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Petrarchan Metaphors in Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* and Prominent Cultural
Discourses in Seventeenth-Century England: "From contraries I seeke to runn,
but contraries I can nott shun"

by

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To the Graduate Faculty:

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For my family,
who taught me what it means to love.

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Dissertation Abstract – Idaho State University (2019)

Through a close reading of the figurative language and imagery in Lady Mary Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* (1621), I examine the ways Wroth reworks Petrarchan figures through the lens of prominent cultural discourse within the historical context of early, seventeenth-century England. I focus my analysis on key metaphors found in her sonnet sequence, including Love is a Monarch, Love is a Journey, Love is a Witch, Love is Light, Love is Food, Love is a Child, and Love is a Teacher. In the final chapter, I apply this study to the classroom, making direct pedagogical applications between a focused attention to Wroth's metaphors, popular music, and the teaching of early English poetry.

Key Words: Sonnets; Wroth, Lady Mary; Renaissance Literature

Chapter 1 – Introduction

Academic scholarship on women writing in Renaissance England has traditionally focused on the poet's gender as a point of comparison and touchstone for interpretation. Lady Mary Wroth (c.1587 - c.1651), the first English woman to publish a prose romance and a dramatist and poet, has been an object of this attention, with criticism focusing on her gender, her reworking of the traditionally masculine Petrarchan tradition, and her giving voice to the historically silent female lover's experience. This work brought an early British writer, almost unknown fifty years ago, into the teaching canon and laid the groundwork for continued scholarship regarding this important poet.¹ More recently, academic attention to Renaissance women writers has begun to shift. Mary E. Burke, Jane Donawerth, Linda Dove, and Karen Nelson assert:

To study early modern women's marginalized positions to the exclusion of the very real and important contributions that they made to culture only continues their marginalization and masks divisions based on race, class, sexual orientation, and nationality. . . . Early modern women moreover, resisted their cultural limitations and acted as agents of social change, if often only temporarily. (xvii-xix)

Feminist critics like Mary Moore and Naomi Miller insist that scholarship must move away from studying female-authored works solely in relation to gender and in

¹ Wroth's sonnets were not the subject of sustained and serious scholarship until the publication of Josephine Roberts's scholarly edition in 1983. My numbering of the sonnets discussed here follow her edition, using P1, P2, and so on, as she does. Although there are significant variations depending on the manuscript consulted, and there are now other editions available, Roberts's edition continues to be the standard for most of the scholarship on Wroth's sequence.

comparison with male poets of the same period, but must seek to bring the same range of questions to female works as we have done with male-authored ones. Miller writes: “To look beyond the ideology of victimization which has shaped many critical readings of Renaissance women’s lives and works is not to evade the truth of social circumstances, but rather to recognize the possible existence of another truth to tell” (5). David Norbrook has been an important player in this shift through both his scholarship and teaching. His 2001 course at Folger Shakespeare Library, “Women Intellectuals and Political Ideology in Seventeenth-Century England,” examined women writers in light of political and intellectual history from the 1630’s through the Exclusion Crisis (1679-1681). Norbrook’s seminar influenced a number of published papers and books developed in his seminar.² In “Women, the Republic of Letters, and the Public Sphere in the Mid-Seventeenth Century,” Norbrook compares two women, Margaret Cavendish (1623-1673) and Anna Maria van Schurman (1607-1678) through the lens of the European republic of letters and public sphere. He suggests that while feminist critiques of Jürgen Habermas’ narrative of the early modern public sphere raise important issues, “they are often pitched at a very abstract level and fail to take into account the agency of particular women” (224). He further asserts: “Some women in the seventeenth century did indeed assume certain spheres of discourse were universal, rather than specifically masculine, and hence vigorously claimed inclusion” (224). For Habermas, the emergence of the

² See Erin Murphy, *Familial Forms: Politics and Genealogy in Seventeenth-Century English Literature*. Newark, DE: University of Delaware, 2010; Shannon Miller, *Engendering the Fall: John Milton and Seventeenth-Century Women Writers*. Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008; Katherine Romack and James Fitzmaurice Eds., *Cavendish and Shakespeare: Interconnections*. Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2006.

bourgeois public sphere as “a sphere which mediates between society and state, in which the public organizes itself as the bearer of public opinion” did not emerge until the eighteenth century, when this public body “laid claim to the officially regulated intellectual newspapers for use against the public authority itself” (52). However, recent critics like Norbrook have already noted the historical limitations of this important theory, particularly in relation to England, where religious motivations behind the emergence of an English public sphere began years earlier. According to Norbrook: “There was a significant expansion in the political public sphere, especially from the 1620’s onward, an emergent civil society whose means of communication – reports of parliamentary debates, newsletters, satires, and so on – circulated horizontally, cutting across the vertical power structures emanating from the court” (7). Although it may be anachronistic to read Wroth’s poetry as part of a defined and stable public sphere in England, we can read her texts as part of the discourse of an emerging civil society. In *Women Writing in Jacobean England*, Barbara Lewalski claims “active involvement with Jacobean culture” for the nine women she studies, including Wroth (1). Lewalski asserts that these women “rewrite discourses which repress or diminish women - patriarchy, gender hierarchy, Petrarchism, Pauline marriage theory, and more - by redefining or extending their terms or infusing them with new meaning” (4). While the discourses centering on gender and women’s roles remain an important aspect of women’s writing, it is not the only discourse in which these women participate and scholars must continue to explore the way that these texts intersect with other important civil debates. One author

who has not received much of this renewed attention is Lady Mary Wroth.³ However, Josephine Roberts calls attention to the potential for this kind of scholarship in her critical introduction to *Urania* by asserting that “In transgressing the traditional boundaries that restricted women writers to translation and religious meditation, Wroth ventured into a territory that offered rich possibilities for women to reshape Jacobean culture by addressing and representing it” (xvi). My project furthers this critical interest by contextualizing her work, and particularly her sonnet sequence, *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* (1620), in relation to some important cultural discourses of Jacobean culture. The dissertation examines Wroth’s use of conceptual metaphors as ways of engaging with and responding to broader social and political concerns. In particular, I examine: Love is a Monarch, Love is a Journey, Love is a Witch, Love is Light, Love is Food, Love is a Child, and Love is a Teacher. This dissertation examines Wroth’s imagery and figurative language and analyzes them through the lens of their historical and literary context. It is my assertion that a close and contextual reading of Wroth’s sonnet sequence will illuminate some of the strategies a seventeenth-century woman writer might use to participate and respond to her culture through poetry. By paying particular attention to the ways in which Wroth re-imagines typical Petrarchan motifs and conceits drawn on by sonneteers before her, engaging with larger, conceptual metaphors for love, I believe we will discover that Wroth’s sonnets are not only poems on female

³ While other scholars have examined Wroth’s role in political and cultural discourse, most of those works focus on her prose text, *Urania*, and include her as part of a larger work including a variety of early modern women writers. For example, see Edith Snook, *Women, Reading, and the Cultural Politics of Early Modern England*. Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2005.

love and desire, but also the demonstration of an original voice using poetic tradition to actively participate in Jacobean cultural discourse.

Background

Wroth's literary importance is significantly interwoven with that of the Sidney-Herbert family's legacy as aristocratic servants of the crown and patrons of the arts. She was the eldest daughter of Lady Barbara Gamage and Robert Sidney (1563-1626) and niece to Sir Philip Sidney (1554-1586), Robert's older brother. Both Wroth's father and uncle were writers. Robert Sidney addressed a manuscript collection to his sister, the Countess of Pembroke, containing thirty-five sonnets, eighteen songs, five pastorals, four short epigrams, three translations, and an elegy. Sir Philip Sidney authored a number of important works, including a sonnet sequence, *Astrophil and Stella* (1591). In addition to her literary heritage, Wroth's family was also well established at court. When James succeeded to the throne after Elizabeth's death in 1603, he named Wroth's father Earl of Leicester, making him one of his chief advisers and courtiers. At Penshurst on September 27, 1604, at age 17, Lady Mary was married to Sir Robert Wroth, a recently knighted sporting companion of King James. She became an intimate member of Queen Anne's courtly circle, playing parts in Queen Anne's *Masque of Blackness* (perf. 1605) and *Masque of Beauty* (perf. 1608), both written by Ben Jonson. Jonson also dedicated his play *The Alchemist* (1612) to Wroth, drawing attention to her family's legacy as art patrons by writing: "This yet safe in your judgement (which is a Sidney's) is forbidden to speak more" (212). Wroth appears to have begun writing by 1613, a year before her husband's death. Although she had no surviving children with her husband, Wroth had two children with her cousin William Herbert, third Earl of Pembroke. Her long affair

with this well-known philanderer is shadowed in the characters and events in her writing, and she included one of Pembroke's poems in *Urania*.⁴

Wroth's importance to the English literary canon results from her achievements as a woman writing and publishing in early-seventeenth century England as well as her range of authorship. She wrote the first sonnet sequence in English by a woman, one of the first plays by a woman, and the first published work of fiction by a woman. Wroth's prose romance, *The Countess of Montgomerie's Urania*, was published in 1621. In the romance, Wroth tells the story of two lovers, Pamphilia and Amphilanthus, and uses their fraught love story to frame a variety of tales about female characters with unsuitable husbands or unfaithful lovers. Pamphilia, meaning "all-loving," and Amphilanthus, "the lover of two," are unmarried lovers and although Pamphilia knows that her lover is unfaithful, she demands that he learn to be faithful if he wishes to be worthy of her. The poems by Pamphilia and addressed to Amphilanthus are scattered throughout the prose and are reprinted as a sonnet sequence at the end of the book. However, because of its similarities to actual people and events in the Jacobean court, *Urania* was very controversial, brought formal slander charges against Wroth from Edward Denny, Baron of Waltham, and sale of the book was quickly stopped.⁵ The second part of the book was never published, but is extant in the Newberry Manuscript.

⁴ Josephine Roberts uses the term "shadow" in her critical discussion of Wroth's topicality following Spenser's letter to Raleigh in the *Faerie Queene* "because it accurately describes the intermittent nature of the references" and because "Wroth follows Spenser in the use of multiple representations of a single figure" (lxxi).

⁵ See Paul Salzman. "Contemporary References in Mary Wroth's *Urania*." *Review of English Studies* 29.114 (1978): 178-181. Print.

In *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, Wroth writes within and also transforms Medieval and Renaissance traditions of sonneteering. The sonnet form first appeared in manuscripts on the European continent by 1090. It flourished during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in the south of France through the Troubadours, celebrating *fin amour* as true or perfect love. The Troubadours' *fin amour* imagined the female beloved on a pedestal and worshipped her as all good. This courtly love tradition, which often idealized the wife of a knight or king, found expression most famously in Troubadour Chretien de Troyes during the twelfth century. The female love object of courtly love always denies sex to her male adorer and therefore, he must sublimate his desire into the idealization of his beloved. When the Christian Crusaders began wiping out the majority of these Troubadours, many of those who survived began writing poetry in honor of the Virgin Mary. Other survivors travelled to Italy and renewed the tradition as seen in Dante's descriptions of Beatrice in *La Vita Nuova* (1295), and Petrarch's portrayal of Laura in *Rime Sparse* (1374). Dante and Petrarch's sonnet sequences established the tradition later imitated during the English Renaissance.

Sir Thomas Wyatt, the Elder (1503-1542) introduced the Petrarchan sonnet into English in the sixteenth century and established many of the conceits and tropes that remained a part of the sonnet writing vocabulary in England for the next 60-70 years. Although Wyatt imitated both the form and subject matter of the Italian sonnet, Henry Howard, the Earl of Surrey (1517-1547) developed an English sonnet form where the fourteen lines are divided into three quatrains and a couplet rather than the octave sestet division of the Italian or Petrarchan sonnet. Surrey's lines became the standard and are now distinguished as Elizabethan sonnets. The sonnet sequence, or sonnet cycle, is a

thematically interconnected series of sonnets written by one poet. Typically, the cycle explores love as a theme and the poet's multiple and often contradictory attitudes toward it. They are generally written in regards to a specific (real or fictional) relationship between the lover-speaker-poet and his beloved. Wroth's uncle, Sir Philip Sidney's sonnet sequence *Astrophil and Stella*, meaning "star-lover" and "star," is credited with inspiring a vogue for English sequences that inspired William Shakespeare, Edmund Spenser, and Samuel Daniel, among others. It is this, the Elizabethan sonnet sequence tradition, to which Wroth adds her voice.

It is also a tradition that retained the misogynistic Petrarchan imagery found in figures like an unattainable beloved, an ensnared lover, and their perfect, unsatisfied love. The objectification of women in Petrarch's *Rime Sparse* is noted by Elizabeth Cropper as informing the Renaissance norm of a beautiful woman while Nancy Vickers points out that "the absence of a coherent, comprehensive portrait is significant" (294) because in singling out disassociated objects like her hair, hands, or eyes, the result was an "obsessive insistence on the particular, an insistence that would in turn generate multiple texts on individual fragments of the body or on the beauties of woman" (294). Petrarchan traditions are still manifest in Wroth's work, but explored in new and unique ways. As Moore explains: "Wroth's labyrinth and her themes of blindness and lost self-knowledge recall Petrarch and manifest Pamphilia's complex subjectivity as a maze of self" (133). In her study of the corona, a cycle of sonnets reflecting on a shared theme in which the final line of each sonnet is the first line of the next to form a poetic circle, or crown, Moore suggests that Wroth's poetry, like other poems voiced by a female, demonstrates the

tension between form and syntax and points to the inherent problems in trying to fit female erotic experience into forms created for male erotic desire.

In traditional Petrarchan sonneteering, the male speaker-lover is placed in the subject position while the voiceless female becomes object to his affection. However, in Wroth's work, the position is less distinguished, leaving a speaker-lover that is at once subject and object. Roberts's introduction finds that Wroth's altering of Petrarchan tradition creates a more careful study on the speaker's internal struggle:

Regardless of the traditional apostrophes to night, sleep, hope, absence, and despair contained in many of her poems, she introduced a significant change in the focus of her sequence. Unlike male sonneteers who often lavished praise (or mock dispraise) upon the woman's physical attributes, Lady Mary's collection deliberately subordinates the role of the beloved. Because the rhetoric of wooing or courtship is largely absent from her collection, the poet places far greater emphasis on the persona's internal struggles, as she comes to recognize the potential dangers in romantic love. (48)

Wroth's depiction of these internal struggles is a distinct move away from the Petrarchist tradition of defining the male's subjectivity through constructing the female as object. Lewalski asserts that this focus on experience provides a space for self-definition based on constancy and determination in love:

Accordingly Wroth makes the love experience itself – not the beloved – the locus of value and the stimulus to poetry: the female lover-speaker's experience of love as constancy is represented, paradoxically, as the

fulfillment of her own desire and determination. From that position the woman can claim the Petrarchan poet's power of self-definition. (256)

Miller argues that female poets like Wroth “work to represent conventional metaphors in unconventional contexts or voices and strive to change the subject of the metaphors by claiming subjectivity for themselves” (199-200). She highlights Wroth's carving out of a “discursive space among early modern constructions of gender within which she can configure both sexes anew as mutual agents of passion” (204). Most importantly, Miller asserts that Wroth's writing within this form is not simply a reversal of gendered subjects, but a complex multiplication of subjects. And, as this dissertation will examine, she does not shy away from traditional sonnet imagery. Rather, Wroth embraces common Petrarchan motifs, complicating their use through historical contextualization and literary adaptation that defies a simple gendered reading and demands a reading which examines Wroth's work as an active and participating voice in the discourses of her culture.

