what can be described as a gallant of display. From the beginning of the drama, display is made essential to the characterization of the five roguish figures at its center. Each of the five gallants possesses a particular, Middleton-assigned niche—from the whore-gallant (Tailby), to the pocket-gallant (Pursenet), the cheating-gallant (Goldstone), bawd-gallant (Primero), and the broker-gallant (Frippery)—and display would have played a significant role in helping the audience identify and differentiate between them.

For example, during the play’s opening prologue, the audience is introduced to these five gallants as they appear onstage, miming the Presenter’s description of them “passing over the stage” (I.i.1), interacting with wenches and then exiting “in a little whisper and wanton action” (I.i.4-5). While the clothing worn by the gallants during this initial exchange is not specified, as Lowe astutely points out, “Each gallant is marked out by the Presenter’s narrative, and it is likely (though not specified) that they are differentiated by wearing notably distinctive clothing” (198). Lowe claims that this short, initial display, “indicate[s] Middleton’s keen awareness of the importance of mimetic modes of presentation on the stage in the first moments of the play” (197) and it seems literally to set the stage for a particularly focused concentration upon the visual (with cloth as its preferred tool) that will continue as the play progresses. While admonitory works like Phillip Stubbes’ *Anatomie of Abuses* (1583), popular sermons like “An Homily Against Excess of Apparel,” frequently issued and revised Elizabethan sumptuary declarations, and popular satire like Greene’s *The Defence of Conny Catching* (1592) came out well before the first performance of *Your Five Gallants*, growing anti-theatricalist sentiment in the Jacobean period ensured Middleton the ability to exploit his audience’s continued acquaintance with the association of luxurious clothing and moral corruption. As Stallybrass points out, “if the ungodliness of the theater is insisted upon by most of its critics, it is the actors’ *apparel* and the ‘infection’ which their proteanism generates to which critics return again and again” (124-125). Display remains at the center of *Your Five Gallants* throughout the drama, as cloth is utilized by the five gallants not for any esteem or advancement but just for display’s own sake, making the tools of sartorial exhibition particularly resonant and warranting closer examination in twentieth- and twenty-first-century discussion.

The Repeal of Sumptuary Legislation

As previously stated, a play immersed in consumption of luxury commodities that appeared so recently following James I’s 1604 repeal of sumptuary laws warrants a discussion that takes this legislative action into consideration. As Bly states, “Middleton’s play [*Your Five Gallants*] constructed luxury and fashion in terms that were newly legible in 1607. It is crucially a play of its moment, and key to understanding it is a historically specific understanding of the complex emotional resonance of luxury clothing” (589). As previously discussed in this project’s introduction and in Chapter One, Tudor sumptuary law was introduced in Henry VIII’s reign and reiterated in multiple proclamations throughout Elizabeth I’s rule. The repeated revisiting of sumptuary legislation throughout Elizabeth I’s reign, charging those in authority to “see to the speedy execution thereof ... for the due execution and punishment of the offenders, so as no subiect of the Realme shal haue cause by ignorance to continue in their offence” (13 February 1588, 30 Elizabeth I), ensured the people were keenly aware of the law. However, the breaching of the statutes of apparel never truly ceased. This confusion is exhibited (as previously mentioned in Chapter Two) in Stubbes:

> it is verie hard to knowe, who is noble, who is worshipfull, who is a gentleman, who is not: for you shall haue those, which are neither of the nobylitie gentilitie, nor yeomanry, no, nor yet anie Magistrat or Officer in the common welth, go daylie in silkes, veluets, satens, damasks, taffeties and such like, notwithstanding that they be both base by byrthe, meane be estate, & seruyle by calling. This is a great confusion & a general disorder. (sig. C3r)

Bly helps to explain why this anxiety that perpetuated the Tudor monarchs’ issuing and reissuing regulations of apparel would have been disconcerting for the early modern imagination: “When the laws were no longer respected, so that class could not be determined from clothing—and a person was surrounded by a city full of strangers—recognition of one’s equals, betters, and inferiors became a far more complicated endeavor” (591).

As important as the acts of apparel were to the Tudor monarchs, they promptly halted with the accession of James I. Clearly significant to understanding the socio-historical context surrounding *Your*

Five Gallants is how English citizens reacted to the repeal of sumptuary law. Bly cites historians like Wilfrid Hooper (“The Tudor Sumptuary Laws”, 1915) and Frances Baldwin (*Sumptuary Legislation and Personal Regulation in England*, 1926) who maintain that, while the laws had been repealed, a continued sentiment in support of sumptuary regulation remained. This debate and eventual passing of sumptuary repeal demonstrate “that while the sentiment behind the regulation of clothing was still widely held (as demonstrated by the June bill), the Commons specifically rejected the *King’s* right to legislate it” (591). While the legislation was retracted, caution remained with regards to sartorial excess, not only due to the potential for confusion in ascertaining status and rank, but also in relation to a perceived connection between luxurious apparel, debt, pride, and prodigality. This concern is demonstrated in “An Homily Against Excess of Apparel,” which was included in a book of homilies appointed to be read in churches during Elizabeth I’s reign and continued to be used and reprinted through the later part of the seventeenth century (one of the last printings was in 1671). The homily states,

> There-fore all may not looke to weare like apparel, but euery one according to his degree, as GOD hath placed him. Which, if it were obseerued, many one doubtlesse should bee compelled to weare a russet coate, which now ruffeleth in silks and veluet, spending more by the Year in sumptuous Apparel, than their Fathers received for the whole Revenue of their Lands. But alas, now adays how many may we behold occupied wholly in pampering the flesh, taking no care at all, but only how to deck themselves, setting their affection altogether on worldly bravery, abusing Gods goodness when he sendeth plenty, to satisfie their wanton lusts, having no regard to the degree wherein God hath placed them. (325)

And yet, while this caution surrounding consumption of foreign luxuries did exist, it was in direct competition with another powerful urge, the urge to own. Lisa Jardine identifies this urge as one of the English early modern culture’s defining characteristics, stating, “The Renaissance ... its particular kind of rebirth, reawakening and renewal—was a celebration of the urge to own, the curiosity to possess the treasures of other cultures and pride in a new craftsmanship which can make the most humdrum commodities desirable” (33-34). Frenk describes the complexity surrounding the early modern perspective of ownership and foreign luxuries, explaining,

> Christian thought and ethics clearly rejected luxury, a key term in pre-modern moral discourse, as one of the cardinal sins, and it warned of luxury’s corrupting power ... In sharp contrast to Christian denunciations of luxury, the expanding European and colonial trade systems were to a large extent based on the acquisition and circulation of luxury objects ... Yet for all the mercantile pride that undoubtedly fueled the actions of the merchant adventurers of the later trading companies founded for the development of overseas trade, there obviously remained, at least in some parts of the English cultural unconscious, an underlying embarrassment of riches. (32)

It is apparent, then, that the conflict between sumptuary restriction and sumptuary freedom continued to exist. This was a significant seismic shift, culturally speaking, as Bailey points out, “The demilitarization of the aristocracy and the erosion of their financial base that began in the earlier part of the sixteenth century contributed to the diminishment of the titled elite as a viable social force” (250). Not only did the “newly rich” have the legal ability to wear the trappings of nobility, but now the nobility were losing ground in the realms of power and influence, giving legitimacy to the lower classes who would wear these trappings in a sign of rebelling against old social determinants of authority and status. “The myriad indicators of status, such as birth, wealth, occupation, political allegiance, and life-style, as well as regional, religious, and professional affiliation, overlapped, cancelled out, and qualified one another to the extent that elite status was at once increasingly easier to achieve and more difficult to define” (Bailey, 254). Sumptuary legislation’s lingering influence is demonstrated in repeated allusions to these laws in publications from the years following the 1604 repeal. The effectiveness of these references obviously hinged upon the audience’s ability to make this mental connection back to the now-repealed acts. In *Your Five Gallants*, for example, as Primero seeks to dress his newly-acquired bawd in a “pretty suit of clothes” (I.i.182), Frippery’s instructions to the novice rely upon the audience at least possessing a general familiarity with sumptuary laws as he instructs the new bawd, once she has been properly clothed as one of elevated rank, “to laugh at all under taffeta” (I.i.229-230). In 1607, the same year *Your Five Gallants* was first performed, James Cleland’s *Hero-paideia, or The institution of a young noble man* warns young men to avoid anyone who shines in scarlet, but does not possess “a liuing

to maintain that brauery, nor yet is of that qualitie, and rancke, vnto which such costly and gorgeous apparel doth appertaine” (216).

Establishing that Elizabethan sumptuary law still existed as a point of reference is important when discussing cloth’s role in *Your Five Gallants* because, as Bly states, “*Your Five Gallants* is a play that demands a narrower focus, an understanding as discerning as Frip[pery]’s of the status of taffeta versus wool in the first decade of the 1600s” (589). Key to appreciating the communicative potential surrounding cloth’s role in this work is not only that the sumptuary laws still existed as a kind of mental touchstone in the English imagination, but also that a significant portion of the population still subscribed to the belief that sumptuary orders helped keep English citizens from “advancing [them]selves in sumptuous Apparel, and despising others, preparing [them]selves in fine bravery, to wanton, lewd, and unchaste behaviour” (“An Homily Against Excess in Apparel”, 323). Middleton capitalizes on this tension generated by the existing residual concern post sumptuary repeal, as Cohen and Jowett point out, *Your Five Gallants* “associate[s] the vices and ills of London—greed, the plague, gambling, prostitution—with clothes that go from hand to hand” (595). The only types of cloth Middleton refers to by name in *Your Five Gallants*—satin, silk, taffeta, velvet and beaver—are all foreign luxuries and each specifically appears in the sumptuary legislation so recently taken off the books. The 1574 Elizabethan *Proclamation against Excess of Apparel,* for example, forbids “Satin, damask, silk, camlet, or taffeta in gown, coat, hose, or uppermost garments; fur whereof the kind groweth not in the Queen’s dominions” (15 June 1574, 16 Elizabeth I). When Tailby dresses in an “orange tawny satin doublet” (II.iv.278) or Primero claims his bawd sent him “boot-hose wrought in silk” (II.i.32), these characters are dressing in fabrics formerly outside their legal reach. Considering one of the alleged primary purposes of the repealed sumptuary legislation was to protect citizenry from over-extending themselves and becoming hopelessly lost in debt and its associated vices, it is important not only to consider what the five gallants are wearing, but also how these characters behave now that they can

finally—legally—wear it. Bly states that, "*Your Five Gallants* is a play that pushes the broader question of commodity culture to one more explicit: What will a man do for a fine suit?" (602). However, in a cloth-based discussion of *Your Five Gallants*, it may be even more interesting to take this question one step further and ask, "What will a man do once he has it?"

A Cautionary Tale

While obviously more than a mere warning against overindulgence and vice, there remains a moralistic element to *Your Five Gallants* that warrants discussion, particularly when exploring cloth's role in the play in the wake of the repeal of sumptuary laws. Kermode points out that there was a "very real early modern sense that the pride of clothing was a leading factor in the period's moral destitution" (17). This is clearly demonstrated in the previously mentioned 1574 proclamation which direly predicted,

> The excess of apparel and the superfluity of unnecessary foreign wares thereto belonging now of late years is grown by sufferance to such an extremity that the manifest decay not only of a great part of the wealth of the whole realm generally is like to follow (by bringing into the realm such superfluities of silks, cloths of gold, silver, and other most vain devices of so great cost for the quantity thereof as of necessity the moneys and treasure of the realm is and must be yearly conveyed out of the same to answer the said excess) but *also particularly the wasting and undoing of a great number of young gentlemen … who allured by the vain show of those things, do not only consume themselves, their goods, and lands which their parents have left unto them, but also run into such debts and shifts … whereby they are not any ways serviceable to their country as otherwise they might be.* (15 June 1574, 16 Elizabeth I, emphasis added)

Cautionary works were popular during the period, ranging from satirical works like Thomas Dekker's *The guls horne-booke* (1609) and Robert Greene's *Conny-Catching Pamphlets* to more reproving tracts like Stubbes' *Anatomie of Abuses*. A popular theme was the warning against vices perceived as rampant in the city, as well as cautioning against those inhabitants already perceived as infected with the city's ills. One particularly popular motif in these works was that of the city's uncivil gentleman, an individual who strutted about in fine clothing, taking advantage of others' generosity and patronage, and using these resources to subsidize his indolence and lust. Thomas Nashe's, *The Anatomie of Absurditie* (1589), for example, criticizes youths' irresponsible handling of their patrimony, complaining they spend their days

“casting that away at a cast at dice, which cost theyr daddes a yeares toyle, spending that in their Velvets, which was rakt uppe in a Russette coate” (sig. C4v). This is also illustrated in Richard West’s 1608 work, *Wits A.B.C. or A centurie of epigrams*, which demonstrates a connection between luxurious apparel and the “sot,” who uses these fabrics’ “show” to establish himself as one of these uncivil gentleman:

> Rvstique Surperbus fine new clothes hath got,
> Of taffeta, and veluet faire in sight:
> The show of which so bewicht the sot,
> That he thinks Gentleman to be his right.
> But he’s deceiu’d, for true that is of old,
> An ape’s an ape though he weare cloth of gold. (sigs. B2r, B2v)

Thomas Gainsford’s 1616 text, *The Rich Cabinet*—a work which, on its title page states that it “provides invectives against many abuses of the time”—demonstrates this motif as it cautions against such an undesirable character in its chapter titled, “Gentery.” Gainsford warns against these types of meritless individuals who walk the city’s streets in fine apparel, yet are severely lacking, both materially and morally: “A Gentleman vvithout meanes, is a painted bardge without oares; faire to looke on, but there is no vse of him, neither in calm, nor storme” (51). Gainsford uses luxurious clothing as one of the signals of this type of unproductive, indolent, dishonest gentleman when he warns, “A Gentleman without meanes is a prettie plant, but without rinde, without roote, without leaues, without fruit. He is a tender creature that can weare his clothes in good fashion, if his Mercer & Tayler will trust him. Hee can borrow with as plausible and pittifull perswasion, and put off payment with as pretty inuention” (52). A lack of substance, character, or worth is lamented as Gainsford further describes this type of individual and luxurious apparel continues to be used as a visual cue of a man’s being infected with the vices commonly associated with the city:

> The outside of an unmannerly gentleman, seems an object of worth, where hee is unknown: but if you taste him, or try him, by more neere commerce, or inward conuersation, you shall finde him, for ignorant prating, for impudent lying, for scornfull scoffing, for rude rayling, for quaffing and quarrelling, for swaggering and swearing, for bawdery and blaspheming, of so riotous and rotten; so contagious and stinking a condition, that of all others, you may least endure him ...

> The first sight of an vnciuill Gentleman, is the best; the further you see him, the better you like him, the nearer he comes, the worse you brooke him. (56)

These types of concerns over falling prey to vice and folly in the city are exploited in *Your Five Gallants* as the five gallants embody vices associated with the city and a perceived type of indigent gentleman residing within. This play with no central point of view shifts between the various antics of the five corrupted gallants, creating an atmosphere that fixates on and exults in tawdry behavior. As Frippery dons others’ pawned wealth, Tailby loses his apparel at the dice tables, and Goldstone makes an empty offer of a satin gown to a courtesan in an elaborately staged lie, it is not difficult to recognize parallels between these characters and the stereotypical uncivil gentleman. Dice and gaming, for example, are never far from the gallants’ minds, as Pursenet inquires, “When come these dice?” (II.iv.17) and Goldstone specifically requests, “Give me a pair of false dice” (II.iv.36). Their characterizations are framed as transient and unreliable, yet they employ language of fealty when navigating illicit realms of chance and gaming, as when Goldstone bids farewell to the courtesans at the Mitre: “Kind ladies, we commit you to sweet dreams,/ Ourselves unto the fortune of the dice” (II.iv.6-7). Later in this same scene, Fitzgrave inquires of Goldstone, “what say you to those that forget themselves?” (II.iv.112-113), seeking Goldstone’s perspective upon the shiftless behavior of his comrades. Goldstone, in reply, exhibits the nonchalant, dismissive attitude associated with the indolent gentleman: “Nay, then, to dice” (II.iv.114). Further reinforcing the gallants’ association with decadence and depravity and placing these characters in direct opposition to productivity and academia, Goldstone, when meeting Fitzgrave disguised as a scholar, compares him to an ass, mocking him as “Piping hot from university” (II.i.58) and establishing himself as an authority, reassuring him, “I’ll bring you to see fashions” (II.i.67). This opposition is underscored again late in the play, when the painter brings the five shields to Fitzgrave as part of his masque to trick the five gallants and reveal their true natures to Katherine. One unnamed gentleman-gallant asks of the symbol blazoned on each shield, “What’s this?” to which Bungler criticizes, “Fooh, you should be a gallant too, for you’re no university

scholar” (V.i.82-84). Not only is the uncivil gallant’s lifestyle established specifically in contrast against that of a scholar, the five gallants mock this more conventionally accepted route to success and social validation. The five gallants are not only representations and proponents of vice, they are pointedly framed as antagonists to virtue. It is easy to see similarities between these five gallants and Gainsford’s description of the attributes of the uncivil gentleman: “the onely ordinarie vocation he is most naturally apt unto, and hath dexteritie in; that he likes, and likes him, that he lives by, and lives in, is the Art of cheating” (55-56). Fitzgrave describes the five gallants as “counterfeits; no honest spirit will pity ’em” (V.i.120-121), placing them within the early modern framework of Gainsford’s “beggarly Gentleman” (56) or the “indigent gentleman ... potentially apt for any thing, but actually good for nothing” (56).

It would not have been difficult for an audience to view these “gallant rascal[s]” (IV.vi.31) as representative of the city’s vices, as they “jump upon one cause: *subaudi* lechery” (III.iii.11-12) and are self-described as dismissive towards authenticity, exhibited in Pursenet’s observation: “Nothing seems as it is but honesty, and that makes it so little regarded amongst us” (III.i.50-51). The gallants not only embody vice and the commonly held fear of the type of indigent men the city held, but these characters also act as a cautionary tale against the type of man (and woman) the city could create. Mistress Newcut’s discussion with three courtesans illustrates this association between the city, luxurious clothing, and a loss of moral character: “were not you a fellmonger’s daughter at first, that run away with a new courtier for the love of gentlewomen’s clothes, and bought the fashion at a dear rate, with the loss of your name and credit? Why, what are all of you, but rustical insides and City flesh, the blood of yeomen and the bum of gentlewomen” (V.i.24-29). The gallants inspire caution against the types of men (and women) found within the city, yet also against the temptations—“the love of gentlewomen’s clothes” –that would create more such decadent, improvident individuals.

To successfully establish these caricatures of vice, Middleton relies heavily not just on the gallants’ names like “Tailby,” “Frippery,” or “Goldstone,” but also on the communicative potential of the

types of cloth selected to surround these corporeal representations of immorality, demonstrating the connection between the city’s moral decline and the increased availability of luxurious commodities after 1604. The play’s previously mentioned opening scene features Frippery, the broker-gallant, tallying his profits from unfortunate English souls forced to sell their prized foreign wares for a fraction of their worth. A taffeta petticoat and cloak, velvet jacket, satin gown, beaver hat—all are listed by the broker gallant as he sits crouched in his usury cloak like a miser, counting luxuries pawned in desperate transactions by English citizens: “Lent the fifth day of September to Mistress Onset, upon her gown, taffeta petticoat with three broad silver laces: three pound fifteen shillings. Lent to Justice Cropshin, upon both his velvet jackets: five pound ten shillings ... Lent to Sir Oliver Needy upon his taffeta cloak, beaver hat, and perfumed leather jerkin: six pound five shillings” (I.i.6-10, 15-17). Mistress Onset, Sir Oliver Needy, Master Andrew Lucifer, Justice Cropshin—Frippery names individuals from a variety of social classes in possession of, and eventually pawning, luxurious cloth. While none of these individuals are present onstage, their debt is alive and well, driving home the image of debt taking precedence over the individual. English men and women have become their debt, encapsulated in these foreign fabrics, hovered over by the pawn broker in his “*wretched cloak*” (I.i.8.2 SD). Concerns surrounding the increased availability of foreign luxuries to the general citizenry are validated as the broker gallant’s customers have been reduced to an entry in the broker’s ledger, needy ghosts mentioned only in passing, while bringing to mind images of desperation, foolishness, and regret. Bly points out the particular resonance this scene would have had with an audience newly freed from the bounds of sumptuary legislation:

> When Frippery lists the velvet jackets, perfumed leather jerkin, and silver laces—all of which would have been forbidden to him, given his humble lineage and position as a clothes broker—his delight is in line with Shakespeare’s Falstaff, who apparently hankered after wenches in flame-coloured taffeta. Queen Elizabeth’s regulations explicitly prohibited taffeta, unless that wench happened to be married to a knight. On the one hand, the play celebrates the rivers of taffeta flowing through the hands of London tailors, available to whoever had the money to pay for it; at the same time it registers a potent anxiety about the inability to discern rank when everyone on the street wears a taffeta cloak. (592)

Immediately after Frippery’s listing these debts, his servant, Arthur, enters to discuss a suit that has “lain above the year now” (I.i.23). Frippery dismissively instructs Arthur to “cut it out into matches; the white linings will serve for tinder” (I.i.24-25). Middleton precisely shows the audience what happens to their once-prized foreign finery: the pawn broker obtains the garments for a pittance, eventually using the wares to his liking, often in a manner that would dismay the owner. The drama itself is making use of these materials it is reflecting upon, implying yet another use for surrendered luxuries and demonstrating what happens to expensive foreign commodities after they are brought home, having been purchased by a drive borne of prideful desire over practical restraint.

While the five gallants are frequently surrounded with various fabrics and fashions including velvet, perfumed leather, and silk, most intriguing are the fabrics Middleton places in closest proximity to their bodies both in dress and possession: taffeta, beaver, and satin. As previously mentioned, when the gallants initially pass over the stage during the play’s prologue, the types of apparel each character wears are not specifically stated. However, throughout the rest of the play it is repeatedly made clear the gallants are wearing taffeta, beaver, and satin in various forms. If Cohen and Jowett are accurate in stating that “Middleton uses costumes and props as a visual glue to hold the various parts of the play together” (595), then the close, repeated association of the five central gallants with taffeta, beaver, and satin potentially works as thematic glue to establish these characters squarely within the realms of excess and vice in a world without legislative controls limiting access to these luxuries. Lucifer himself is hinted at visiting Frippery’s shop during an early conversation between Frippery and his apprentice about what to do with a “Master Lucifer’s flame-colored doublet.” The repeated reference to satin in particular underscores association as it is an obvious pun on “satan.” Such a connection is demonstrated elsewhere in literature of the period, as in Thomas Dekker’s *The Whore of Babylon* (1607), when Plaine dealing describes being “cast into the bonds of sattin” and then later one of the three Kings desires to be dressed “Like to a Sattin diuell” (sigs. D1r, D4v). This helps to explain when Primero, the bawd gallant,

enters Frippery’s shop in search of clothing for his “fat-eyed wench” (I.i.168), Frippery immediately offers him “satin, taffeta, beaver” (I.i.178). These three fabrics are specifically named in Act IV, working as personified forms of the gallants themselves, when Fitzgrave sarcastically laments to Frippery, “What man so savage spirited durst presume/ To strike down satin on two taffetas cut,/ Or lift his hand against a beaver hat?” (IV.ii.26-28). Frippery, the broker gallant, interacts closely with these three fabrics within his shop—“a fair satin gown; new taffeta petticoat ... a fine white beaver” (I.i.75-76, 81)—and also places these fabrics upon his person: “Bring down Sir Oliver Needy’s taffeta cloak and beaver hat” (I.i.316-317). Tailby, the whore gallant, wears several different pieces of satin and beaver throughout the play—“a beaver hat, with a correspondent band ... [and] orange tawny satin doublet” (II.iv.247, 278) or none at all, as evidenced by Tailby’s man, Jack, who tells Mistress Cleveland’s servant in Interim I, that Tailby is “awake, but not yet stirring, for he played away half his clothes last night” (Interim I.7-8). Goldstone, the cheat gallant, frequently refers to “a satin gown or two” (II.i.171) when acting in his role as a “dissembler” (II.i.142), even offering “a watchet satin gown” (III.iv.167) as an invented gift to manipulate a courtesan. While these three fabrics are not the only material references in *Your Five Gallants*, they appear most frequently and are the fabrics found most often closely associated—both literally and in dialogue—with the five gallants themselves, an association which clearly establishes the gallants’ characterization within a particular connotative framework. Early modern association with these specific types of materials and prodigality underscores why this type of gallant—“soone slypt into his satin sute, silke stock, treble ruffe, and beauer hat” (Gainsford, 55)—is described as a “sycophant, parasite, or jester” living a “weake and worthlesse life” (Gainsford, 55). Further examination of these particular fabrics in writings of the period makes it clear why Middleton selected these particular types of cloth in crafting these personified versions of vice, as well as to demonstrate a cautionary connection between access to luxurious fabrics and a downward spiral in behavior.

Taffeta

Making its first appearance as a pawned taffeta petticoat in Frippery’s shop before eventually appearing on the bodies of the broker and bawd gallants, taffeta visually represents the decline associated with overindulgence as the taffeta petticoat is pawned by a gentlewoman who has been put “to her shifts” (I.i.72), then directly conscripted onto the body of one of those navigating the city’s moral underbelly, Primero’s novice bawd. As previously discussed in Chapter One, taffeta’s associations with indulgence, superfluity, and manipulation are clearly demonstrated in Berowne’s reference to this fabric in his forswearing of elaborate, insincere, and inflated language in Shakespeare’s *Love’s Labour’s Lost* (1598): “Taffeta phrases, silken tearmes precise,/ Three-piled hyperboles, spruce affectation” (V.ii.407-408). The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines taffeta, when used as an adjective as in Shakespeare’s “Taffeta phrases,” as meaning “florid, bombastic; over-dressed” (“taffeta, adj.”). The gentlewoman’s lost taffeta petticoat in *Your Five Gallants* is a visual representation of a moral decline, overindulgence gone awry. Her finery is pawned and discussed in uncivil, sexual terms, as when, after the taffeta petticoat’s initial appearance, Frippery asks, “this petticoat has been turned?” (I.i.77), to which the fellow replies, “Often turned up and down” (I.i.78), with obvious erotic undertones. Further evidence of taffeta’s association with overindulgence and prodigality is found in Thomas Dekker’s *Lanthorne and Candle-light, Or The Bell-mans second Nights walke* (1609), when the “Infernal Promoter” enters the city and passes through the open gates to the suburbs to discover “more Ale houses than there are taverns in all Spain and France … [and] the dores of notorious Carted Bawdes, (like Hell gates) stand night and day wide open, with a paire of Harlots in Taffata gownes (like two painted posts) garnishing out those dores” (sigs. D3r, D3v). When Frippery, after completing his shop’s inventory in the opening scene of *Your Five Gallants*, changes his clothes to “Sir Oliver Needy’s taffeta cloak and beaver hat” (I.i.316-317), this change of his wardrobe foreshadows what type of characters Frippery and his associates can be expected to be. After Frippery wonders, “whose cloak shall I wear today to continue change?” (I.i.313-314), finally settling

upon the taffeta cloak and beaver hat, he is establishing himself with connotations of pride and affected superiority, made particularly illegitimate as Frippery notes he is not putting on his own cloak, but rather he must select “whose cloak” he shall wear. This is a demonstration of what Stubbes lamented as “pride of apparel” that is committed “by wearyng of Apparell more gorgeous, sumptuous and precious than our state, calling or condition of lyfe requireth, wherby, we are puffed vp into Pride, and inforced to thinke of our selues, more than we ought, being but vile earth and miserable sinners” (sigs. B6r, B7r). Taffeta appears again in a similar, although satirical, description of gallant behavior in a passage from Dekker’s *The guls horne-booke* when, in chapter four, Dekker describes “How a Gallant Should Behaue himself in Powles-Walkes”:

> Hee therefore that would striue to fashion his legges to his silke stockins, and his proud gate to his broad garters, let him whiffe downe these obseruations ... bend your course directly in the middle line, that the whole body of the Church may appeare to be yours, where, in view of all, you may publish your suit in what manner you affect most, either with the slide of your cloake from the one shoulder, and then you must (as twere in anger) suddenly snatch at the middle of the inside (if it be taffeta at the least) and so by these means your costly lining is betrayed, or else by the pretty aduantage of Complement. (sig. D1v)

Frippery’s taking an English woman’s taffeta petticoat pawned in desperation, transferring the taffeta petticoat to Primero for his bawd, then throwing on a taffeta cloak after wondering to himself which of many desperate consumers’ cloaks he should wear this particular day “to continue change” (I.i.313-314) reinforces the connection between these characters, luxurious fabric, and the vices of pride, manipulation, and indulgence.

Beaver

Beaver, imported from Russia, had been long forbidden to the lower classes along with other foreign furs since the Henrician statute that stated such persons may not wear “any sateen damaske silke chamlett or taffeta in his gowne cote with sleves or other uttermost apparel or garment, ... nor also shall weare any furre wherof the like kynde growth not within this realme of Englande” (24 Hen. VIII. c. 13).

Beaver’s association with uncommon luxury is well documented, and its post sumptuary association with unchecked social mobility is exhibited in John Mason’s *The Turke* (1610): “I haue seen a capp most miraculously turned into a beauer hatt without either trimming or dressing” (sig. E4v). Beaver’s association with a type of prodigal framework of vice and the uncivil gallant is demonstrated in John Taylor’s *The sculler rowing from Tiber to Thames with his boate laden with a hotch-potch, or gallimawfry of sonnets, satyres, and epigrams* (1612), which describes a “gallant Gull … With the great Feather, and the Beauer Hat” who wastes his fortune on whores and gambling: “Thus doth he swagger, sharke, steale, filtch, and quarrel” (Epigram 38, sig. E4r). From its initial appearance as a pawned item in Frippery’s shop, to adorning Frippery’s body, to a bit of collateral for Tailby at the dice tables, the beaver hat is a recurring object in the play, working as a representation of the consequences of a society forgoing compelled sumptuary restraint. Tailby pawns his beaver hat, along with his satin doublet, rapier, and dagger to Frippery while standing at the dice table to subsidize his gambling, predictably losing everything by the end of the night (II.iv). Later in Interim II, Tailby receives a new satin suit from a former mistress and wishes for his pawned beaver hat. Almost immediately, Mistress Newblock’s servant brings him “a beaver hat here, with a band best in fashion” (Interim II.52). The staged image, with the beaver hat as a central prop, is a whore gallant completely reliant upon the whims of foolish women represented in Mistresses Newblock, Newcut, Tiffany, and Cleveland; a gallant who promises he will “dispatch her out of hand the first thing I do” (Interim II.62), with its evident sexual innuendo. After he doffs his new beaver hat, Tailby ends the scene marking his own lack of ambition, stating, “let others live by art, and I by nature” (Interim II.95). Tailby’s taking particular pleasure in living with no skilled profession, reinforced by the use of the beaver hat that casually drifts in and out of his possession, emphasizes his character’s indolence. Foreign luxuries like beaver are specifically linked to Tailby’s idleness, similar to the previously mentioned 1574 proclamation warning against “the wasting and

undoing of a great number of young gentlemen … not any ways serviceable to their country” (15 June 1574, 16 Elizabeth I,) and blaming the allure of foreign luxuries like beaver for exacerbating the problem.

Beaver also can allude to the previously discussed perception of divisiveness that existed between city gallants and scholars in Sir Thomas Overbury’s description of “An Innes of Court Man” in *Characters, Or Wittie descriptions of the properties of Sundry Persons* (1616), stating of such gallants, “He is distinguished from a Scholler by a paire of silke stockings and a Beauer hat, which makes him contemne a Scholler as much as a Scholler doth a Scholemaster” (sig. H1v). When Fitzgrave, disguised as Bowser, is introduced to the gallants as “piping hot from the university” (II.i.58), Goldstone immediately asserts his critical views of scholars/university men, calling Bowser “the arrantest ass” (II.i.59-60), stating “his friends are of the old fashion” (II.i.61-62). While this exchange places these characters squarely within the city gallant framework and at odds with the scholarly/university men, the beaver hat flitting in and out of the gallants’ possession drives this point home further as a visual affirmation of the verbal squaring off between the two realms.

Satin

While satin’s association with indulgence and vice has been discussed in previous chapters, *Your Five Gallants* particularly capitalizes on these connotations to effectively establish the gallants with qualities of lasciviousness and other vices associated with the temptations of the city. Considering the well-established association between satin and tawdry behavior, dressing the whore gallant, the bawd gallant and the broker gallant in satin seems a particularly obvious choice. Middleton’s satin-clad gallants closely resemble images found in John Marston’s previously mentioned *Scourge of Villanie* (1598), which rejects the attention of “each sattin sute,/ Each quaint fashion-monger, whose sole repute/ Rests in his trim gay clothes” (sig. B1r). This association is demonstrated in Thomas Dekker’s description of the broker in *The Seuen deadly sinnes of London* (1606): “These Brokers were armed with

thrumd capes ... for they had all diuellish heads, and were suited in sparke of veluet Iackets with out sleeues, tuft taffatie breeches, close to them like Irish Stroozes, Sattin doublets with sagging bellies” (sig. G2r). Satin appears as a gift for the whore gallant, Tailby, when Mistress Cleveland sends Tailby a satin suit after the whore gallant has lost his own along with his beaver hat the previous night at the dice tables, quiet compensation after a late night’s secret rendezvous. Directly before the conniving gallant Goldstone references a satin gown as he casually steals a ring from a courtesan—“What reckon I a satin gown or two/ If she were wise” (II.i.171-172)—Goldstone identifies himself as a conniving cheat, stating, “how could drabs and cheaters live else?/ Then, since the world rolls on dissimulation,/ I’ll be the first dissembler” (II.i.140-142). Later in Act III, the discussion of the promised satin gown continues, as Goldstone employs a tailor in an elaborate ruse to convince the courtesan her gift of a “watchet satin gown” (III.iv.167) is coming. The nonexistent gown remains unseen throughout the play. The imagined possession of it works to appease the courtesan, yet it never actually materializes. In fact, anyone who would create or come into contact with this gown (other than the courtesan) understands it is nonexistent, invisible. Middleton’s choice to use satin for this imaginary gown not only speaks to its association with licentiousness, but also a lack of substance. Satin is a foreign luxury portrayed in the drama as a tool of seduction or payment for lascivious services, a contrivance in one of the con man gallant’s many cons.

While satin, along with the other previously mentioned luxuries, works to craft an identity imbued with lasciviousness and indolence, one that is lacking in substance, eventually the gallants’ identities even become synonymous with the fabric at certain points in the play. “Satin” eventually becomes a term used to refer to the gallants themselves, as when Fitzgrave mocks Frippery in Act IV, stating, “What man so savage spirited durst presume/ to strike down satin” (IV.ii.27-28), or Primero observes, “you find not that in the statute, to whip satin” (V.ii.75-76). It is notable the phrase reads “to whip satin,” and not “to whip *one wearing* satin.” The fabric has become the gallant, in this case, and

the gallant’s identity is effectively encapsulated with a mere reference to the cloth he wears. Just as the play’s introductory scene depicts English citizenry as eclipsed by their debts, these later interchanges demonstrate the gallants as incorporated into or eclipsed by this fabric. This, along with the previously discussed pun on “satan,” makes Middleton’s choice to use satin as one of the fabrics to place on the bodies of personified vice a particularly effective one.

Enter the Virgin

In a display that would be in stark contrasts against the satin, taffeta, and beaver-clad gallants who have dominated the onstage action thus far, when Katherine takes the stage to play her part in the masque that will ultimately decide whom she will wed, the stage directions simply state, “*enter the virgin [Katherine]*” (V.ii.239.1 SD). According to the editors’ footnote in *The Oxford Middleton*, this “suggests a ceremonial costume denoting Katherine as such, perhaps a white robe” (Cohen and Jowett, 632). At this point in the play, after the audience has witnessed the tossing to and fro of beaver hats, satin suits, taffeta petticoats, and nonexistent satin gowns, Katherine standing onstage in robes meant to indicate her virginity would have provided some significant contrast as well as iconographic recognizability, as white is at times associated with virginity in an English context. For example, in a 1609 pageant for the installation of Thomas Campell as London’s Lord Mayor, a young woman is described as entering “in a Virgin vesture of pure white” (sig. B1r). Also, in Middleton’s 1616 pageant, *Civitatis Amor*, or *The City’s Love*, there are “four virgins all in white, having silver oars in their hands” (115-116). No matter what specific fabric comprised Katherine’s virginal robes, it is certain this garment, along with her comportment, would have placed Katherine in glaring distinction against the cozening thieves and bawds surrounding her in this scene. She is an honest and admirable character, the prize of the masque, referred to as “perfection” (V.ii.13) and “virgin” (V.ii.92). In contrast, the various women who vie for Tailby’s affections are at one point privately mocked by the bawd gallant as “botchers [one who

performs poorly or clumsily]” (Interim II.85), who provide Tailby with a sexualized “secret supply out o’th’ city” (Interim II.72-73). After the audience has watched the taffeta, beaver, and satin-clad gallants gamble, steal, cheat and cozen, the virtuous Katherine appears to speak a warning against superfluity and susceptibility to vice: “How easily may our suspectless sex/ With fair-appearing shadows be deluded!” (V.ii.53-54). As previously stated, it would be overly simplistic to view *Your Five Gallants* as a one-dimensional, cautionary tale directed towards the common citizenry who could become entangled in debt, debauchery, and lust; however, it is still important to consider how Katherine, standing onstage dressed as a virgin while warning against “fair-appearing shadows”, would create a dramatic visual contrast against her onstage suitors. Such a display would have, at the very least, paraded this social dystopia before the audience, calling attention to the perceived mutual exclusivity between desire and virtue. As Vincent points out, the increased availability of commodities associated with “economic hardship, social dysfunction and immorality” (130) presented a conflict between the desire to own what was once forbidden and the desire to avoid succumbing to traveling a road that leads to debt and debauchery—paved by once-forbidden luxuries—a road that eventually leads to a morally bankrupt end, personified in the gallants’ characters.

The Gallant of Display

Halting any discussion of cloth’s role in *Your Five Gallants* after exploring its connotations in a world without sumptuary legislation is insufficient, inaccurately categorizing the work as a basic, uncomplicated warning against the evils of indulgence. Some twentieth- and twenty-first-century discussion of the work demonstrates this tendency to underestimate *Your Five Gallants* and assign hasty explanations of Middleton’s motivations in writing it. For example, Leinwand says of *Your Five Gallants*, “There is nothing subtle about this play, nor is it especially original. It consists of a frame story that encloses a string of dupings and cony catchings drawn from the popular pamphlet literature” (*The City*

Staged…, 109). Leinwand claims “Middleton’s point” is to highlight the interchangeability of the gallants (109), as well as provide commentary on the type of gallant these five characters represent, marked particularly by their pride—demonstrated by the luxurious cloth that “runs like quicksilver” (III.i.139) through their hands—and their impudence. Leinwand interprets Fitzgrave as, at one point in the play, serving as “Middleton’s surrogate ... calling our attention to their [the five gallants’] impudence; but as we would expect, he is not of their [the five gallants’] opinion” (110). Leinwand endeavors to assign a message or moral to the play, insisting that Middleton works to identify traits for charming gallants and unattractive gallants as a commentary on such types who strut about in their foreign finery, and that the play is Middleton’s criticism of unattractive gallants who “have no justifiable claim to their title. They do not even know how to play the part” (*The City Staged…*, 110). Connections can easily be made between these ill-behaved gallants clad in foreign luxuries and a lack of compelled restraint, and the first half of this chapter has examined cloth’s role in communicating this cautionary element. Any cloth-centered discussion of a play that features luxurious cloth so prominently in the years immediately following sumptuary legislation’s repeal is incomplete without such a conversation. However, the work is much more complex than a mere reminder for the audience to behave themselves and dress according to their appropriate station, and for an analysis to try and assign some type of simple moral to Middleton, or attempt to interpret his position on sumptuary law, or gallants, or prodigality, is only glancing upon the play’s surface while simultaneously ignoring much of the its communicative potential. Far from seeing Middleton’s gallants as interchangeable, Lowe feels *Your Five Gallants* “has so far been neglected in critical terms” (197). Lowe views Middleton’s crafting of these five characters as quite complicated and finds the play’s lack of critical attention surprising, considering “the complex witty banter and careful caricature of gallants it dramatizes” (197).

I would agree with Lowe that Middleton’s gallants are much more complex than Leinwand asserts. These gallants of display are carefully wrought characterizations designed to draw the audience

into much more than a simple admonitory tale cautioning against debt, debauchery, and lust. The previously discussed concern surrounding the “wasting and undoing of a great number of young gentlemen” (15 June 1574, 16 Elizabeth I) is exploited by Middleton as he employs cloth to craft five gallants of display. These gallants of display embody the type of gallant described in the previously mentioned “An Homily Against Excess of Apparel”: “taking no care at all, but only how to deck themselves, setting their affection altogether on worldly bravery, abusing Gods goodness when he sendeth plenty, to satisfie their wanton lusts, having no regard to the degree wherein God hath placed them” (325). This type of character was perceived as more than a mere sinner or disobedient subject. As Bailey states, “The mean [low social status], sumptuous dresser is also censured for flouting the very principles of celestial and civic order by his irreverent use of apparel. He does not wear his silks and sables to accurately represent his status, nor does he dress sumptuously to insidiously advance himself. Rather he is ostentatious and extravagantly ‘decks’ himself out” (261). Much more than crafting a formulaic bogeyman in these five scoundrels, Middleton has crafted five gallants of display who utilize fine apparel to turn the stage into a catwalk. The humbler sort had the ability to wear costly apparel onstage, as it was the business of the theatre to produce such spectacle. This display, combined with the heightened interest in the material, exhibited a fetishistic obsession with clothes and sumptuous dress, drawing the audience’s fascination with a parade of splendid luxuries.

Through its representational strategies and commercial practices, the theater provided the grounds for a nascent subculture that gradually came to redefine the relationship between dress and identity within the culture at large. The public playhouse provided an alternative site of sumptuous display, where the meaner sort strutted about in luxurious clothes without penalty. The characters paraded onstage conspicuously, deliberately dressed. Onstage conspicuous consumption of particular fabrics was “a highly self-conscious mode that realized the process of self-presentation as spectacle” (Bailey, 252). Cloth exhibits the shared consciousness between author, player, and audience. It is a

conduit for this celebration of exhibitionism. This self-presentation of the actor portraying the gallant (or Lord, or Lady) in clothes far beyond their actual social reach, presented the audience with a visual display that generated a kind of mental gap. Such gaps between the wearer’s social status and the connotations of his clothes are left unreconciled. Jones and Stallybrass point out, “Since playing companies profited from the renting and selling of costumes, the majority of which were aristocratic cast-offs, the theater was also responsible for placing sumptuous apparel in wider circulation; at the playhouse clothes moved freely among actors and audience members alike” (189). This intensified an already significant issue of sartorial and social illegibility that loomed large in the early modern cultural perspective. Bailey points out how sumptuous apparel onstage emphasized these social tensions:

> By effacing the boundary between on stage and off-stage and, by extension, between spectacle and reality ... [these costumes] exposed the myth of naturalness upon which members of the dominant culture relied. Perhaps most disturbing of all, jetting about in sumptuous attire released these mean men from the constraints of an ideology of class distinction that divested them of cultural authority. Despite their low social standing, sumptuousness liberated these mean men from performing the deference expected of them and suddenly they were not afraid to mock or, as [Stephen] Gosson puts it, to “scoff” and “look askance” at their social superiors. (266-67)

Adding to this tension, lying and not lying were performed in close proximity to one another onstage, as though their occupying the same space was a way of stating that these two behaviors could even exist in the same space.

In what was described in a 1580 Elizabethan proclamation as a “monstrous manner of attiring them selues” (12 February 1580, 22 Elizabeth I), these young men who outrageously paraded in luxurious clothes bore the connotations of the unnatural or perverse, “marking the performative way in which these men wore sumptuous items as a phenomenon that was ultimately more threatening than social mobility or its disruptive counterpart, social fluidity” (Bailey, 260). One characteristic of the “gallant sort” was the lack of desire to advance in the traditional sense with industry and/or scholarship, employing luxury for luxury’s sake, for the sake of display. This was perceived as a problem, as Bailey points out: “These men did not attempt to outperform their betters but simply usurped the symbols of

luxury through practicing subversive modes of resignification” (264). Frippery demonstrates this glorying in the display of luxurious apparel in the play’s first scene, as he removes his miser’s cloak and reveals, as the stage directions state, “*bright clothes*” (I.i.278 SD). The broker gallant exults in his display, stating confidently,

> Vanish thou fog, and sink beneath our brightness,
> Abashed at the splendour of such beams.
> We scorn thee, base eclipser of our glories,
> That wouldst have hid our shine from mortals’ eyes. (I.i.279-282)

Display occupies a much more central role in this drama than merely enabling the audience to determine which gallant(s) occupy the stage at a given moment. The five disreputable yet charming gallants possess an undeniable appeal as they participate in a dazzling parade of luxuries accompanied by their naughty behavior, but never are their modes of display accompanied by any attempts at advancement up the social ladder. While the gallants do dress in fine apparel as they compete for the orphaned Katherine’s hand, their vying for attention is only to secure an income to feed their consumptive habits. The gallants hope their sumptuous appearance will be enough to secure the hand of the Knight’s daughter; as Frippery observes, “impudence gains more respect than virtue,/ And coin than blood” (I.i.328-329). In comparison, *Michaelmas Term* uses sartorial display to demonstrate a transition in authority, status, or credit in social and commercial realms, emphasizing kersey and satin’s role in Lethe’s visually-based social advancement or mobility, for example. *Your Five Gallants* does not feature characters that use display for social advancement, as a means to any end. No gallant in this play is described as exchanging humbler clothing for luxurious apparel; there are no “wholesome weeds” (I.i.55) to bid farewell, as in *Michaelmas Term*. We never see the gallants in their meaner roles, clad in poorer fabrics, and we do not see them working or even scheming to progress up the social ladder. Frippery speaks briefly of his humbler beginnings in his shop, as he throws off his miserly cloak and prepares himself to appear with his comrades before the mourning Katherine, stating simply, “I scorn to think on’t ... [and] I strive to forget the days of my serving” (I.i.291-291, 294). The fact that Tailby wears

satin communicates elements of frivolity and excess associated with the character, but the *manner* in which Tailby wears it—minus seeking any position or advancement—displays this subversive mode of resignification. *Your Five Gallants* does not give a cautionary tale of the prodigal gallant shifting from kersey to satin. We only see the gallant strutting about *in* satin. This display for its own sake is all the play emphasizes, values, or features. *Your Five Gallants* takes *Michaelmas Term*’s notion that the body beneath is irrelevant (as is birthright) in visually-based social advancement or obtaining credit, and removes cloth’s role as a means to any end. The gallants are on display throughout the drama in their taffeta cloaks, satin suits, and beaver hats, journeying through the Mitre tavern (II.iv) and sauntering through St. Paul’s walks (IV.iv), seeking nothing more than to be seen and to continue maintaining that display. *Your Five Gallants* utilizes foreign luxuries like satin and taffeta not only to generate a cautionary tale of post-sumptuary excess, but also to craft an image of a potentially subversive characterization that challenges the social order by wearing status fabrics minus motivation or ambition to advance onseself. Cloth is kept pointedly within the boundaries of use-loss-reuse, which differs from the previously discussed plays where cloth marks the body beneath with quality, credit, or esteem.

As a result, these gallants of display reveal a disconnect between owner and property, a slipperiness that highlights an incoherence within the authority of the dominant culture while simultaneously fascinating the audience with glittering spectacle. Not only is cloth no longer a reliable indicator of status or wealth, it is no longer an indicator of ambition or motivation either. This would exhibit an anxiety prevalent during the period. The flamboyant display of this type of lower sort would have been disconcerting for a society so entrenched in the visual, as a young man in sumptuous dress would be assumed to possess some social clout or status, and yet does not, and more importantly, does not actively seek it out. The tension surrounding this type of display is demonstrated in Stubbes’ complaint that these types of men “go brauelye in Apparell, chaunging fashions euerie daye, for no cause so much as to delight the eyes of their harlots withall, and to inamoure the mindes of their fleshly

paramours” (sig. G7r). The perceived “monstrous manner” of these youths who went out luxuriously attired was assumed to lead them not only to demonstrate a disrespect for the social order, but also to potentially challenge that very order.

Most fascinating in this discussion is the notion that this type of gallant so warned against in writings of the period finds identity in excessive behavior. These men did not attempt to resolve contradictions about how they were dressed versus who they were underneath. Rather, the contradiction between how they were dressed versus who they were underneath *became* who they were. Their identities became embedded within this contradiction. Most important to this discussion, without the clothes to create the display, this contradiction could not exist. The gallant needs the disconnect between what he wears and what he is to create the cultural space his character occupies. These individuals were not explicitly dressing in sumptuous apparel to declare independence from sartorial codes or social mores. It was not an attempt to establish insubordination or communicate a subversive agenda. Excessiveness itself was the desired outcome. Middleton’s five gallants demonstrate this type, as cloth on the bodies of Frippery, Tailby, Primero, Goldstone and Pursenet is spectacle, and the disconnect between who they are underneath and their sumptuous apparel helps craft their contradictory identities. Clothes, for this gallant sort, have become “fetish-objects of the highest order, [the gallant] promotes a mode of presentation that makes a spectacle out of the conditions of his own self-production” (Bailey, 268).

The subversive connotations associated with such figures would have been simultaneously fascinating and disconcerting for the audience. These sumptuous gallants demonstrate those whom Stubbes claimed to be “neither of the nobylitie gentilitie, nor yeomanry ... [who] go daylie in silkes, veluets, satens, damasks, taffeties· and such like, notwithstanding that they be both base by byrthe, meane be estate, & seruyle by calling” (sig. C2v). The categorizing of the meaner sort, as well as cataloguing their behavior repeatedly in past sumptuary legislation, ironically “mobiliz[ed] nascent

cultural anxieties about mean men misusing the signs of luxury to flaunt their own social dissidence, Elizabethan clothing laws brought the monstrous to light” (Bailey, 253). This anxiety, as discussed previously, was not removed with the repeal of sumptuary legislation. The fact that Dekker’s *The guls horne-booke* cautions against “how” one wears something demonstrates that concern remained during this period. There is an undeniable appeal in watching these five men strut across the stage in clothes they do not own, never striving for anything more than manipulating and conniving their way in and out of trouble, eventually getting tricked into revealing their true natures in a most comical fashion. However, this gallant of display would have been viewed with anxiety and concern along with fascination, as the figure was perceived as challenging the social order, with significant political implications. Middleton’s five gallants of display highlight the incoherence of the dominant culture’s authority, that one can dress in signifying material, and not attempt to adopt the significations the materials attempt to cast upon the body, even behaving in a way that rejects those significations.

The theater became a place where conspicuous consumption could be celebrated without penalty. In a play like *Your Five Gallants* as well as other city comedies that prominently feature the gallant form, Middleton was plausibly exploring (rather than commenting on, as Leinwand asserts) the tension that existed between the position of sumptuary freedom and sumptuary control, where affect has replaced authenticity. If sartorial display was such a significant piece of identity for these types of gallants—and for many in the audience—and a play was a display by its very nature, then a play about these types of gallants so overt in their sartorial display becomes a parade of glittering naughtiness and lies. *Your Five Gallants* becomes a display of display, one that its audience would have likely found most appealing. Middleton’s five gallants act in a way and dress in a way that was frowned on, warned against, valuing display above character or substance without consequence and embracing vice, demonstrating the very behavior Stubbes and others cautioned against in a society highly dependent upon representational economies. Middleton’s five gallants capitalize on anxiety and tension in the early

modern streets, as these types of gallants did not fit into any social category or mode as they employed contradictory display for no reason other than to be seen.

Cloth commodities resonated with audiences during the beginning of the seventeenth century in a manner that twentieth- and twenty-first-century analysis can only feebly attempt to appreciate. Using Jackie Kennedy’s famous pillbox hat to demonstrate this difficulty, Bly points out that “When Bob Dylan sang of a ‘Leopard-Skin Pill-Box Hat’ in 1966, the reference was complicated in a way we can hardly recover from the 1960s, let alone attempting to recover trends of the 1600s. Yet Thomas Middleton’s *Your Five Gallants* is a play that demands we try to resurrect knowledge of the pillbox hats of early modern London” (588). As the early modern audience watched the bawd, whore, broker, pocket, and cheat gallants weave in and out of trouble as they visit some of the city’s more notorious spaces, these images would have surely recalled warnings against the city’s vices and cautionings against indolent, prodigal youth. However, seeing these personified forms of the city’s most notorious pitfalls negotiate these interactions in the specific fabrics Middleton selected—taffeta, beaver, satin—created a much more powerful cautionary image in a world so recently free of sumptuary control. Middleton exploits this familiarity with fabric as he crafts his tale, using cloth almost like a gateway drug to the seedy underbelly of the city’s ills, creating a work which explores the tension that remained in London long after James I’s repeal of sumptuary legislation.

However, in addition to this, the five gallants also demonstrate what Bailey calls a “defiant conspicuousness” (279), compelling the audience’s attention as these gallants of display adorn themselves in previously forbidden luxuries in a manner that focuses on the exhibitionistic, in a display for display’s sake. Utilizing apparel in a visual display that was nothing but exhibitionistic challenged the social order which depended upon those same visual signifiers. In *Your Five Gallants*, exhibition for exhibition’s sake is the focus, not on people and not on authenticity. With these types of characters, there is no reason to be concerned if someone is really an authentic or charming gallant, as Leinwand

describes them. The exhibition is the focus in this play, where the five gallants utilize apparel for the sole purpose of being seen in it, and all there is for the audience (or onstage counterparts) to do is watch. *Your Five Gallants’* appeal, then, may lie less in its moralistic undertones and more in the exhibitionist behavior of these gallants of display as they intelligently defraud others and utilize display for nothing more than its own sake, an exhibition in which cloth’s role is an obviously significant one. In a social system that had depended upon visual markers for so long to categorize, stigmatize, and monetize, to view characters who utilize this commodity for no other reason than to be seen consuming it may have been a particularly disconcerting and yet simultaneously mesmerizing sight.