The importance of cultural discourse to male sonneteers has been convincingly argued and reveals that although the sonnet is traditionally associated with love poetry and often connected with introspection, interiority and narcissism, it has also been recognized as an important form of discourse regarding less emotive and introspective purposes. In her study of mid-Tudor sonnets, Cathy Shrank, for instance, finds that “the unquiet state of the insomniac lover is made analogous to the unquiet state of the insomniac poetic speaker, kept awake by money worries” (39). She finds that beyond their introspective attention to love and desire, these collections also “strive to recreate the social milieu in which, and for which, they were produced” (40). However, Shrank insists that the “companionable, outward-looking potential of not just the mid-Tudor

sonnet but the Renaissance sonnet in general is an aspect of the form often overlooked in literary criticism” (45). Christopher Warley considers Philip Sidney’s sequence, *Astrophil and Stella*, in light of social and political discourse, particularly the way his sonnets critique the monarchy and a number of critics have examined similar trends in the sonnets of Milton, Shakespeare, and Spenser, among others.

While critics have begun to examine early modern sonnets in light of their connection to court politics and in the fashioning of a courtier, these studies have focused on male-authored sonnets and the discourses within a dominantly masculine court.⁶ This study attempts to examine a female-authored sonnet sequence with that same eye for the outward, culture-building discourse present within the work. It assumes a critical posture after David Norbrook’s assertion in *Poetry and Politics in the English Renaissance* that “some of the greatest English Renaissance poets were politicians, and *all of them* tried to influence public affairs through their writings” (1 emphasis mine). While male sonneteers may have offered a more overt political commentary in their writing, I believe that the precedent for political involvement set by Wroth’s own family as well as the sonnet tradition itself makes space for the possibility of her own participation in cultural discourse.

Methods

Through a close reading of the figurative language and imagery in *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, I study the ways that Wroth reworks Petrarchan figures and engages

⁶ See Arthur F. Marotti. “‘Love Is Not Love’: Elizabethan Sonnet Sequences And The Social Order.” *ELH* 49.2 (1982): 396-428) and Ann Rosalind Jones and Peter Stallybrass. “The Politics of Astrophil and Stella.” *Studies in English Literature, 1500-1900* 24.1 (1984): 53-68.

conceptual metaphors for love through the lens of prominent cultural discourse within the historical context of early seventeenth-century England. I begin by categorizing the images found in Wroth's poetry into certain groups based on traditional sonnet motifs and conceits. I draw on historical and literary texts to determine and define these various discourses and to situate Wroth's imagery within her cultural and literary tradition. In so doing, I also look at other sonnets from the same period by both male and female authors in order to assess how Wroth's work compares with, comments on, and responds to the work of her literary peers. Using resources from Oboler Library at Idaho State University, the Folger Shakespeare Library in Washington D.C., and especially the Newberry Library in Chicago, I utilize a variety of primary and secondary texts in order to better understand the specific issues surrounding Petrarchan poetry, the sonnet tradition, feminist and new-historicist criticism, and seventeenth-century culture and historical discourses. I utilize *Early English Books Online* to access historical chronicles, biographies, and other original texts from the period, and I rely on the Oxford English Dictionary to support my close-reading and textual explication.

This project participates in a recent, but now well-established direction for feminist literary theory in its attempt to examine a female poet not solely in terms of her gender, but also in terms of her participation in the culture around her. It does so through a new historicist approach to literature. In a defining essay on new historicism, Stephen Greenblatt maintains that "a full cultural analysis will need to push beyond the boundaries of the text, to establish links between the text and values, institutions, and practices elsewhere in the culture. But these links cannot be a substitute for close reading" (348). I have followed Greenblatt's assertion in this project by close-reading

particular images in Wroth's poetic texts while also looking to the cultural milieu in which these texts were composed and published and the overarching conceptual metaphors that make her work relevant to both her contemporary readers and modern audiences.

Terminology

Petrarchan Metaphor

My analysis of Wroth's metaphors rely on the use of two critical terms:

Petrarchan Metaphor and Conceptual Metaphor.⁷ Mary Wroth's sonnets are part of a sonnet tradition deeply steeped in Petrarchism, a term used to refer to literary activity under the direct influence of Francisco Petrarch. In his foundational survey, Ernest Wilkins identifies the central manifestations of Renaissance Petrarchism as the "use of Petrarchan words, phrases, lines, metaphors, conceits, and ideas, and the adoption, for poetic purposes, of the typical Petrarchan experiences and attitudes" (329). These Petrarchan conventions include an idealization of the beloved as goddess, perfect, and worshipped as all good. Further, the poet-lover is figured in a state of perpetual want and despair because the beloved is always unattainable. The immutability of the poet's love results in contradictory feelings like hope and despair, love and hate, pain and pleasure and throughout the poems, the male poet-lover remains focused on his own subjective experience, effectively silencing the female beloved.

⁷ This terminology for a "conceptual metaphor" is drawn from the field of cognitive linguistics and refers to the understanding of one conceptual domain, like love, in terms of another, like a journey. Coined by George Lakoff and Mark Johnson in 1980, it is explored concisely in the article, "Conceptual Metaphors in Everyday Language," published in the *The Journal of Philosophy*, 77(8), pp. 453-486, and comprehensively in their book, *Metaphors we Live By* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980).

Petrarchism displays an obsessive insistence on the particular, a feature that Nancy Vickers credits with generating “multiple texts on individual fragments of the body or on the beauties of women” (266). Dymphna Callaghan sees “a kind of violent anatomical dissection at play in many poems of the Petrarchan tradition as the mistress was broken down into discrete body parts to be itemized by her male appraiser” (55). These fragmentary obsessions manifest themselves through blazons, a literary device where the speaker uses figural language to describe parts of the beloved’s body like her coral lips, lily-white hands, or net-like hair. This Petrarchan convention can be seen in the works of Richard Barnfield, particularly in Sonnet 17:

His cheekes, the Lillie and Carnation dies,
 With lovely tincture which Apolloes dims.
 His lips ripe strawberries in Nectar wet,
 His mouth a Hive, his tongue a hony-combe,
 Where Muses (like Bees) make their mansion. (17.7-11)

Although Barnfield’s work takes a significant departure from Petrarchism by directing the lover’s affection at a male beloved, his poetry draws on typical Petrarchan conventions through the use of blazons like lips as ripe strawberries and a honeycomb tongue as well as echoing typical conceits such as the wound received from the beloved’s eye:

Even so it fareth with my fortune now,
 Who being wounded with his piercing eie,
 Must either thereby finde a remedy,
 Or els to be releev’d, I know now how (5.9-12)

Lisle Cecil John's foundational work on the conventional conceits of Petrarchan poetry identifies and categorizes a number of common tropes and images like this one and including the migration of the heart, sun and stars, and wasting in despair.

The inverse of the Petrarchan blazon, and the typical example of anti-Petrarchism can be found in William Shakespeare's Sonnet 130:

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun;

Coral is far more red than her lips' red;

If snow be white, why then her breasts are dun;

If hairs be wires, black wires grow on her head. (130.1-4)

Here, Shakespeare adapts the typical Petrarchan blazon, revising it into a sort of mock-praise or dispraise. Callaghan insists that while the Petrarchan blazon is not merely an idealization, Shakespearean reversal is not merely misogynistic. Rather, she asserts that by the time poets like Shakespeare, Raleigh, and Spenser write their sonnets, "the language of idealized female beauty is ancient, and familiar to the point of being hackneyed" (55). In her introduction to the sonnets, Katherine Duncan-Jones asserts that Shakespeare's sonnets "are not merely non-Petrarchan and non-Sidneian, but in important respects both anti-Petrarchan and anti-Sidneian" (25). She insists that in making the central focus of the poems a young man's beauty, "Shakespeare may be seen as overturning the conventions of more than two hundred years of 'Petrarchanism,' broadly interpreted" (46).

However, there is more to anti-Petrarchism than a satirical reversal of complimentary blazons in mock-celebratory sonnets. Although it usually found expression in parodies of the convention or by rejecting some of its principal features, critics have also found that these counter discourses are often aligned with issues of

national and literary identity or political purpose. Not simply pointing a finger and laughing at Petrarchan convention, poets adapted Petrarchism for a variety of purposes and to demonstrate their own literary skills. For example, Edmund Spencer's *Amoretti* (1595) takes a marked departure from Petrarch by eliminating the tension of an unrequited love. He dedicated his sonnets to Elizabeth Boyle, a woman he eventually married. Anne Prescott maintains that Spencer's most significant innovation of Petrarchan tradition "was to dedicate an entire sequence to a woman he could honorably win" (153). We can see this difference throughout the series when the poet-lover is depicted kissing his beloved, "Coming to kisse her lyps, (Such grace I found) / Me seemd I smelt a gardin of sweet flowres" (63.1-2), or when his beloved smiles at him:

But fairest she, when so she doth display,
the gate with pearles and rubyes richly dight:
through which her words so wise do make their way
to beare the message of her gentle spright,
The rest be works of natures wonderment,
but this the worke of harts astonishment. (81.9-14)

In this description of the beloved's smile, Spencer recalls Petrarchan tradition by comparing her teeth to pearls and lips to rubies, but this beloved also demonstrates an accessibility and availability to the poet-lover that was absent in Petrarch's sonnets. Further, this sonnet takes a significant move away from the usually silent Petrarchan beloved. Here, Spencer draws attention to her words and values their wisdom, "through which her words so wise do make their way" (11). Rather than objectifying his beloved and absenting her from the poetry, Spencer gives his beloved a speaking agency and

describes a woman who speaks, smiles, kisses, and even embraces in her “bosome bright” (73.9).

In order to establish working definitions of Petrarchism and anti-Petrarchism in spite of integrated and dependent meanings, the historical approach to anti-Petrarchism’s development explored by Christine Hutchins provides a useful starting point. Hutchins asserts that Chaucer was the “first, and most consistently influential, English poet to imitate and adapt Petrarch” (554). Significantly, she finds that his translations and adaptations of Petrarch:

bifurcated the English Petrarchan tradition into distinct strands, both emphasizing the sufferings of the lover faced with an unattainable love, one establishing the cause of love’s unattainability as resulting not from the beloved’s eternal purity and/or physical distance but instead from the beloved’s fickle promiscuity and the lover’s embittered retreat, as in *Troilus and Criseyde*. (554)

Chaucer’s satirical version of Petrarch results, Hutchins argues, in “a Petrarchan tradition in England focused on wanton self-immolation” (555). Subsequent English Petrarchan poets adopt accusatory, resentful, and retaliatory stances that “reflect a peculiarly English and Chaucerian fascination with poets and lovers who feel deep ambivalence about their prostration and powerlessness” (555). Hutchins identifies several areas in the poetic discourse that distinguish between the Petrarchan and anti-Petrarchan modes including unqualified versus back-handed praise, an idealized versus a physical, eroticized beloved, an unfulfilled and unrequited lover verses a lover entwined with his beloved, and an emphasis on Neoplatonic and Christian underpinnings in Petrarchan verse in contrast to

the “frustrated, seething, sated, or insatiable passions of a more capriciously inclined and precariously placed courtly lover” (566). In Hutchins formulation, these strains of anti-Petrarchism are also seen as distinctly English strains.

William Kennedy also adopts a nationalistic interpretation of Petrarchan adaptations.⁸ Kennedy identifies two premises for his work. First, the Petrarchan sonnet “provides a site for early modern expressions of national sentiment” and second: “Petrarchism unfolds amid critical commentary appended to early modern printed editions of the Rime sparse and that it acquires a protonationalist density through this commentary” (1). Kennedy argues that works by Sir Philip and Mary Sidney and their niece Mary Wroth “showed how a Petrarchan style could empower English literary expression” (4). He sees the collective effort of the Sidney family, all of whom composed poetry in the Petrarchan mode, generating “a family history that exalts the virtues, and sometimes derides the foibles, of an emerging English national character” (7). Kennedy finds a direct correspondence between the subjects of love and nationalism in these works. He maintains: “A striking feature of these sonnets is that their amatory entanglements reflect historical tensions and cultural conflicts in the emerging national sentiment, even though their literary pedigree is predominantly foreign, issuing from the Continental matrix of Italy, France, Spain, and the papacy which Protestant England sought to define itself against” (165).

⁸ Kennedy acknowledges the anachronism in assigning ideas of nationalism to sixteenth-century Europe, but argues alongside other early modern critics that while there were not necessarily politically defined nations, there was at least “national sentiments socially and culturally articulated” (4).

The difficulty of establishing and maintaining distinctions between an identifiable Petrarchan tradition and voices that might be considered anti-Petrarchan in their aims and emphases is a point underscored by Heather Dubrow. Her work illustrates how this mode of writing has been self-questioning and self-inverting even since its beginnings in Petrarch's poetry. Further, her readings of Sidney, Shakespeare, Donne, and Mary Wroth show how the work of anti-Petrarchans is itself rooted in Petrarchism. However, if we think of Petrarchism as the ever-desiring lover caught in the contradictions of emotion because of an unattainable and idealized beloved and anti-Petrarchism as a counter to that through a sexualized figuring of both lover and beloved and a debasement of Petrarch's spiritual love using mock-praise, satire, and parodies of typical conceits, how then do we situate Wroth and her sonnet sequence in this tradition? I believe that in order to answer this question it is necessary to look not only to Wroth's sonnets, but to their initial publication as an integral part of her prose romance, *The Countess of Montgomery's Urania* (1620). In *Urania*, the titular characters of the sonnet sequence, Pamphilia and Amphilanthus become the embodiments of their names. Pamphilia, meaning all-loving, displays a love that is unwavering in spite of the obstacles between her and Amphilanthus, mostly in the way of other lovers. Amphilanthus, meaning the lover of two, has numerous lovers throughout the romance and, although he returns to Pamphilia's side throughout the story, his characterization is a far cry from the typical Petrarchan beloved who is worshipped as all good and idealized as a goddess. Taking these names into account, it seems as though Wroth's characters must be anti-Petrarchan, demonstrating the "fickle promiscuity" described by Hutchins. However, in spite of figuring the male beloved in anti-Petrarchan terms, Wroth's poetry still resounds with

Petrarchism in light of Pamphilia and her narrative in the romance. In the first book of the *Urania*, Pamphilia and her companions encounter the Throne of Love. Here, the allegorical figure of Constancy vanishes into Pamphilia and she seems to become the embodiment of constancy itself:

Both then at once extremely loving, and love in extremity in them, made
the Gate flie open to them, who passed to the last Tower, where Constancy
stood holding the keyes, which Pamphilia tooke; at which instant
Constancy vanished, metamorphosing her self into her breast: then did the
excellent Queene deliver them to Amphilanthus, who joyfully receiving
them, opened the Gate (169).

As the story progresses, Pamphilia remains constant in her love for Amphilanthus in spite of his philandering. Because Pamphilia becomes constancy, or constancy becomes Pamphilia, she is able to take a position of Petrarchan lover. While the Petrarchan poet-lover is constant in his love for a woman he can never have and the anti-Petrarchan lover and/or beloved are often is gallivanting around with other sexual partners, like the triangulation that occurs between Shakespeare's poet-lover, fair boy, and dark lady, Wroth's lover is constant. In fact, she is constancy itself. Furthermore, while Amphilanthus seems more of an anti-Petrarchan beloved based on his narrative in *Urania*, Wroth's figuring of him in the sonnets essentially ignores this characterization to focus instead on the speaker's emotions and her experience of constant love. In this way, Wroth's intense focus on the poet-lover's subjectivity is quite Petrarchan indeed. Wroth's Petrarchism can be illustrated through a close reading of sonnet P55. In this poem, Wroth figures love as fire: "How like a fire doth love increase in mee, / The longer that itt lasts,

the stronger still (1-2). Like Petrarch, Wroth figures love as a fire as in Petrarch's Sonnet 364: "Love held me burning, twenty-one years, / happy in the fire and in grief full of hope" (ll. 1-2).