Chapter Four – *The Roaring Girl*

Like *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, *The Roaring Girl* (1611) is a collaborative work between Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker. A great deal of scholarly discussion exists concerning the respective contributions of the two playwrights in what would be their final shared undertaking. For example, early research from Alexander Dyce (1840) attributed the majority of the play to Middleton; however, other studies have taken a more precise, scene-by-scene examination of various elements including linguistic features and stylistic traits, producing contradictory results. For example, Arthur Henry Bullen (1885) claimed that each author could be assigned individual scenes, but also that several of the play’s scenes still exhibited elements from both dramatists. George R. Price (1944) and Richard Hindry Barker (1958), on the other hand, both proposed similar scene by scene divisions of the play, attributing scenes i, ii, vii, ix, and x to Dekker, scenes viii and xi to Middleton, and scenes iii, iv, v, and vi to both authors. In *The Oxford Middleton* companion volume, *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture*, Coppelia Kahn states of *The Roaring Girl*’s authorship: “In two separate studies based on similar methodologies unlike those of Price and Barker, Lake (1975) and Jackson (1979) proposed divisions of authorship substantially in agreement with each other ... Dekker, scene 1, 2, 6, 7, 9, 10; Middleton, scenes 3, 4, 5, 8, 11” (“The Roaring Girl: Spring 1611”, 370). This particular division of authorship justifies the inclusion of *The Roaring Girl* in an examination of cloth’s role in Middleton’s city comedy due to the fact that Moll Cutpurse is the central character in most of the play’s relevant cloth-associated interchanges, and these Middleton-attributed scenes feature Moll, cross-dressing, and cloth-related characters most prominently. For example, scene iii features Moll’s first appearance onstage in a complex economic exchange among “*three shops open in a rank [resembling booths or stalls]*” (iii.0.1 SD). Scene iii also introduces the character of Master Openwork, the sempster, who invites Moll kindly into his shop, with the assurance that Moll shall have “the best in the shop” (iii.230-231) and who is

repeatedly accused of infidelity by Mistress Openwork. Scene iv features a tailor onstage, fitting Moll for a new pair of breeches as Sir Alexander watches in hiding and exclaims shock at the scene (iv.83-85). Scene v features Moll’s prolonged confrontation with Laxton at Gray’s Inn Fields during which Laxton is confused both by the display on Moll’s body and her aggressive behavior. In scene viii, Moll, Sebastian, and Mary Fitzallard are all onstage together alongside Sir Alexander, with Mary Fitzallard disguised as a male page. Finally, scene xi features the staged Sebastian/Moll wedding with Moll appearing at various moments in male and female clothing. However, Kahn goes on to point out that Mulholland, in his 1987 edition of *The Roaring Girl*, warns against putting too much stock in studies that utilize a scene by scene attribution of authorship. Kahn notes Mulholland’s argument that “most scenes show evidence of both authors’ hands ... [and that Mulholland] thinks that ‘traits of both are mingled throughout’ and ‘the designation “Middleton and Dekker” is the only one appropriate for much of the play’” (“The Roaring Girl: Spring 1611”, 370-371). Whether Middleton is assigned individual scenes from the play, or, as Kahn states, “the authors revised each other’s work so that their writing overlapped” (“The Roaring Girl: Spring 1611”, 371), is, for the purpose of this project, irrelevant. From either perspective, Middleton’s hand was involved in the scenes that are particularly dense with the use of cloth and apparel, justifying *The Roaring Girl*’s inclusion in a cloth-centered discussion of Middleton’s city comedy.

From its very beginning, cloth is featured as a conduit for communicating meaning in *The Roaring Girl*. Obviously, the play’s opening epistle (mentioned—signed by Middleton and from which this project’s title is taken—explicitly utilizes cloth and the shifting tastes of fashion as a vehicle to describe evolving perspectives and dramatic styles of the period:

> The fashion of play-making I can properly compare to nothing so naturally as the alteration in apparel: for in the time of the great-crop doublet, your huge bombasted plays, quilted with mighty words to lean purpose, was only then in fashion; and as the doublet fell, neater inventions began to set up. Now in the time of spruceness, our plays follow the niceness of our garments: single plots, quaint conceits, lecherous jests dressed up in hanging sleeves; and those are fit for the times and the termers. Such a kind of light-colour summer stuff, mingled with diverse colours, you shall find this published comedy– (1-11)

In part, this opening epistle obviously compares shifts of literary or linguistic style to clothing, a technique that is not new or unique to Middleton. One such example of this explicit connection between fabric or apparel and a text’s meaning is recorded in Sir Harris Nicolas’ *Memoirs*, which records Sir Thomas Wyatt’s *Defence*—a 1541 letter to the Privy Council—in which Wyatt challenges those who would incorrectly, perhaps maliciously, attribute words to him that had been altered from their original form:

> But because I am wont sometime to rap out an oath in an earnest talk, look how craftily they have put in an oath to the matter, to make the matter seem mine. And because they have guarded a naughty garment of theirs with one of my naughty guards, they will swear, and face me down, that that was my garment. But bring me my garment as it was. If I said any like thing, rehearse my tale as I said it. No man can believe you, that I meant it as you construe it, or that I speak it as you allege it. (xxxvii)

Another example of this metaphor is found in the opening prologue to Thomas Norton’s *The Tragedy of Ferrex and Porrex* (1570). The original publication of the work is described as happening without the author’s consent and compared to an innocent maid’s downfall, stating its publication was “as if by meanes of a broker for hire, he should haue entised into his house a faire maide and done her villanie, and after all to bescratched her face, torne her apparell, berayed and disfigured her, and then thrust her out of dores dishonest” (sig. A2r). The play is described as being eventually restored to its original state by its authors with a continuation of this comparative analogy, describing the play as “new apparelled, trimmed, and attired her in such forme as she was before ... and I do not dout her parentes the authors will not now be discontent that she goe abroad among you good readers ... [wearing] this one poore blacke gowne lined with white that I haue now geuen her to goe abroad among you withal” (sig. A2r). In addition to this common association, however, Middleton’s link between the stylization of garments with the stylization of drama also demonstrates, albeit subtly, a perceived connection between cloth—apparel, specifically—and the communication of meaning, with a particular emphasis on how a playwright’s preferred manner or form for communicating meaning does not always remain static. As mentioned in the Introduction, this chapter will shift in accordance with Middleton’s preferred “fashion

of play-making,” focusing on cloth’s communicative display when utilized in visually unconventional ways, specifically when placed upon the “wrong” form: that of a roaring girl.

To briefly summarize the play, a swaggering, cross-dressing woman—Moll Cutpurse—is asked to participate in the young Sebastian Wengrave’s ploy to gain his father’s permission to marry the woman he loves, the demure Mary Fitzallard. Sebastian’s father, Sir Alexander Wengrave, has forbidden the match, declaring he will disown his son if he acts in defiance of his wishes and deny Sebastian any inheritance. Sebastian endeavors to manipulate the situation by asking Moll to participate in a ruse that will convince Sir Alexander that Sebastian is now in love with the notorious roaring girl and that he and Moll are soon to be wed. When Sir Alexander is faced with the possibility of his son marrying a raucous, transvestite female such as Moll, it is Sebastian’s hope his father will view the more reserved, traditional Mary Fitzallard as the preferable option and allow the wedding between Sebastian and Mary Fitzallard to commence. It important to point out that Sebastian uses Moll’s display in his attempt to manipulate his father and advance his own agenda, as in scene xi when Moll enters in a wedding gown, masked and concealed in a way that earns high praise from Sir Alexander, who describes the disguised roaring girl as “a goodly, personable creature;/ Just of her pitch was my first wife his [Sebastian’s] mother” (xi.131-132). However, Moll agrees to this concealment of her identity at Sebastian’s request, allowing Sebastian to use her appearance for his own aims. Moll never chooses to dress in male or female clothing at any point in the play to advance her own agenda and never of her own volition hides who or what she is from anyone. Moll’s cross-dressing exists well before Sebastian approaches her in his efforts to capitalize on her unconventionality for his own purposes. Even during her altercation with Laxton at Gray’s Inn Fields in scene v, Laxton’s mistaking Moll for a man is not the roaring girl’s doing, but rather a result of Laxton’s own inability to recognize her. Although she agrees to help Sebastian in his manipulation to achieve his desired marriage, Moll consistently establishes herself verbally and visually

as outside the circles of traditional femininity and matrimony, resulting in a characterization that exists outside mainstream societal norms.

While *The Roaring Girl*, similar to *Your Five Gallants*, utilizes visual contradiction to help craft a character’s identity, demonstrating an inconsistency between a character’s apparel and what lies beneath it, in this particular work the inconsistency used to establish Moll Cutpurse’s characterization is not generated by her perceived social or economic eligibility (or lack thereof) to wear certain types of cloth, nor does it lie in her flamboyant sartorial excess. The roaring girl character has none of these qualities about her. Rather, the inconsistency that plays a role in crafting Moll’s characterization is generated when cloth is placed upon the wrong form, specifically, male apparel upon a female form. From a rigid categorical perspective, the idea that Moll’s body underneath is female with male clothing placed upon it would have been disturbing primarily due to the early modern perception of the mutual exclusivity of gender (the early modern perception of cross dressing is explored in depth later in this chapter). However, from a more malleable, fluid perspective, this display for its own sake, as previously stated, is similar to *Your Five Gallants* and communicates an identity in itself. While it was not uncommon for early modern female characters to employ cross-dressing for a myriad of reasons—Mary Fitzallard dresses as a male page in scene viii in a covert meeting with Sebastian, for example—Moll Cutpurse, like the gallant of display, does not dress in male clothing to serve any personal agenda or motivation other than to please herself. While this characterization grounded in the contradiction between what is worn and what is beneath is similar to what Middleton uses to craft his gallant of display, Moll’s utilization of display minus agenda generates a significantly different demonstration, staging a dualistic female protagonist who herself possesses no neat categorization or boundaries. Cloth, then, is particularly important to any discussion of *The Roaring Girl* because Moll’s dualism—her ability to cross boundaries of gender, possess or obtain authority and credit—all depends upon her character’s display. While Moll Cutpurse only employs cross-dressing as a means of identity and self-

expression, her unconventional appearance does create a residual fallout that gives her a unique ability to interact in various social circumstances with a kind of pliable ethos. This notion of malleable boundaries and categorization carries much potential for unease in its connotation and is made more resonant with the audience’s realization that this character is modeled on one who actually walked London’s streets during this period, exhibiting society’s own tendencies turned around on itself as it reveals inconsistencies embedded within the system that created such tenuous boundaries in the first place.

Cloth, Cross-dressing, and *Hic Mulier*

Interestingly, Middleton and Dekker employ cloth in a unique fashion in *The Roaring Girl* as the playwrights use apparel to craft a cross-dressing central character that is based at least partially in reality. *The Roaring Girl*’s protagonist, Moll Cutpurse, is modeled on Mary Frith (1584-1659), who was infamous as a cross-dressing bawd, whore, and thief during this time period and is described by Kahn as “the first English woman to perform in a public theatre.” Kahn cites church court records that provide detail of the incident: “Sometime in the spring of 1611 … she [Mary Frith] sat on the stage of the Fortune Theatre ‘in the public view of all the people there present, in man’s apparel, and played upon her lute and sang a song’” (“Introduction to The Roaring Girl”, 721). With court records documenting her arrests, Mary Frith is famously described by John Chamberlain in a letter addressed to Sir Dudley Carleton, dated 12 February 1612 as “a notorious baggage (that used to go into man’s apparel and challenged the field of diverse gallants) [who] was brought to [Paul’s Cross], where she wept bitterly and seemed very penitent, but it is since doubted she was maudlin drunk. Being discovered to have tippled off three quarts of sack before she came to her penance” (McClure, 334). Obviously, then, cross-dressing was not solely a dramatic element, employed at times by playwrights to complicate the plot. It was a concern outside the playhouse. It has been well established in earlier chapters that fashion during this period, as

Mary Beth Rose states, was “the focus of considerable moral and social anxiety aroused by changing sexual values in Jacobean England” (368), and that excess and indulgence were typically lamented from writers in both the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries like Philip Stubbes (1583) and Thomas Mun (1622) as moral and social ills infecting England’s middling sort. However, concerns about cross-dressing specifically were also voiced in early modern conduct manuals and other tracts, as well as evidenced in the legal entanglements of Mary Frith. For example, George Gascoigne’s *The Steele Glas* (1576) wonders of the cross-dressing female, “What be they? Women? Masking in mens weedes? With Dutchkin dublets ... and with Jerkins jaggde?” (sig. Ijv.). While Phillip Stubbes’ previously discussed *Anatomie of Abuses* (1583) voices a concern surrounding the blurring of the lines in visually-established authority and rank, Stubbes also expresses particular alarm in this work at the inability to distinguish between male and female. In the chapter titled, “A particulare Discription of the Abuses of Womens apparel in Ailgna,” Stubbes states, “Our Apparell was given us as a signe distinctive to discern betwixt sex and sex, and therefore one to weare the Apparel of another sex is to ... adulterate the veritie of his owne kinde. Wherefore these Women may not improperly be called *Hermaphroditi*, that is, monsters of bothe kindes, half women, half men” (sig. F5v). The concern over cross-dressing continued through the first decade of the seventeenth century and beyond the first performance of *The Roaring Girl* in 1611. The “man-woman” type appeared in numerous texts of the period like Barnabie Rich’s *The Honestie of this Age* (1614), Joseph Swetnam’s *The Araignment of Lewd, Idle, Froward, and unconstant Women* (1615), and Thomas Adams’ *Mystical Bedlam* (1615). In the anonymous 1620 pamphlet titled, *Hic Mulier* (The Man-Woman), the cross-dressing female is set against the chaste, maternal, obedient feminine ideal. *Hic Mulier* speaks of the non-traditional, disconcerting type of “Masculine-women ... [as utilizing] a deformitie never before dream’d of,” describing them as wearing a “cloudy Ruffianly broad-brim’d Hatte, and wanton Feather ... the loose, lascivious civill embracement of a French doublet … most ruffianly short lockes ... for Needles, Swords ... and for Prayer books, bawdy Jigs” (sigs. A3v, A4r, A4v).

The *Hic Mulier* pamphlet goes on to wonder if such a character “is not halfe man, halfe woman ... but all Odyous, all Divell” (sig. A4r). *Hic Mulier* inspired a second 1620 pamphlet, *Haec Vir* (The Womanish-Man), which also lambasts male effeminancy. Concern over this type of cross-gendered behavior even inspired a protest from James I, described in a letter from John Chamberlain to Sir Dudley Carleton, dated 15 January, 1620:

> Yesterday the bishop of London called together all his clergie about this towne, and told them he had expressed commandment from the King to will them to inveigh vehemently against the insolencie of our women, and theyre wearing of brode brimmed hats, pointed dublets, theyre haire cut short or shorne, and some of them stilettoes or poinards, and such other trinckets of like moment; adding that if pulpit admonitions will not reform them he would proceed by another course; the truth is the world is very much out of order. (Statham, 182-183)

It seems obvious this practice was viewed with anxiety across a broad array of social classes and attributed to a number of moral concerns, and that the character of Moll Cutpurse generated a visual image at the very least fraught with tension within the early modern imagination.

It is important not to oversimplify early modern perception of the roaring girl/*Hic Mulier* figure, as there was significant complexity surrounding this type. Much ambivalence was associated with this display: as Rose notes, “the figure of the female in male attire is portrayed in both dramatic and social contexts with simultaneous admiration, desire, abhorrence, and fear” (368). While the playwrights establish the stereotypical form of the roaring girl as central to the play well before Moll’s character even appears onstage when they declare in the prologue, “the subject [of this play] being but mean./ A roaring girl” (8-9), considering the appearance of this type in numerous texts of the period, they must have also recognized the complex reaction Moll Cutpurse would inspire, and cloth’s significant role in Moll’s characterization underscores this ambivalence. The prologue goes on to reinforce the masculine female figure, stating the audience indeed does “know what girl this roaring girl should be–/ For of that tribe are many” (15-16). However, this character is not so easily categorized as Moll’s staging (specifically what she wears, how she wears it, how she acts while wearing it, and how others react to

her while she wears it) creates a much more complex display than simply a woman who chooses to dress in masculine apparel.

In a way that highlights inconsistencies and tensions within the traditional hegemonic order—subversive at times—the idea of mutual exclusivity and rigid boundaries is dismantled by the cross-dressing Moll Cutpurse, aided by cloth’s ability to inhabit different spheres of meaning simultaneously, particularly when utilized in visually unconventional ways. Malleable boundaries of meaning are particularly significant within *The Roaring Girl*’s plot, which, with its *Hic Mulier*-type heroine and shallow, lecherous gallants, is driven by the notion of flexible, rather than rigid, categorization. These flexible categories are explored in the play, with a particular focus on gender, eschewing mutually exclusive forms of male *or* female, good *or* evil, saint *or* sinner. Middleton uses cloth’s arbitrary, shifting meaning to insert a different conjunction for consideration, creating fluid boundaries of male *and* female, good *and* evil, saint *and* sinner. Several characters mistakenly categorize Moll according to the *Hic Mulier* stereotype, as when Laxton assumes Moll is a whore in scene iii, stating, “I’ll lay hard siege to her—money is that *aquafortis* that eats into many a maidenhead” (iii.201-202), but this assumption is quickly rejected in their altercation in scene v. While it is made clear Moll Cutpurse is neither a reiteration of the *Hic Mulier* stereotype nor of Mary Frith herself, her literal status is not specified and the question hangs heavy: “What *is* she?” Middleton and Dekker identify the difficulty in pinning down this complex, dualistic figure in the prologue, yet also emphasize how imperative it is that she be accurately assessed:

> Thus her character lies—
> Yet what need characters, when to give a guess
> Is better than the person to express?
> But would you know who ’tis? Would you hear her name?
> She’s called mad Moll; her life our acts proclaim—(26-30)

Therefore, any discussion of *The Roaring Girl* must include an in depth examination of Moll Cutpurse, toward whom “the playwrights maintain an ambivalent attitude ... in whom courageous moral and

sexual principles combine with a marginal social identity, both of which are symbolized in the play by her male attire” (Rose, 379), but difficulties arise as twentieth- and twenty-first-century discussion of the play tries to pin down this marginal, malleable protagonist.

While all twentieth- and twenty-first-century analysis is in agreement that Moll’s *Hic Mulier*-type character challenges traditional societal norms, there is significant disagreement on this character’s subversion or rehabilitation, as well as her eventual admittance into or separation from mainstream society. For example, David Holmes states a common motif in *The Roaring Girl* supported by Moll’s characterization is “the dignity of marriage” (107), yet Rose claims Moll Cutpurse embodies equality and independence outside traditional marital roles (381). Jane Baston states Moll is “reinvented” in *The Roaring Girl* and is “contained, enervated, and eventually incorporated into prevailing social apparatus” (319). Patrick Cheney also views Moll as a unifying entity, stating she represents a type of hermaphroditic figure that crosses boundaries of gender and acceptance: a “supreme symbol of two souls becoming one—particularly within the context of married love” (124-125). Rose, on the other hand, argues that while society recognizes Moll’s contradiction of stereotypes in *The Roaring Girl*, in the conclusion Moll is kept outside traditional hierarchies because society remains “unable to absorb” her (390). Such contradicting interpretations of Moll are easily attributed to the significant amount of material in *The Roaring Girl* supporting a broad variety of perspectives. The simple fact that Moll Cutpurse chooses to dress at times in different combinations of male and female apparel creates onstage imagery obviously designed to elicit a variety of reactions and interpretations from the audience and, apparently, modern criticism as well.

The Roaring Girl and Subversion

The interpretation of Moll as a subversive character in *The Roaring Girl* is easily supported. Rose extensively documents the insubordination associated with cross dressing behavior, pointing out the

perception that a female in male clothing “displays and encourages a free-floating sexuality ... socially destabilizing and therefore disastrous” (374). Rose notes the *Hic Mulier* text illustrates the sexual subversion associated with the cross-dressing female figure: “The fear seems to be that without rigidly assigned, gender-linked roles and behavior, legitimate, faithful erotic relations between the sexes will become impossible and the integrity of the family will consequently disintegrate” (374). This is demonstrated particularly clearly in scene iii which, as previously mentioned, opens upon a row of three shops: an apothecary shop, a feather shop and a sempster’s shop. While Moll passes by all three shops during this scene, her attention is drawn to the sempster’s shop, declaring loudly, “I am going to buy a shag ruff” (iii.209-210) and it is her interaction with Mistress Openwork, the sempster’s wife, that highlights this subversive perception of the roaring girl. The scene opens with Mistress Openwork calling out to passersby a typical shop call that mentions tempting items and fabrics available within the shop: “Gentlemen, what is’t you lack? What is’t you buy? See fine bands and ruffs, fine lawns, fine cambrics. What is’t you lack, gentlemen, what is’t you buy?” (iii.1-4). Moll takes the stage as a participant in commerce, stating more than once her intent to visit the sempster’s shop to buy “a good shag ruff” (iii.229). As previously mentioned, upon entering the shop, Moll is immediately greeted with respect as a welcome and valued customer by Master Openwork: “Mistress Mary, that shalt thou, i’faith, and the best in the shop” (iii.230-231). Mistress Openwork immediately interjects, demonstrating a hostility towards Moll that indicates her perception of the roaring girl as a sexual rival: “How now?—Greetings! Love terms, with a pox between you!” (iii.232-233). Master Openwork attempts to continue the commercial exchange with Moll, but his wife will not allow it, demanding of Moll, “Get you from my shop!” (iii. 242). Moll responds, reiterating her intent is merely commercial—“I come to buy”—to which Mistress Openwork refuses to interact with Moll in the realm of commerce, perceiving Moll solely as a seductress seeking after her husband’s favors: “I’ll sell ye nothing; I warn ye my house and shop” (iii.243-245). Earlier in this same scene, Laxton expresses a similar view of Moll, stating, “she might first cuckold

the husband and then make him do as much for the wife!” (iii.218-219). This association between cross-dressing and sexualization continues as Moll, angered at her treatment from Mistress Openwork, turns her attention to a “fellow” who happens to enter the shop immediately after Moll has been instructed to leave. Moll turns her anger upon him, claiming he “abused me t’other night in a tavern,” and assures him she will repay his abuse, telling the fellow, “I have reserved somewhat for you” (iii.258-259, 262-263) as she strikes him. In response, the fellow quickly chooses to “turn tail” (iii.269) and exit the shop. Laxton, who has witnessed the interaction, then compliments Moll, assuring the roaring girl he was ready to help should Moll have needed him: “Had he offered but the least counter-buff, by this hand, I was prepared for him” (III.272-274). The exchange that follows between Moll and Laxton both demonstrates the roaring girl’s autonomy outside of typical gender-assigned roles as well as demonstrates how her behavior is again interpreted with sexualized overtones. Moll responds to Laxton’s offer of help with disdain, scoffing, “You prepared for him! Why should you be prepared for him? Was he any more than a man?” (iii.275-276), to which Laxton responds, “No, nor so much by a yard and a handful, London measure” (iii.275-278). Williams notes the phallic overtones of “yard” in numerous period texts including *Virgins Complaint* (1642): “in mere charity we of the wealthy have ingendred with spruce Taylors, because we know they know how to use their yards” (1359). Moll responds to Laxton again with disdain, but her response is now colored by the sexual connotations Laxton has generated: “Why do you speak this, then? Do you think I cannot ride a stone-horse unless one lead him by th’ snaffle?” (iii.279-280). The roaring girl is demonstrated as claiming power outside her typical gender-assigned role, but that power then becomes sexualized in the perception of others. While a cross-dressing female subverts typical gender-roles both with her appearance and behavior, the power she asserts is sexualized and thus her subversion transfers to this realm as well.

A cross-dressing female was not only viewed as sexually subversive, but also hierarchically subversive, “obscuring not only the clarity of their gender, but the badge of their social status as well,

and thereby endangering critically the predictable orderliness of social relations” (Rose, 374). As Baston points out, during this period, “willfulness in a woman was tantamount to a crime” (317). Further, “Court records [between 1560-1640] show an intense concern about unruly women” demonstrating that “female intrusion into male codes could be very harshly punished” (Baston, 321, 318). Preacher John Williams in *A Sermon of Apparell* (1619) condemns women who enter the church “Chimera-like ... halfe male, and halfe female ... lifting vp towards his [God’s] throne two plaister’d eies and a polled [shorn, shaven] head” (sigs. D2v, D3r). The *Hic Mulier* text illustrates further the chaotic, socially subversive view associated with the mannish-woman figure while simultaneously communicating a concern about class mobility: “It is an infection that emulates the plague, and throwes itself amongst women of all degrees ... Shall we all be co-heires of one honor, one estate, and one habit?” (sigs. B1v, B4v). Underscoring this perception of the roaring girl as subversive or monstrous, *Hic Mulier* condemns the cross-dressing female using combative, armaggeddon-like imagery: “Let ... the powerfull Statute of apparel but lift up his Battle-Axe, so as every one may bee knowne by the true badge of their bloud, or Fortune: and then these Chymera’s of deformitie will bee sent backe to hell, and there burne to Cynders in the flames of their owne malice” (sig. C1v). This dire perspective of the cross-dressing female image is exhibited in scene iv when Sir Alexander secretly watches as Moll is fitted for breeches by a tailor, causing the old man to exclaim, “What age is this? If the wife go in breeches, the man must wear long coats like a fool” (iv.83-85). Moll Cutpurse rejects all others’ attempts to categorize her or reduce her to a static icon and showpiece, demonstrated in her statement to the gallant, Laxton: “In thee I defy all men, their worst hates/ And their best flatteries, all their golden witchcrafts” (v.92-93). With texts of the period such as *Hic Mulier* attacking women bold enough to place themselves on an equal footing with men in dress, speech and action, when Moll chastises Sir Alexander, stating, “Methinks you should be proud of such a daughter—as good a man as your son!” (xi.152-153), she is contradicting significant

underpinnings of early modern gender perception, which gives her character the potential for strong subversive connotations.

This interpretation of Moll as a subversive spectacle is supported not only because her display and behavior dismantle rigid boundaries, but also because it draws the eye, recognized repeatedly throughout the play as something that would tap into the public’s fascination. As Sir Alexander notes of Moll’s display, “no blazing star draws more eyes after it” (ii.136). Another interchange that illustrates this appeal or fascination with cross-dressing occurs when Sebastian and Mary Fitzallard meet in scene viii. In this interaction, Mary is disguised as a male page and Sebastian finds her male clothing visually pleasing, kissing her and approving that “a woman’s lip tastes well in a doublet” (viii.47). Further, Sebastian states,

> As some have a conceit their drink tastes better
> In an outlandish cup than in our own,
> So methinks every kiss she gives me now
> In this stranger form is worth a pair of two. (viii.53-56)

Sir Alexander says of such a display “as good marry a beacon on a hill,/ Which all the country fix their eyes upon” (iv.145-146). Further, when Sir Alexander tries to convince Sebastian not to marry Moll, he refers to this fascination, warning his marriage to this roaring girl will make “the story of thy infamous fortunes/ Serve for discourse in ordinaries and taverns” (iv.148-149).

The Roaring Girl and Rehabilitation

While the previous section demonstrates sufficient evidence obviously exists to support a subversive interpretation of this cross-dressing, brawling, bawdy-speaking female, there is also content in *The Roaring Girl* to support an interpretation of Moll Cutpurse as a rehabilitated figure who ultimately supports societal norms, eventually becoming incorporated into existing hierarchical constructs. Baston interprets Middleton’s statement within the play’s opening epistle that it is a playwright’s job “to leave things better than he finds ’em” (23) as an admission he will make this roaring girl confirm and more

closely align with societal mores (326). Rose states the “desirable social norm in the play” is not Moll’s transvestitism but the conservative and traditional—albeit troublesome as far as Sir Alexander is concerned—“relationship and opinions” of Sebastian and Mary Fitzallard (385), interpreting *The Roaring Girl*’s conclusion as conventional for all characters, including Moll. Larry Champion also interprets the long sought-after nuptials of Sebastian and Mary Fitzallard as a “happy ending” (85), supporting traditional gender roles. If the degeneration of marriage and family is at the heart of the play, as Viviana Comensoli and Holmes argue, then this interpretation assumes Moll’s involvement in Sebastian’s plot to gain his lover’s hand illustrates her eventual approbation of traditional relationships. Baston claims “her [Moll’s] stage representation, which on the surface seems empowering, is in fact conforming” (323), interpreting Moll’s statement supporting the dominant view of marriage—“a wife, you know, ought to be obedient,/ but I fear me I am too headstrong to obey” (iv.39-40)—as illustrative of the roaring girl as “fitting into the traditional requirements of marriage rather than seeking to change them” (328). Baston also interprets Moll as a “matchmaker, mediator, and conciliator, all in the service of venery, not radical feminism” (323).