Wroth suggests that as this love continues to burn, it not only grows stronger, but it is also purer and brighter: "The greater purer, brighter, and doth fill / Noe eye with wunder more, then hopes still bee / Bred in my breast, when fires of love are free" (3-5). This image of love as a pure, and perhaps purifying, fire highlights the spiritual love so foundational in Petrarch's sonnets to Laura. The constancy of the poet-lover is reiterated in the final lines of the poem: "My breath nott able is to breathe least part / Of that increasing fuell of my smart; / Yett love I will till I butt ashes prove (12-14). Although there are elements in Wroth's sonnets that suggest the anti-Petrarchan discourse that would have become prevalent and popular by the time she was writing, the sonnets focus on the experience of the poet-lover and that experience is one that seems remarkably Petrarchan in its constant and spiritualized form.

Roger Kuin compares two different types of access to Petrarchan discourse and two different results in the sonnets of Louise Labé and Mary Wroth. Kuin emphasizes that their work is a demonstration of access, not imitation in that their work makes the learned discourse their own and produces work that is "new and individual, yet still displays and demonstrates the tradition upon which it is based" (148). He asserts that Wroth's text "attempts not to subvert, not to overturn the Petrarchan discourse, but to restate it – one last time – and to restate it in a woman's voice" (157). Kuin argues that her work tries to "use every indeterminacy present in the discourse and its codes to insert itself as a female voice" and "to preserve the discourse intact for posterity" (157). By the

time Mary Wroth writes her sonnet sequence, I would argue that the Petrarchan form in England had taken on distinct forms of its own and that while Wroth's work displays elements that seem to draw from anti-Petrarchan discourse alongside those following Petrarch, her work can still be understood as Petrarchan. Like Dubrow, I see anti-Petrarchism rooted in Petrarchism and that by 1620, this and other counter discourses would all be available and accessible to Wroth under the broader definition of Petrarchism in general.

Conceptual Metaphor

In order to understand conceptual metaphors, we turn to the work of George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. In their formative work, *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson insist that "metaphor is pervasive in everyday life, not just in language but in thought and action" (3). They assert: "Our ordinary conceptual system, in terms of which we both think and act, is fundamentally metaphorical in nature" (3). For example, through the metaphor, Argument is War, they explain the way that argument is, at least partially, understood, discussed, and performed in terms of war: "The concept is metaphorically structured, the activity is metaphorically structured, and, consequently, the language is metaphorically structured" (5). Using expressive language, like he shot down all my arguments, she attacked the weak points of my argument, these claims are indefensible, or her criticisms were right on target, Lakoff and Johnson show the way this metaphor has informed our understanding and performance of argument.

In addition, they maintain that these conceptual metaphors are systematic. Because of this, they maintain that "we can use metaphorical linguistic expressions to study the nature of metaphorical concepts and to gain an understanding of the

metaphorical nature of our activities” (7). Furthermore, these metaphorical concepts must create a coherent system with our values, and they are orientational in nature, based on our human experience of the world. These orientational metaphors give our concepts spatial orientation. Using the example, “happy is up,” Lakoff and Johnson examine language like: I’m feeling up, my spirits sank, and I feel down. They assert that “no metaphor can ever be comprehended or even adequately represented independently of its experiential basis” (19).

Lakoff and Johnson’s study of love metaphors can help us to understand Wroth’s metaphorical work in her sequence. In turning from conventional metaphors to creative ones, Lakoff and Johnson maintain that these imaginative and creative metaphors can provide new understanding to our experiences: “They can give new meaning to our pasts, to our daily activity, and to what we know and believe” (139). That said, these new metaphors can help us “make sense of our experience in the same way conventional metaphors do: they provide coherent structure, highlighting some things and hiding others” (139). Through a careful examination the metaphor Love is a Collaborative Work of Art, they find that 1) “metaphor highlights certain features while suppressing others,” 2) “metaphor does not merely entail other concepts,” but also it “entails every specific aspects of these concepts,” 3) “because the metaphor highlights important love experiences and makes them coherent while it masks other love experiences, the metaphor gives love a new meaning,” 4) “metaphors can thus be appropriate because they sanction actions, justify inferences, and help us set goals,” and 5) the meaning metaphor has for a person will be determined in part by cultural and in part by past experience (141-142). Lakoff and Johnson find in metaphor the power “to create a reality rather than

simply to give us a way of conceptualizing a preexisting reality” (144). New, creative metaphors can create new realities because as we comprehend our experiences through these terms, we also begin to act according to these terms. By imagining love as a monarch, for instance, we may try to satisfy our lover’s wishes or demands, we may elevate our lover above our own experience, and we may even subject ourselves to mistreatment and abuse. On the other hand, this metaphor may lead us to respect the love experience or to treat our lover as royalty. When both partners live by this metaphor, the result could be a respectful and appealing partnership. However, when one person is imagined as superior to the other, the love experience can be unsatisfactory or even dangerous.

The metaphors that I examine in Wroth’s sequence are both conceptual metaphors and Petrarchan metaphors, and I’ll explore the ways she employs these conventional and creative metaphors throughout her sequence. Through a close-reading of these metaphors, I believe we can better understand the way that “Pamphilia speaks not solely as a lover focused upon the beloved but as a woman cognizant of the shared female experience of suffering for love” (Miller 296). Her metaphors connect to a shared experience of love, and while I do not find the entire sequence suggesting that this experience is entirely one of suffering, I do find that these conceptual metaphors allow for her exploration of a universal love experience, rather than the particular lover and beloved that dominate most male sonneteering projects. Even so, Wroth’s conceptualization of love is informed and even structured in terms of Petrarchan metaphor. While Petrarchanism is historically situated, it informs the Renaissance concept of love. Danielle Clark asserts that “Petrarchanism proved to be an extraordinarily flexible and durable language of love,

longing and desire which could be adapted to virtually any scenario from the obscene to the divine” (205). Clarke points to the “widespread evidence of women’s knowledge of Petrarchan conventions and ideas, and their deployment of them in other media - pageants and entertainments, tapestry, embroidery and domestic interior decoration” (204) to support her claim that Petrarchanism is an accepted convention, by both women and men, in the seventeenth century. Clark maintains that “many women adopt strategies which enable them to use this most central of cultural discourses to their own advantage” (208). Going even further, she insists that Petrarchanism was “one of the most central discourses mediating and constructing” the power relationships between monarch and subject (211). Given its predominance in her culture, and even more so in her chosen poetic form, the sonnet sequence, Wroth’s conceptual metaphors can never be free from Petrarchan influence. In addition, while Petrarchan metaphor is situated in the European Renaissance, it can never be free from the conceptual metaphors, like spatial and experiential metaphors, which inform human conceptions of ideas like love. Through her engagement with both Petrarchan metaphors and conceptual metaphors, Wroth offers a detailed and comprehensive picture of the love experience, not only for women, not only for lovers in the seventeenth century, but also for twenty-first-century readers. Our experiences of love and the way we behave in relationships are still informed by at least some of the same conceptual metaphors that appear in Wroth’s poetry. And, I might argue, by some of the same Petrarchan metaphors that provide a structure for Wroth’s conceptualization of the love experience. I hope that my focus on those metaphors in this project will lead to both further study of these images as well as productive teaching experiences for those of us working in literature classrooms.

Chapter Outline

Each subsequent chapter focuses on close-reading a particular image set, like the various manifestations of love as a monarch for example, and contextualize the image within its literary and historical culture and the associated discourses on subjects such as royal prerogatives and religious reforms. I rely on the work of Philip Sidney, in particular his sonnet sequence *Astrophil and Stella*, as a comparative touchstone for Wroth's poetry in order to demonstrate Wroth's distinction and originality in the adaptation of common sonnet imagery. Each chapter, then, is organized around a particular Petrarchan image set and a prominent category of seventeenth-century discourse. I begin with a political issue highlighted in the reign of King James and critical to this son and successor, Charles I's trial and public execution in *Love is a Monarch*. The establishment of monarchical rights and its corollary, the rights of his subjects, pushes discourse toward the issue of where, how, and by whom lands should be ruled, questions especially important to a world newly-opened through exploration. Britain's first established colonies and increased naval presence raise a variety of issues that I explore in the next chapter, *Love is a Journey*. However, the edenic dreams and idealizations of the New World were quickly fraught with dark and demonic possibilities. In the fourth chapter, *Love is a Witch*, I focus on the seventeenth-century's terror of and often revolting responses to anything perceived as unnatural or related to the occult. To blame religious leaders in the period for stoking this fear might be a vast oversimplification, but the religious reformations taking place in England certainly contributed and responded to the witch crisis. Not only did the Protestant James's succession instigate a fresh wave of worry for Catholic leaders in England, new religious thought leaders like Calvin and Luther were leading protestant

reforms throughout Europe. I explore this religiously volatile period in chapter five, *Love is Light*. In chapter six, *Love is Food* and *Love is a Child*, I look to Wroth's domestic metaphors, attending to the way these metaphors are informed by the everyday experiences of seventeenth-century Englishwomen and respond to the societal limitations enforced over their autonomy. Finally, my dissertation ends with a chapter focused on some of the pedagogical concerns and methods for teaching Renaissance poetry, centered on the metaphor: *Love is a Teacher*. Founded on a practical application of my critical approach to Wroth's sonnets, it will support the argument that a critical pedagogy focused on cultural contextualization and conceptual metaphors will enhance the literature student's ability to read critically and analyze poetry.

Chapter 2 – Love is a Monarch

The Subjected Lover: “The badge, and office of his tyrannies”

In this chapter, I explore the ways that Wroth’s reworking of typical Petrarchan imagery in her sonnet sequence participates in the discourse of Jacobean authority, prerogative, and rule. In particular, I want to address Wroth’s metaphors for Love as Monarch. To do so, I will examine her figurations of Cupid as an embodied representative of love and other figurative language that presents love as a monarch, even without the direct involvement of Cupid. I assert that while this imagery is part of Petrarchan tradition, it is reworked in ways that demonstrate Wroth’s active participation in cultural discourse. Previous critics have suggested that the third section of Wroth’s sequence deals directly with imagining Cupid as a monarch, and Linda Dove argues that the corona’s dealings with Cupid as monarch provide a critique of King James’s leadership by proposing a reform of Cupid’s tyranny to a shared rule with the help of the people. In order to understand how Wroth’s love poems might offer a critique of King James’s rule, I want to explore the ways that writing by early modern women might be influenced by gender in works that suggest an engagement with contemporary cultural discourse, particularly the work of Katherine Philips and Elizabeth Cary, before shifting to focus on Wroth. Although the focus of this project seeks to avoid such gender-based readings, I believe that a pause to focus on gender and the way women resisted patriarchal ideals through their writing can inform the way we understand Wroth’s strategies, even when they engage with political concerns in ways that extend well beyond the poet’s gender.

Each of these women wrote and published in the early seventeenth century, a period many historians consider part of an Age of Absolutism. An absolute monarchy refers to a government where the monarch has complete, or absolute, power to rule without legal opposition or laws restricting or balancing his authority with other ruling bodies. When King James of Scotland ascended to the throne of England, he had already written a substantial body of work establishing the absolute authority of the divinely ordained monarchy, including *Basilikon Doron* and *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies*. These absolutist ideals were even more extreme in King James's son, Charles I, whose continuing disagreements with parliament and refusal to recognize their authority led to his execution in 1649.

Although early modern women were not allowed to participate in political matters or issues of state, there is evidence of their participation in the discourses surrounding these topics through poetry, drama, and other artistic means.⁹ Susan Wiseman examines women's relationships to politics in seventeenth-century England by drawing on literary and other written evidence. Although women were generally excluded from politics, Wiseman suggests that "the idea of exclusion makes literary and cultural production a very rich source for the examination of political attitudes and understandings in both men and women: exclusion makes figural language, myth, narrative, and poetry crucial modes

⁹ My use of the word political through this essay is informed by the definition provided by Danielle Clark to refer to "what we might be able to discern of these writers' engagement, through literary means, with matters of state, culture, religion and subjecthood, to our own politics as readers of these writers, and to the processes of political signification in which women's texts participate, whether consciously or not" (1).

of political expression” (9). In these three examples, we can see political expression through poetry, narrative, and figurative language, albeit couched in gendered terms.

When Welsh preacher Vavasour Powell tried to justify the regicide of Charles I on the grounds of Christ’s second coming and destruction of earthly kingdoms, Katherine Philips (1632-1664) wrote a poetic response that illustrates one early modern woman writer’s engagement with the topic of absolutism. Many of Philips’ poems and translations consider questions of political authority and express her royalism and support of the English monarchy, and “Upon the Double Murder of King Charles” (ca. 1649) is a clear denunciation of the execution of Charles I on January 30, 1649. Although Philips’ poem is an example of women’s poetry, it is also an example of political poetry. However, Philips’ political stance in this poem includes elements that suggest a distinctly gendered response in the way that she sets up her poem’s argument.

Writing in seventeenth-century England, Philips was part of a culture that idealized feminine behavior as silent, chaste, and obedient. Because writing was an act of public expression, many in early modern culture considered it unfitting for women. That said, those women who did write, mostly aristocratic, educated women, kept their creative output limited to translations and spiritual works, areas considered more appropriate for a woman.¹⁰ Philips acknowledges this belief and uses it to her advantage by suggesting that she must break her silence because the act against Charles I was so hideous to demand it: “so here is a cause / That will excuse the break of nature’s laws. /

¹⁰ For example, Mary Sidney (1561-1621), a gifted poet in her own right, spent most of her creative energy on verse translations of the Psalms and on translating works like *Antonius* by Robert Garnier and *The Triumph of Death* by Francis Petrarch.

Silence were now a sin” (5-7). Philips figures her breaking of silence as that of a mute boy who, when he sees his father’s life in danger, unties “his fettered organs” (5). She further expands this argument by asserting that passion itself is merited in this situation in spite of the usual Stoic counsel to control or eliminate one’s passions: “nay passion now / Wise men themselves for merit would allow” (7-8). Catherine Gray asserts: “The question for Philips becomes how to engage public matters without compromising her Royalist distaste for leveled debate, how to steer between the Scyllan and Charybdis of religio-political discussion (the very existence of which questions royal right) and disloyal silence in the face of Royalist defeat” (129-130).

Not only does Philips insist that her public expression is now practically a natural response to this situation, she also she qualifies her response at the start of the poem by defining the scope of her concerns, insisting that she is not stepping outside her gender’s proper place by thinking about state issues, but thinking only on the heinous crime done to her king: “I think not on the state, nor am concerned / Which way soever that great helm is turned” (1-2). Once Philips has qualified the scope of her argument and asserted the viability of its expression, she goes on to question the actions taken against the king. Her argument focuses on offenses to Charles I’s dignity and the unrest this will bring him after death: “Hath Charles so broke God’s law, he must not have / A quiet crown, nor yet a quiet grave?” (11-12). Philips’ attention to the religious issues at stake behind the execution not only serve as a direct response to the lyrical justification on religious grounds put forth by Powell, but also keep her poetry closer to the spiritual matters generally considered more appropriate for women’s writing. She addresses the argument against monarchies held by Republicans: “His title was his crime” (19), but then shifts to

a more introspective response to this line of thinking: “He broke God’s laws, and therefore he must die, / And what shall then become of thee and I?” (20-21). Next, her poem briefly appeals to reason and common sense before returning to consider religious matters and the contradictory stance of those who would kill in the name of religion in spite of biblical commandments against killing:

Christ will be King, but I ne’er understood,
His subject built his kingdom up with blood
(Except their own) or that he would dispense
With his commands, though for his own defense.
Oh! to what height of horror are they come
Who dare pull down a crown, tear up a tomb! (29-34)

Philips is clearly engaging with a significant political issue in her time and expressing her stance as a royalist supporter of the late king. However, she does so in ways that suggest influence by her gender. She keeps her poem away from political policy or questions of state and instead, focuses on the religious issues underlying the execution. Furthermore, her expression on this matter is carefully cushioned in the first eleven lines of the poem that set up an argument for her to break her feminine silence and express a passionate response to the execution.

Another woman writing in seventeenth-century England, Elizabeth Cary (c.1585-1639), also wrestled with issues of authority, monarchy, and absolutism as illustrated in her Senecan tragedy, *The Tragedy of Mariam*, written around 1603. Barbara Lewalski argues that Cary’s tragedy finds precedent in other tragedies by members of her circle including Samuel Daniel’s *Cleopatra* and *Philotas*, Fulke Greville’s *Mustapha*, and Mary

Sidney's *Antonie*. Lewalski asserts that these classicizing dramas "were a recognized vehicle for the exploration of dangerous political topics – the wickedness of tyranny, the dangers of absolutism, the modes of and justifications for resistance, the folly of princes, the corruption of royal favorites, the responsibilities of counselors" (191). In *Mariam*, Cary wrestles with these dangerous political topics, but through a domestic lens that reflects her own gender and personal stake in the rights of wives in an early modern household in which men were considered the heads, with absolute authority over their families and households. Lewalski maintains:

Mariam is the last published in a series of closet Senecan dramas concerned with forms of tyranny, and should perhaps be seen as the first of a series of tragedies (1610-1614) that focus on female resistance to tyrants in the domestic sphere – women who seek to control their own sexual choices, challenging the orthodox ideal of submission (200).

By addressing political issues of tyranny, but focusing on the domestic sphere, Cary participates in the political discourse about one of the dangers that can result from an absolutist monarchy while keeping her discourse in a realm considered more suitable to women – the household.¹¹ Her tragedy begins by addressing one of the same concerns found in Katherine Philips' poem: women's silence. In the first scene, Mariam is on stage alone and considers how her opinions on Julius Caesar have changed since becoming the tyrant Herod's wife and hearing of his death: "How oft have I with public voice run on / To censure Rome's last hero for deceit" (I.i.1-2). This opening line draws attention to the

¹¹ Furthermore, the very subject of Cary's play is drawn from a biblical source, a creative choice that allows her to write on political issues while keeping that work safe within the realm of spiritual matters.

strictures on female voice and Mariam highlights that she has used a “public voice” rather than the more suitable private expression. She addresses lines 5-8 to Julius Caesar:

But now I do recant, and, Roman lord,

Excuse too rash a judgement in a woman:

My sex pleads pardon, pardon then afford,

Mistaking is with us but too too common. (I.i.5-8)

Mariam’s lines highlight ideas about women during the early modern period. Not only has she violated expectations by speaking publicly about Julius Caesar in the past, she begs his pardon by using her gender as a means for excusal, “my sex pleads pardon” (I.ii.7) and “mistaking is with us but too too common” (I.i.8). Mariam considers her contradictory feelings toward Herod and his death, figuring her life with him as though she were a slave or a prisoner: “When Herod liv’d, that now is done to death / Oft have I wish’d that I from him were free” (I.i.16). Wishing for freedom, she also blames Herod’s strictures on her freedom for teaching her to disobey them: “For he, by barring me from liberty, / To shun my ranging, taught me first to range” (I.i.25-26). This assessment of absolute rule seems to suggest that monarchies who rule in this way are actually responsible for creating disorder and rebellion among their subjects. Mariam then highlights the third element in the feminine ideal of chaste, silent, obedience by insisting “But yet too chaste a scholar was my heart, / To learn to love another than my lord” (I.i.27-28). Although Mariam has not been silent and has not been obedient, she insists upon her chastity because she has remained loyal to Herod in spite of her wish “that he might lose his breath” (I.i.17). Lewalski notes that “the drama goes some distance toward disjoining the triad of virtues that constitute the era’s feminine ideal, inviting sympathetic

identification with a heroine who is chaste but manifestly neither silent or obedient” (200). Through her characterization of Mariam and by exploring issues of tyranny and absolutism via the lens of a domestic sphere, Cary is able to participate in political discourse not only in spite of her gender, but also in a way that her gender allows. Cary challenges patriarchal assumptions and insists that integrity is the best way to resist tyranny. Lewalski asserts, “Mariam’s challenge to patriarchal control within the institution of marriage is revolutionary, as the heroine claims a wife’s right to her own speech – public and private – as well as to the integrity of her own emotional life and her own self-definition” (201). Like Philips, Cary creates a space and a circumstance for her writing by drawing on and resisting Renaissance ideals for feminine behavior and by couching their discourse in spheres of religion and domesticity that were more acceptable arenas for women’s agency and expression.

Mary Wroth (1587-1651) also considers issues of absolutism and monarchical rights in her sonnet sequence, and a number of critics have noted the intense scrutiny given to the monarchy, particularly in the Crown of Sonnets (P77-P90). This section of sonnets forms a circle or crown of sonnets as the last line of each sonnet serves as the first line of the next and the final line is a repetition of the first. Josephine Roberts maintains that although “Pamphilia begins by acknowledging the tremendous power exercised by the ruler in his Court of Love . . . she soon finds it impossible to sustain her glorification of Cupid” (45). Linda Dove argues that Wroth’s sonnets do more than mimic the eroticism of love poems, they also provide a critique of King James’s leadership by proposing a reform of Cupid’s tyranny in the sequence’s corona. She suggests that Wroth challenges James’s ideas of absolute authority by offering a picture

of Cupid and the poems' female speaker reigning together. Dove asserts that Wroth's model for good government is one where rule is shared with the people, claiming that she adapts the commonplace analogy to better suit her image of right rule. Dove asserts, "Wroth alters the analogy by imagining a reciprocal partnership in the corona and thus suggests a state ruled with the help of the people" (143).

Like Elizabeth Cary's Mariam, wife to the tyrannical King Herod, Mary Wroth's Pamphilia is wife to a king, in this case Cupid, and this allows her a space to question and challenge an absolute monarchy. Dove asserts, "Wroth adopted the marital model of leadership that James abandoned as a way of correcting him and as a way of suggesting resistance to his theories of absolutism directly" (145). Wroth draws on the image of companionate marriage in sonnet P82, emphasizing a partnership wherein the two lovers are joined as one: "To joine two harts as in one frame to move; / Two bodies, butt one soule to rule the minde" (3-4). In the second stanza, she imagines the lovers ears tuned only to the other and their eyes bound to the other in love:

Eyes which must care to one deer object bind

Eares to each others speech as if above

All els they sweet, and learned were; this kind

Content of lovers wittniseth true love (5-8)

Wroth's lovers are completely focused and intent on one other. In addition, she goes so far as to define this kind of relationship as "true love" (8) declaring that these kinds of relationships "inrich the witts, and make you see / That in your self, which you knew nott before" (9-10). This ideal love is what Wroth imagines adorning "the Throne of Love" (13) and experiencing the favors of the King of Love, Cupid. This happy image of

companionate lovers dissipates as the corona continues, drawing on figures of death, poison, and rot as in sonnet P87. In this sonnet, Wroth imagines the “frayle dull earth” (2) giving life to plants that cause ill, “Which ripest yet doe bring a sertaine dearth” (4). Wroth’s “Fruit of a sowre, and unwholesome ground” (P86.13) in the previous sonnet is further developed:

A timeles, and unseasonable birth
Planted in ill, in wurse time springing found,
Which hemlock like might feed a sick-witts mirth
Wher unruld vapors swimm in endless rounde (5-8)

This image of a poisonous, treacherous weed springing from the earth serves to invoke the jealousy that continues to haunt Pamphilia throughout the sequence. By the final sonnet in the corona, jealousy has crept into the relationship like a poisonous weed in a garden after the speaker has given her love and heart to Cupid and he, in turn, has given away to be kept in storage:

Except my hart which you beestow’d before,
And for a signe of conquest gave away
As worthles to bee kept in your choyse store
Yett one more spotles with you doth not stay (P90.1-4)

Like Cary, Wroth emphasizes Pamphilia’s chastity and constancy toward Cupid, “one more spotless with you doth not stay” (4). These lines also draw on martial language, “a signe of conquest” (2), a move that suggests a ruler who is not ruling in a democratic fashion, but conquering and enslaving his subjects under absolute rule.

In these three examples, we see a number of the strategies early modern women writers used in their responses to political problems like centering their work in spiritual or domestic spheres and addressing feminine ideals of chastity, silence, and obedience. While each takes a unique approach to the subject of absolutism, their works share characteristics that speak to their gendered role in early modern culture. Jennifer Richards and Alison Thorne consider these gendered strategies inevitable for early modern women who tended “to speak and write in terms of a traditional understanding of their place, identities and roles with the social order” (14). Each of these women, in spite of their differing political or religious beliefs, subject matter or generic form, or different backgrounds and social or economic standing, use traditional gender roles as part of their project, even to their advantage. In her study of early modern women’s poetry, Carol Barash asserts that women writers form a tradition in that they respond “in similar ways to a shared set of political and cultural problems, shifting configurations of monarchic, religious, and linguistic authority; tensions between political and literary communities and poetic legitimacy, and attention to the place of gender in debates about political and linguistic authority” (2). While I sometimes prefer to ignore these gendered strategies in my own research and writing, this exploration of political writing demonstrates how impossible that is. As Philips, Cary, and Wroth each confront absolutism in their work, they do so, finally, as women.

However, in the remainder of this chapter, I want to examine Wroth’s metaphors without letting gender dominate the analysis. Rather, this chapter further explores the sonnet sequence’s imagery figuring Love as Monarch in relation to other early modern texts and images, and it will illuminate Wroth’s participation in cultural discourse,

particularly in the political discourse regarding prerogative rights, authority, absolutism, and divine rule.

Cupid in the Renaissance

Although Wroth depicts love as a monarch in images that do not involve Cupid, his figure plays an important role in much of the imagery discussed within this chapter, and it is important to begin with some context and background for this classical figure and his role in the Renaissance imagination. While the corona section of the sonnet sequence focuses on Cupid as a monarch, Cupid appears throughout the sequence from the opening sonnet's martyring of the speaker's heart, through his conquering of the speaker, his own captivity at the hands of Venus, and the speaker's final decision to "Leave the discourse of Venus and her sunn / To young beeginers" (P103.9-10).

To date, there are only two book-length studies of Cupid's role in Renaissance art and literature. In his 1986 work, *The Poetic Theology of Love: Cupid in Renaissance Literature*, Thomas Hyde asks if Cupid is a mythical deity or personified passion (13). Hyde explores the poetic theology of love by tracing the figure of Cupid from his first appearance in Hesiod, through the Middle Ages, and focuses on his role as an "amphibious figure" in the Renaissance, "alternatively or simultaneously both mythical deity and personified passion" (13). He asks, "Should we say that the troubadours, who give Amors only arrows, are using the personification, while Petrarch uses the mythical deity because he gives him wings also and makes Venus his mother?" (13). This distinction and the questions posed by Hyde are concerns that we can see Wroth portraying in her sonnet sequence, as she works to discover a viable role for Cupid within her figurations of love as a monarch. Like the troubadours, Wroth engages with Cupid's

role as an archer, shooting arrows into unsuspecting lovers. However, this imagery is often veiled in punning and wordplay. Meanwhile, our study of Wroth's monarchy metaphors will reveal that she aligns more with Hyde's assessment of Petrarchan poets, figuring Cupid as a deity, a boy god, and reflecting on his position as son to Venus.

While Hyde admits that this distinction may seem trivial, he justifies his study arguing:

If Love is "sometimes to be thought of as a god or demon and sometimes merely as an experience,"¹² we must be able to tell the difference in order to avoid either disobeying a divine impulse or making an idol of our own desire. If the Eros or Amor or Cupid who appears in literature also is sometimes to be thought of as a god or demon and sometimes merely as an experience, then readers and poets (who "read" the tradition whenever they write a poem) need to tell the difference too. Otherwise they risk errors analogous to those of literary characters: either too skeptically spurning poetic theology as empty fables (and so missing its divine truths) or, like Nero, too credulously accepting fictions that may be dangerous (and so deluding themselves or others). (17)

Wroth's depiction of Cupid in her sequence explores the very risk Hyde asserts in his book. By imagining love as a monarch, often through the body of Cupid, Wroth presents this figure as a deity, a trickster, a king, and a boy, often at once. Nevertheless, she also highlights the possibility of delusion and danger that follows any conception of the love experience like that of a monarchy. In Wroth, I see a studied effort to depict Cupid or

¹² Plotonius *Enneads* 3.5

Love as a Monarchy in ways that are both conceptualized as a god/demon or as an experience. In both, she uncovers risk, and through both, she finds potential for danger, contradiction, and delusion.

More recently, Jane Kingsley-Smith studies the range of Cupid's identities in her 2010 work, *Cupid in Early Modern Literature and Culture*. In this book, Kingsley-Smith argues that Cupid's extended range of identities in early modern England are united by his adversarial relationship to English Protestantism, making him a controversial and seductive figure for writers. One of Kingsley-Smith's main contentions is that "although Cupid attained a new distinctiveness in early modern England he was also elusive in a way that frustrate many of the polemical functions that he was required to perform" (4). She focuses on the period between the first publication of *Tottle's Miscellany* in 1557 and William Davenant's staging of *The Temple of Love* in 1635 to argue that "not only does this period represent a highpoint in the cultural visibility of Cupid in England, it was also defined by a series of political renegotiations with the ideals of English Protestantism" (4). Kingsley-Smith considers, for example, the pressure on Elizabeth for more extensive Protestant reforms as well as the Catholic influence on the Stuart courts and the hostile responses from Puritans. She asserts that while Cupid "should have achieved his greatest cultural status at a time when he was required as an adversary, embodying the 'Catholic' sins of lust and idolatry in order to exorcize the dangers perceived to threaten the establishment of the Reformed faith" (5) it is not coincidental that his "innate ambivalence also encouraged his appropriation by those who wished to express their opposition to Protestantism's more extreme doctrines" (5). She asserts that poets who were hostile to the Calvinist doctrine of predestination, suspicious of iconoclasm, or who

rejected the idea of sexual repression relied on this new figure of Cupid as sadistic and tyrannical in order to illustrate the unfortunate consequences of Puritanism or to expose him “as a travesty illustrative of Protestant ‘misreading’” (5). Kingsley-Smith contends:

Cupid’s confounding of the distinction between desires undermined the Protestant attempt to separate licit from illicit love and even extended to the limits that defined early modern patriarchy. In the case of both male and female gender identities, Cupid reinforced the norm and punished transgressions but he was also manipulated by women to assert their capacity for self-government and literary authorship, and by men to play out scenarios of subjection and disempowerment. Thus, even as Cupid was required as an agent of repression he embodied forbidden fantasies, and it is this that makes him such an irresistible figure in early modern literature and art. (5)

In Wroth’s figurations of Cupid, we can see her exploring the issues of government in ways that reflect both her claim to legitimate authorship and her fellow Englishwomen’s right to self-government or, at the very least, a more shared, democratic rule. Wroth does so in ways that ask us to look beyond the personification of Cupid and to the English court at large.