To support this analysis, Baston claims Moll’s appearance as she first takes the stage in scene iii would not have disturbed the audience in comparison with the other more traditional female characters onstage: “Moll presents us with nothing more shocking than her sharing a pipe with the assembled gallants” (328). Baston claims Laxton’s attraction to Moll—“I would give but too much money to be nibbling with that wench. Life, sh’as the spirit of four great parishes, and a voice that will drown all the city! Methinks a brave captain might get all his soldiers upon her” (iii.193-197)—is not indicative of the subversive sexuality associated with cross-dressing. Rather, this attraction showcases Moll’s strength as “sexual vivaciousness,” calling her an “acceptable stereotype” (328). As the play progresses, Baston claims Moll becomes increasingly incorporated into traditional hierarchies and her roaring girl persona is eventually reduced to “a ‘fit instrument’ serving at best the plot, and at worst patricians such as Sir Alex”

(330). Baston interprets Moll’s helping Mary Fitzallard dress in a page’s disguise so she may meet Sebastian as robbing Moll’s *Hic Mulier* display of its power and says that this “devitalizes her main strategy of resistance” (330). Baston believes the roaring girl’s ability to move credibly between the gentry rogues, as in scene x when she saves Sir Beauteous from Tearcat and Trapdoor’s conniving as well as her later participation in a canting duet with Trapdoor, results in the belittling of Moll’s credibility as an independent force (331). As Moll sings with Tearcat in scene x and rejects marriage in the play’s finale, Baston interprets the responses from Sir Beauteous—“This is excellent; One fit [strain of music] more, good Moll” (x.219)—and Sir Alexander in the next scene—“In troth, thou’rt a good wench” (xi.227)—as suggesting Moll is no longer a radical figure but rather incorporated “into the group of manageable, controllable, and even lovable rogues” (331). When Moll enters dressed as a bride in the final scene—her only onstage appearance entirely in feminine apparel—Baston claims this is a visual indication of Moll’s full rehabilitation; she has become “a singer harmonizing inequalities rather than a roarer protesting them” (332).

Oversimplification in Twentieth- and Twenty-first-century Analysis

As the above discussion illustrates, there are three typical approaches twentieth- and twenty-first-century analyses take when categorizing Moll Cutpurse. First, that a subversive Moll calls for greater female freedom and equality, but these freedoms are undercut at the play’s end. Second, that Moll is an opponent of specific institutions and circumstances that oppress women, working as a radical critic against a patriarchal system. Third, that *The Roaring Girl* actually stages Moll’s recuperation and rehabilitation as she is gradually contained and incorporated into mainstream social apparatus. While modern scholarship’s exploration of the nature of Moll’s character is illuminating, contradictions arise due to a tendency to oversimplify the roaring girl’s characterization and employ the same rigid categorization this character eschews in the plot. Baston and other critics like Jonathan Dollimore, in

their efforts to “pin down” Moll’s character and categorize her as one type or another, ironically blur her interpretation. According to Rose, Moll Cutpurse demonstrates that equality and independence are desirable, but the play’s conclusion illustrates the masculine woman is ultimately “impossible ... to absorb [into society] without disruption” (378). On the other hand, Baston’s argument that Moll is ultimately incorporated into society is also inaccurate, for while Moll is not directly “expelled” from society this does not mean she is, by default, successfully incorporated into it. The problem with these and similar interpretations is they seek to categorize Moll as one or the other: subversive or rehabilitated, challenging or contained, eschewed or incorporated. Moll, through an oversimplification in twentieth- and twenty-first-century analysis, has become a board hanging from a single nail. The element of her characterization all can agree on is her association with the *Hic Mulier* stereotype, yet the rest of Moll’s characterization remains undetermined, leaving the board to blow back and forth between ostracized or absorbed, subversive or supporter.

I suggest a new possibility for consideration, one in which a focused discussion of apparel plays a key role: there are no mutually exclusive categories promoted in *The Roaring Girl* and there is no “desirable social norm” (Rose, 385) advocated within the play. Moll’s existence as “the instrument who brings about the happy ending” who yet remains “nevertheless excluded” from mainstream acceptance (Rose, 389) is not a stamp of approval for conservative relationships as exhibited in the Sebastian/Mary union, nor is it a rejection or an endorsement of non-traditional gender roles. For example, when Moll states a woman “ought to be obedient” (iv.39) in marriage, it is certainly much more complex than a simple statement of support for traditional marital relationships, as it could also be an acknowledgement of stereotypical parameters that existed during the time period, to which a woman was expected to adhere. When Moll dresses Mary Fitzallard as a page, bragging to Sebastian, “My tailor fitted her: how like you his work?” (xiii.69), she is not necessarily “devitalizing her strategy” (330) as Baston claims, as she could also be exhibiting a mind open enough to view even her own preferences or

tendencies in display as possessing the potential to move beyond stereotypical boundaries. Baston, pointing out the language, “a brave disguise and a safe one” (opening epistle.16) as it is used to describe Moll’s apparel, interprets Moll’s wearing male clothing as a “safe” behavior similar to female characters in other city comedies who periodically dress in male garb as a means to an end. This risks a significant oversimplification in interpretation for several reasons. First, the word “disguise,” the way Baston is interpreting it, is not necessarily the same as cross-dressing. When Moll dresses in a doublet and breeches, they are not items she has stolen from a fellow’s closet in a hasty masquerade to manipulate or deceive. She possesses these items of clothing in her own wardrobe. Moll’s employment of a tailor to fit her for another pair of breeches to add to her personal wardrobe in scene iv further underscores this point. These pieces of male apparel are Moll’s own personal property, adding a layer of authenticity for the roaring girl while simultaneously removing connotations of manipulation or ulterior motive from her character. Second, not only is Moll’s behavior, in a very real sense, unsafe for her as her appearance risks making people like Laxton think she is fair game physically, but also Baston’s interpretation of “safe” is incomplete, as this term can mean much more than “without risk.” According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, “safe” can also mean “of sound health” or “mentally sound” (“safe, adj.”), which could further contradict Baston’s interpretation of Moll’s “safe disguise.” While Baston may have a good point in stating that by the play’s end Moll’s actions, words, and appearance are “no longer threatening” (332), this is not proof that Moll’s character is without subversive undertones as “threatening” and “subversive” are not necessarily interchangeable terms. The claim that Moll is merely working to harmonize inequalities rather than protest them presupposes that these are the only two options. Rose’s claim that Moll’s “courageous moral and sexual principles combine with a marginal social identity” (379) to create a protagonist protesting against early modern categorization and paradigms also risks being overly simplistic. Moll’s character could be pointing out inconsistencies in the perception of male and female realms, as well as the inequalities associated with those categorizations. As

“society’s effort to assess the identity of this female figure in male attire becomes the central dramatic and symbolic issue of the play” (Rose, 367), it remains the central issue in *The Roaring Girl*’s present-day analysis as well. Whether it is Rose’s interpretation of Moll as subversive, or Baston’s insistence she has been rehabilitated, both are examples of an either/or interpretation of the protagonist and, as a result, the play. The one thing the early modern audience could not do, and any present-day scholarship concerning *The Roaring Girl* cannot do, is ignore Moll Cutpurse, and because of this character’s heavy reliance upon display to communicate her dualistic identity, a complete analysis of Moll Cutpurse cannot exclude a careful consideration of cloth’s role in communicating elements of that characterization. A cloth-centric analysis helps to clarify Moll’s malleable boundaries, rejecting an “either/or” interpretation of “subversive” vs. “rehabilitated,” providing a clearer understanding of Moll’s characterization, while opening up the play to examination in the complex areas of gender, authority, and credit.

Cloth, Moll, and Gender

An explicit connection is made from the beginning of the play between literal and abstract, and cloth’s potential to work as a material anchor upon which Middleton and Dekker could then create abstract meaning. This is demonstrated in scene vii, when Trapdoor describes Moll to Sir Alexander using a simple pun that bridges literal and abstract meaning: “She comes in a shirt of mail” (vii.20), to which Sir Alexander queries, “How, shirt of mail?” (vii.21). Trapdoor then answers, “Yes, sir, or a male shirt, that’s to say, in man’s apparel” (vii.22-23). In this interchange, specific effort is made to reinforce the associated connotations of gender, with its communicative display bearing the content or meaning, rather than representing what is beneath. This underscores cloth’s ability to work as a bridge between literal (concrete, material, monetary value) and abstract (collateral, credit, esteem, rank), suggesting these categories are malleable, if they can be put on or taken off as easily as a shirt. When Moll wears cloth that contradicts the body beneath it, her individuality or persona is crafted by these pressures of

what is worn contradicting what is beneath; thus cloth possesses the potential to constitute elements of her identity, particularly her gender identity.

Obviously with items of apparel categorized specifically as “male” and “female,” like the frieze jerkin and black safeguard Moll wears in scene iii, the idea that such items can be identified as designed for a certain gender, yet being worn by another created significant tension or discomfort. Cloth establishes visual constructs of male and female in *The Roaring Girl*, yet emphasizes ambiguities as these gender associated materials are then utilized in an unconventional display. As Kahn points out, cloth on the body of Moll Cutpurse reveals these “ambiguities and inconsistencies that expose constructions of gender in this patriarchal society, despite their apparent rigidity, as shifting and multivalent” (“Introduction to *The Roaring Girl*”, 721). Mistress Openwork articulates recognition of these fluid, dismantled boundaries when describing one of the play’s other characters in scene ix, stating of Goshawk, “Who’d think that in one body there could dwell/ Deformity and beauty, heaven and hell?” (ix.220-221). Categories such as male or female, good or evil, virgin or whore, were mutually exclusive types the early modern imagination was comfortable utilizing to navigate their interpersonal relationships. Display was a significant tool used to place individuals within appropriate, clearly defined groupings. Moll disassembles the boundaries of these neatly corded-off categories, her apparel rejecting the idea that clothing must be for a type, instead breaking down and challenging neatly defined gender constructs by dressing and acting how she will. Characters’ reactions to her illustrate a struggle to process the idea of malleability over exclusivity. Sir Alexander exhibits the unease this non-conformist display creates with dichotomized ideas of gender in a previously mentioned interchange when he spies Moll fitted for a codpiece and struggles to picture a world where gendered items of clothing suddenly have no gendered boundaries (iv.83-85). Moll is either man or woman, but dresses as man *and* woman, or sometimes in all male dress (still a visual combination of male *and* female), straddling two planes

visually throughout the play, except for the single moment in the play’s conclusion when Moll, at Sebastian’s request, appears dressed as Sebastian’s bride.

Multiple interchanges within the play highlight how Moll, while not necessarily intentionally, tips the scales and throws gender categorization into imbalance. The struggle to define her happens throughout the play as Moll appears dressed in both male and female garb. Descriptions of her character struggle to merge her feminine body with her masculine appearance, as when Sir Alexander references Moll’s masculine attire to demonstrate her “otherness,” mourning that his son will marry “a Dutch slop [wide-cut baggy breeches] and a French doublet [close-fitting body-garment]” and “a codpiece daughter” (iv.99-100). Further demonstrating this problem, other characters in *The Roaring Girl* repeatedly struggle to categorize the roaring girl, as in scene ii, when Sir Alexander describes Moll as “A creature ... nature hath brought forth/ To mock the sex of woman,” also stating she is “a thing/ One knows not how to name” (ii.129-131). In scene v, when Moll enters “like a man” (v.37.0 SD), Laxton does not recognize her, even after she speaks to him. Moll approaches Laxton, asking him, “Come, are you ready, sir?” to which a confused Laxton replies, “Ready? For what, sir?” (v.44-45). Moll continues to address him, yet Laxton is confused, telling her, “you mistook me, sir. You seem to be some young barrister” (v.48-49). Once he realizes who Moll is, Laxton still misunderstands the situation, expecting an amorous meeting and invites Moll into his coach (v.59-60). Moll removes her cloak and draws her sword, stating her weapon will “serve though to tie up a rogue’s tongue” (v.63-64). Laxton, finally realizing Moll’s intentions, still remains unable to address the contradictory display before him of a female wearing male clothing and instigating a masculine act. Moll assumes male roles, male dress, and male behavior, leaving Laxton confused and stammering as he tries to speak peace to the roaring girl, exclaiming, “Moll! Mistress Mary” (v.68), yet even this address indicates an inability to categorize her, as “Moll” was slang for “whore” and “Mary” (Moll’s given name) carries with it obvious Christian association with the Virgin Mary.

Also in male characters’ criticisms of her, Moll’s malleability or fluidity in gender categorization is continually underscored. Colorful descriptions of Moll vacillate between flattering and critical, indicating a discomfort with categorizing this type of figure as well as highlighting a fixation upon what falls outside the realm of boundaries perceived as absolute. In scene iii, Goshawk wonders at Moll as “the maddest, fantasticalist girl! I never knew so much flesh and so much nimbleness put together!” (iii.211-212). In this same scene, Trapdoor sardonically lauds Moll’s “heroic spirit and masculine womanhood” (iii.368-369), his sarcasm communicating a subtle disdain for otherwise typically admired qualities. Her ability to exist within multiple types and her fluidity between categories is described by Laxton, who observes of Moll, “She slips from one company to another” (iii.213). This behavior combined with Moll’s unconventional display generates no small amount of anxiety or tension, eliciting immediate negative assumptions associated with that display, as when Sir Alexander calls her “most wicked, most unnatural!”(ii.164), yet maintaining a lingering uncertainty. In Sir Alexander’s initial discussion about Moll with Trapdoor, Sir Alexander cannot even describe Moll without contradictory images as he claims she “strays so from her kind/ Nature repents she made her” (ii.221-222). However, immediately following this statement he describes Moll, utilizing common feminine descriptors, stating, “’tis a mermaid/ Has tolled my son to shipwreck” (ii.222-223), an image not without its own dualistic construct. This highlights the fragmentation and conflict within the early modern imagination when it comes to gender constructs and the roaring girl figure. Moll is described using dualistic, genderized imagery, a dichotomy that rejects the female—“her kind”—yet is also described using a common feminine stereotype: the seductress leading men to their doom. The early modern perspective defines the “mannish woman” as a form that goes against nature, yet at the same time that perspective struggles to define her outside those feminine constructs.

Cloth, Moll, and Authority

Not only does cloth’s display work to dismantle early modern gender constructs in *The Roaring Girl*, it also exhibits a potential to confuse the attribution of male/female authority. At different points in the play, Moll establishes her authority—physically, intellectually, and morally—progressively and intermittently granted to her as the male display upon her body increases. One such instance happens inside Master Openwork’s shop in scene iii. In the previously discussed exchange between Moll and Laxton, the scene demonstrates a significant shift in traditional roles, highlighting a confusion of male and female authority. Moll, displaying male and female apparel on her body, visually straddles two realms, a display viewed by others as confusing, yet enough female attributes remain in her physical display to cause Laxton to place her in the passive female category. Moll retains control in the interchange, however, utilizing the authority of the male category into which her clothing also visually places her. Further establishing her authority at the end of scene iii Moll speaks with Trapdoor, a male servant who wishes to establish his value to Moll and gain her trust. She requires Trapdoor to prove his value to her, asking him three questions: (1) what parts he has for service, (2) what strength he has, and (3) if he has a spirit of fighting in him (iii.360-385). Moll is unwilling to grant credit based solely on Trapdoor’s word or his falling visually within the male gender construct. Moll requires physical, tangible evidence, exposing Trapdoor’s weak claim upon authority based entirely in the visual when she trips him, exposing a lack of authenticity beneath his display (iii.380). Moll retains her physical authority in the interaction, as well as her strategic authority, easily exposing the flaws in Trapdoor’s claims. Later in scene v, when Trapdoor again enters, Moll once more asserts an intellectual or perceptive authority over him, stating, “he seems/ A man without; I’ll try what he is within” (v.148-149). This places Moll, dressed partially as a man, again in a clear position of authority over another male, both in physical strength and ability to accurately surmise a situation.

As the play progresses and Moll’s dress becomes increasingly “male,” the visual display of male clothing on her body coincides with her continual, even increasing, possession of authority within various interactions. She becomes progressively, yet tentatively, valued as a source of wisdom, which is underscored by Sebastian in scene iv: “’twixt lovers’ hearts she’s a fit instrument,/ And has the art to help them to their own./ By her advice, for in that craft she’s wise” (iv.205-207). In scene x, Moll shares the stage with several male companions and, in multiple interchanges, imparts information with regards to typically male-dominated matters to her male counterparts. Lord Noland (whose name alludes to his own lacking, similar to that of Laxton) asks Moll about the meaning of a “canting song” (x.260) she and Tearcat were singing, to which Moll briefly explains the song as “a praise of good drink” (x.261), assuring Lord Noland, much like a teacher, that further explanation is “not worth the opening” (x.275-276). Immediately following, when a “cutpurse” enters the scene disguised as a gallant and accompanied by several companions, neither Lord Noland nor Sir Thomas identify the rogue as a cutpurse, but Moll informs them of the lack of authenticity behind this disguised gallant’s display. Moll educates her companions, directing them to “Shadow me, I know him: ’tis one that cumbers the land indeed. If he swim near to the shore of any of your pockets, look to your purses!”(x.285-287). Moll then takes a moment to patiently explain in detail the hierarchy of thievery before them:

> All his train study the figging-law, that’s to say, cutting of purses and foisting. One of them is a nip: I took him once i’the twopenny gallery at the Fortune; then there’s a cloyer, or snap, that dogs any new brother in that trade, and snaps will have half in any booty. He with the wand is both a stale, whose office is to face a man i’the streets whilst shells are drawn by another, and then with his black conjuring rod in his hand, he, by the nimbleness of his eye and juggling stick, will in cheaping a piece of plate at a goldsmith’s stall, make four or five rings mount from the top of his caduceus and, as if it were at leap-frog, they skip into his hand presently. (x.291-303)

Even the disguised thieves recognize Moll as possessing authority. Directly after the second cutpurse spots her, he exclaims to his companions, “Zounds, we are smoked!” (x.304). Moll not only has risen to physical authority in combative interactions, but is perceived as possessing authority in both knowledge and perception.

Following this interchange, Lord Noland inquires after Moll’s expertise in these areas in scene x, perhaps suspicious of her character. He asks, “I wonder how thou camest to the knowledge of these nasty villains?” (x.322-323). Moll further distances her authority from these men, not only educating them, but now preaching, chiding, rebuking them for their quickness to judge and their choosing instead to embrace ignorance. Moll removes herself from stereotypical accusations, recalling Middleton and Dekker’s allusion to preconceived notions in the opening prologue (“each one comes/ And brings a play in’s head with him” [3-4]), challenging, “Dare any step forth to my face and say,/ ‘I have ta’en thee doing so, Moll’?”(x.327-328). After explaining to the men how she came to gain “knowledge in those villainies” (x.352), Moll then wonders with thinly veiled chastisement,

> How many are whores in small ruffs and still looks?
> How many chaste whose names fill slander’s books?
> Were all men cuckolds, whom gallants in their scorns
> Call so, we should not walk for goring horns. (x.356-359)

Most notable in this scene is that these men listen to Moll, they believe Moll, and they recognize the shame Moll points out in their behavior, telling her she has “A brave mind, Moll, i’faith” (x.362).

Moll eventually is granted authority physically, intellectually, and finally morally, earning a type of credibility typically only granted to a male figure, yet it is imperative to recognize this authority is highly dependent on Moll’s display. Cloth’s role is significant in establishing Moll’s authority as it would be difficult for characters (and audience members) to grant Moll the same level of credibility if she appeared in full female display during these different interactions. The display of male clothing upon her body makes Moll’s authority in these interactions “believable” or at the very least more palatable, both for the characters within the play, and for the audience. Without this display placing Moll at least partially within the male realm, her assumption of authority becomes unlikely and the play lags as a result. Also significant is that the play’s male characters don’t fully grant Moll this authority; it appears in glimpses, and then it slips away as the characters return to more familiar constructs. While these men obviously do not wholeheartedly recognize Moll as above them or even a peer, as their previous

derogatory statements indicate, their recognition of Moll’s authority within these isolated interactions remains, even if it does fluctuate. While Moll’s keen perception of truth does not change in accordance to her particular display, others’ willingness or ability to grant Moll that authenticity increases as her display becomes increasingly male, further emphasizing the malleability of a perceived “rigid” construct of gender. If Moll can gain this authority just by a shift in habit, this highlights the notion that these categories are fluid. Display becomes subjective and thus the audience is forced to recognize the unreliability of the visual markers on which they so frequently rely.

Cloth, Moll, and Credit

Individual authenticity and credit were a part of daily early modern interaction, highly dependent upon strategies for judging one’s character and gauging trust. Using a carefully constructed extensive display of the early modern economic setting which Horwich points out is “portrayed with some realism in city comedies, and almost nowhere else” (291), Middleton works to build what Horwich describes as an “ethical substructure ... using the imagery of the shops ... markets, and exchanges of London as a device for commenting upon the lives and characters of men and women, and the ways in which they come together” (296-297). One of the ways in which these lives came together is through relationships of honor and credit which, as discussed in depth in Chapter Two, were becoming associated with an increased element of instability. Credit, once widely viewed as meaning “character” or “integrity,” began to shift and take on a much stronger economic slant with connotations of trustworthiness with regards to debt. During this period, bargaining and contract became methods to establish interpersonal sociability; one’s ability to give or take out a loan on interest established oneself not only economically, but also socially. Because display in *The Roaring Girl* is simultaneously reliable and deceptive, credit’s reliance upon that display underscores the uncertainty surrounding it, placing an inconsistency that all had to reconcile during this period under a figurative microscope. As Kitch points out, “The paradox of

the crisis of value in Middleton is that the signs of one’s credit—one’s language, one’s status, one’s ‘countenance’—are at once more suspect and more crucial for determining creditworthiness and character” (411). I would assert one’s clothing is subject to a similar “crisis of value.” If, as Kitch states, “Doubt and distrust of appearances weaken traditional networks of trust and credit demanding new strategies for determining formal credit relationships” (412), then cloth becomes both an onstage signal of status as well as a warning to beware. The paradox that cloth both reveals and hides at the same time creates a significantly more complex communicative tool in establishing characterization and maneuvering plots based in economic stratagem, as Middleton’s city comedies typically were.

This illustration of the unreliable display before them and the flawed system of extending credit based on the visual is clearly exhibited within the economic backdrop of scene iii. In a complex scene of multiple interchanges, these three shops demonstrate how characters who utilize socially acceptable display for advancement are granted credit and contracts, while the sole character employing a socially unconventional display solely for its own sake is denied credit or legitimate contract. Consider the contradictory display of authenticity and validity that is created in the juxtaposition of display as Laxton and Moll each enter a shop, seeking to establish “credit” with their respective shopkeepers. Laxton reinforces the irony behind those who “fit” societal norms of display, yet lack legitimacy, openly admitting his lack of authenticity as he describes his “contract” with Mistress Gallipot, stating, “what I take from her, I spend upon other wenches ... She has wit enough to rob her husband, and I ways enough to consume the money ... Thus reward I all her cunning with simple mistaking. I know she cozens her husband to keep me, and I’ll keep her honest, as long as I can” (iii.93-97, 146-149). While it is made obvious to the audience his intentions are false and his legitimacy nonexistent, Laxton’s physical appearance as a gallant creates a visual legitimacy from which he is able to draw. Credit, in the form of money from the eager Mistress Gallipot, is granted to the appropriately named “Laxton [because he lacks]”, to help him “buy” or “gain” more credit with others (other gallants, other wenches, other

citizens, other citizens’ wives). Further, Laxton obtains credit from one who has nothing to give, as Mistress Gallipot has to steal from her husband to enter this “contract” with Laxton. Laxton recognizes this, stating, “I know she cozens her husband to keep me” (iii.147-148), admitting, “I rail upon opportunity still, and take no notice on’t” (iii.140-141). Laxton uses his credit gained without substance in an attempt to gain further credit with Moll, inviting her as, “sweet plump Moll, when shall thou and I go out o’ town together?” (iii.283-284) and further promising, “I’ll hire a coach with four horses” (iii.290-291). In his attempt to obtain credit with Moll, Laxton offers her “ten angels in fair gold” (iii.298-299) to show her he is genuine, reassuring Moll, “I do not trifle with you” (iii.299-300). In a circulation of commodities similar to *Your Five Gallants*, Laxton uses money that was stolen by Mrs Gallipot from her husband in an unsuccessful attempt to secure another woman’s affection. Not only is Laxton without actual substance that should earn him credit, the explicit irony is this character, while awarded credit based on his visual authenticity, becomes the drama’s most deceitful (albeit ultimately unsuccessful) player.

In contrast, the fluctuation of credit granted or denied to Moll begins when Moll initially appears onstage in scene iii as Goshawk points out to Laxton, “yonder’s Moll,” (iii.181) to which Laxton asks, “Moll, which Moll?” (iii.182). Goshawk then specifies, “Honest Moll” (iii.183). Multiple characters recognize Moll’s authenticity from the play’s early scenes, yet it is repeatedly denied by those same characters throughout the play’s interactions. The audience would likely regard this as an ironic statement, misleading, likely due to typical stereotypes and what they have heard up to this point from other characters, as when the yet-unseen Moll is described by Sir Davy as “A monster! ’Tis some monster!” (ii.137), and also described by Sir Alexander in scene ii as a “she-fox” (ii. 244) leading “lambs” to her den (ii.245). However, “Honest Moll” will ironically turn out to be an accurate salutation. At the beginning of scene iii, Moll is denied credit for maintaining a display without regard for genderized boundaries and societal norms. As previously discussed, the roaring girl attempts to enter a “contract”

of her own upon arrival in the sempster Openwork’s shop by asking to buy “a good shag ruff” (iii.229). After finding her overtures initially accepted by Master Openwork, who states, “Mistress Mary, that shalt thou, i’faith, and the best in the shop” (iii.230-231), in an exchange that illustrates the confusion surrounding Moll’s cross-gendered display, Mistress Openwork soundly rejects Moll’s patronage, stating, “Get you from my shop!” (iii.242). When Moll replies with a simple explanation, “I come to buy” (iii.243), Mistress Openwork, in what may be attributed to revulsion to Moll’s unconventional display or even sexual jealousy, again denies Moll’s attempt to enter a sales contract, stating, “I’ll sell ye nothing; I warn ye my house and shop” (iii.244-245). After watching the hollow Laxton navigate credit and contract without hindrance, Moll’s inability to obtain either in the economic milieu of scene iii is a paradox that looms large from that scene forward, as the rest of the play is spent building a character who deserves this legitimacy and credit. From the beginning, the irony is made obvious that this individual is one whom society categorizes as the monstrous sort, which will require the audience for the duration of the plot to reconcile this stereotypical belief with what they see from Moll’s character. The stereotypes associated with the roaring girl are acknowledged and then swept aside, repeatedly reinforced as inaccurate. This further complicates defining her form, as when Sebastian remarks of Moll, “Sh’as a bold spirit that mingles with mankind” (iv.183). Consider the interchange in scene iv, when Moll, after Sebastian’s proposal, instantly, honestly, explains why she is not suited for marriage. Even an eavesdropping Sir Alexander admits Moll’s response is “The most comfortablest answer” (iv.48). Further acknowledging Moll’s honesty, Sir Alexander admits, “if every woman would deal with their suitor so honestly, poor younger brothers would not be so often gulled” (iv.61-63). However, directly after this more positive observation of Moll’s honesty and authenticity, the tailor enters to measure Moll for her breeches (iv.81) and Sir Alexander cannot reconcile the display before him with the behavior he just witnessed, reverting to old habits of categorization as he watches the display, wondering of his son, “Will he marry a monster” (iv.82-83). Sir Alexander further retreats to old stereotypes in scene viii when,

after he has previously witnessed her honesty, he criticizes her “thief-whorish eye” (viii.17). The fluctuation of display-based authority or credit intermittently granted and denied to Moll is nowhere as clearly displayed as in scene xi. Moll enters dressed as a man, to which Goshawk adamantly declares, “No priest will marry her” (xi.104). Later in this same scene Moll re-enters dressed as a woman, masked, to which Goshawk positively claims she is “a proper lusty presence” (xi.129). Sir Alexander also exclaims, “Now has he [Sebastian] pleased me right. I always counselled him/ To choose a goodly personable creature:/ Just of her pitch was my first wife, his mother” (xi.130-132). Sir Alexander also uses language like, “friends” (xi.140), “Salute” (xi.140), “joy” (xi.136), “all’s pardoned” (xi.139) during this interchange, stating he will “Hide not my happiness” (xi.139). Later in the scene, when Moll is unmasked, Sir Alexander’s attitude shifts significantly, lamenting, “O my reviving shame!” (xi.142) and calling this development “the work of sorrow” (xi.143), with Sir Guy also exclaiming, “Darkness and death!” (xi.144).