Cupid in *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*

Cupid’s portrayal in Wroth’s sequence does not present a consistent image. Rather, she explores this figure in different ways as the sections of the sequence progress. In the first section of *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, defined by Roberts as P1-P55, Wroth imagines Cupid as a conqueror, tormentor, and slave-master. In the second section, P56-

72, he becomes a mischievous child, juggler, and escape-artist, while in the third section, P73-P90, or the corona, he is presented as a monarch, the “Great King of Love” (11), a guide, and a tutor. Finally, in the fourth section, P91-103, Cupid is imagined in his most disparate roles as both a god and a beggar as well as a part of the “race of lovers” (7-8). This evolution of Cupid presents an interesting corollary to Wroth's evolving concept of love, acting as a personified image of the way her attitude toward love changes in the course of the sonnet sequence. In the first section, Pamphilia is a victim of love. In the second, she is beset by love, harassed by it, but as Cupid becomes relegated to a more powerless position, Pamphilia gains a sense of power and autonomy in spite of her loving. In the third section, Wroth begins to imagine Cupid as a ruler, but figures him not as the tyrant one might expect based on the Cupid of section one, but as a democratic ruler, considered alongside other cooperative images like guide and tutor. Finally, in the fourth section, Wroth begins to displace Cupid. Setting him apart with the “race of lovers” (P100.7-8) as she leaves her writing on the subject of love “To young beeginers” (P103.10).

Although Cupid plays an important role across Wroth's sonnet sequence, I am most interested here in those instances where Cupid is figured in the position of a monarch. In addition, I want to consider language and imagery that figures love as a ruler or monarch, even when those images don't directly involve Cupid. In my survey of Wroth's monarchical imagery throughout the sonnet, I see a few common themes emerging. These include 1) the lover as a slave, bound subject, or conquest, 2) the Court of Love and love's throne, 3) truth as ruler of the heart, and 4) didactic sonnets on good rulership. While these thematic categories are not a perfect or complete way of

understanding or approaching Wroth's Love is a Monarch imagery allows us a way of seeing the deliberate variety and purpose behind the poet's language and images.

Lover as Subject

Wroth imagines the lover as a subject of love in several of her sonnets. While some poems focus more on the torture and pain that the lover experiences, I want to focus here on those that provide an explicit image of the lover in a role as subject, servant, conquest, or slave. After the initial violence against the lover in the opening sonnet, the speaker voices her subjectivity to love in P8. Most interesting about this first vocalization of the lover's subjectivity, however, is the speaker's boldness in suggesting that her monarch is a coward. The poem opens with the speaker telling love to stop its force against her because she is already conquered:

Love leave to urge, thou know'st thou has the hand;

'Tis cowardise, to strive wher none resist:

Pray thee leave off, I yeeld unto thy band;

Doe nott thus, still, in thine own powre persist,

Beehold I yeeld: lett forces bee dismiss; (1-5)

Here, the lover indicates that she has yielded to love and love has the upper hand. In addition, she insists that love knows he has the upper hand, and it is cowardice to continue striving against one who is not resisting. In this way, I believe Wroth's imagery is already serving in a didactic role, and I'll discuss this more below. First, let's unpack more of what it means to Wroth's speaker to yield. In the second quatrain, the speaker expands on her condition: "I ame thy subject, conquer'd, bound to stand, / Never thy foe, butt did thy claime assist / Seeking thy due of those who did withstand" (6-8). These

images offer us variations on a similar theme, while also highlighting the different positions that someone can take under a monarch. First, the lover is a subject. This term can suggest any person or thing that is under the control of another (“Subject, n1”). Although this subordinate, dependent, or even inferior position suggests that the self is not autonomous and is under the control of another, it is not inherently forceful or violent. However, the speaker goes a step further by next defining herself as “conquer’d” (6). To conquer suggests acquiring something by force, fighting, or warfare (“Conquer, v”). These terms highlight the difference between a native subject, born under the rule of their country’s monarch and a conquered subject, forced to give allegiance to a monarch after invasion or war. Taken further, the first term might suggest one born to love, while the second term might suggest one who is forced to love by conditions outside of their control, like a dream of Cupid martyring one’s heart, perhaps? That said, when we think of a distinction between the state of the lover in this way, we might assert that love is always caused by a force outside of one’s control, although humans may be born with an innate capacity to love. The speaker goes one step further in her self-definition, declaring herself “bound to stand” (6). This image pushes beyond a subject who owes obedience or one conquered by force to suggest someone that is bound or tied up, one who is actively imprisoned, like a slave or a prisoner. By aligning these three descriptions of her condition, the speaker seems to highlight the different positions available to a lover and to suggest that she does not necessarily need to remain in a captive position, as she would still remain a conquered subject. This idea is made even more explicit in the lines that follow: “Never thy foe, butt did thy claime assist / Seeking thy due of those who did withstand” (7-8). Here, the speaker insists that she was never a foe or enemy to love, a

claim that highlights the superfluous act of conquering and binding her. Furthermore, the speaker claims not only that she never opposed love, but also that she worked to help love. Love, imagined as a monarch, has made a claim, a demand for something or the assertion of his right to something, that the speaker has helped love to realize (“Claim, n”). She has sought the due from those who tried to resist this claim, working on behalf of love, rather than against it. This imagery depicts an excess of force which love has used against her, while also offering a vision for the role of a good citizen, working to further the work of her monarch and bring all the rightful subjects to his service. At the volta, Wroth flips her focus to show why love as a monarch continues his cowardly use of force against her even as she has shown no resistance to him. She asserts:

Butt now, itt seemes, thou would'st I should thee love;

I doe confess, t'was thy will made mee chuse;”

And thy faire showes made mee a lover prove

When I my freedome did, for paine refuse. (9-12)

These lines present a monarch who seems to have made her a lover and subject to love, but now wants that love directed at himself, not at any other beloved. In fact, this may even be a pun on the name Will, hinting at an autobiographical allusion to William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke. The speaker may be alluding to a choice between loving William Herbert or loving love itself. Furthermore, this figuration of the monarch shows a discrepancy between love as a ruler, guiding his subject toward her beloved, and love as a tyrant, demanding all the love for himself. The next line shows readers how the monarch seeks to groom her love: with “faire showes” (11), a figure that aligns the monarch more with trickery and falsity than with truth or honesty. The couplet reinforces

this reading by drawing a sharp distinction between what the speaker loves and despises: “Yett this Sir God, your boyship I dispise; / Your charmes I obay, butt love nott want of eyes” (13-14). Like her initial suggestion that the monarch is a coward, the speaker again mocks the monarch here as “Sir God” and calls him “your boyship.” Like Sidney’s address to Cupid as “sir foole,” (*AS* 53.7), Wroth’s parody of a courtly compliment shows her regard for this monarch as perhaps just as flimsy and false as the shows with which he first made her a lover. The line regards him as a deity and as a royal knight, but it highlights a sense of immaturity and smallness alongside these grander titles. Wroth’s appositive phrasing for love here is a far cry from her exaltation of Cupid as the “Great King of Love” in the corona (P89.11), and I’ll address the links between these two sonnets in greater detail later in this chapter. Here, I want to pause to consider the way the final line of this sonnet links both Wroth’s Love is a Monarch metaphor and her Love is a Witchcraft metaphor. After confessing that she despises his boyship, the speaker asserts: “Your charmes I obay, butt love nott want of eyes” (14). This line marks a distinction between love and obedience, perhaps two of the greatest concerns for a monarch and certainly concerns for King James. For instance, in his second speech to parliament on April 8, 1614, James requested a “Parliament of Love,” demonstrating his affection for his subjects and commanding his subjects to show manifest love for their sovereign (Ackroyd 43). Wroth’s line furthers the metaphor of love as a monarch, reflecting the monarch’s need for obedience from his subjects and at least the just monarch’s desire that this obedience be grounded in love for their ruler and not on fear, as a tyrannical king might enforce his rule. However, in her distinction between love and obedience, the speaker asserts that she obeys love’s charms, but doesn’t love his

blindness. In this way, the speaker links her obedience with the Love is a Witchcraft metaphor, suggesting she is only obedient to charms, or a magic spell, and not to any qualities generally associated with a monarchy, like a ruler's fairness, wisdom, or generosity. In addition, the speaker declares that she does not love Cupid's blindness. Not only does this reinforce the idea that the subject does not obey out of love, but also it places that reason for a lack of love on an inherent trait of the boy god. The source of Cupid's blindness is never revealed in mythological sources, suggesting the trait as something the boy was born with. The speaker, it seems, despises his "boyship" and his blindness, inherent traits of the mythical figure for love and, in this case, the monarchy to which love is compared. The speaker's only obedience is based on charmes, magic, and deception, and I believe this conflation of witchcraft and monarchy may be an early foreshadowing of the tyranny that love is capable of as the metaphor continues across the sequence. Now, although Wroth carefully aligns her word choice, "charmes" (14) in this sonnet with "faire shoves" (11), suggestive of the magical, deceptive meaning in this word, I think it is also important to note the use of "charm" to suggest a trinket, small ornament, or even money ("Charm, n1"). This meaning of the term emphasizes a more monarchical sense of the phrase, alluding to the gifts or financial rewards given by a ruler, while also suggesting the trinkets or ornaments passed between lovers. However, that these gifts would lead to obedience serves to once again undercut any sense of the monarch's rule founded on the love of his subjects or his traits as a good ruler. Whether the charms that ignite obedience are magical, ornamental, or financial in nature, their influence places such obedience on untenable ground, leaving the possibility for favoritism, despotism, and tyranny lurking in the Court of Love.

Wroth's next figuration of the lover as a bound subject to love comes in P16. This sonnet, explored further for its use of the Love is a Journey metaphor elsewhere, depicts the speaker-lover as "conquer'd" (1), "captive," "prisoner," "bound," and "unfree" (4). Like P8, this sonnet links the idea of love as a ruler or monarch and love as witchcraft. The speaker asks: "Why should wee nott loves purblind charmes resist? / Must wee bee servile, doing what hee list?" (9-10). The first question casts love in the role of a witch or wizard, using charms to control its subjects. Then, the second question highlights the lover as servile, as a slave or property, casting love in a role as master. While both questions essentially do the same work of interrogating the lover's experience as a loss of control to the emotion of love, they draw a suggestive link between the conception of love as a master, ruler, or monarch and love as a witch. As the poem continues, the speaker asserts that she will escape love's tricks and declare her freedom: "[...] I fly / Thy babish tricks, and freedome doe profess" (11-12). In this image as well, the speaker blends two metaphors to imagine herself escaping love, figured as a master or ruler, and escaping love's "tricks," recalling witchcraft imagery. Beginning with a question, "Am I thus conquer'd?" (1), this sonnet's interrogation of the love experience seems unable to distinguish between a conception of love as either a lawful master or a tricky wizard.

Wroth may find a possible solution to this in P47, when she draws on the metaphor of love as king, but limits the rule of such a monarch to the lover's eyes. As this sonnet nears its conclusion, the speaker declares: "His sight gives lyfe unto my love-rulde eyes" (13). Without traces of witchcraft, charms, or tricks, the speaker here seems able to imagine love as a ruler, ruling over her eyes. However, the final line of the sonnet may be complicating this possibility as the speaker's contentment is haunted by the possibility of

deception in the final line, discussed further elsewhere: “My love content beecause in his, love lies” (14). The possibility that “love lies” suggests not only her love’s resting places, but also the risk of deception. In this way, we could read another link here between love as ruler and love as witch, although I don’t think it is explicitly required.

Wroth returns to a conception of the love experience as a form of slavery in P72, when she imagines the lover brought to the bonds of love by Folly. Told that no one can live without this bondage, the speaker explains: “I, ignorant, did grant, and soe was brought, / And solde againe to lovers slaverie” (5-6). This image of slavery puts the lover in the role of slave, merely for feeling love, and does not seem to suggest that the sense of slavery is the result of an unequal or abusive relationship or an unfaithful or narcissistic lover. While Folly participates in this transaction, she merely delivers the lover to the “bands” (4) and sells her into “lovers slaverie” (6). Once enslaved, the speaker insists that lovers won’t seek to free themselves: “The duty to that vanitie once taught / Such band is, as wee will nott seeke to free” (7-8). This image of the lover as slave suggests a willful bondage and one that the lover does not resist. Therefore, even as she engages with a metaphor casting love as a slave-master, Wroth also hints at a voluntary subjugation, lessening the sense of violence or control that might otherwise haunt a slave-lover image.

Wroth explores this sense of voluntary subjugation further in P79. In this sonnet, third in the corona, the speaker exhorts lovers to “Please him, and serve him, glory in his might” (9). While each sonnet in the corona presumably imagines love, via Cupid, as a monarch in the Court of Love, this sonnet explicitly casts the lover in a subjugated role. The lovers here are imagined in the court, both bound to love, “his bands are true lovers

might” (1), and obedient to love: “Then love obey, strive to observe his might” (13).

Examined together, the “might” referred to at the start of the sonnet and that at the end seem contradictory. At the start, the speaker seems to imagine that love’s bands are, in fact, the result of the lovers’ own might, suggesting that perhaps the strength of their love holds them captive to love. Or even, perhaps, that their bondage to love gives lovers strength. However, as the poem draws to a close, the lovers are encouraged “to observe *his* might” (13 emphasis mine). As she creates this figurative court, the lovers who occupy it are both captive to love’s bands while also obedient and subservient to love, presumably unresistant to love’s rule.

Similar to her image casting love as ruler over the speaker’s eyes in P47, in P85 Wroth positions love as ruler again, but limited to only the heart as a subject. Reflecting on Venus, the speaker asserts: “Our harts ar subject to her sunn” (5). This line firmly places lovers’ hearts in the role of subject, a positioning that promotes the metaphor of love as a ruler or monarch, but the figure limits this subjugation to the heart. Like her love-ruled eyes in P47, we see the heart here as a subject to Love, or Cupid, the son of Venus, but we don’t encounter the fully-enslaved body of a lover. In fact, this image might even recall Cupid’s traditional evisceration of the heart, particularly in Cupidean Tragedy. Kingsley-Smith asserts that while not all tragedies featuring Cupid are Cupidean tragedy, she locates four early modern plays in which Cupid functions “as the agent of the lovers’ destruction”: *Cambyses* (1561), *Gismond of Salerne* (1566), *Tancred and Gismund* (1591), and *Cupid’s Revenge* (1608). She asserts that “Cupidean tragedy is more engaged with the political consequences of desire, anticipating ‘Jacobean sex tragedies’ such as Middleton’s *The Lady’s Tragedy* and Fletcher’s *Valentinian*, in which

the tyrant's 'sexual misconduct and abuse of power are coextensive'" (75) and insists that this Cupid "embodies the desire that drives the tyrant and that will invariably lead to his downfall" and "imitates the violent self-assertion and lawlessness of the tyrant, as suggested by his cruelty towards lovers" (75). In particular, one of the key dramatic features of these plays is "the evisceration and displaying of a human heart" (77), a feature we might recognize in Wroth's opening sonnet. In *Tancred and Gismund*, Kingsley-Smith sees the evisceration and display of Guiscardo's heart as "an image that would have been familiar from the contemporary execution of traitors but also as an emblem of Cupid's power and of the lovers' fatal self-loss" (82). This self-loss is registered in Wroth's opening image of Venus displaying her flaming heart for Cupid to shoot: "But one hart flaming more then all the rest / The goddess held, and putt itt to my brest, / Deare sonne, now shutt sayd she" (P1.9-11). From this point on, Wroth's self-identification shifts: "Yett since: O mee: a lover I have binn" (14), and her sequence explores the subjugation she experiences in this role. In this image, we see the lover's heart figuratively eviscerated from the rest of her body, presenting the heart as a subject to Cupid, while ignoring the rest of the body. The heart in this sonnet, torn from the lover in its role as subject, finds its match in Cupid: "This childe for love, who ought like monster borne / Bee from the court of Love, and reason torne" (P85.14). In imagining how the lover might be a subject to love, Wroth seeks to distinguish between the lover and her heart. In so doing, she eviscerates the lover's heart like Cupid, tearing it from the lover's body like Cupid himself is torn from reason and the court of Love.

In P90, the final sonnet of the corona, this imagery is furthered, as the lover's heart is given away as a sign of conquest. Before this sonnet begins, P89 concludes with

the speaker's honorification of Cupid and claim to give to his trust "This crowne, my self, and all that I have more / Except my hart which you beestow'd beefore" (13-14). This sonnet's conclusion presents a lover who has given her heart to Cupid, or love, and who seems willing to give him even more. However, as the final sonnet of the corona opens with this same line, the line's new conclusion suggests that love is unworthy of such adoration:

Except my hart which you bestow'd before,
 And for a sign of conquest gave away
 As worthles to bee kept in your choyse store
 Yett one more spotles with you doth nott stay. (P90.1-4)

This opening quatrain presents a Love that is unfaithful to the lover, giving her heart away. And, not merely is the gifted heart given away, it is done so as a sign of conquest to others. This presentation of the lover's heart is done to prove that the lover is a subject to love and has been conquered by it. The speaker highlights here that even though her own heart is treated as worthless, it is more spotless than any of the others. She unpacks the reason for exalting her own heart in this way in the second and third quatrain:

The tribute which my hart doth truly pay
 Is faith untouch'd, pure thoughts discharge the score
 Of debts for mee, wher constancy bears sway,
 And rules as Lord, unharm'd by envyes sore,
 Yett other mischiefs faile nott to attend,
 As enemies to you, my foes must bee;
 Curst jealousie doth all her forces bend

To my undoing; thus my harmes I see. (5-12)

Here, the speaker figures her heart as paying a tribute to discharge her debts, and this payment is in the form of her faithfulness and constancy. The speaker imagines envy and “other mischiefs” as the enemies and foes of both love and herself, and she sees jealousy bending all her forces to undo her. Under this attack, the speaker claims to see her harmes, and she returns to the conflicting question: “Soe though in Love I fervently doe burne, / In this strange labourinth how shall I turne?” (13-14).

Love’s Throne and the Court of Love

Beyond imagining the lover as a subject or even slave to love, Wroth also employs a Love as Monarch metaphor in her depictions of the Court of Love and Love’s throne. For instance, in P2, the speaker praises the eyes of her beloved, a topic discussed further in my chapter on Love as Light, referring to his face as “The court of glory, wher Loves force was borne” (4). She compares his eyes to “starrs of Heaven” (9), insisting that they have been sent down to grace the earth and “Plac’d in that throne which gives all joyes theyr birthe” (10). In this sonnet, Wroth first introduces her Court of Love imagery. She does this, not by aligning the court with love as an emotion or a deified power, but as the face of her beloved. She imagines his eyes adorning “that blessed sphaere” (2), calling it the “court of glory” and the birthplace of love’s force (4). The throne of love becomes the throne for the beloved’s eyes, and they seem to rule the lover here more than the actual emotion of felt love. The speaker imagines them with echoes of the traditional Petrarchan figure, claiming that they wound, hurt, and harm her, even as they delight her and their force seems pleasant. However, rather than imaging a throne in

this Court of Love occupied by Love itself, or Cupid, Wroth imagines the ruler sitting in this throne as the bright eyes of her beloved.

In P12, Wroth suggests that Love may occupy this throne by referring to “The honor’d title of your Godhed, Love” (10). While this line exalts Love as a deity, it offers little picture of a throne or an ultimate ruler handing down orders. Instead, in this instance of the Love is a Monarch metaphor, we see the ruler, Love, depicted in debate, presumably seeking the council of advisors before deciding whether or not to come to the aid of the speaker’s requests and end the torments against her. Because of this detail, I think we could also consider this imagery among those that teach the reader something about being a good ruler, or about being a good lover. In this case, Wroth may be teaching her readers that a good lover, like a good ruler, will not needlessly oppress or torment. Doing so risks turning even the faithful lover to anger: “Give nott just cause for mee to say a place / Is found for rage alone on mee to move” (11-12). Additionally, the good ruler debates and seeks council, but not for too long. “O quickly end, and doe nott long debate / My needfull ayde, least help do come too late” (13-14). While Wroth admonishes Love to not debate too long, she also reinforces that a good ruler seeks council, a move that critiques King James’s absolutist vision of monarchy. In his *Basilikon Doron* and *The Trew Law of Free Monarchies*, both reprinted in England the year of his coronation in 1603, King James argues that kings are appointed directly by God and are responsible solely to him and not to their subjects. Intended to serve as a textbook to his son and heir, Prince Henry, King James advises: “Aboue all vertues, study to know well your owne craft, which is to rule your people” (*Basilikon Doron* II.14). In a 1610 address to Parliament, King James asserts that “kings are justly called gods, for that

they exercise a manner or resemblance of divine power upon earth . . . They make and unmake their subjects. They have power of raising and casting down, of life and death, judges over all their subjects and yet accountable to none but God only” (“A Speach”). King James’s fraught relationship with Parliament characterizes his absolutist form of monarchy and a failure to heed their council. Beyond a critique of his absolutism in this sonnet, Wroth also suggests that the good ruler will show mercy and give aid to his needful subjects. This runs counter to King James’s own admissions about his leadership, and his council to Prince Henry. King James writes: “I confesse, where I thought (by being gracious at the beginning) to win all men’s hearts to to a louing and willing obedience, I by the contrary found, the disorder of the countrie, and the losse of my thanks to be all my reward” (*Basilokon Doron* II.3). And, he goes on to council the prince toward more severity: “For if otherwise ye kyth your clemencie at the first, the offences would soone come to such heapes, and the contempt of you grow so great, that when ye would fall to punish, the number of them to be punished would exceed the innocent” (II.3). The King’s resistance to clemency and mercy is depicted in his writing, but Wroth’s sonnet offers a counter approach to his kind of rule. Instead, she appeals to King James’s view of king as gods in her address to “your Godhead” and follows that with a depiction of a king who seeks the counsel of his trusted advisors, acts quickly, and shows mercy.

Although Wroth began by imagining the beloved’s eyes in the throne, her shift to place Love in the court as godhead seems to result in the spoiling of that place. For example, in the second song of this first section of sonnets, the singer asks where she might go after Cupid runs off to the forest:

Whether (alass) then shall I goe Ay mee;
 When as despaire all hopes outgoe Ay mee;
 Iff to the Forest, Cupid hyes,
 And my poor soule to his lawe ties Ay me;
 To the Court? O no. Hee crys fy Ay mee;
 Ther no true love you shall espy Ay mee;
 Leave that place to faulscet lovers
 Your true love all truth discovers Ay mee; (P14.13-20)

The lines of this song suggest that the Court of Love is not, in fact, a place for true love. Rather, the court is for false lovers. This image of a court spoiled by its own monarch may mirror the Jacobean court. Sir John Harington's description of King James's entertainment of the King of Denmark at Theobalds in 1606 includes ladies who "roll about in intoxication" and men who excel each other in "wild riot, excess, and devastation of time and temperance" (352). Although optimism ruled at his coronation with the Archbishop of Canterbury's prayer that "the glorious dignity of his royal court, may brightly shine . . . far and wide in the eyes of all men" (qtd. in de Lisle 243-244), King James's personal behavior diminished his prestige. His court was characterized by intemperance, and Wroth's inconsistent imagery of a "court of glory" (P2.4) and a court where true love is unable to flourish may be registering some of the disappointed hopes by the English. Her imagery may recall the lost days of *Gloriana*, or Elizabeth I. In fact, de Lisle maintains: "The glorification of Elizabeth's memory became a popular means of criticizing her successor" (284). By shifting between these contradictory depictions, Wroth presents two views of the monarchy and his court. This move allows the poet to

glorify the English court and its memory of Queen Elizabeth, while also posing a subtle critique of the current monarch. In this song, the speaker laments: “From contraries I seeke to runn Ay mee; / Butt contraries I can nott shunn” (P14.9-10). Following the apparent debasement of the court by placing Love, as a god, in its thrown, Wroth acknowledges the inconsistency of these two competing images and reinforces the possibility for critique of King James in her sequence.

In P41, readers encounter another court scene. Here, the speaker’s heart serves in the role of witness and fear is the testimony:

How well poore hart thou wittnes canst I love,
 How oft my grieve hath made thee shed for tears
 Drops of thy deerest blood, and how oft feares
 Borne testimony of the paines I prove (1-4)

Although the opening quatrain presents a rather nondescript day in court, the speaker goes on to describe the scene further with details suggestive of torture and inquisition:

What torments hast thou suffered while above
 Joy, thou tortur’d wert with racks which longing beares
 Pinch’d with desires which yett butt wishing reares
 Firm in my faith, in constancy to move (5-8)

In this quatrain, Wroth’s language, including “torments,” “suffered,” tortur’d,” “racks,” and “pinch” add a significant twist to the court scene. Now, readers can imagine the speaker and her heart in some kind of dungeon or pit, as the previous torments were “sufferd while above” (5). The speaker is now depicted as below, down, or beneath joy, an image that reiterates the premise from Lakoff and Johnson that “orientational

metaphors” organize a system of concepts in relation to each other (14). For example, up is the direction of happiness, joy, and gladness, while down is the direction of sadness, grief, and melancholy. They assert: “These spatial orientations arise from the fact that we have bodies of the sort we have and that they function as they do in our physical environment” (14). The sad lover feels down or low, for example, while the happy lover feels up or even over the moon. In addition, these torments include torture with devices like a rack and pincers, tools often associated with inquisition and interrogation. Wroth reinforces this connection to religious torture, like that of the Spanish Inquisition, in the final line of this quatrain: “Firm in my faith, in constancy to move” (8). Although there is not a monarch explicitly present in this imagery, the sonnet offers a view of the lover’s experience as a court scene and it alludes to the ruler or monarch that might be behind this kind of torture, even if he is not actively participating in the act. The second part of the sonnet suggests the cause for this torture as an interrogation of the heart to see if it truly loves, particularly because it does not seem to exhibit love. The speaker insists, in lines distinctively reminiscent of Sidney’s: “For know more passion in my hart doth move / Then in a million that make show of love” (13-14). Unlike Wroth’s imagery, Sidney explores this idea using familiar images of courtly love, like set colors, locks of hair, and the lover’s groans. His final couplet presents a rather pastoral comparison between bird types, returning love to an idyllic environment for final consideration: “Dumb swans, not chattering pies, do lovers prove; / They love indeed, who quake to say they love” (54.13-14). Conversely, Wroth keeps her imagery firmly in a court environment, exploring its dark underbelly in terms of torture and interrogation. Her imagery hints at abuse of power, tyranny, and distrust. She leaves out descriptors that

might associate this court with courtly love, focusing on the court as a place of questioning, doubt, and violence. Furthermore, while Sidney's speaker seems to reject outward shows of love out of personal preference and the suggestion that unvoiced love is truer, Wroth's speaker seems to hide her love out of necessity and suggests that it is painful to do so: "When thy chief paine is that I must itt hide / From all save only one who should itt see" (11-12). In the sonnet's conclusion, we see a lover caught in a hopeless cycle. She hides her love, causing hurt to her own heart, but in being unable to show her love, she seems to be dragged to court and interrogated over whether or not she loves at all.

Following what I would argue is an overtly negative view of court, and perhaps courtly love, Wroth's next engagement with court imagery in the second section of sonnets turns convention and social order on its head. She describes night as "The Raigne of Love for servants, free from spite" (P65.3). In this sonnet, Wroth explores the nighttime as a potential space for love to rule its servants, now free from the spite or envy that rules them during the day. This sonnet can serve as a representation of Wroth's focus in this second section on the troubling elements of love, like jealousy, doubt, anxiety, and hopelessness. As the section draws to a close, the speaker expresses her guilt over portraying Love in this way, and she introduces the next section: a corona in his honor. This sonnet begs Cupid for forgiveness and asserts that "treason never lodged in my mind / Against thy might soe much as in a thought" (P76.3-4). By using the word "treason" here, Wroth clearly positions Cupid, or Love, in the role of a monarch. She insists that her folly was caused because her soul could not find quiet rest and that she acted rashly and in error:

And now my folly I have deerly bought
 Nor could my soule least rest or quiett find
 Since rashnes did my thoughts to error bind
 Which now thy fury, and my harme hath wrought; (5-8)

In repayment for her crimes against Love, she offers love a crown: “Butt now that hand shall guided bee aright, / And give a crowne unto thy endless prayse” (11-12). The crown, or corona, that the poet presents offers the monarch endless praise because the final line of each sonnet is the first line of the next one, with the final line of the sonnet bringing the reader full circle back to the first line. This section of sonnets serves as the literary representation of Love’s crown, highlighting the conceptual metaphor of Love as Monarch in both its form and function within the sequence. Although Wroth’s most immediate influence may have been her father, Sir Robert Sidney, his incomplete crown of sonnets to a specific lady is surpassed by his daughter’s larger, completed crown in honor of a universal concept of love.

Within this section of the sonnets, there are few explicit references to the Court of Love or Love’s throne, but Wroth engages with this image again in the sequence’s fourth and final section. The section opens with an interlude of songs, and here we find Cupid, still cast as a monarch, but playing in the woods:

Sweet Silvia in a shadie wood
 With her faire Nymphs layde downe
 Sawe nott farr off wher Cupid stood
 The Monarck of loves crowne;
 All naked playing with his wings

Within a mirtle tree (P92.1-6)

After failing to satisfactorily idealize Cupid as a good and noble ruler in the corona, Wroth quickly switches back to the Anacreontic Cupid within this interlude. While Wroth returns to imagining a mischievous rascal, she does not leave out his designation as a monarch, reminding readers that even as a boy, playing naked with himself in the woods, he is still the Monarch of Love's Crown. The song ends with a sobering reminder:

Take heede then, nor doe idly smyle
 Nor loves commands despise
 For soone will hee your strength beeguile
 Although hee want his eyes. (25-28)

As we enter the final section of sonnets, Wroth's playful song insists that Love, imagined as a monarch, can be neither fully exalted as good and noble nor dismissed as a naive child. In either form, Cupid wears Love's crown, serves as the Monarch of Love, and embodies all of the contradictions inherent in that image.