All of this categorizing of people as foxes or lambs, shepherds or monsters, proper or shameful, while their outward appearance grants some credibility to initial assumptions, is eventually shown to be inaccurate. This drives the point of malleable categorization home, both from the initial explicit establishment of Moll as a roaring girl, and the subsequent rejection of the associated forms typically ascribed to this stereotype. This is demonstrated in Sebastian’s description of Moll in scene iv:

> oftentimes
> Through her apparel somewhat shames her birth;
> But she is loose in nothing but mirth:
> Would all Molls were no worse! (iv.184-187)

Credit, awarded or denied based on display is repeatedly shown through Moll’s character to be an unreliable system. In *The Roaring Girl,* Moll’s character is the most authentic and she is the character who exposes the hypocrisy and deceit of characters like Laxton; however, Moll is the one who transgresses cultural norms of clothing. Visually she is the least authentic of the play’s characters, yet she most clearly maintains her legitimacy throughout. The audience is at once using visual cues of cloth

to establish characterization, yet at the same time these same visual cues remind them they cannot trust what they see.

Cloth, Moll, and Duality

The Roaring Girl’s themes of gender, authority, and credit all intersect at Moll’s duality or malleability. In a type of layering process, male apparel on Moll’s female form leads to a fluid gender construct, giving her character an ability to behave in a manner unacceptable in mutually exclusive realms of male and female, which then leads to Moll’s ability to move with authority within various spheres, among both thieves and gallants. Cloth is the necessary element that enables all of Moll’s movements throughout the play, without which Moll’s ability to cross gender categories and constructs, to establish authority—even inconsistently—does not exist, at least not with authenticity or legitimacy.

Rather than work to unpack Middleton and Dekker’s characterization and pin down “which” Moll is—subversive or coercive, proponent or opponent—a better approach recognizes the inherent duality in a character that rejects these simplistic interpretations. Moll is not one or another, she is both, at home in various modes of apparel and in multiple spheres. As Comensoli states, “Throughout the play the dramatists underscore Moll’s protean nature, which cannot be understood by those ... who conceive of the world two-dimensionally” (259). In the play’s final scene, Sir Alexander’s hedging affirmation of Moll observes, “Thou art a mad girl, and yet I cannot now/ Condemn thee” (xi.208-209), illustrating the possibility that one can exist within multiple, at times contradictory, domains. Moll’s dialogue supports this dualism as she sings of her own contradictory nature in scene viii, acknowledging her ability to straddle boundaries of categorization:

> I dream there is a mistress,
> And she lays out the money;
> She goes unto her sisters,
> She never comes at any.
> She says she went to th’Burse [the Royal Exchange] for patterns;

> You shall find her at St. Kathern’s [area known for alehouses and taverns],
> And comes home with never a penny. (viii.103-109)

Moll continues to sing of a woman who chooses to enjoy “unwomanly” amusements such as gambling and low company, fantasizing of illicit sexual adventures, yet is quick to point out the difference between her own fantasies and her reality. After her song ends she states, “Hang up the viol now, sir; all this while I was in a dream: one shall lie rudely then, but being awake, I keep my legs together” (viii.127-129). Her recognition of her independence and the loss it necessitates exhibits what Comensoli calls a “tension between denial and desire ... [and] Moll’s dream suggests we are viewing neither a symbol of virtue nor the two-dimensional virago of the *Hic Mulier* pamphlet, but a complex individual whose dream/song embodies the self’s ambiguous relationship to the world” (258-259). While the boundaries surrounding traditional categories of gender, authority, and credit are then blurred, recognition of those malleable boundaries ironically works to clarify Moll’s character. Display, in conjunction with Moll’s behavior, has worked to both establish its own unreliability and yet this ambivalence works to more clearly establish *The Roaring Girl*’s dualistic protagonist.

This existence outside rigid, idealistic categorization is underscored further as Moll, who has progressively been granted authority across boundaries by other (mostly male) characters in the play, eventually claims authority and autonomy for herself, outside the control of those who have been unable to see past her clothing or her gender. Male characters in the play describe Moll at certain points as an entity within their control using militaristic, combative terms. They paint Moll as an entity to conquer, something men are capable of taking, conquering, or possessing. In scene iii, for example, Laxton and other gallants describe Moll’s body using militaristic and sexually charged terms of conquest. Laxton states, “Methinks a brave captain might get all his soldiers upon her” (iii.196-197). She is a fortress to invade and possess; the men state they will “come on, and come off” (iii.198) Moll’s body, and “lay hard siege to her” (iii.201), claiming “where the walls are flesh and blood, I’ll ever pierce through” (iii.202-203). However, in Moll’s perception, she constantly remains in full possession of her

autonomy, stating confidently in scene x, “Perhaps for my mad going, some reprove me;/ I please myself, and care not else who loves me” (x.360-361). At times, Moll must point out and claim her autonomy and power, as when Moll enters dressed as a man in scene x and addresses Sir Alexander in a manner that simultaneously establishes her authority while deriding his assumption of gender-based supremacy: “I have taken measure of you better than a tailor can, and I’ll fit you as you—monster with one eye—have fitted me” (x.110-112). At the play’s end, Moll, whom the audience has now watched run the full gamut of clothing combinations, stands before Sir Alexander and makes a declaration separating her “self” completely from its display. As she stands for the only time in the play in fully female clothing, Moll declares herself detached from her male counterparts’ estimation, defiantly stating to Sir Alexander that she is “as good a man as your son” (xi.153) and establishes her sexual power, confidently asserting her role in Sebastian’s plot, boasting, “I’d a forefinger in’t” (xi.170). It is ironic that Moll’s figure, to whom male counterparts granted gradual authority as the male display upon her female body increased, appears in her most powerful moment of autonomy in fully female dress and claiming what, in her perspective, has always been hers. Moll sweeps aside her male counterparts’ ability to grant or refuse authority to her with the powerful statement that Sir Alexander “was in fear his son would marry me,/ But never dreamt that I would ne’er agree!” (xi.213-214). At the play’s conclusion, Moll underscores the notion that a female’s power has not only nothing to do with the cloth that is placed on her body, but also nothing to do with whether or not male figures in power would grant it. Like Moll’s display for its own sake, Moll’s authority simply exists, completely dissociated with whether the men she encounters would have it be or not.

The Roaring Girl’s conclusion, as is common in Middleton’s city comedies, seems at first glance to be an idealistic type of “easy fix,” with a celebration of the Sebastian/Mary union and Moll continuing in her desired independence. However, like Moll herself, *The Roaring Girl*’s conclusion is much more complicated than it initially appears to be. The conclusion depicts the potential to achieve a happy,

psychologically reassuring norm in the Sebastian/Mary marriage, but also affirms another option with “a strikingly different set of values” (Comensoli, 263). As with Moll’s character, modern analysis seeks to categorize the play’s conclusion as endorsing either a traditional or an unconventional lifestyle, with neither interpretation in sole possession of decisive evidence from the play itself. There are no simple, neat solutions in *The Roaring Girl*. To marry is to adhere to societal norms and enjoy acceptance into society’s hierarchies; however, this requires a female sacrifice of independence and autonomy, as Moll points out, “marriage is but a chopping and changing, where a maiden loses one head and has a worse i’ th’ place” (iv.45-47). On the other hand, Moll’s remaining outside patriarchal norms is not without its own type of sacrifice, as Moll acknowledges her inability to enjoy or satisfy her sexual longing as she sings in scene viii,

> Here comes a wench will brave [defy/challenge] ye,
> Her courage was so great,
> She lay with one o’ the navy,
> Her husband lying i’ the Fleet. (viii.114-117)

However, just prior to her singing of this female sexual freedom, Moll metaphorically alludes to her own limited sexual expression to Sebastian, stating, “I ne’er came into that chamber yet where I took down the instrument myself” (viii.92-94). Her sacrifice enables her to escape marital subordination, yet Moll, thanks to the visual categorization due to her cross-dressing behavior, ultimately remains an “other,” emphasizing the idea that a perfect solution does not exist.

The audience must reconcile that the tools used to establish credit or belief offstage (cloth/clothing) are just as unreliable as those they’ve just witnessed used unreliably onstage. This idea is kept at the forefront throughout *The Roaring Girl* particularly in the interactions of the sempster Openwork and his wife, Mistress Openwork. After discovering her husband has manipulated Master Goshawk into believing he “kept a whore, made [him] believe ’twas true” (ix.234) to expose Goshawk’s own lecherous desire for her affection, Mistress Openwork uses cloth to describe the unreliability she perceives in the world that relies so heavily on visually-based esteem: “Why, have not many handsome

legs in silk stockings villainous splay feet for all their great roses?” (ix.7-9). She continues later in the same scene, “Goodness, I see, is but outside. We all set/ In rings of gold, stones that be counterfeit,” to which the now vindicated sempster Master Openwork replies, “What’s this whole world but a gilt rotten pill?/ For at the heart lies the old core still” (ix.222-223, 229-230). This point is revisited repeatedly, as when Mistress Gallipot wonders, “Is’t possible his smooth face should have wrinkles in’t, and we not see them?” (ix.5-6). Moll points out the incompleteness in what is viewed as established legitimacy earlier in the play, stating in scene iii, “’tis impossible to know what woman is thoroughly honest, because she’s ne’er thoroughly tried” (iii.331-333), protesting this lack of validity in current methods of estimation and establishing proof, within which cloth had no small role to play. The malleable and ambivalent meanings associated with cloth and display allow for a more accurate interpretation of Moll, specifically, and *The Roaring Girl* overall. When one moves away from an either/or, mutually exclusive type of analysis that tries to define Moll or the play itself as subversive or rehabilitated, either endorsing or rejecting a patriarchal system, it becomes clear that *The Roaring Girl*—the play and the character—are simply both. Accepting the duality intrinsic to Moll’s character not only complicates her characterization, but also allows for a clearer understanding of that characterization. The role Moll’s apparel plays in establishing this duality hammers in the second nail to Moll’s figurative swinging board, illustrating the character’s complex identity is inherent to her malleability.

Chapter Five – *Anything for a Quiet Life*

Thus far in this project, cloth has been demonstrated to emphasize inconsistency—albeit in different ways—throughout the four previously discussed Middleton-associated city comedies. In *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, cloth highlights the inevitable tension between expected and recommended behavior of the patient merchant, while in *Michaelmas Term* it works to emphasize the increasing inconsistency associated with cloth as a reliable visual marker. In *Your Five Gallants*, the exhibitionist gallant of display actually finds identity within his cloth-based establishment of inconsistency between outward appearance and inner worth, and in *The Roaring Girl*, cloth (specifically, clothing) challenges gender expectations in particular by emphasizing tension surrounding unconventional display. Either as an onstage object or referenced in dialogue, cloth has been closely considered in its modifying role as it works to provide added depth and complexity for characterizations, establish types, or highlight tensions between expectation and reality. This chapter will continue to explore cloth's role in contributing meaning within the dramatic system of *Anything for a Quiet Life* (1621) by examining the inconsistencies that emerge when Middleton's utilization of cloth and cloth-related characterizations in his earlier works are compared against this much later play. As mentioned in the Introduction, not only is there a different collaborator working with Middleton on *Anything for a Quiet Life* (Webster), but also the ten years separating this play from the four earlier city comedies was a decade of unprecedented devastation for England's domestic cloth industry. This discussion of *Anything for a Quiet Life* will focus on the systematic differentiation between how cloth was utilized in the earlier plays versus this much later work and concentrate more keenly than previous chapters on the particularly powerful and resonant relationship between context and cloth on the London stage, exploring what can be learned about shifts in attitudes or perceptions related to cloth and the cloth industry in the aftermath of the Cokayne project.

The attribution of *Anything for a Quiet Life*’s authorship is anything but settled in twentieth- and twenty-first-century scholarship. The contributions of Middleton and Webster (and sometimes Shirley) in this jointly-authored play have been debated as far back as Bullen’s nineteenth-century introduction to *The Works of Thomas Middleton* (1885-86). A closer look at scholarship focusing on *Anything for a Quiet Life*’s authorship demonstrates this issue as being particularly difficult to pin down, with some scholars assigning primary authorship to Middleton, and others to Webster. Bullen claimed that the play’s scenes featuring one of *Anything for a Quiet Life*’s principal antagonists—the selfish Lady Cressingham—were not by Middleton at all, but were instead the contribution of James Shirley. H. Dugdale Sykes, on the other hand, in “A Webster-Middleton Play: *Anything for a Quiet Life*” (1924) asserted that most of *Anything for a Quiet Life* should be attributed to Webster. However, just a few years after Sykes’ article was published, Wilbur. D. Dunkel, in “The Authorship of *Anything for a Quiet Life*” (1928) countered both Bullen’s and Sykes’ claims, stating, “Whether Webster or Shirley be regarded as the collaborator or reviser, the work of Thomas Middleton is recognizable to such a considerable extent that the principal share in writing this play may hardly be ascribed to another” (793). Dunkel’s article addresses each Act and scene that Sykes attributes to Webster, providing contradictory evidence of Middleton’s hand in almost every instance, confidently stating, “it is fair to conclude that *Anything for a Quiet Life* is a typical comedy of London life by Thomas Middleton, but probably revised by John Webster” (799). More recently, Thomson takes this debate surrounding *Anything for a Quiet Life*’s authorship past the earlier claims of Bullen, Sykes, and Dunkel and includes more recent discussion from Lake (1975) and Jackson (2006). Thomson describes the more current analyses from both Lake and Jackson as taking a precise, surgical approach in carving up *Anything for a Quiet Life*’s different scenes for either Webster or Middleton:

> Both studies give Webster all of Act I; Act 2, Scene I; and 4.1. Middleton is credited with the larger share: 2.2-2.4; all of Act 3; and 4.2. For Act 5, Jackson argues that “the linguistic evidence ... would encourage a theory of mixed authorship”, whereas Lake attributes 5.1 to Webster and 5.2 substantially to Middleton. Lake gave Webster 4.2.1-44, but Jackson ... provides convincing evidence of Middleton’s authorship. (“*Anything for a Quiet Life*: Late 1621”, 422)

This more precise division of authorship is admittedly potentially problematic for this discussion as it gives the entirety of Act I to Webster, an act that is particularly laden with cloth references in the initial onstage appearances of the merchant Walter Camlet and Lady Cressingham. However, this attribution of authorship also assigns later scenes set inside Camlet’s cloth shop to Middleton (II.ii, IV.ii), scenes which are naturally littered with cloth references and that include the particularly cloth-dense shop call from Camlet’s apprentice, George (II.ii.1-10). Additionally, Jackson and Lake include Camlet’s interaction with Young Franklin as he poses as a Frenchman in Act III.ii in their Middleton-assigned scenes, a scene which is also important to this chapter’s discussion. Therefore, even if these more recent assertions from Lake and Jackson were considered the final word on the matter, effectively excluding Act I and Lady Cressingham’s character from the discussion, Lake and Jackson’s attributing to Middleton the cloth-dense scenes in Camlet’s shop as well as Camlet’s cloth-centered interaction with a “foreign” character justifies the inclusion of *Anything for a Quiet Life* in this Middleton-centered project.

However, such Act and scene divisions from theorists like Lake and Jackson have not neatly settled the matter. Emerging discussion of early modern authorship, particularly with regards to drama, is moving away from the notion that twentieth- and twenty-first-century analysis can ever reach a definitive attribution of who, precisely, wrote what, even asking whether or not such a debate is a fruitful endeavor. Jeffrey Masten, for example, claims that modern conceptions of authorship are not in precise alignment with the early modern approach to dramatic authorship and that collaboration was a much more dominant strategy than the modern perspective that gravitates toward single-author attribution wants to allow. Heather Hirschfeld points out it is a mistake to adopt the presupposition that “the author is an unchanging individual writing in a creative vacuum” (615). Hirschfeld lobbies instead

for a “retheorization of the collaborative basis of early modern drama” (617), suggesting new ways for studying collaboration. Hirschfield even advocates for a redefinition of the term, stating that “future criticism must find another word to describe the relation and experience of authorship by two writers who contribute, calculatedly, to the same text” (620). Masten and Hirschfeld both argue that the fixation on attributing authorship is a post-enlightenment concern that would not have resonated so deeply with those involved in the textual production of the early modern period in which collaboration was a prominent practice. After considering all of these different placements of authorial ownership of *Anything for a Quiet Life* from recent (and not so recent) studies, Thomson seems to lean towards the more current scholarship from Masten and Hirschfeld, stating, “it is often difficult to divide the play rigidly between the two authors. Certainly, it is unlikely that they wrote in isolation of each other; rather, they probably not only worked together but edited and altered each other’s work as they went along” (“*Anything for a Quiet Life*: Late 1621”, 422).

While it is obviously important to this project to examine work that is Middleton’s and attribution is a valuable tool in this endeavor, tracing past scholarship associated with *Anything for a Quiet Life*’s authorship in particular demonstrates perhaps most clearly how unsure we must admittedly be. As stated in the Introduction, this discussion must remain “grounded in its confines and aware that all knowledge has inherent uncertainty.” It seems this bouncing back and forth between attributing the play primarily to Webster (Sykes), or to Middleton (Dunkel), or arguing for some combination of the two (Lake, Jackson), supports most clearly the claims of Masten, Hirschfeld, and ultimately Thomson, that to try and untangle what was certainly an involved collaborative effort is an endeavor that risks missing the mark, at least for an analysis such as this project has undertaken. If one revisits the density study (see Appendix) used to justify the selection of the five Middleton-associated city comedies for this project, *Anything for a Quiet Life* is notable as particularly laden with cloth references. Therefore, in the absence of a clear argument against Middleton’s significant contribution to the work, *Anything for a Quiet Life*

remains a legitimate component of this project’s discussion of Middleton’s use of cloth in his city comedies.

Middleton, London, and the Cokayne Project

Considering the timing of the first performance of *Anything for a Quiet Life*, the concurrent economic depression, and Middleton’s own involvement with the city and the London livery companies during this period, an initial biographical discussion of Middleton 1614-1621 and the 1614 Cokayne project is key to augment a discussion of cloth’s utilization in *Anything for a Quiet Life* and the influences of social realities of the period within the drama. As discussed in the Introduction, Middleton dominated civic revels and mayoral pageants in the decade following *The Roaring Girl*, earning an appointment as the city’s first salaried chronologer in 1620. As Taylor states, “his [Middleton’s] career brought him into complicated relationships with different artistic constituencies: the legal community, the City authorities, the royal court” (“Thomas Middleton: Lives and Afterlives”, 41). While Margot Heinemann argues that Middleton’s connections within city government (particularly in Parliamentary Puritan circles), may have influenced how court, city, and country are presented in his plays, I would not go so far as to claim that *Anything for a Quiet Life*’s treatment of the city or court demonstrates a puritan influence or “a concern to arouse sympathy for the domestic virtues as well as a contempt for the wicked” (114). What I would argue, and what this chapter attempts to establish through an examination of cloth’s treatment in *Anything for a Quiet Life*, is that the influence of social realities like Middleton’s navigation of these “complicated relationships” in court and city government—particularly Middleton’s relationship with London merchant/alderman Sir William Cokayne (1561-1626)—does exist within the drama.

Sir William Cokayne, described by Lawrence Manley as “one of the most notorious merchant-courtiers of the Jacobean period” (“Introduction to *The Triumphs of Love and Antiquity”,* 1397), was the

architect of the infamous Cokayne project that devastated the English cloth industry and precipitated the severe economic depression of the 1620s. The apparent overlap between Cokayne’s and Middleton’s circles of interaction makes a discussion of Middleton’s use of foreign and domestic cloth incomplete without a brief synopsis of Cokayne’s notorious project and its overwhelming consequences on the English cloth trade in the years that followed. In 1614, James I acted against the advice of his Privy Council and passed what would later become the most ill-famed piece of legislation for the seventeenth-century cloth industry. From 1606 to 1614, over half of London’s total cloth exports were “white” cloths (undyed and undressed [unfinished]), manufactured in Western counties and sent to Germany and the Low Countries for finishing. The Merchant Adventurers—London’s leading overseas merchants—possessed a charter granting them a monopoly on these unfinished cloth exports. However, exporting half-finished products in an economy dominated by policy focused on increasing exports and employment was seen as wasteful, particularly when wool was in decline. According to Supple, “It was estimated in 1614 that dyeing and dressing woollen textiles [in England] would add anything from 50 to 100 per cent to the value of exports” (33). Cokayne presented a plan in 1613 to halt all exports of unfinished cloth from England. The plan seemed sensible—to dye and dress the cloth at home rather than abroad. However, what Cokayne failed to realize (or perhaps refused to admit in his petitions to James I) was the equipment and skill to dye and dress such cloth would take time to establish, a steep learning curve which England’s domestic cloth manufacturers neither had the time nor the financial reserves to indulge. Further, no one could predict how their foreign counterparts would react to being cut out of the process. Simply stated, England would still need to sell its cloth. In 1614, James I instituted a ban on all unfinished cloth exports and revoked the Merchant Adventurers’ charter, leaving Cokayne and the project’s other advocates in control of the manufacture and export of cloth finished solely on English soil. The risk involved was substantial, as Supple emphatically points out:

> Events had taken a startling turn. The hesitancy of generations of privy councilors had finally been overcome, the organization of “the most famous company of merchants [the Merchant Adventurers] in Christendom” had been overthrown, and in a very real sense England’s prosperity had become the object of a gigantic gamble, at least on the part of the government, as to whether England was capable of producing, and Holland willing to buy, a new type of product. (34)

John Chamberlain expressed his misgivings in 1616, stating, “After much canvassing and debating at the council table, Alderman Coquin [Cokayne] and his new company have carried away the bucklers from the Merchant Adventurers, contrary to the opinion of the major part, but the king overruled the case; I pray God it may prove well for him and the realm” (Vol. 1, 617). By 1616, “It quickly became apparent that the government had a serious textile depression on its hands. Unemployment was rife, cloth had fallen in price, the cloth customs had declined by more than 25 per cent, and, it was claimed, ‘in Gloucestershire, Worcestershire and Wiltshire either one half or a third part of the looms are abated’” (Supple, 43). Hentschell describes the aftermath of this economic disaster: “Everyone involved in the domestic broadcloth industry, from country weavers and spinners—who relied on London clothiers to buy their cloth—to drapers, to merchant adventurers, was financially devastated” (161). The experiment was disastrous for an already suffering industry, one from which it would never quite recover. “Cloth exports never again reached the level of 1614—the advance of foreign manufacture, partly under the enforced stimulus of the events of 1614-1616, and the competition of the newer fabrics for factors of production at home, ensured a permanent restriction of the overseas market for old draperies” (Supple, 52). While in 1618 the Merchant Adventurers did achieve a small amount of recovery from the decline, it was only the calm before another storm. By the time *Anything for a Quiet Life* appeared in 1621, the English cloth trade had slipped back into a depression.

Cokayne’s reputation certainly suffered for his involvement in the notorious venture. At the end of the failed project, “Sir Edward Coke ... described its [the Cokayne project’s] leaders as ‘Projectors and Deluders of the State’, and King James was said to have threatened Cokayne that ‘if he had abused him by wrong information his four quarters should pay for it’” (Manley, 1397). However, Cokayne was not

completely removed from political position in the years that followed. Retribution for his role in the project was particularly light, as noted in Cokayne’s entry in the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*: “Cokayne managed to avoid falling into disfavour for long ... and by 1618 his reconciliation with the king was complete.” In 1619, he was appointed Lord Mayor—a promotion that was key in Cokayne’s post-project restoration as well as bringing him in direct contact with Middleton. Middleton wrote Cokayne’s mayoral pageant, *The Triumphs of Love and Antiquity*, and in 1619, Middleton “also wrote *The First Entertainment*, held at Cokayne House on Monday and Tuesday in Easter week 1620” (Aldous, “Cokayne, Sir William. 1559/60-1626”). Middleton composed ten *Honourable Entertainments* for the city from April 1620 – April 1621, and was awarded his position as the city’s first official chronologer in September 1620, at the end of Cokayne’s tenure as Lord Mayor. This was a significant achievement in Middleton’s career, as “His [Middleton’s] appointment as the first salaried city chronologer (6 September 1620) transformed his status, and prompted much of his subsequent work” (Taylor, “Middleton, Thomas (bap. 1580, d. 1627), playwright”). Cokayne afforded Middleton much success and opportunity later in his career, yet Cokayne remained a controversial public figure throughout. Chamberlain wrote in late 1616, “some few curse [Cokayne] only and hope his hanging will be the catastrophe of all” (Vol. 1, 617). While Cokayne may have enjoyed a post-project restoration in the Jacobean court, the memory of the general populace was not so easily whitewashed. Evidence of the longevity of Cokayne’s damaged reputation can be found in a 1625 letter from John Chamberlain, written after Cokayne’s London home was destroyed by fire: “[I] had seldom known a man less pitied, ... and specially for that business of clothing (wherein all England hath and is like to suffer so much) which was his only plot and project, and procured him many a curse from poor people, which is not to be contemned when yt is deserved” (Vol. II, 524). Such an individual, especially one with whom Middleton had direct interaction, could have been an appealing creative resource—directly or indirectly—for the man who “told dramatic stories about emblematic sinners” (Taylor, “Middleton, Thomas (bap. 1580, d.

1627), playwright”). Considering the established close proximity of Middleton’s and Cokayne’s biographies, a play such as *Anything for a Quiet Life* that is centered on cloth and cloth-making and authored in the years immediately following Cokayne’s infamous 1614 project and Middleton’s 1620 appointment as the city’s chronologer from Cokayne himself certainly warrants attention in twenty-first-century discussion.

Interestingly, however, *Anything for a Quiet Life* has not received a large portion of critical attention in comparison with Middleton’s other collaborative and solely-authored works. For example, in Taylor and Lavagnino’s previously mentioned *Thomas Middleton and Early Modern Textual Culture: A Companion to The Collected Works,* there is surprisingly little treatment of the work aside from Thomson’s previously mentioned discussion of *Anything for a Quiet Life*’s authorship in the section devoted to determining the Middleton canon. Jackson gives the play a brief mention in his chapter on authorship included in this same volume, titled “Early Modern Authorship, Canons and Chronologies,” in which Jackson acknowledges Sykes as the scholar to whose “intuition we owe the recognition that Webster shared with Middleton the writing of *Anything for a Quiet Life*” (83). Aside from these mentions, the play does not garner more than a side mention in other chapters in *The Oxford Middleton* companion volume. *Anything for a Quiet Life* earns similar ancillary treatment in Gossett’s *Thomas Middleton in Context,* in which it is mentioned briefly in James P. Bednarz’ chapter on authorship, titled, “Collaboration: The Shadow of Shakespeare.” Bednarz gives *Anything for a Quiet Life* just a passing glance, stating, “the attempt to ascribe specific parts of *Quiet Life* to either [Middleton or Webster] is especially controversial” (212). Otherwise, Gossett’s collection of essays features the play only briefly in Darryll Grantley’s chapter “Middleton’s Comedy and the Geography of London” (32,33), while Jennifer Panek gives a bit of attention to Sib Knavesbe and Lady Cressingham in the chapter, “Women’s Life Stages: Maid, Wife, Widow (Whore)” (275, 276). Heinemann does give *Anything for a Quiet Life* some attention, exploring the work as a moral comedy and discussing its place in opposition drama with the

drama’s shifting social balance and “the moral point of view of the ‘middling sort of people’” (117). However, in the overall discussion of Middleton’s works in general and city comedy specifically, *Anything for a Quiet Life*’s footprint is faint.

This paucity may be a result of the previously discussed debate surrounding the *Anything for a Quiet Life*’s authorship, causing Middleton-focused scholars to steer away from the work; however, the authorship question does not remove the potential for such a cloth-dense play to communicate meaning relative to the post-Cokayne cloth industry. A close examination of Hentschell’s text, *The Culture of Cloth in Early Modern England,* demonstrates how the neglect of *Anything for a Quiet Life* can generate a research gap, particularly in a cloth-centered discussion of the early modern period. In the chapter, “The Fleecing of England, or the Drama of Corrupt Drapers: Thomas Middleton’s *Michaelmas Term*,” Hentschell discusses the corrupt draper Quomodo’s characterization in depth, exploring how his depiction has much communicative potential about an industry in decline and the increasing association of scheming and manipulation with the figure of the draper. As mentioned briefly in Chapter Two, Hentschell argues that *Michalemas Term*, particularly through Quomodo, demonstrates deterioration in the cloth trade and in the estimation of those involved in that trade. Henstchell points out the industry’s decay was so prevalent in the English imagination that it encroached upon the city’s stages, stating, “In his creation of the deceptive woollen draper, Middleton stages his culture’s stereotypes and fears about that occupation that were prevalent in other kinds of texts” (134). Hentschell closely examines not only Quomodo, but also the significance of Quomodo’s shop, stating, “Middleton’s audience is never allowed to forget that Quomodo’s shop is the seat of fraudulence. The draper’s shop is situated under the ‘[s]ign of Three Knaves’ (II.iii.98)” (142). Hentschell maintains that the staging of Quomodo’s shop and the characterization of Quomodo himself are telling elements with regards to the fears and trepidation surrounding the industry during this period. While Hentschell’s analysis is fruitful and obviously beneficial to this project’s earlier discussion of *Michaelmas Term*, the question must be asked why

Hentschell, in her detailed analysis of a Middleton-associated play that was performed at the beginning of one of the darkest decades for English cloth with a draper at its center and scenes set in that draper’s shop, did not also focus at least some discussion on another Middleton-associated play that had similar elements and was performed on the other side of that same decade. If, as Hentschell states, “Middleton’s play [*Michaelmas Term]* is in many ways more effective than the non-dramatic texts at offering a critique [of the industry] because the audience *sees* the drapers’ deception in action” (134), then surely a discussion of Camlet in *Anything for a Quiet Life* could have also provided similar valuable insight on this topic in a post-Cokayne environment.

While Hentschell does discuss the Cokayne project and the decade of unrest that followed *Michaelmas Term* in her next and final chapter, “Politics on Parade: The Cockayne Project and Anthony Munday’s Civic Pageants for the Drapers,” this chapter shifts its focus to the civic pageantry of Munday for further insight into the cloth industry’s turmoil during the period. Hentschell explains, “In this chapter I move from the dramatic representation of the domestic cloth trade in the theatre to the staging of these problems on the public streets of London, where the crisis was writ large in civic pageantry” (153). Hentschell examines how Munday’s mayoral pageants manifested the cloth crisis in performance, stating, “the Mayors’ pageants were one among many modes that worked to construct the cloth industry as both the history and future of England’s success as a nation” (177). Hentschell explores Munday’s pageants in a productive and valuable discussion that establishes the Mayor’s pageants from 1614 and 1615 as particularly important in understanding the climate of the time. Hentschell ends this chapter, and her book, with this insightful statement summing up the significance of the relationship between the cloth industry and textual production during this period:

> [T]he pervasive sense that the industry was largely responsible for defining English national identity was articulated through several decades of textual output by authors and for audiences across the social spectrum. If this object—wool cloth—held the interest of so many of England’s subjects, this was primarily achieved through the circulation of a stunning array of printed texts, didactic verse, prose romance, pastoral poetry, popular ballads, royal proclamations,

> propaganda, topical satire, city drama, and civic pageants. Cloth and print, warp and weft, were the materials comprising the fabric of English nationalism. (177)

Hentschell’s discussion of Munday’s work in her examination of the culture of cloth and English national identity is not irrelevant nor is it unimportant, obviously. However, the contention remains that such an analysis is incomplete without the inclusion of Camlet and *Anything for a Quiet Life*, particularly when such weight is placed upon Quomodo and *Michaelmas Term* earlier in that same analysis. In Hentschell’s attempt to gain insight into cloth’s role in crafting a national identity during the early modern period, two plays with such key similarities—one before the Cokayne decade and one after with the same author at the helm, solely or collaboratively—seem to provide a ripe opportunity to glean information about shifting perceptions and treatments of cloth and cloth-associated figures from a before and after perspective. The two works can bookend such an exploration of the relationship between the seventeenth-century cloth crisis and early modern drama, and, while the discussion of civic pageantry is not unprofitable, it seems an incomplete conversation when *Anything for a Quiet Life* is excluded from the discussion. This chapter will take this opportunity, making the claim that a cloth-centered comparison between *Anything for a Quiet Life* and Middleton’s earlier city comedies can reveal shifts in the perception of cloth drapers, consumers and the domestic cloth trade.

Master Walter Camlet

Anything for a Quiet Life’s plot revolves around Master Walter Camlet, a cloth merchant struggling to navigate demanding nobility, critical consumers, scheming citizens, and a shrewish wife. As the plot moves forward, Master Camlet becomes caught between pleasing the elderly Sir Francis Cressingham and placating Cressingham’s new wife, as well as satisfying the demands of his own exasperated wife, Rachel Camlet, all while attempting to recover from the scheming plots of Young Cressingham and Young Franklin. The new Lady Cressingham expects every luxury to be provided to her by her husband, a point which is emphasized repeatedly throughout the drama. In the play’s initial scene, for example, Sir

Francis mentions he is indebted to Master Camlet when he tells the cloth merchant, “I am deeply in your books for furnishing my late wedding” (I.i.92-93), while Lady Cressingham loudly demands more expensive clothing for herself. Not only is Sir Francis established as deep in Camlet’s debt, but Sir Francis has also imposed upon the good-hearted merchant to board his two young children, whom Lady Cressingham refuses to care for or clothe. Meanwhile, Sir Francis’ heir, Young George Cressingham, along with his accomplice Young Franklin, determine they should secure their own futures by endeavoring “to turn rich fools and gulls into quarter-days [sources of income]” (I.i.249). These two young men select Camlet as their target, confidently predicting, “Master Camlet/ Shall put us into money” (I.i.251-252). In a side plot, the lawyer Knavesbe attempts to pander his wife, Sib Knavesbe, for a handsome sum to one of Sir Francis’ acquaintances, Lord Beaufort, a ploy which the savvy Sib shrewdly manipulates to her own benefit. As the play progresses, Camlet continues to endure much at the hands of Young Cressingham and Young Franklin, while his unhappy wife, frustrated at having the Cressingham children in her home, leaves the cloth merchant with threat of a divorce. Sir Francis eventually resigns all legal power over his affairs to Lady Cressingham, who sells his lands and reduces her husband to a pauper in his own household. In the play’s conclusion, resolution is found for all characters as Camlet’s loyal apprentice, George, helps the merchant regain his wife’s affection, Sib outwits her husband and Lord Beaufort at their pandering scheme and earns their apologies, Lady Cressingham enters in humble apparel claiming she had only behaved poorly in order to teach Sir Francis a lesson in wisdom and thrift, and Master Camlet is compensated for his losses by Old Franklin on behalf of his son’s misbehavior. A plot with so much action involving Camlet and happening within Camlet’s shop is unsurprisingly dense with cloth references, as the density study shows, producing much potential for fruitful scholarly discussion.

The Personification of Cloth

According to Hentschell, "… the hallmark of city comedy in general and Middleton's plays in particular is that their staging of the marketplace allows for a complex understanding of the ways humans interact within that system of exchange" (133). Similarly, cloth's personification in city comedy can make statements on human interactions inside this highlighted system of exchange using humanized versions of inanimate fabric. The personification of cloth is not unique to *Anything for a Quiet Life*, as Chapter One also discussed Middleton's endowment of cloth and other surrounding objects with life. In *Anything for a Quiet Life*, however, cloth is not simply imbued with life; it is endowed with the ability to act upon the world, rather than merely exhibiting reactive responses to that world, as in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*. Even more interestingly, Middleton's cloth in *Anything for a Quiet Life* acts in a predatorial fashion. Cloth is described as taking money from citizens' mouths when Lord Beaufort warns Lord Cressingham that "one new gown of hers/ When 'tis paid for will eat you out the keeping/ Of a bountiful Christmas" (I.i.12-14). While this line may be read as commenting more on the consumptive habits of Lady Cressingham, it does grant cloth a more aggressive perception. Cloth is given a vulturine quality: expensive, stealing necessities and pleasures, a villain taking food from people's mouths. While articles of clothing appear widely in other Middleton city comedies, as discussed in depth in Chapter Four, none are described as "eating" or performing similar aggressively autonomous actions as it does in *Anything for a Quiet Life.*

Cloth has now become a predatorial object, very different from the cloth that "meets" customers in Candido's shop nearly twenty years earlier, when it was personified with language endowing it with the ability to sell, work, make money, persuade, interact with and entice the consumer. Considering the dramatic changes the cloth trade underwent between 1604-1621, this shift is notable. The years between 1600 and 1610 saw positive foreign and domestic commercial developments. As discussed in depth in Chapter Three, after his accession in 1603, James I repealed the

long-standing sumptuary laws, leading to an even broader demand for foreign luxuries across the social strata. Significantly, other hindrances to the cloth trade soon fell away. In 1604, direct trade with Spain opened after years of war-time disruption and in 1606, the treaty with France further widened trade avenues. Supple discusses this broadening of opportunity for English merchants, stating, “the cessation of war ... eased direct commercial communication with the Mediterranean area” (99). The cloth trade possessed opportunity for growth and expansion. The final year of the Merchant Adventurers’ charter before it was rescinded in 1614 was, “for the traditional cloth trade ... the *annus mirabilus*, whose level of exports (127,200) exceeded all past figures and was never again equaled in the period” (Supple, 34). However, as Chamberlain described in 1617, “as they say clothing decays apace and hath already received a great blow by this project so I pray God that these ... conclusions do not ruin or bring down our merchants” (Vol. I, 625). The failure of the Cokayne project granted the Merchant Adventurers an opportunity to once again secure their footing in overseas trade, which they obtained with a bribe to the King securing protection against any future attempts by the Crown to enforce the finishing of cloth exports (Supple, 52). While there were signs of recovery in 1618, they “were misleading, for in fact the resulting equilibrium was unstable … English cloth was merely holding its own in Europe, the Adventurers had clearly been weakened by the payment to the king and by the efflux of capital during and after the experiment” (Supple, 52). When *Anything for a Quiet Life* debuted in 1621, the audience was acutely aware of the failure of this supposed recovery. Supple describes, “By 1620 … a dislocation [in the textile industry] had appeared. For almost four years England was enveloped in the gloom of a depression which paralysed the cloth industry and spread over many other branches of economic activity until men could find only one parallel for their plight: ‘When was it seen a land so distressed without war?’” (53). In 1604’s *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, cloth assumes a subservient role, working to profit the cloth merchant. In 1607’s *Michaelmas Term*, while utilized in a nefarious manipulation by the scheming Quomodo, cloth still is portrayed as a means to achieve a desired

economic end. However, in 1621’s *Anything for a Quiet Life*, cloth is now mentioned as an obstacle to economic security and success, rather than a means to obtain it.

The Cloth Merchant

Of the other cloth merchants in these Middleton-associated city comedies—*Michaelmas Term*’s Quomodo, *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*’s Candido, *The Roaring Girl*’s Openwork—none are constructed as sympathetically and with such direct relations to cloth as *Anything for a Quiet Life*’s Master Walter Camlet. The 1621 cloth merchant is crafted with a characterization that has lost Quomodo’s antagonism, Openwork’s manipulation and Candido’s passivity. The villainous Quomodo from 1606, for example, is intimidating, as his first appearance onstage generates the fearful exclamation from Rearage, “’Slid, Master Quomodo!” (I.ii.75). Quomodo’s apprentices, Shortyard and Falselight, also allude to suspicions and misgivings associated with the cloth merchant, working to cozen and deceive at Quomodo’s direction. However, Camlet from 1621 generates respect and welcome, as his initial onstage appearance is received with an enthusiastic salutation from Lord Beaufort: “O, Master Walter Camlet, you are welcome” (I.i.50). Camlet’s apprentice, George, stands as a model of right service central to all the cloth merchant’s dealings and when Camlet’s wife, Rachel, dismisses George from the cloth merchant’s service, Camlet becomes despondent, vowing to leave the cloth trade forever and sail for the Bermudas. Lord Beaufort then asks Camlet incredulously, “is that your only cause, the loss of George?” (V.ii.99-100), to which Camlet replies in desperation, comparing his servant to the nobleman’s Order of the Garter: “The loss of George, my lord! Make you that no cause? Why but examine, would it not break the stout heart of a nobleman to lose his George? Much more the tender bosom of a citizen” (V.ii.101-104). While an apprentice named George is not uncommon, with Quomodo himself having a “George” as well as Candido, Camlet’s George is the only apprentice who is specifically loyal to the cloth merchant throughout (*Michaelmas Term*’s George primarily serves Thomasine

Quomodo and *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*’s George is repeatedly conflicted between Candido and the manipulative desires of Candido’s wife, Viola). Further, Camlet’s George is the only cloth merchant’s apprentice who is referenced with direct associations to the Order of the Garter and thus the patron saint of England, giving the character connotations of patriotism and chivalry. This is a significant shift in perspective when compared against Thomas Adams’ previously mentioned *The White Devil* (1612), which warns that “insufficient wares” will “appeare good to the buyers eye” because merchants have both “a darke window and an impudent tongue” (sig. G2r). Middleton’s cloth merchant has shifted from villain to victim, encouraging the audience’s empathy or compassion rather than its caution or exasperation.

Camlet’s characterization demonstrates a cloth merchant who has not only gained in sympathetic treatment but also in social influence and mobility. Existing as a model of right service with influence crossing social boundaries, the cloth merchant weaves in and out of scenes with nobility, apprentices, bawds, and yeomen with equal ease. The cloth merchant rests at the center of economic and personal interaction in *Anything for a Quiet Life*. Lord Cressingham is admittedly in Camlet’s debt for past and future dealings, Camlet boards Lord Cressingham’s young children at Cressingham’s new wife’s request, and Young Franklin and Young Cressingham look to cozen Camlet when they need money. When Lady Cressingham takes the stage for the first time in the play, the person whom she first addresses is Camlet. After Lady Cressingham derides the cloth merchant’s wares and tells him of her demands, Camlet is the one who is left to point out the uncomfortable matter of payment. Camlet is the one who deals with and suffers at the hands of Young Franklin disguised as a potential French customer and the French hood. Camlet is the one who offers the advice echoed in the play’s title: “Anything for a quiet life” (I.i.313). His is a pivotal, if at times unpleasant, economic role. While other city comedies have cloth merchants in their *dramatis personae*, none possess the central, socially mobile role of Camlet.

This socially flexible characterization is meticulously constructed, with cloth playing a significant role. At the play’s outset, *Anything for a Quiet Life*’s prologue establishes a collective human experience that crosses class boundaries—“This being in men of all conditions true” (14)—and while such boundaries still exist in *Anything for a Quiet Life*, Camlet finds them more permeable than other Middleton cloth merchants. His name, Walter Camlet, is literally a pun on a type of cloth: “water” or “watered” camlet. Originally a costly, eastern fabric of camel’s hair, camlet’s manufacture was later imitated in England’s domestic production with wool and silk. This fabric would be placed under a hot press in its production, and the merchant Camlet even alludes to this cloth’s manufacture when he describes himself as being “pressed to death” (III.ii.169) at one particularly stressful point in the play. This type of fabric possessed origins both foreign and domestic, giving it dualistic associations of both foreign luxury and domestic industry. Philemon Holland records camlet’s mention as a luxurious fabric in his translation of Pliny the Elder’s discussion of wool and other cloth in *The historie of the world, commonly called the Naturall Historie of C. Plinius Secundus* (Philemon Holland, translator): “The waued water Chamelot, was from the beginning esteemed the richest and brauest wearing” (228). Camlet is also associated with foreign finery in Samuel Purchas’ *Purchas his pilgrimes In fiue books* (1625), which contains an account of travels through Natolia, Syria, Arabia, Persia, and other countries in Asia, describing “Natolia [as] affoording great store of Chamolets and Grogerams” (1278). Purchas also mentions camlet as he further details the clothing of the Turks, stating they wear “Cloth of Tissue, of Gold and Siluer, Veluet, Scarlet, Sattin, Damaske, Chamolets, lined with Sables, and other costly Furres” (1295). Camlet is further associated with foreign luxury in Thomas Herbert’s *A relation of some yeares trauaile begunne anno 1626. Into Afrique and the greater Asia* (1634), in which Herbert describes, “Some what of rich gold or silver Camlets, and other of cloth of gold” (146). However, camlet is also mentioned in less exclusive, more domestic settings, as in Shakespeare’s *Henry VIII*, when a crowd of ordinary people are gathering to watch Princess Elizabeth’s christening and the porter shouts after an

unnamed character, “You i’th’ camlet, get up o’th’ rail” (V.iii.87). This fabric, then, would be an ideal choice to name a cloth merchant who is struggling to succeed in the multi-faceted, sometimes contradictory role in which many cloth merchants found themselves during this period: procurer of foreign luxuries as well as representative of English wool, nobility’s subsidizer yet cozener’s target.

Leinwand discusses the complex dualism within the seventeenth-century perception of the cloth merchant, pointing out how, in the 1635 William Scott work, *An Essay of Drapery*, Scott utilizes “both an elegiac and a stoic voice” (*The City Staged…*, 33) to describe the cloth merchant. This is demonstrated in statements from Scott’s work such as, “I thinke there is no Citizen can say hee hath had no losse” (70), or “God makes men his Balls; and of these Balls, who is more tost up and downe then the Citizen? ... but he is a man, that can endure violent Tides, and still swim aloft” (61-62). As the middling sorts gained access to textiles in the beginning of the seventeenth century, either by craft or purchase, they also gained access to the status these items embodied. The merchants, while suffering in the throes of cloth’s depression, were narrowing the gap between themselves and the gentry through upward social mobility. The interactions between merchant and nobility in *Michaelmas Term* and *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, when contrasted against those in *Anything for a Quiet Life*, reflect this economic and social trend. In *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, when Bellafront is entertaining suitors, the men speak of an usher they supped with, who “had been to borrow money for his lord, of a citizen” (vi.138-139). The transaction is immediately mocked as Castruccio replies, “What an ass is that lord, to borrow money of a citizen” (vi.140-141). However, in the opening scene in *Anything for a Quiet Life*, Lord Cressingham readily admits to Camlet that he is in debt to the merchant (I.i.92-93) and endeavors to accrue more, telling Lady Cressingham of her desired purchases, “do sweetest, thou deserv’st to be exquisite in all things” (I.i.300-301). There is no mocking or shame associated with the interaction, as Lord Cressingham readily discusses the debt in front of his contemporary, Lord Beaufort. When Candido’s sanity is examined by the Duke in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, the Duke lauds the

cloth merchant’s patience—“So calm a spirit is worth a golden mine” (xv.552)—but the exchange is nothing but a courtesy, not evidence of a deeper, more intimate interest or interaction between the two men, as the Duke quickly turns his attention to other matters. *Anything for a Quiet Life,* however, demonstrates a significant shift in the perception of the merchant class when Camlet makes his initial appearance and Lord Beaufort immediately interrupts his conversation with Lord Cressingham, acknowledging Camlet by name: “O, Master Walter Camlet, you are welcome” (I.i.50). Lord Beaufort then inquires of Camlet after any “news stirring in Cheapside” (I.i.51), making bawdy references with the merchant. Lord Cressingham also joins in to compliment Camlet: “Come, you are warm, and blest with a fair wife” (I.i.58). A few lines later, when Lord Cressingham criticizes Camlet’s treatment of his wife and finances, Camlet is confident enough to respectfully remind the Lord of his own economic failings: “you have been a gamester” (I.i.83). While the 1621 cloth merchant is reminded he is not a nobleman’s equal, to which Camlet readily acknowledges, “believe it, I am a poor commoner” (I.i.57), Camlet is regarded more warmly and is able to interact on a more equal footing with nobility than his counterparts a decade earlier. Camlet is a more sympathetic character than his Middleton-crafted predecessors, sought after by upper and lower classes for aid; however, he is still at times a victim to the criticisms and schemes of those same members. He remains, after all, a member of the middling sort. Middleton and Webster’s choice to name this cloth merchant after a fabric possessing an equivocal identity is significant when one understands the merchant’s struggle for legitimacy during this period, pinpointed by Leinwand: “The merchant had to fight for his place in the polis, and then he had to fight for his place in the minds of the men of the polis” (*The City Staged*…, 34). The characterization of Camlet the merchant seems to possess a duality in perception and authority that is underscored by the multivalent associations tied to his fabric namesake, crafting a character that is both benefactor and victim, respected and abused, gaining “his place in the polis” while simultaneously required to fight for that place.

The Consumer

No other Middleton city comedy contains a cloth merchant protagonist and consumer antagonist with roles so clearly established within a cloth framework, pitted directly at cross purposes with one another as there is found in *Anything for a Quiet Life*. Lady Cressingham takes advantage of Camlet’s generosity and good nature, accruing increasing amounts of debt as she consumes the cloth merchant’s products while simultaneously deriding his wares. Lord Cressingham’s son, Young Cressingham, works repeatedly along with Young Franklin to cozen the cloth merchant, eventually succeeding while Young Franklin is disguised as a Frenchman. In *Michaelmas Term*, by comparison, it is the consumer who is taken advantage of and seeks compensation, not the cloth merchant. Quomodo is the villain: the cheating, grasping cloth merchant with the consumer at his whim. A suspicious, manipulative figure, Quomodo works to cozen the gentry and advance himself—a stark contrast to Camlet’s empathetic characterization. While *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*’s Candido is antagonized in his shop, he is not crossed by actual consumers. Rather, Candido struggles against staged performances at his wife’s behest in her attempts to anger him. In *The Roaring Girl*, the sempster Openwork tricks Master Goshawk into believing he kept a whore to expose Goshawk’s own seductive designs on Mistress Openwork. Only in *Anything for a Quiet Life* is there a sympathetic merchant struggling against an antagonistic or cheating consumer.

While scoundrels are not scarce in the earlier city comedies, none establish their antagonizing role so pointedly with cloth as does *Anything for a Quiet Life*’s Lady Cressingham. From the moment Lady Cressingham steps onto the stage, Lord Cressingham’s young, demanding wife uses her consumption of Camlet’s commodities to establish her contrary role. Her first conversation is with the cloth merchant, berating his wares as “too common” (I.i.290) and lauding the lavish, foreign goods she intends to now purchase for newer, more fashionable apparel (I.i.294). She specifically mentions cloth-making centers directly in competition with English goods at a time when English cloth was in a severe

depression. In a statement that must have stung in an economy hit hard by foreign demand, one of her first lines confidently asserts, “I’ll have my agents shall lie for me at Paris and at Venice and at Valladolid in Spain for intelligence of all new fashions” (I.i.297-299). Lady Cressingham’s aligning herself with consumption of foreign textiles places her directly at odds with domestic sympathies and economic welfare. As Jones and Stallybrass point out, “The innovative force of fashion was associated both with the dissolution of the body politic and with the exorbitance of the state’s subjects” (1). Lady Cressingham’s statement that she intends to send her agents to foreign shores uses her choice to consume foreign wares to vilify her in a disloyal framework. Later in this exchange, while not a cloth reference, Lady Cressingham further places herself at odds with domestic welfare and preferring foreign design when she advises her husband to sell his land “and the manor house upon’t, ’tis rotten” (I.i.337-338), admiring “the new fashioned buildings brought from the Hague” (I.i.338-339). Lady Cressingham is placed in direct conflict not only with her husband’s welfare and her step-children’s welfare, but also in direct opposition to domestic wares and thus domestic economic welfare.

Young Franklin also plays a manipulative role as a cloth consumer who is, himself, foreign (or at least he is pretending to be) in Act III.ii. First, in Act II, Young Franklin and Young Cressingham pose as a wealthy knight and his tailor, convincing Camlet to allow them to take some expensive cloth from his shop on credit. However, Camlet eventually realizes he has been duped and attempts to arrest Young Franklin when he finds him again in the street in Act III.ii. Franklin, with the help of an amiable French bawd who happens to be passing by, convinces Camlet he is a foreigner and that Camlet has mistaken him for another. When Camlet happens upon Franklin in the street, the cloth merchant is initially convinced he has found the culprit from his shop, stating, “He’s very like the man we seek for, else my lights go false” (III.ii.73-74). However, as the scene continues, Camlet becomes duped by the French chattering between Young Franklin and the French bawd, deciding confidently that their foreign conversation validates Young Franklin’s disguise, stating, “This is a Frenchman sure” (III.ii.99). Camlet

quickly shifts from a position of power in the scene to a supplicating one as he then worries over the “French” consumer, humbly petitioning the foreign woman to speak to her companion on his behalf and curry the “French” consumer’s favor: “we are mistaken I see. Pray you so tell him, and request him not to be offended ... The error was in our eyes” (III.ii.120-121, 123). The French bawd then tells Camlet her “French” companion has “Moosh moosh anger” (III.ii.142) towards the merchant, at which Camlet immediately gives her money in order to appease that anger and perhaps gain a customer for his shop. The merchant almost sounds as though he is begging as he says to the foreign bawd and the disguised Franklin: “Look, there is earnest [money], but thy reward’s behind. Come to my shop, the Holy Lamb in Lombard Street; thou hast one friend more than e’er thou hadst” (III.ii.146-149).

During this period, foreign industries were fast encroaching upon the cloth market, and English cloth merchants were left to operate at the foreigners’ pleasure, rather than dominating the trade as they once had. As Hentschell points out, with the rise of luxury textiles imported from France, Italy, and Spain, “For the first time, wool cloth had real competition in the form of products that were also seen as morally suspicious” (7). Camlet’s interaction with the French whore as she assists the “French” Young Franklin in further manipulating and stealing from Camlet removes power from the domestic cloth merchant in this scene and places it squarely in the “foreigner’s” lap. In this exchange, Camlet’s domestic merchant is showcased as operating at the whim of the foreign element, a point driven home by Camlet’s submissive, apologetic behavior at the end of the interaction, apologizing to and even paying these “foreign” characters who are robbing him. While this is obviously not the first time a cloth merchant is taken advantage of in Middleton’s city comedy, this scene in *Anything for a Quiet Life* is particularly powerful as it features the domestic Camlet subservient to the foreigner’s whim, apologizing as a “foreign” entity (even a disguised one) robs him, even giving the “foreigner” more of his capital. In the 1621 post-Cokayne environment, it is plausible that Camlet, Lady Cressingham, and the “French” consumer’s interactions have been influenced by the cloth merchant’s struggle to survive in a domestic

economy buffeted by the encroachment of foreign goods at the demands of the increasingly powerful and disloyal consumer.