Wroth engages Court of Love imagery in three sonnets within the final section. In P95, the speaker exalts Cupid as the God of Love, while denigrating Venus to the Queen of lust: "Thou God of love, she only Queene of lust" (13). In P98, the speaker refers to her "genius" (7), traditionally the arch-priest of the Court of Love. She describes the effects of looking at an image of her beloved: "And in my soule a speritt would apeere, / Which boldnes waranted, and did pretend / To bee my genius" (5-7). Although the image sparks fear, desire, and jealousy, leading to this false genius, the speaker overcomes this danger with the realization that the truer image of her beloved lies in her heart, where

others can't see it. Finally, in P101, Wroth imagines love's lasting power. She reflects on her inability to escape the passions in her heart, and admits that in spite of love's power to "Rule, wounde, and please" (7), she doesn't want it to stop: "Yet would I nott (deere love) thou shouldst depart" (5). Rather, the sonnet ends with the speaker looking to end of the world: "Think on thy glory which shall still assend / Untill the world come to a finall end, / And then shall wee thy lasting powre deserne" (12-14). In Wroth's final depiction of the Court of Love here, she exalts love and emphasizes its power. She imagines love lasting beyond the end of the earth and its glory. Although Wroth's particular spelling, "deserne," is not found in the *OED*, I think it is safe to gloss this as "decern," equivalent to the modern word, "discern." Given that meaning, we can interpret this word as "to comprehend or understand clearly" ("Discern, v1"). Love is contradictory, confusing, and withstands neither exaltation nor denigration. In short, it seems nearly impossible to understand. However, Wroth asserts in this sonnet that while our understanding and experience of love offers no satisfaction or peace now, we will be able to comprehend it after the world comes to an end. Wroth's suggestion here is that everything else will end, but love will last. And when it lasts beyond the end of the world, we'll be able to see and understand its power.

Truth as Ruler

In my examination of Wroth's Court of Love imagery, I found her exploring the inherent contradictions and impossibilities of defining love as an honorable ruler, despot tyrant, or mischievous child, concluding that we won't fully understand Love until the end of time. Here, I want to shift to consider another ruler that emerges within these sonnets. In P56 and P69, both in the second section of sonnets, Wroth considers Truth as

a ruler, offering a telling counter to her depictions of Love in the same role. In P56, the speaker addresses an unidentified “you” and also relies on feminine pronouns: “Lett those disdaines which on your hart doe seaze / Doubly returne to bring her soules unrest” (5-6). She wishes for grief to be far from the audience’s breast and for her to find contentment in love. At the volta, however, she turns to the mistakes of love:

Butt often times mistakings bee in love,
 Bee they as farr from faulce accusing right,
 And still truthe governe with a constant might,
 Soe shall you only wished pleasures prove (9-12)

While the speaker admits that love can make mistakes, even such gross mistakes as false accusing what is right, she insists that truth rules the heart with constancy. In this sonnet, we see a monarch ruling in the lover’s heart, but it is not love, as suggested, albeit problematically, elsewhere. Rather, it is truth. Countered against love, the speaker recognizes that Love is not infallible or always right, but that truth governs the heart with constancy. Furthermore, the speaker suggests that truth can govern even as love makes mistakes, “And still truthe governe” (11). In this sonnet, the speaker seems to have found another monarch to rule the heart, displacing Love as Monarch while also appearing to work alongside it.

Wroth continues this line of thinking in P69 by asserting that jealousy persuades belief even while truth rules the heart. The speaker begins by claiming to know jealousy because she has seen and felt it:

An end fond jealousie alas I know
 Thy hidenest, and they most secrett art

Thou cast noe new invention frame butt part

I have allreddy seene, and felt with woe, (1-4)

In knowing jealousy, the speaker comes to believe it: “All thy dissemblings which by fained show / Wunn my beeleeffe, while truth did rule my hart” (5-6). In these lines, we once again see truth as the monarch of the heart instead of love. Jealousy, an apparent side effect of love, has led the speaker to believe things that are not true, even while truth remained the ruler of her heart. In this imagery, we can see Wroth distinguishing between both the heart and the head and between truth and belief. Going even further, the third stanza distinguishes excuse from reason: “I thought excuses had bin reasons true, / And that noe faulcehood could of thee ensue” (9-10). The speaker contends that belief can easily be created in an honest mind: “Soe soone beeleeffe in honest minds is wrought” (11). That said, the final tercet shows a lover who has overcome this false belief and learned from it: “Butt now I find thy flattery, and skill, / Which idly made mee to observe thy will; / Thus is my learning by my bondage bought” (12-14). The important distinctions that the speaker asserts in these lines seem to be the result of her learning. Through her bondage to jealousy, the speaker has learned to distinguish between her head and her heart, between truth and belief, and between excuse and reason. Interestingly, Wroth does not align truth with the mind and belief with the heart. Rather, Wroth aligns truth and reason with the heart and she aligns belief and excuses with the mind. She suggests that the mind can be tricked, it can be deceived by flattery, shows, excuses, and disguise, but the heart is ruled by truth. Although this sonnet doesn’t mention love directly or place it as a counter to truth, I see this imagery connecting with P56 in the way they both place truth as ruler of the heart while Love’s more troubling elements bombard

and threaten the lover. That both of these sonnets are found in the second section reinforces the suggestion that Wroth is attempting to find a stable truth and constancy in the heart, even as passion and emotion may alter the mind.

Although Wroth attempts to locate this stable truth in the second section, her work in the corona hints at the impossibility of dismissing Love's power. Earlier, I discussed Wroth's imagery at the end of P101, depicting our ultimate understanding of Love's lasting power after the end of the world. In the corona, we find a similar sentiment in P80. Here, the speaker implores lovers to be a light in love's court and to maintain the fires of love until the sun and moon go dark and second chaos, the ultimate destruction of the world, occurs. In the meantime, she asserts, affections rule the heart: "Till then, affections which his followers are / Govern our harts, and prove his powers gaine" (9-10). These lines explicitly align affection with love and suggest that these affections govern the heart, at least until the end of time, when, as suggested in P101, we are able to comprehend love. While her previous sonnets in the second section allow truth to govern the heart even as the lover is beset by jealousy or grief, Wroth avoids displacing love from the throne in the corona created in his honor. This is most likely a result of her purpose to exalt love in this section, leaving behind the rash errors she confessed to at the end of the second section. Placing truth in the role of monarch or ruler in the second section is the very kind of move that might suggest the treason she insists she didn't commit. Leaving that exaltation of truth behind, she moves on to consider love as the ultimate ruler and monarch in the corona. Nevertheless, the echoes of these other possibilities haunt the corona, and even this image of affections governing the heart

recalls the other ruler that Wroth has explored previously, already hinting at the impossibility of sustaining her glorification of love beyond that circular unit.

Didactic Metaphors - What is good rule?

While elements of Wroth's didacticism can be read throughout the sequence, I want to focus here on three sonnets that seem to offer an explicit lesson about ruling. The first of these can be found in P3, where the speaker turns to hope in the midst of love's pain. Begging love to think of her and shine again in her beloved's eyes, the sonnet ends with a tercet directing love as a monarch to seek the good for his subjects: "Will you your servant leave? Think butt on this; / Who weares loves crowne, must nott doe soe amiss, / Butt seeke theyr good, who on thy force doe lye" (12-14). The speaker's voice makes a noticeable shift between the 12th and 13th line. While line twelve is personal, referring to the speaker directly as "your servant" and suggesting a certain degree of immediacy and intimacy, this specificity is dropped for a universalized lesson on kingship, addressing not so much love as a particular monarch, but anyone who wears love's crown. I suggest that the shift here to a more generalized monarch also allows readers to recognize in these lines an address to monarchs more generally as well. Contemporary readers might see in these lines a sort of "mirror for magistrates," or a way to hold the mirror up to a monarch and reflect their deeds so that other leaders can learn from them. Is Wroth offering a lesson for King James in this sonnet? Dove argues that Wroth's sonnets do more than mimic the eroticism of love poems, they also provide a critique of King James's leadership by proposing a reform of Cupid's tyranny in the sequence's corona. I think we might begin to see this critique emerge earlier, particularly in the subtle didacticism of lines like these. As I established earlier, King James did not seem particularly concerned

with the good of his subjects. In his *Basilikon Doron* he advises Prince Henry: “The sword is giuen you by God . . . to revenge vpon your owne subjects, the wrongs committed amongst themselues” (II.3). However, Petrarchanism offered “a means of using accepted conventions to put courtly presumptions in their place,” as asserted by Danielle Clarke regarding Queen Elizabeth’s own use of the Petrarchan mode (206). Similarly, Wroth uses the Petrarchan mode in her sonnets to critique King James’s practice of the monarchy. Sir John Harington’s observation of the Hampton Court conference in 1604 suggests that King James dealt harshly with his subjects, even those he claimed to appease. Harington writes that the king “rather used upbraidings than arguments; and told the petitioners that they wanted to strip Christ again and away with their snivellings” in his dealings with the Puritans (181-2). De Lisle cites King James’s “evident contempt for ordinary people” as more weighty than his intellect and good intentions in his historical legacy. By ending her sonnet with a lesson for anyone “who weares loves crowne” (13), Wroth is able to indirectly tell King James to be appropriate with his rule, seeking the good of his subjects rather than relying on force.

In P10, the speaker considers herself a bride of sorrow, “I with sorrow marry” (12). In the second quatrain of this sonnet, the speaker suggests that “sad misfortune” is destroying her, and she implores: “Leave crosses to rule mee, and still rule free” (6). This line presents an interpretive challenge. Is the speaker imploring the monarch to go rule freely, leaving crosses to the role ruling her? Is the speaker asking the monarch to leave crosses behind to focus on ruling? Although Wroth’s intended meaning may be difficult to determine, part of what I think is interesting about this line is the way that Wroth conflates the idea of a husband and a monarch, especially in the final couplet. The idea of

love is essentially absent from this sonnet, focusing instead on sorrow as a groom and a groom as a monarch. Although the idea of love certainly lurks behind marriage, Wroth's emphasis is on the groom as a ruler and the groom as a lover. The sonnet ends: "Then if with grief I now must coupled bee / Sorrow I'll wed: Despaire thus governs me" (13-14). Linda Dove asserts: "Wroth adopted the marital model of leadership that James abandoned as a way of correcting him and as a way of suggesting resistance to his theories of absolutism directly" (145). Although Dove focuses on the corrective elements in Wroth's corona, this early sonnet helps to set up a way of understanding that shared rule, by conflating the ideas of husband and wife, lover and beloved, king and subject. Dove suggests that Wroth challenges James's ideas of absolute authority by offering a picture of Cupid and the poems' female speaker reigning together. She maintains that Wroth's model for good government is one where rule is shared with the people, claiming that she adapts the commonplace analogy to better suit her image of right rule. Dove asserts: "Wroth alters the analogy by imagining a reciprocal partnership in the corona and thus suggests a state ruled with the help of the people" (143).

Although the entire corona presents Love as a Monarch, sonnet P86 offers an explicit statement on rule and government. Like much of Wroth's work, however, reading this sonnet presents interpretative challenges. In order to unpack the poem's ideas about the love experience and monarchy, we have to slow down and read each word and line carefully and critically, an act of reading that in itself may be one of Wroth's underlying goals. The sonnet opens with the speaker addressing lovers in general, urging them to: "Bee from the court of Love, and reason torne" (1). This line seems to suggest that lovers separate themselves both from the Court of Love, which has already been

identified as problematic, and from reason, a potential escape from love's pain that Wroth has explored, although unsuccessfully, in previous sonnets. The next line explains why this separation is necessary: "For Love in reason now doth putt his trust" (2). The rationale behind the speaker's direction suggests that lovers should separate themselves from the Court of Love and from reason because Love is now trusting reason. I think we can understand this as a vexed turn of events because Wroth has previously suggested that love and reason are not compatible, like in P72 where the speaker comes to understand love's power and "reason did reject" (12). The next two lines use an image of parenthood to further reveal the nature of this association: "Desert, and liking are together borne / Children of love, and reason parents just" (3-4). Here, Wroth's word "desert" suggests deserving or becoming worthy of recompense ("Desert, n1"). Notably, this term does not imply merit or demerit, but simply the reward or punishment, depending on the character or on the conduct. Next, Wroth's term "liking" suggests an instance of pleasure or enjoyment or a feeling of regard and affection ("Liking, n1"). Going a step further, this term is suggestive of lust and sexual desire. Taken together, the line presents an image of that which is deserved and that which is enjoyed being born at once. If deserving and enjoying are born together, who are the parents? Line four reveals that with love now trusting reason, reason and love together become the parents of what is deserved and what is enjoyed: "Children of love, and reason parents just" (4). With the scene set in this first quatrain, the second quatrain shifts to offer a precept on love:

Reason advisor is, love ruler must

Bee of the state which crowne hee long hath worne

Yett soe as neither will in least mistrust

The government wher noe feare is of scorne, (5-8)

Here, Wroth seems to offer a corrective to the scene she paints above. She uncouples love from reason to present both in unique roles rather than united as parents. Reason, Wroth asserts, is an advisor. Love is a ruler. Not stopping there, Wroth goes on to assert that as ruler, love must “Bee of the state which crowne hee long hath worne” (6), a line that seems to be telling love to get back to the state of love, get back to wearing love’s crown, and let reason return to its advising role to that state. As in the first quatrain, the first two lines give a directive and the second two provide a rationale. The rationale provided here suggests that by working in their distinct roles, reason as advisor and love as ruler, neither will mistrust this government because there is no fear of mockery or contempt: “Yett so as neither will in least mistrust / The government wher noe feare is of scorne” (7-8). The suggestion here seems to be that when love rules and reason advise, the two can trust each other and that governing structure. The fear of mockery or scorn is removed and trust is restored. This language might once again reflect the fraught state of affairs in King James’s court, like his dealings with the Puritans at Hampton Court that Harington describes. In addition, the government’s mistrust of their monarch may echo some of the financial troubles by the king, and he disappointed the hope expressed at his coronation. Lockyer explains: “Their expectations, unfortunately, were not fulfilled, for corruption, which was one of the principal abuses, remained endemic in public life, and James’s good intentions were frustrated by the financial problems which confronted him, and which he made worse by his own extravagance” (254). For example, following the Gunpowder Plot, a relieved Parliament voted three subsidies and six fifteenths, an increase in taxation that excelled the widespread perception that the limits of taxation had

already been reached. King James celebrated the revenue by giving £44,000 to three Gentleman of the Bedchamber in order to help them pay off their debts. “Such behavior,” Lockyer insists, “helped create the impression that James’s financial problems were self-generated, and that any aid he was given would be wasted” (256). This mistrust in the king’s ability to manage the finances of the state, Wroth seems to argue, might be avoided if the king would “Bee of the state which crowne hee long hath worne” (6).