The Holy Lamb in Lombard Street

Not only is an in-depth discussion of shifting portrayals of cloth merchants and consumer behavior important in this examination of Middleton’s city comedy before and after the decade of the cloth trade’s demise, but the draper’s shop space itself also warrants consideration. The seat of all cloth-related commercial interaction, Camlet’s shop’s portrayal in comparison with earlier years has the potential to add much insight to the discussion. Camlet’s shop—“the Holy Lamb in Lombard Street” (III.ii.147-148)—is referenced repeatedly throughout the drama, acting as the backdrop for Act II.ii and Act IV.ii. Yet another significant shift from Quomodo’s shop, the Three Knaves, with its allusions to theft and trickery, Camlet’s Holy Lamb is a particularly powerful symbol embodying the heart of the once mighty English cloth trade combined with biblical allusions of meekness and suffering, similar to the associations between Candido and lamb imagery in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*. The Lamb alludes to both successes long gone and recent failures in the English wool trade, a reference to the past and a grim reflection of the present. The use of this symbol in a bittersweet mixture of reverence and lament is demonstrated in John Taylor’s *Noble antiquitie of shepheards, with the profitable vse of sheepe* (1624), which seems to revere the sheep or the lamb as mighty in the realms of both religion and commerce, while simultaneously recognizing the years of the lamb’s prominence are long since past:

> All power, and praise, and glory, be therefore
> Ascribed to the Lambe for euermore ...
> Vnto the Sheepe againe my Muse doth flie,
> For honest safetie, and commoditie.
> He with his flesh and fleece, doth feed and clad
> All languages and nations, good and bad:
> What can it more, but die, that we may liue,
> And euery yeare to vs a liuerie giue?
> ’Tis such a bountie, and the charge so deepe,
> That nothing can affoord the like, but Sheepe.

> For should the world want Sheepe, but fiue whole yeare,
> Ten thousand millions would want cloaths to weare. (sigs. C2r, C3r)

In 1624, wool was obviously not the crown jewel of England’s cloth trade as it once had been, yet Taylor’s language paints an image of the sheep/lamb’s prominence that, religious allusions aside, had not been an economic reality in England for many years. Hentschell claims this was not an uncommon sentiment of the period, stating, “There is ... in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, a recurrent strain of loss and nostalgia in the writings about the [cloth] industry” (5). Camlet’s Lamb is representative of the English cloth merchant’s shop, post-Cokayne project, and this shop—the heart of the English domestic trade—is not filled with domestic products. Camlet himself describes his shop as filled with foreign goods (“tissue, cloth of gold, velvets and silks” [I.i.97]), illustrating foreign infiltration into domestic trade after the downward slide of England’s once “golden fleece.”

“What is’t you lack?” (II.ii.1), the Lamb’s shop call that Camlet’s apprentices use to entice passersby into the Holy Lamb in Lombard Street, also underscores this rise of foreign wares in the English cloth merchant’s shop. Finding its way into a multiplicity of works in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, this cry of “What is’t you lack?” would have been immediately recognized by the audience as a popular sales practice of the time. At times this shop call appears as an innocent inquiry as to immediate need, as in Nathan Field’s 1618 comedy, *Amends for Ladies*, when Mall inquires, “Why how now Mistris, what lack yee?” (sig.C2r). At others the phrase is utilized as an attempt at seduction, as in the flirtatious advertisement to the virtuous ladies in Edmund Gayton’s 1645 political satire, *Chartae scriptae: or A new game at cards, call’d Play by the booke,* in what is described as “An Advertisement to the Uertuous Ladies,” that states, “Deale fairely *Ladies;* ’tis a *Pack* Of arrrant *Knaves?* What is’t you lack?” It can also carry connotations of deceit or devious intent, as when listed as one of the personified Pride’s tools in Thomas Adams’ 1614 sermon, *The Diuells Blanket*: “Pride is another Bidder, and she keepes a shop in the Citie: You shall finde a description of her Shop, and take an Inuentory of her Wares ... Shee sits vpon the Stall, and courts the Passengers with a What lacke ye?” (sig. C2r). While

Middleton’s use of this shop call is obviously not uncommon, Middleton’s inclusion (or exclusion) of fabrics within it communicates meaning as those selected fabrics are expected to be found inside the associated shop. In *A Chaste Maid in Cheapside* (1613), “What is’t you lack?” appears twice (I.i.99 & I.i.177), both instances as a single line with no specific fabrics mentioned. In *Michaelmas Term,* the shop call is just over a single line and features domestic fabrics: “What lack you, gentlemen? See good kerseys or broadcloths here, I pray come near” (II.iii.104-105), a deceitful attempt by Quomodo to style himself a good, domestic merchant discussed in depth in Chapter Two. *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* also gives the call more than the one line, this time advertising specific fabrics like the more desirable, finer cloth of holland, cambric, and lawn to draw in customers: “what do you lack? What is’t you buy? See fine hollands, fine cambrics, fine lawns” (v.12-14). The shop call in *The Roaring Girl* is also more than the one line, advertising lawn and cambric: “What is’t you lack? What is’t you buy? See fine bands and ruffs, fine lawns, fine cambrics. What is’t you lack, gentlemen, what is’t you buy?” (iii.1-4). The shop call in *Anything for a Quiet Life*, however, is by far the longest and most detailed. A song repeatedly sung by Camlet’s apprentices, George and Ralph, it is crafted to seduce customers by casting these foreign wares as a tool for sexual seduction:

> What is’t you lack, you lack, you lack?
> Stuffs for the belly or the back?
> Silk-grograms, satins, velvet fine,
> The rosy-coloured carnadine,
> Your nutmeg hue, or gingerline,
> Cloth of tissue, or tobine,
> That like beaten gold will shine
> In your amorous lady’s eyne,
> Whilst you their softer silks do twine. (II.ii.1-9)

While the street vendor cry of “What is’t you lack?” is obviously common, the rest of George’s song is unique. The call is not only a peddler’s bark, but also a more detailed inventory of what will be found inside the Holy Lamb in Lombard Street. Representing the English cloth trade, the Holy Lamb, as its name implies, was built on wool. However, wool obviously does not sustain the Holy Lamb any longer.

The fabrics George mentions to lure in customers illustrate a movement in the English cloth trade from primarily English wares to foreign stuffs. This shop call, listing the foreign luxuries in Camlet’s inventory, demonstrates the developing trend Phillip Stubbes railed against years earlier in his previously mentioned *Anatomie of Abuses* (1583): “this sinne of excesses in Apparell, remayneth as an Example of euyll before our eyes, and as a prouocatiue to sinne” (sig. B7v). Jones and Stallybrass argue that cloth and apparel possessed the power to “leave a ‘print or character’ upon observer and wearer alike. And, when excessive, they visibly imprint ‘wickednes and sinne.’ Through its ability to ‘print or character’ the wearer, exotic clothing ‘transnatureth’” (4). If cloth or apparel could “transnature” a gallant, it could also be argued that it also had the ability to “transnature” the shop that dealt in it, profited from it, or advertised it. While earlier city comedies feature a mixture of foreign and domestic cloths in their shop calls (kersey, holland, broadcloth, calico, lawn), in *Anything for a Quiet Life,* George only names foreign imports in his shop call (satin, silk, velvet). The English cloth merchant’s shop has been “transnatured” since its appearances in city comedies a decade before.

This concept is supported further by more careful consideration of Middleton and Webster’s choice of cloths specifically included in the Lamb’s shop call. While the association of silk, satin, and velvet with temptation, lust, decay, deceit, and extravagance has been discussed in depth in previous chapters and does not need to be revisited here in depth, the inclusion of these foreign fabrics communicates much about the prominence of foreign commodities within the English cloth merchant’s shop. Also, carnadine, tobine, silk grograms, and cloth of tissue work to further underscore these foreign associations. Carnadine, according to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, is a fabric of red or carnation color, originating from the Italian *carnadino* (“Carnadine, n.”), which carries foreign connotations of luxury and finery. Tobine, sometimes referred to as “tabby” or “tabinet,” is described in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as a type of luxurious, striped silk taffeta (“Tobine, n.”). Silk grogram is also mentioned in the Oxford English Dictionary as “a coarse fabric of silk, of mohair and wool, or of these mixed with silk”

("Grogram, n.") and cloth of tissue is described in this same dictionary as "a rich kind of cloth, often interwoven with gold or silver" ("Tissue, n."). Cloth of tissue's association with indulgence, finery, and pride is documented in writings of the period like Charles Pierse's *Vertues Anatomie* (1618), in which Pierse extols the late Lady Cheany of Tuddington, describing her rejection of vanity and pride:

> For well she knew that flesh and blood is apt
> Of it owne nature to be proud enough,
> And needs not such inticements to intrap,
> As cloth of Tissue, gold, or richer stuffe,
> Which often makes the wearer wondrous proud,
> Though 'tis for Kings, and princes courts allowd (sig. C8r)

Another example is found in Richard Brathwaite's *A strappado for the Diuell: Epigrams and satyres alluding to the time, with diuers measures of no lesse delight* (1615). In the epigram titled, "An Heroycke Embleme vpon the Warriour called HONORA," Brathwaite describes "What difference there is in honours sight,/ Twixt a good Souldier and a carpet-Knight," citing vanity as one of the carpet knight's principal sins: "VVhere sinnes in cloth of Tissue faire descri'de" (sigs. C1v, C2r). Whether it is silk, satin, or cloth of tissue, each of these listed fabrics carry particular connotations as they are all luxurious, foreign imports. When these fabrics are sung from the door of Camlet's Holy Lamb in Lombard Street, such commodities reflect not only the increasingly expensive consumer taste during this period, but also the trade's movement away from domestic commodities into foreign domination. Comparing the list of textiles named in George's shop call against the 1586 inventory for Stratford-Upon-Avon draper John Browne (discussed in depth in Chapter One), this shift is made clear. The inventory listed in Browne's possession shows a shop filled to the brim with broadcloth, kersey, bay, cotton, and frieze (Jones, 64-74). In 1621, however, Camlet's shop advertises no such domestic product; rather, it brags of foreign stuffs to play a role in achieving licentious ends: "whilst you her softer silks do twine" (II.ii.9). This reflects a significant shift in trade and the motivation behind Thomas Mun's words when he gave evidence to the Trade Commission in 1622, complaining of men living in "'pride, monstrous fashions, and riot'" (72). When these foreign cloths are called out from Camlet's Holy Lamb, it echoes the struggle

of the cloth merchant to negotiate both foreign and domestic products within that space, trying to negotiate what Stubbes cautioned against: “the pride of apparel, remaining in sight, as an exemplary of euill, induceth the whole man to wickedness and sinne” (sig. B6r). Just as Camlet was forced to listen as Lady Cressingham criticized his wares and demanded “a new invention” (I.i.294), threatening to take her business to Italy, France, or Spain (I.i.298), Camlet must also listen as his apprentices call out not sturdy English wool or kersey from his shop’s door, but foreign imports like silk, carnadine, cloth of tissue, and velvet along with licentious suggestions at these fabrics’ seductive potential to make his shop more appealing.

Once the customers are inside the Lamb, the language used to determine cloth’s quality also demonstrates a rise in the esteem of foreign wares against that of domestic cloth. When George tries to reassure customers of a particular piece’s value, he refers to foreign products to establish quality. For example, when Young Franklin asks for “good satins” (II.ii.81), George assures him the Holy Lamb in Lombard Street offers “The best in Europe, sir ... the King of Naples wears no better silk” (II.ii.83-84). A few lines later, Young Cressingham eyes another fabric and comments, “A good piece indeed, sir” (II.ii.105), to which George assures, “The great Turk has worse satin at’s elbow than this, sir” (II.ii.106-107). Finally, Young Cressingham asks for “a fair piece of cloth of silver” (II.ii.157), and George confidently replies, “or cloth of gold, if you please, sir, as rich as ever the Sophy wore” (II.ii.158-159). Domestic cloth is never referenced in these exchanges as either a recommended fabric or as a measuring stick of quality. However in Candido’s shop in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore*, when Candido’s apprentices are asked about a lawn’s quality, they state confidently the lawn is the “best in all Milan” (iv,21). The measuring stick for quality in Candido’s shop is their domestic wares, and while the shop is technically set in Italy, the point remains that domestic wares are the bar against which quality is measured in that space. Camlet’s apprentices never tell any customers the Lamb’s wares are “best in all England.” Whether the shop is in London, or in Italy, the failure to use domestic cloth as a measuring

stick to determine quality reflects a significant rise in consumer estimation of (and desire for) foreign luxuries, as well as a decline in the same for domestic wares.

Written about a cloth merchant, dense with cloth references, emerging in the post-Cokayne cloth trade, and composed at least in part by a playwright who was appointed London’s first chronologer by Cokayne himself, it is surprising *Anything for a Quiet Life* has not garnered more critical attention. If, as stated in the Introduction, a materialist approach can “potentially allow ... new insights in reconciling the relationship between Jacobean city comedy and Jacobean society,” then a focused analysis of cloth within a play that emerged after one of the English cloth industry’s darkest decades offers an intriguing opportunity for a productive discussion. The play’s surrounding context creates fertile opportunity for discussion in a broad array of early modern topics, one of the most noteworthy obviously being cloth. Taken as an individual work, much can be gleaned with regards to sales practices, the purchasing power of the draper, and the role of the consumer in the domestic economy. However, when used in a comparative analysis of Middleton’s cloth references in his cloth-centered city comedies produced before and after the decade that saw English cloth’s dramatic decline, *Anything for a Quiet Life* can provide significant illumination about the development of early modern perspectives of cloth merchants, consumers, and the larger domestic cloth trade in a post-Cokayne environment.

Conclusion

While this project has focused specifically on Middleton's use of cloth in five of his city comedies, his affinity for utilizing cloth references in his work has been demonstrated elsewhere. Shakespeare's *Measure for Measure*, for example, while first written and performed in 1603–1604, only survives in the 1623 First Folio text, which was adapted by Middleton. One of the passages widely attributed to Middleton features "the fantastic," Lucio, speaking to another gallant in an exchange particularly laden with cloth references:

> First Gentleman: Well, there went but a pair of shears between us.
> Lucio: I grant—as there may between the lists and the velvet. Thou are the list.
> First Gentleman: And thou the velvet. Thou art good velvet: thou'rt a three-piled piece, I warrant thee. I had as lief be a list of an English kersey as be piled as thou art piled, for a French velvet. Do I speak feelingly now? (I.ii.27-34)

This passage's squaring off of two men in irreverent banter features a comparison of foreign cloth against domestic to communicate notions of identity, estimation, derision, even disease, but it also demonstrates once again how Middleton would turn to cloth to communicate larger ideas in dramatic works. Ian Munro points out that "Middleton's theatre is not merely a representation of Error's thronged city, but one of its principal intersections" (51). Because cloth has a crucial role in bridging the gap between real and fictional London, this project's in-depth, cloth-focused exploration of five Middleton-associated city comedies has generated significant fruitful discussion of expectations, inconsistencies, tensions, and boundaries during the early modern period: the embedded tension in *The Patient Man and the Honest Whore* surrounding the expectations of patient masculinity in a commercial setting, the contradictory nature of a social system based on increasingly unreliable visual markers in *Michaelmas Term*, the inconsistency-generated identity of the prodigal gallant of display in *Your Five Gallants*, the tension surrounding unconventional display and malleable gender expectations in *The Roaring Girl*, as well as the shifting perceptions of England's cloth trade in a post-Cokayne climate in

Anything for a Quiet Life. It has been demonstrated through these chapters that without giving specific attention to cloth in an exploration of Jacobean city comedy, one can potentially risk a severe oversimplification of Middleton’s (or others’) works. For example, after the discussion of the tension surrounding the malleable boundaries of gender and authority generated by the cross-dressing Moll Cutpurse’s apparel in Chapter Four, it is difficult to understand how Bullock, even in 1927, could have said the following of women in Middleton’s city comedy: “Violetta and Castiza are, with the exception of a few colorless young marriageable daughters of no great significance in the plays, almost the only women neither sexually immoral nor engaged in schemes to cheat ... [and] As for the courtesans, they are the most interesting women in these London comedies” (769). This project has shown that a focused exploration of cloth specifically in Jacobean city comedy—either directly as bolts of fabric and items of clothing, or indirectly referenced in dialogue—has merit, as cloth provides depth, conflict, tension, and inconsistency that brings complexity to now multi-faceted characterizations and their surrounding spaces previously viewed as flat and uninteresting.

As discussed in the Introduction, there has been an increased focus in recent years on early modern material culture in Jacobean drama. The work of scholars like Douglas Bruster, Ann Rosalind Jones, Peter Stallybrass, Eleanor Lowe, Theodore Leinwand and many others has, thanks to this heightened emphasis on commodity and materiality in city comedy in particular, significantly enriched modern critical understanding of private and commercial interpersonal exchange in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century London. Exploring the material elements utilized onstage as well as in dialogue in these dramatic systems allows for a clearer understanding of the period from which these works sprang. As a result, the amount of scholarship focusing on material culture in early modern drama continues to grow, significantly advancing modern understanding of a society centuries in the past. However, there remains much work to be done. While cloth is admittedly one of many important material elements in Jacobean city comedy that warrants consideration when discussing the crafting of

characterization, spaces, conflict, and tension in these works, the amount of attention this specific element has garnered in modern scholarship is relatively small. It has been the goal of this project to demonstrate how a focused analysis of the particular material element of cloth, in various forms, within Jacobean city comedy in particular can further advance current scholarship, allowing for increased insight into the early modern perspective in matters such as identity, gender, and commerce. This project has shown that it is important for modern literary critics not to overlook cloth, or give it a quick glossing as part of a larger discussion of material culture. There is much opportunity for further literary analysis and discussion in this arena, considering city comedy’s commercially-driven plots, characters, and the significant role cloth played in both foreign and domestic commercial developments during the early modern period. Literary criticism of such works should necessarily make room for closer consideration of cloth specifically, as such an approach allows for new insights in reconciling the relationship between Jacobean city comedy and Jacobean society.

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12 February 1580, 22 Elizabeth I. England and Wales. Sovereign (1558-1603: Elizabeth I). *By the Queene. A proclamation vvith certayne clauses of diuers statutes, & other necessary additions, first published in the xix. yeere of the Queenes Maiesties reigne, and now reuiued by her highnes commandement to be put in execution, vpon the penalties in the same conteined* (London, 1580). Web. (http://eebo.chadwyck.com).

13 February 1588, 30 Elizabeth I. England and Wales. Sovereign (1558-1603: Elizabeth I). *A declaration of the Queenes Maiesties will and commaundement, to hauecertaine lawes and orders put in execution against the excesse of apparellnotified by her commandement in the Starre-chamber the xiij. of Februarie in the xxx. yeere of her reigne* (London, 1588). Web. (http://eebo.chadwyck.com).

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24 Hen. VIII, c. 13. Great Britain. *The Statutes of the Realm: Printed by Command of His Majesty King George the Third, In Pursuance of an Address of the House of Commons of Great Britain. From Original Records and Authentic Manuscripts.* (London: Dawsons of Pall Mall, 1810-1828). 430. Print.

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	Total Word Count	# of Textile References	Density Ratio (Total Words / Textile references =)
William Shakespeare:			
All's Well That Ends Well	23,009	10	1 / 2,300
Antony and Cleopatra	24,905	10	1/2,490
As You Like It	21,690	17	1 / 1,275
Comedy of Errors	14,701	9	1 / 1,633
Coriolanus	27,589	13	1 / 2,122
Cymbeline	27,565	9	1 / 3,062
Hamlet	30,557	10	1 / 3,055
Henry IV, Part I	24,579	32	1 / 768
Henry IV, Part II	25,689	28	1 / 917
Henry V	26,119	16	1 / 1,632
Henry VI, Part I	21,607	3	1/7,202
Henry VI, Part II	25,439	10	1 / 2,543
Henry VI, Part III	24,294	12	1 / 2,024
Henry VIII	24,629	5	1 /4,925
Julius Caesar	19,703	5	1 / 3,940
King John	20,772	3	1 / 6,924
King Lear	26,145	17	1 / 1,537
Love's Labour's Lost	21,459	21	1 / 1,021
Macbeth	17,121	8	1 / 2,140
Measure for Measure	21,780	10	1 / 2,178
Merchant of Venice	21,291	9	1 / 2,365
Merry Wives of Windsor	21,845	19	1 / 1,149
Midsummer Night's Dream	16,511	15	1 / 1,100
Much Ado about Nothing	21,157	10	1 / 2,115
Othello	26,450	13	1 / 2,034
Pericles	18,529	20	1 / 926

	Beaver	bezant	Biggin	blacks	Black, Cyprus	Blanket
William Shakespeare:						
All's Well That Ends Well						
Antony and Cleopatra						
As You Like It						
Comedy of Errors						
Coriolanus						
Cymbeline						1
Hamlet	1					1
Henry IV, Part I	1					
Henry IV, Part II	1					1
Henry V	1					
Henry VI, Part I						
Henry VI, Part II						
Henry VI, Part III	1					
Henry VIII						
Julius Caesar						
King John						
King Lear						2
Love's Labour's Lost						
Macbeth						1
Measure for Measure						
Merchant of Venice						
Merry Wives of Windsor						
Midsummer Night's Dream						
Much Ado about Nothing						
Othello					1	
Pericles						

	Bodkin	Buckram	Buff	buskin	Caddis	Cambric	Camlet
William Shakespeare:							
All's Well That Ends Well							
Antony and Cleopatra							
As You Like It							
Comedy of Errors			2				
Coriolanus						1	
Cymbeline							
Hamlet	1						
Henry IV, Part I		**7**	2		1		
Henry IV, Part II							
Henry V							
Henry VI, Part I							
Henry VI, Part II		**1**					
Henry VI, Part III							
Henry VIII							1
Julius Caesar							
King John							
King Lear							
Love's Labour's Lost	1						
Macbeth							
Measure for Measure							
Merchant of Venice							
Merry Wives of Windsor							
Midsummer Night's Dream				1			
Much Ado about Nothing							
Othello							
Pericles						1	

	Canvas	caps	carnadine	carnation	Carpet	Cushion
William Shakespeare:						
All's Well That Ends Well						
Antony and Cleopatra						
As You Like It						
Comedy of Errors						
Coriolanus						5
Cymbeline						1
Hamlet						
Henry IV, Part I	1					1
Henry IV, Part II						1
Henry V				1		
Henry VI, Part I						
Henry VI, Part II						
Henry VI, Part III						
Henry VIII						
Julius Caesar						1
King John						
King Lear						1
Love's Labour's Lost				1		
Macbeth						
Measure for Measure						
Merchant of Venice						
Merry Wives of Windsor						
Midsummer Night's Dream						1
Much Ado about Nothing					1	1
Othello						
Pericles	1				1	

	Cassock	cerecloth	cheyney	cipher	Cistern	Coxcomb
William Shakespeare:						
All's Well That Ends Well	1					1
Antony and Cleopatra					1	
As You Like It						
Comedy of Errors						1
Coriolanus						1
Cymbeline						
Hamlet						
Henry IV, Part I						
Henry IV, Part II						
Henry V						4
Henry VI, Part I						
Henry VI, Part II						
Henry VI, Part III						
Henry VIII						
Julius Caesar						
King John						
King Lear						6
Love's Labour's Lost						1
Macbeth					1	
Measure for Measure						
Merchant of Venice		1				
Merry Wives of Windsor						2
Midsummer Night's Dream						
Much Ado about Nothing						2
Othello					1	1
Pericles						

	coverlet	crewel	Damask	Diaper	Durance	Ell	Felt	Flax
William Shakespeare:								
All's Well That Ends Well								
Antony and Cleopatra								
As You Like It			1					
Comedy of Errors					1	1		
Coriolanus			1					
Cymbeline								
Hamlet								1
Henry IV, Part I					1	1		
Henry IV, Part II					1			
Henry V								
Henry VI, Part I								
Henry VI, Part II								1
Henry VI, Part III								
Henry VIII								
Julius Caesar								
King John								
King Lear							1	1
Love's Labour's Lost			1		1			
Macbeth								
Measure for Measure					2			
Merchant of Venice								
Merry Wives of Windsor								1
Midsummer Night's Dream								
Much Ado about Nothing								
Othello								
Pericles								

	Fleece	Fleece, Golden	Foot carpet/rug	Franchipane	Frieze	Fringe	Fustian
William Shakespeare:							
All's Well That Ends Well							
Antony and Cleopatra							
As You Like It	1					1	
Comedy of Errors							
Coriolanus							
Cymbeline							
Hamlet							
Henry IV, Part I	1						
Henry IV, Part II							1
Henry V							
Henry VI, Part I		1					
Henry VI, Part II	1						
Henry VI, Part III	2						
Henry VIII							
Julius Caesar							
King John							
King Lear							
Love's Labour's Lost							
Macbeth					1		
Measure for Measure							
Merchant of Venice	2	1					
Merry Wives of Windsor					1		
Midsummer Night's Dream							
Much Ado about Nothing							
Othello					1		1
Pericles						1	

	Gaberdine	Gigget	Girdles	gold, cloth of	Green	grogan	Hair-cloth
William Shakespeare:							
All's Well That Ends Well							
Antony and Cleopatra				1			
As You Like It							
Comedy of Errors							
Coriolanus							
Cymbeline							
Hamlet							
Henry IV, Part I							
Henry IV, Part II			1				
Henry V				1			
Henry VI, Part I							
Henry VI, Part II							
Henry VI, Part III							
Henry VIII				1			
Julius Caesar							
King John							
King Lear							
Love's Labour's Lost			1				
Macbeth							
Measure for Measure							
Merchant of Venice	1						
Merry Wives of Windsor					4		
Midsummer Night's Dream				1			
Much Ado about Nothing				1			
Othello							
Pericles							

	Hemp	Holland	Inkle	joined stool	Kendal	Kersey	Lawn
William Shakespeare:							
All's Well That Ends Well							
Antony and Cleopatra							
As You Like It							
Comedy of Errors							
Coriolanus							
Cymbeline							
Hamlet							
Henry IV, Part I		1		1	2		
Henry IV, Part II	1	1					
Henry V	2						
Henry VI, Part I							
Henry VI, Part II	1						
Henry VI, Part III							
Henry VIII							
Julius Caesar							
King John							
King Lear							
Love's Labour's Lost			1			1	
Macbeth							
Measure for Measure						1	
Merchant of Venice							
Merry Wives of Windsor							
Midsummer Night's Dream	1						
Much Ado about Nothing							
Othello							1
Pericles			1				

	Lace	Leather	lettice	Linen	Lince/Linsey	Mail	Mercer
William Shakespeare:							
All's Well That Ends Well					1		
Antony and Cleopatra	1						
As You Like It		3					
Comedy of Errors		2					
Coriolanus						1	
Cymbeline				1			
Hamlet							
Henry IV, Part I		1		1		1	
Henry IV, Part II		2		3			
Henry V						1	
Henry VI, Part I							
Henry VI, Part II		2				1	
Henry VI, Part III		1					
Henry VIII							
Julius Caesar		2					
King John							
King Lear							
Love's Labour's Lost				1		1	
Macbeth							
Measure for Measure							1
Merchant of Venice							
Merry Wives of Windsor				5			
Midsummer Night's Dream		1		1			
Much Ado about Nothing							
Othello							
Pericles				1			

	Napkin	Needle	panes/paned	Pantaloon	passment	Pearl
William Shakespeare:						
All's Well That Ends Well						
Antony and Cleopatra						2
As You Like It	3			1		1
Comedy of Errors						
Coriolanus						
Cymbeline		2				
Hamlet	1					1
Henry IV, Part I	1					
Henry IV, Part II						1
Henry V						1
Henry VI, Part I						
Henry VI, Part II						
Henry VI, Part III	3					
Henry VIII						1
Julius Caesar	1					
King John						1
King Lear						1
Love's Labour's Lost						3
Macbeth	1					1
Measure for Measure						
Merchant of Venice						1
Merry Wives of Windsor	1					1
Midsummer Night's Dream						2
Much Ado about Nothing						1
Othello	3	1				1
Pericles	1	2				

	Pennystone/penistone	petticoat	Pillow	pillowbere	pin-pillow	plush
William Shakespeare:						
All's Well That Ends Well						
Antony and Cleopatra		1	1			
As You Like It		3	1			
Comedy of Errors						
Coriolanus						
Cymbeline			2			
Hamlet						
Henry IV, Part I						
Henry IV, Part II		2	3			
Henry V			1			
Henry VI, Part I						
Henry VI, Part II			1			
Henry VI, Part III		1				
Henry VIII						
Julius Caesar						
King John						
King Lear			1			
Love's Labour's Lost						
Macbeth			2			
Measure for Measure						
Merchant of Venice						
Merry Wives of Windsor						
Midsummer Night's Dream			1			
Much Ado about Nothing						
Othello		1				
Pericles			2			

	Poldavis	Purple	quilt	Ruffs	Russet	Sable	Sackcloth
William Shakespeare:							
All's Well That Ends Well				1			
Antony and Cleopatra		1					
As You Like It							
Comedy of Errors							
Coriolanus							
Cymbeline							
Hamlet		1			1	2	
Henry IV, Part I		2					
Henry IV, Part II				1			1
Henry V							
Henry VI, Part I							
Henry VI, Part II							
Henry VI, Part III		3					
Henry VIII							
Julius Caesar		1					
King John		1					
King Lear							
Love's Labour's Lost					1		
Macbeth							
Measure for Measure							
Merchant of Venice							
Merry Wives of Windsor		1					
Midsummer Night's Dream		4			1		
Much Ado about Nothing							
Othello							
Pericles		1		1		1	2

	Sarcenet	Satin	Scarlet	Serge	sheepskin/lambskin	Silk	silver, cloth of
William Shakespeare:							
All's Well That Ends Well							
Antony and Cleopatra						1	
As You Like It						1	
Comedy of Errors						1	
Coriolanus						2	
Cymbeline						2	
Hamlet							
Henry IV, Part I	1		1				
Henry IV, Part II		2	1			3	
Henry V						2	
Henry VI, Part I			2				
Henry VI, Part II				1		1	
Henry VI, Part III							
Henry VIII			2				
Julius Caesar							
King John						1	
King Lear						2	
Love's Labour's Lost						2	
Macbeth							
Measure for Measure		1					
Merchant of Venice						1	
Merry Wives of Windsor						2	
Midsummer Night's Dream						1	
Much Ado about Nothing						1	1
Othello						1	
Pericles		1				3	

	skins	slip	stammell	standard	stole	strait	tabine
William Shakespeare:							
All's Well That Ends Well							
Antony and Cleopatra							
As You Like It							
Comedy of Errors							
Coriolanus							
Cymbeline							
Hamlet							
Henry IV, Part I							
Henry IV, Part II							
Henry V							
Henry VI, Part I							
Henry VI, Part II							
Henry VI, Part III							
Henry VIII							
Julius Caesar							
King John							
King Lear							
Love's Labour's Lost							
Macbeth							
Measure for Measure							
Merchant of Venice							
Merry Wives of Windsor							
Midsummer Night's Dream							
Much Ado about Nothing							
Othello							
Pericles							

	Taffeta	Tapestry	tissue, cloth of	Tuft taffata	Valance	Veil	Velvet
William Shakespeare:							
All's Well That Ends Well	2						3
Antony and Cleopatra			1				
As You Like It							1
Comedy of Errors		1					
Coriolanus							
Cymbeline							
Hamlet							
Henry IV, Part I	1						2
Henry IV, Part II		1					
Henry V						1	1
Henry VI, Part I							
Henry VI, Part II							
Henry VI, Part III						1	
Henry VIII							
Julius Caesar							
King John							
King Lear							
Love's Labour's Lost	2						2
Macbeth							
Measure for Measure						1	4
Merchant of Venice							
Merry Wives of Windsor						1	
Midsummer Night's Dream							
Much Ado about Nothing		1					
Othello							
Pericles							

	wimple	Wool	Worsted
William Shakespeare:			
All's Well That Ends Well		1	
Antony and Cleopatra			
As You Like It			
Comedy of Errors			
Coriolanus		2	
Cymbeline			
Hamlet			
Henry IV, Part I		1	
Henry IV, Part II			
Henry V			
Henry VI, Part I			
Henry VI, Part II			
Henry VI, Part III			
Henry VIII			
Julius Caesar			
King John			
King Lear		1	1
Love's Labour's Lost		1	
Macbeth		1	
Measure for Measure			
Merchant of Venice		2	
Merry Wives of Windsor			
Midsummer Night's Dream			
Much Ado about Nothing		1	
Othello			
Pericles			

	Total Word Count	# of Textile References	Density Ratio (Total Words / Textile references =)
Richard II	22,423	4	1 / 5,605
Richard III	29,278	8	1 / 3,659
Romeo and Juliet	24,545	7	1 / 3,506
Taming of the Shrew	21,055	32	1 / 657
Tempest	16,633	6	1 / 2,772
Timon of Athens	18,216	4	1 / 4,554
Titus Andronicus	20,743	9	1 / 2,304
Troilus and Cressida	26,089	11	1 / 2,371
Twelfth Night	19,837	12	1 / 1,653
Two Gentlemen of Verona	17,129	6	1 / 2,854
Winter's Tale	24,914	17	1 / 1,465
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe	14,323	8	1/1,790
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe	12,332	16	1 / 770
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe	20,450	13	1/1,573
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker	24513	44	1/557
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker	25640	33	1/777
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker	15392	17	1/906
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604)	25,708	90	1/286
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton	20,085	13	1/1545
Volpone (1606) Jonson	30,763	38	1/809
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton	20,981	25	1/840
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton	22,785	88	1/259
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton	19859	20	1/993
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson	31,935	54	1 / 591
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood	18,262	9	1/2,029
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker	26,756	43	1/623
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middlet	28923	20	1/1447
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton	19,324	11	1/1757
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson	38623	36	1/1073
The Old Law (1618) Middleton	24,150	15	1 / 1,610
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton	23,141	32	1 / 723
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger	12,007	0	0
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	Beaver	bezant	Biggin	blacks	Black, Cyprus	Blanket
Richard II						
Richard III	1					
Romeo and Juliet						
Taming of the Shrew						
Tempest						
Timon of Athens						
Titus Andronicus						
Troilus and Cressida	1					
Twelfth Night						
Two Gentlemen of Verona						
Winter's Tale	1			1	1	
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe						
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe						
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe						
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker				2		
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker				1		
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker				3		
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604) Middleton and Dekker				1		
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton						
Volpone (1606) Jonson			1			
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton						
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton	11					1
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton				2		
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson						
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood						
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker	1			2		1
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middleton				1		1
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton				1		
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson						
The Old Law (1618) Middleton				2		
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton						
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger						
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	Bodkin	Buckram	Buff	buskin	Caddis	Cambric	Camlet
Richard II							
Richard III							
Romeo and Juliet							
Taming of the Shrew							
Tempest							
Timon of Athens							
Titus Andronicus							
Troilus and Cressida							
Twelfth Night							
Two Gentlemen of Verona							
Winter's Tale					1	1	
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe							
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe							
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe							
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker			1			6	
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker							
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker				1			
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604)	1					10	
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton							
Volpone (1606) Jonson							
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton	1						
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton							
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton			1			1	
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson						1	
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood			1				
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker						2	
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middlet	1						
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton			1			1	
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson			1			1	
The Old Law (1618) Middleton							
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton							
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger							
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	Canvas	caps	carnadine	carnation	Carpet	Cushion
Richard II					1	
Richard III						
Romeo and Juliet						
Taming of the Shrew					2	1
Tempest						
Timon of Athens						
Titus Andronicus						
Troilus and Cressida						
Twelfth Night					1	
Two Gentlemen of Verona						
Winter's Tale						
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe						
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe						
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe						
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker		4				
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker		3				
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker		1				
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604)	1	5		1	7	1
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton		1				
Volpone (1606) Jonson		4			1	
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton		1				
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton		1				
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton		1				
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson						
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood		1				
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker						1
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middleton						1
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton						1
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson		3				
The Old Law (1618) Middleton						5
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton	1					1
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger						
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	Cassock	cerecloth	cheyney	cipher	Cistern	Coxcomb
Richard II						
Richard III						
Romeo and Juliet					1	
Taming of the Shrew						
Tempest						
Timon of Athens						
Titus Andronicus						
Troilus and Cressida						
Twelfth Night						3
Two Gentlemen of Verona						
Winter's Tale						
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe						
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe						
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe						
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker						1
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker						2
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker						
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604) Middleton and Dekker						7
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton	1					5
Volpone (1606) Jonson				1		
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton						1
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton						1
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton						3
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson						2
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood						1
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker						3
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middleton						1
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton						
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson						4
The Old Law (1618) Middleton				2		1
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton						2
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger						
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	Coverlet	crewel	Damask	Diaper	Durance	Ell	Felt	Flax
Richard II								
Richard III								
Romeo and Juliet								
Taming of the Shrew	1			1				
Tempest								
Timon of Athens								
Titus Andronicus								
Troilus and Cressida								
Twelfth Night			1		1			1
Two Gentlemen of Verona								
Winter's Tale			1					1
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe								
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe								
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe								
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker			3					
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker			1				2	
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker								
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604) Middleton and Dekker							1	
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton								
Volpone (1606) Jonson			1	1				
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton							1	
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton							1	
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton								
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson		1	8				1	
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood								
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker						1		
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middleton								
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton								
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson						1		
The Old Law (1618) Middleton						1		
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton								2
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger								
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	Fleece	Fleece, Golden	Foot carpet/rug	Franchipane	Frieze	Fringe	Fustian
Richard II							
Richard III							
Romeo and Juliet							
Taming of the Shrew							1
Tempest						1	
Timon of Athens							
Titus Andronicus	1						
Troilus and Cressida							
Twelfth Night							1
Two Gentlemen of Verona							
Winter's Tale							
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe							
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe		1					4
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe		1					
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker							
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker			1				
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker		1					
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604) Middleton and Dekker							
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton							
Volpone (1606) Jonson			1				
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton			1				
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton							
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton							
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson		1					1
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood							
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker					2		
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middlet	1						
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton							
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson							
The Old Law (1618) Middleton							
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton							10
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger							
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	Gaberdine	Gigget	Girdles	gold, cloth of	Green	grogan	Hair-cloth
Richard II					1		
Richard III							
Romeo and Juliet							
Taming of the Shrew				1			
Tempest	2						
Timon of Athens			1				
Titus Andronicus							
Troilus and Cressida					1		
Twelfth Night							
Two Gentlemen of Verona							
Winter's Tale					1		
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe			1		1		
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe					2		
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe					2		
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker							
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker			1				
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker							
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604) Middleton and Del			1				
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton							
Volpone (1606) Jonson			1	1			
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton					2		
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton			4				
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton			1	1			
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson			1		2		
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood							
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker							
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middleton				1			
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton							
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson					6		
The Old Law (1618) Middleton							
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton		1			2		
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger							
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	Hemp	Holland	Inkle	joined stool	Kendal	Kersey	Lawn
Richard II							
Richard III							
Romeo and Juliet							
Taming of the Shrew	1					1	
Tempest							
Timon of Athens							
Titus Andronicus							
Troilus and Cressida							
Twelfth Night							
Two Gentlemen of Verona							
Winter's Tale			1				2
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe							1
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe							
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe							
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker							1
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker							
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker	1						
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604)	1	4					20
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton							
Volpone (1606) Jonson							
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton						3	
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton							2
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton		1					
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson							1
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood							
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker	1	2					1
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middleton							
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton				1			1
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson							
The Old Law (1618) Middleton							
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton							
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger							
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	Lace	Leather	lettice	Linen	Lince/Linsey	Mail	Mercer
Richard II							
Richard III	1						
Romeo and Juliet	1						
Taming of the Shrew		2		2			
Tempest		1		1			
Timon of Athens							
Titus Andronicus							
Troilus and Cressida		1				1	
Twelfth Night							
Two Gentlemen of Verona							
Winter's Tale	2			1			
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe							
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe		1					
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe							
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker		5					
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker		4					2
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker	2			1			2
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604)	1	2		6			
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton							1
Volpone (1606) Jonson		1		1			
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton		1					1
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton	2	1					
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton		2					1
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson		1		5			
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood	1			1			
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker				2		2	2
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middleton							
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton							
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson	2						
The Old Law (1618) Middleton							
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton		4			2		
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger							
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	Napkin	Needle	panes/paned	Pantaloon	passment	Pearl
Richard II						
Richard III						2
Romeo and Juliet						
Taming of the Shrew	1	3		2		3
Tempest						1
Timon of Athens						
Titus Andronicus	2					2
Troilus and Cressida		1				2
Twelfth Night						1
Two Gentlemen of Verona						5
Winter's Tale						
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe						1
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe						2
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe						6
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker	1	1				
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker						3
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker						
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604) Middleton and Dekker						2
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton	1					
Volpone (1606) Jonson	1					9
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton	2					
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton		1				34
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton						
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson						3
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood	1					
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker	1	3				
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middleton						2
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton		1				2
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson		1				
The Old Law (1618) Middleton		1	1			
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton						
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger						
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	Pennystone/peniston	petticoat	Pillow	pillowbere	pin-pillow	plush
Richard II						
Richard III			1			
Romeo and Juliet						
Taming of the Shrew		1	1			
Tempest						
Timon of Athens			1			
Titus Andronicus			2			
Troilus and Cressida			1			
Twelfth Night						
Two Gentlemen of Verona						
Winter's Tale						
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe						
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe						
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe						
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker		1				
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker						
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker			1			
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604) Middleton		2				
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton			1			
Volpone (1606) Jonson			3			
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton						
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton		3	1			
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton			1			
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson		3				
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood						
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker		1	1			
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middleton			2			
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton						
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson		4	1			
The Old Law (1618) Middleton						
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton						
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger						

	Poldavis	Purple	quilt	Ruffs	Russet	sable	Sackcloth
Richard II		1					
Richard III		1					
Romeo and Juliet		1					
Taming of the Shrew				1			
Tempest							
Timon of Athens							
Titus Andronicus							
Troilus and Cressida							
Twelfth Night							
Two Gentlemen of Verona							
Winter's Tale							
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe		2				1	
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe		1					
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe						1	
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker		3		1			
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker							
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker				1			
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604) Middleton and Dekker				6			
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton							
Volpone (1606) Jonson		1					
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton		1					
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton							
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton				1			
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson				7			
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood						1	
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker				8			
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middleton				1	1		
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton							
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson		1		2			
The Old Law (1618) Middleton				1		1	
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton							
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger							
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	Sarcenet	Satin	Scarlet	Serge	sheepskin/lambskin	Silk	silver, cloth of
Richard II			1				
Richard III						1	
Romeo and Juliet			2			2	
Taming of the Shrew			1			3	
Tempest							
Timon of Athens			1			1	
Titus Andronicus						1	
Troilus and Cressida	1					2	
Twelfth Night							
Two Gentlemen of Verona						1	
Winter's Tale						2	
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe							
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe						2	
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe						3	
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker		3	1		1	7	
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker		1	1		2	3	
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker		2			1		
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604) Middletc		2				4	
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton				2			
Volpone (1606) Jonson			1			2	
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton		4				2	
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton		11				1	
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton						3	
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson	1	1	1		1	1	
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood					1		
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker		1				1	
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middleton		1			1		
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton							
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson		1	1			4	
The Old Law (1618) Middleton							
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton		1					
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger							
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	skins	slip	stammell	standard	stole	strait	tabine
Richard II							
Richard III							
Romeo and Juliet							
Taming of the Shrew							
Tempest							
Timon of Athens							
Titus Andronicus							
Troilus and Cressida							
Twelfth Night							
Two Gentlemen of Verona							
Winter's Tale							
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe	1						
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe							
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe							
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker							
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker	2						
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker							
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604) Middleton and Dekker							
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton							
Volpone (1606) Jonson	5						
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton	1			1			
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton				4			
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton							
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson	2						
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood							
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker	2						
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middleton				1		1	
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton				1			
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson	1						
The Old Law (1618) Middleton							
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton	2						
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger							
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	Taffeta	Tapestry	tissue, cloth of	Tuft Taffata	Valance	Veil	Velvet
Richard II							
Richard III						1	
Romeo and Juliet							
Taming of the Shrew					1		2
Tempest							
Timon of Athens							
Titus Andronicus							
Troilus and Cressida							
Twelfth Night	1					1	1
Two Gentlemen of Verona							
Winter's Tale							1
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe							
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe							2
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe							
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker							1
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker							2
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker							
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604)	2						2
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton							1
Volpone (1606) Jonson			1				1
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton	1						
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton	8						1
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton			1				
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson	1						6
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood						1	
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker				1			1
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middleton						1	2
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton			1				1
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson				2			
The Old Law (1618) Middleton							
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton	1						
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger							
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	wimple	Wool	Worsted
Richard II			
Richard III			
Romeo and Juliet			
Taming of the Shrew			
Tempest			
Timon of Athens			
Titus Andronicus		1	
Troilus and Cressida			
Twelfth Night			
Two Gentlemen of Verona			
Winter's Tale			
Dido, Queen of Carthage (1585) Marlowe			
Doctor Faustus (1592) Marlowe		1	
Jew of Malta (1598) Marlowe			
The Shoemaker's Holiday (1599) Dekker		1	
Old Fortunatus (1600) Dekker		2	
The Noble Spanish Soldier (1602) Dekker			
The Patient Man and the Honest Whore I (1604) Middleton and Dekker			
A Trick to Catch the Old One (1605) Middleton			
Volpone (1606) Jonson			
Michaelmas Term (1607) Middleton		1	
Your Five Gallants (1608) Middleton			
A Mad World, My Masters (1608) Middleton			
The Alchemist (1610) Jonson		1	1
The Fair Maid of the West (1610) Heywood			
The Roaring Girl (1611) Middleton and Dekker			
No Wit, No Help Like a Woman's (1611) Middleton			
A Chaste Maid in Cheapside (1613) Middleton			
Bartholomew Fair (1614) Jonson			
The Old Law (1618) Middleton			
Hengis King of Kent (1619) Middleton		3	
The Duke of Milan (1620) Massinger			
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	Total Word Count	# of Textile References	Density Ratio (Total Words / Textile references =)
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton	21,192	52	1 / 407
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker	21,168	20	1 / 1,058
The Changeling (1622) Middleton	19,820	10	1 / 1,982
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton	29,949	12	1 / 2,495
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster	24,638	38	1 / 648
The Captives (1624) Heywood	27,190	20	1 / 1,359
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton	29,362	11	1 / 2,669
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont	2,128	1	1/2,128
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson	28,883	41	1 / 704
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley	23,080	22	1 / 1,049
The New Inn (1629) Johnson	26,012	44	1 / 591
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome	32,501	14	1 / 2,321
The City Wit (1629) Brome	26,673	34	1/784
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker	27600	63	1/439
The Traitor (1635) Shirley	22,228	6	1/3,704
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley	18,771	5	1/3,754
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish	9,846	29	1 / 339

	Beaver	bezant	Biggin	blacks	Black, Cyprus	Blanket
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton	1					
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker						
The Changeling (1622) Middleton						
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton						
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster						
The Captives (1624) Heywood						
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton						
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont						
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson		1		1	1	
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley	1					
The New Inn (1629) Johnson						
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome						
The City Wit (1629) Brome						
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker				1		
The Traitor (1635) Shirley				1		
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley				1		
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish						
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	Bodkin	Buckram	Buff	buskin	Caddis	Cambric	Camlet
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton			1				1
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker							
The Changeling (1622) Middleton							
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton			1				
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster	1	1		1			
The Captives (1624) Heywood							
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton							
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont							
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson							
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley			1		1		
The New Inn (1629) Johnson							
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome							
The City Wit (1629) Brome	1						
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker			1			7	
The Traitor (1635) Shirley							
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley							
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish							
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	Canvas	caps	carnadine	carnation	Carpet	Cushion
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton			1			
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker						
The Changeling (1622) Middleton						
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton						1
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster						1
The Captives (1624) Heywood						
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton						
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont						
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson					1	
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley						2
The New Inn (1629) Johnson		2			1	1
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome						
The City Wit (1629) Brome						
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker		9				
The Traitor (1635) Shirley						
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley		1				
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish					1	
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	Cassock	cerecloth	cheyney	cipher	Cistern	Coxcomb
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton			1	1		
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker						3
The Changeling (1622) Middleton						4
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton						
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster						1
The Captives (1624) Heywood						1
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton						
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont						
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson						
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley				1		
The New Inn (1629) Johnson	1					
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome						1
The City Wit (1629) Brome						4
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker				1		1
The Traitor (1635) Shirley						1
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley						
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish						
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	coverlet	crewel	Damask	Diaper	Durance	Ell	Felt	Flax
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton						3		
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker								
The Changeling (1622) Middleton								
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton								
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster								4
The Captives (1624) Heywood		2			1			
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton								
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont								
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson								
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley								
The New Inn (1629) Johnson						1		
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome								
The City Wit (1629) Brome			2					
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker						5	1	
The Traitor (1635) Shirley								
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley								
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish			2	1				
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	Fleece	Fleece, Golden	Foot carpet/rug	Franchipane	Frieze	Fringe	Fustian
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton					1		1
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker			1				
The Changeling (1622) Middleton							
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton							
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster			2			1	
The Captives (1624) Heywood						1	
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton							
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont							
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson							
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley						1	
The New Inn (1629) Johnson					1		
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome			1				
The City Wit (1629) Brome		1	1				
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker							
The Traitor (1635) Shirley							
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley							
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish				1			

	Gaberdine	Gigget	Girdles	gold, cloth of	Green	grogan	Hair-cloth
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton				4	1	1	
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker			1		1		
The Changeling (1622) Middleton							
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton					2		
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster					2		
The Captives (1624) Heywood							
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton				1	1		
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont							
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson			1		4		
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley			1	2			
The New Inn (1629) Johnson			1	1	3		
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome							
The City Wit (1629) Brome					2		
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker			1		1		
The Traitor (1635) Shirley					1		
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley							
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish					3		1
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	Hemp	Holland	Inkle	joined stool	Kendal	Kersey	Lawn
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton							
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker							
The Changeling (1622) Middleton							
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton							
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster							1
The Captives (1624) Heywood							
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton							
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont							
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson							
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley							
The New Inn (1629) Johnson	2						
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome							
The City Wit (1629) Brome							
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker	3	2					8
The Traitor (1635) Shirley							
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley							
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish		2					
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	Lace	Leather	lettice	Linen	Lince/Linsey	Mail	Mercer
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton	1	1		1			4
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker							
The Changeling (1622) Middleton							
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton							
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster	1					1	
The Captives (1624) Heywood		5		3			
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton	1						
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont							
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson	3	3		3			
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley	2						
The New Inn (1629) Johnson	1		3				
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome				1			1
The City Wit (1629) Brome				3			1
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker							2
The Traitor (1635) Shirley							
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley				1			
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish		1		5			

	Napkin	Needle	panes/paned	Pantaloon	passment	Pearl
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton						
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker		1	1			1
The Changeling (1622) Middleton						1
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton						2
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster		1				1
The Captives (1624) Heywood					1	2
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton		2				1
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont						
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson	1	1			2	1
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley		1				
The New Inn (1629) Johnson		2				
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome		1	1			1
The City Wit (1629) Brome	1			1		1
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker						
The Traitor (1635) Shirley						
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley						
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish						2
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	Pennystone/penistone	petticoat	Pillow	pillowbere	pin-pillow	plush
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton	1	7			1	
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker			2			
The Changeling (1622) Middleton			2			
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton				1		
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster		1	2			
The Captives (1624) Heywood						
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton						
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont						
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson						1
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley		1				
The New Inn (1629) Johnson		3	1			1
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome		1				
The City Wit (1629) Brome			2			
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker		5	2			
The Traitor (1635) Shirley						
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley			1			
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish			1			

	Poldavis	Purple	quilt	Ruffs	Russet	Sable	Sackcloth
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton							
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker	1						
The Changeling (1622) Middleton							
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton			1				
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster			1				
The Captives (1624) Heywood		1		1			
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton					2		
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont						1	
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson				1			1
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley							
The New Inn (1629) Johnson				2			
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome				1			
The City Wit (1629) Brome		1		1			
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker			1	1			
The Traitor (1635) Shirley							
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley							
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish							
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	Sarcenet	Satin	Scarlet	Serge	sheepskin/lambskin	Silk	silver, cloth of
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton		3	2			7	1
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker		2	1				
The Changeling (1622) Middleton							
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton						2	1
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster			1		3		
The Captives (1624) Heywood		1					
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton							
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont							
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson		3	1			1	
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley		1				1	
The New Inn (1629) Johnson		2				4	
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome			1			1	
The City Wit (1629) Brome		4				1	
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker		2				7	1
The Traitor (1635) Shirley						1	
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley		1					
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish		1				4	

	skins	slip	stammell	standard	stole	strait	tabine
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton							2
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker						1	
The Changeling (1622) Middleton	1						
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton							
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster	3						
The Captives (1624) Heywood	1						
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton		1			1		
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont							
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson		1					
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley			1				
The New Inn (1629) Johnson				2			
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome							
The City Wit (1629) Brome							
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker							
The Traitor (1635) Shirley							
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley							
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish							
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	Taffeta	Tapestry	tissue, cloth of	Tuft taffata	Valance	Veil	Velvet
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton			2				2
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker							2
The Changeling (1622) Middleton							
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton							1
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster	3						3
The Captives (1624) Heywood							
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton							1
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont							
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson			1				7
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley	1	1					1
The New Inn (1629) Johnson	1			2			6
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome							
The City Wit (1629) Brome						2	2
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker	1						
The Traitor (1635) Shirley						2	
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley							
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish	1						1
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	wimple	Wool	Worsted
Anything for a Quiet Life (1621) Middleton			
The Witch of Edmonton (1621) Dekker		2	
The Changeling (1622) Middleton		2	
Women Beware Women (1622) Middleton			
The Devil's Law Case (1623) Webster		2	
The Captives (1624) Heywood			
A Game at Chess (1624) Middleton			
The Theatre of Apollo (1625) J. Beaumont			
The Staple of News (1625) Jonson		1	
The Witty Fair One (1628) Shirley			2
The New Inn (1629) Johnson			
The Northern Lass (1629) Brome	3		
The City Wit (1629) Brome		3	
The Honest Whore Part II (1630) Dekker			
The Traitor (1635) Shirley			
Love's Cruelty (1640) Shirley			
Convent of Pleasure (1668) Cavendish		2	
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