While Wroth has previously demonstrated that reason and love are incompatible, this imagery searches for a happy medium, a way for love and reason to work together without, say, love mocking reason for lacking heart and reason mocking love for lacking brains. Rather, this governing structure might utilize both their strengths, and this powerful potential becomes the resulting effect in the first line of the third quatrain: “Then reverence both theyr mights thus made of one” (9). Although Wroth has defined distinct roles for love and reason in this governmental structure, she presents the roles working together, “theyr mights thus made of one” (9). With love ruling and reason advising, lovers can give reverence to both, acknowledging a united force within the government. Beyond showing honor and esteem for love and reason, Wroth goes a step further in her direction to lovers: “Butt wontones, and all those errors shun, / Which wrongers bee, impostures, and alone / Maintainers of all follyes ill begun” (10-12). Directing lovers to shun wantonness and error, Wroth again shows a distinction between love and reason. Wantonness might be read as a mere recklessness or even a child’s unruliness, but given Wroth’s earlier use of “desert” and “liking,” I think we can read in this word its associations with lustfulness, lasciviousness, and sexual promiscuity (“Wantonness, n”). Shunning wantonness, then, can be read as a direction to shun the

corrupted version of love. Similarly, shunning error might be read as rejecting the corrupted version of reason. Just as wanton lust might be understood as the opposite of faithful love, error might be understood as the opposite of informed reason. Furthermore, Wroth defines these corrupted versions of love and reason as “wrongers,” “impostures,” and “maintainers of all follyes” (11-12). Wroth’s word placement in these lines is particularly interesting because of the way she uses “alone” (11). On the one hand, we might read this as wantonness and error being the only maintainers of folly. This reading is supported by the punctuation. However, line eleven also suggests a list of three: 1) wrongers, 2) imposters, and 3) alone. With “alone” dangling at the end of that line, longer on the page than either of the adjacent lines, Wroth draws emphasis to the condition of solitude, presenting aloneness or perhaps singleness as an implied part of wantonness, error, wrongness, folly, and deception. This word placement and line design reinforces the unproductiveness or unprofitability of love trusting implicitly in reason. The result is not a coupling or the union of a happy pair, rather it’s an imposter at love, wrong at the ground level, as the couplet asserts: “Fruit of a sowre, and unwholsome ground / Unprofitably pleasing, and unsound” (13-14). Although relying on reason as an advisor is advanced here, Wroth seems to reject the possibility that reason can successfully be promoted to the same level as love or that these two could parent a healthy lover’s experience together. Taken further, I believe Wroth’s audience might see in her lines on government a precept applicable to their current monarchy. Let’s return to that second quatrain and examine the lesson it contains:

Reason advisor is, love ruler must

Bee of the state which crowne hee long hath worne

Yett soe as neither will in least mistrust

The government wher noe feare is of scorne, (5-8)

In these lines, Wroth not only offers a lesson on love, but also she offers a lesson on rule. First, she asserts that a ruler must be of the state whose crown he wears. What does it mean to be of the state? In the case of love, this seems to be telling love to behave like love, to act like the monarch it is, not putting its trust in something incompatible, like reason. Wroth's directive offers a few possibilities regarding her historical context. King James's personal behavior diminished his prestige, and nostalgia for Elizabeth began to creep into public sentiment. Harington reports that ordinary people complained of missing "that generous affability that their good queen did afford them" (354). Harington recalls: "We did all love [the Queen], for she said she loved us," a feeling acknowledged by the Earl of Suffolk, James's Privy Councilor: "These things are no more the same" (355-363). A contemporary historian, Arthur Wilson, describes King James: "In his publick Appearances . . . the Accesses of the People made him so impatient, that he often dispersed them with Frowns" (qtd. in Ashton 63-64). Venetian ambassador Nicolò Molin described King James's failure to "caress the people" and his open "contempt and dislike" as resulting in his being "despised and almost hated" (*Calendar of the State* 513). And, while Wroth's instruction to embody the state recalls the myth of King Arther, where the king and the land are one, Lockyer emphasizes: "There was never any national cult of King James and attempts to turn the figure of Arthur from a chivalric symbol to one of British Union failed" (286). Meanwhile, Queen Anne finds ways to resist the restrictive court of King James, like adopting a distinct persona for her progresses and public appearances, "enacting to perfection the role of warm, gracious, lovely and

beloved Queen and presenting a sharp contrast to James's much-criticized aloofness and reserve" (Lewalski 18). In her study of the ways in which Queen Anne enacts her opposition to King James, Lewalski asserts:

The Queen's separate interests ran to progresses, entertainments, attending the theater, dancing and games with her ladies, architectural planning, and masques - activities which allowed her some scope for self-affirmation, for affecting Jacobean culture, and for resistance. Her most significant cultural activities were the entertainments and court masques she panned with Daniel, Jonson, and Inigo Jones, the primary recipients of her patronage over several years. (26-27)

These court masques, in particular, offer another way of understanding the historical context for this line. By asking the monarch in this sonnet to embody the state he rules, Wroth recalls the situational representation of the monarch at a court masque. The Jacobean masque presents a mythic idealization of the King, and he enjoys the only perfect perspective while seated in his chair of state. His gaze, Lewalski notes, "encompasses and controls the entire spectacle, he displays what the masque texts and the symbolic action show: that the monarch is the radiating source of all power, virtue, and benefits" (28). Stephen Orgel states: "The monarch, always the ethical centre of court productions, became in a physical and emblematic way the centre as well" (7). However, for the first decade or so, Lewalski suggests that the Stuart masque is not a normative form, and "the masque is instead a site for contestation about gender, power, and status. For example, in Daniel's *Vision of Twelve Goddesses*, presented on January 8, 1604, at Hampton Court, twelve goddesses present gifts to King James. Lewalski argues that "although these allegorical gifts compliment James," the Queen and her ladies "very

presence as performers makes the female body the locus of action and meaning” (30). Furthermore, the ladies are “active forces, the earthly embodiments of the deities who bring to James qualities and gifts which (by implication) his reign does not yet have” (30). In addition, Ben Jonson’s *Masque of Blackness*, a masque Wroth participated in, appears to center on the King, as the Queen and her ladies appear as dark-skinned and primitive beauties eager to transform their skin with the whitening power of the King. Lewalski writes: “At first glance their danger seems to be contained, and the transformative power seems to be vested where it should be, in James as Albion, son of Neptune and Sun-King of ‘Britania’ - the place the nymphs must discover and visit in order to gain their desired white skins” (32). However, the Sun-King’s powers are never displayed in the masque, and the Ethiops’ skin remains black. Wroth’s familiarity with these Jacobean masques is evidenced not only by her participation, but also by her family’s association with court entertainments. Wroth’s father, Robert Sidney, Viscount Lisle of Penshurst and later Earl of Leicester, became Queen Anne’s Lord Chamberlain and was responsible for the plays, entertainments, and festivities at her court. Additionally, Wroth’s cousin, love interest, and the inspiration for Amphilanthus in her sequence, William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke, was the King’s Lord Chamberlain after 1615. Wroth’s familiarity with and participation in these masques may inform the lines of this sonnet, urging the monarch to take back his position at the center and to embody his state, as the mythical ideal for these performances suggests.

When Love is a Tyrant or Loving is Treason

The ideas of treason and tyranny might be thought of as two sides of the same coin. On one side, treason is a subject’s act of betrayal against her King. On the other

hand, tyranny is a King's act of betrayal against his subjects, ruling unjustly, arbitrarily, and with an oppressive government. For this reason, I want to consider a sonnet dealing with the topic of tyranny here, rather than in the earlier section on Love as Subject, although many of the images Wroth uses in those sonnets might provide further evidence that when imagined as a monarch, love can start to look an awful lot like a tyrant.

Wroth defines this explicitly in her first section of sonnets, imagining false hope first as a miscarriage, discussed more in my chapter on Wroth's domestic metaphors, and then comparing that image to tyranny:

Soe Tirants doe who faulsly ruling earth
 Outwardly grace them, and with profitts fill
 Advance those who appointed are to death
 To make theyr greater falle to please theyr will.
 Thus shadow they theyr wicked vile intent
 Coulering evill with a show of good
 While in faire showes theyr malice soe is spent;
 Hope kills the hart, and tirants shed the blood. (P40.5-12)

Wroth's image of tyranny in this sonnet shows a monarch who rules falsely, and she highlights that potential differences between one's inward motives and what is presented outwardly. She asserts that tyrants shadow their wicked intent, coloring evil with an outward show of goodness. In particular, Wroth suggests that a tyrant advances his subjects at court only to kill them, making their fall from honor all the greater. As love, tyranny is figured here as beloved who teases, giving false hope to a potential lover only to abandon or humiliate her. Wroth asserts that this deluding hope "kills the heart," a

potential lurking anytime the lover lets herself believe in love. In line twelve, the death of the heart caused by hope is bloodless, as though the heart has merely stopped beating. However, when love is a tyrant, when love is false, an outward show intended only to humiliate and destroy, this tyranny sheds blood. The sonnet ends with a heroic couplet: “For hope deluding brings us to the pride / Of our desires the farder downe to slide” (13-14). Her conclusion returns us to that particular definition of a tyrant as one who advances only to kill, linking “greater falle” (8) with “farder down” (14), and reinforcing the association between false hope and tyrannical love.

The final aspect of monarchy that I want to examine here is treason, or the breach of faith. In the fifth sonnet of the sequence, Wroth engages with the conceptual metaphor of Love as Monarch by exploring the possibility of treason. This sonnet begins with a series of questions that reveal love's potential for betrayal:

Can pleasing sight, misfortune ever bring?

Can firme desire a painefull torment try?

Can winning eyes prove to the hart a sting?

Or can sweet lips in treason hidden ly? (P5.1-4)

She wonders here if a pleasing sight can ever bring misfortune, if desire can ever cause torment, if winning eyes can sting the heart, and if treason can be hidden in sweet lips.

Wroth's engagement with the idea of treason here presents it as a betrayal of the lover's experience. Those “sweet lips” might imply loving words or loving kisses, but they also contain the potential for treason or betrayal and, given the ending of that line, lies.

Wroth's phrase, “in treason ly,” suggests a pun on the word lie as an untruth as well as a pun on the word lie as the act of laying down. Her focus on treason reveals love's

potential for deception behind every kiss or loving word. She ends with the directive:

“Then show you harmes dislike, and joye in Love” (14). Wroth’s response to treason here is to express your dislike for it. She asks lovers to voice their dislike for the unenjoyable aspects of love and to focus on the joyous ones.

Wroth concludes the second section of her sequence and introduces the corona to Cupid, by asserting that she never committed or even considered any act of treason:

O pardon, Cupid I confess my fault

Then mercy grant mee in soe just a kind

For treason never lodged in my mind

Against thy might soe much as in a thought (P76.1-4).

Here, Wroth defines treason as an act of betrayal against Cupid, figured as the King of Love. Furthermore, she suggests that the pain she has felt in her love experience is the result of her failings and folly, and she promises to “give a crowne unto thy endless prayse” (12).

Within the corona, we find the most pronounced homage to this Monarch of Love in P89, when Wroth presents a series of kingly titles for Cupid in apposition. In this penultimate sonnet of the corona, Wroth seems to have reached an almost fever-pitch of devotion to the concept of Love as a Monarch, or Cupid. The speaker in this poem sees a sky, clear and bright, idealizing the weather as an introduction to the idealization of love to follow:

Free from all fogs butt shining faire, and cleere

Wise in all good, and innoſent in ill

Wher holly friendship is eſteemed deere

With truth in love, and justice in our will,
 In love thes titles only have theyr fill
 Of happy lyfe maintainer, and the meere
 Defence of right, the punnisher of skill,
 And fraude; from whence directions doth apeere,
 To thee then lord commander of all harts,
 Ruller of owr affections kind, and just
 Great King of Love, my soule from fained smarts
 Or thought of change I offer to your trust
 This crowne, my self, and all that I have more
 Except my hart which you beestow'd beefore. (1-14)

If ever there was a time when me thinks the lady might protest too much, it's now. By my count, this sonnet contains at least fifteen positive characterizations or titles for love, including Happy Life Maintainer, Commander of all Hearts, Ruler of Our Affections, and the Great King of Love. Love is wise in everything good and innocent of anything ill. Love punishes fraud and defends what is right. Love is where direction comes from. Idealizing love as a great monarch, the speaker is moved to give him her soul: "my soule form fained smarts / Or thought of change I offer to your trust" (11-12). Furthermore, the speaker, poet, and her poems merge in the final couplet, suggesting that this crown of sonnets is, in fact, the poet herself, voiced by the speaker: "This crowne, my self, and all that I have more / Except my hart which you beestow'd beefore" (13-14). It is this final line of the sonnet that causes the collapse of her entire enterprise. "*Except* my hart," the poet contends, and in this exception seems to remember why she is presenting her soul

here in the first place instead of her heart, as the next sonnet goes on to describe the way her heart was given away by love as a sign of conquest, discussed above. Wroth's attempts to idealize and honor love as a great monarch have collapsed by the end of the corona, returning the speaker to confusion and incomprehension within the corona.

Conclusion: The Unsustainability of Love as Monarch

As we have seen, imagining love as a monarch raises a number of problematic concerns for the lover. When depicted as monarch, love rules the lovers, making them subject to his whims and victims to his violence, whether manifest or metaphorical. The power structure that this imagery creates places lovers below love itself, and they prop up its power even as they are subject to it. By drawing on Petrarchan tradition in this image of Cupid as well as her contemporaries' representations of the love god in Cupidean tragedy, Wroth highlights the tyranny of desire and establishes a way of reading her sonnets that allows us to see her work participating in prominent political discourses on monarchy and absolutism in early seventeenth-century England. As she builds upon her opening vision of Cupid, Wroth imagines the boy-god's tyranny subjecting the lover to pain, captivity, and the tortures of jealousy and false hope. In her sonnets' exploration of the lover's experience, they also explore the experience of the English subject and present more ideal models of rulership. Readers can recognize that a conception of love as a monarch will not provide lasting stability or viability for a "true forme of love" (P100.14). Rather, the poet and her readers must seek other ways of imagining love and the love experience, through light, journeys, witchcraft, and domestic imagery.

Chapter 3 – Love is a Journey

The Ship-Wrecked Lover: “Sunk, and devour’d, and swallow’d by unrest”

An important feature of King James’s reign was the establishment of the first successful English colonies in the New World, like Jamestown. Poetry’s place among the imaginative repercussions of an age of discovery and colonization has been studied in Eric Cheyfitz’s *Poetics of Imperialism* and Jeffrey Knapp’s *An Empire Nowhere: England, America, and Literature from Utopia to the Tempest* in which he traces “the problem of an island empire, colonialism as a special solution to the problem, and poetry as a special model of both problem and solution” (7). However, although the foundational work for new historicist studies like this one has expanded our understanding of discursive relationships in the seventeenth century and the complicated connections between literary texts and the ideologies of the cultures and discursive milieu that produced them, scholars have not yet studied Mary Wroth’s sonnet sequence as a part of this complex colonial discourse. While ship and sea imagery is prominent in Petrarchan imagery, as are images of conquest, discovery, and weary travelers, Wroth’s use of these figures in her sequence not only attests to her knowledge and skill working inside this poetic tradition, but it also partakes in the colonial discourse surrounding England’s colonialism in the early seventeenth century. This chapter will explore a variety of issues related to English colonialism and increased naval presence, including conquest, slavery, race, trade, shipping, and other aspects of colonization and exploration. Centered on an image set surrounding the idea of Love as a Journey, this chapter explores various travel, migration, racial, marketplace, and commercial metaphors used by Wroth in *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*.

The Lover in Journey: Conquered, Weary, Scorched, and Thirsty

Wroth begins to employ the Love is a Journey metaphor in the first section of sonnets. In P11, she imagines Pamphilia's tired mind like a traveler, weary from travel.

The poem opens with a description of the weary traveler:

The weary traveller who tired sought
In places distant farr, yett found noe end
Of paine, or labour, nor his state to mend,
Att last with joy is to his home back brought (1.4)

While this initial imagery seems to suggest a weary traveler returning home from his pain and labor to joy at home, the following quatrain disrupts this vision to expose the traveler's discontent: "Finds nott more ease, though hee with joy bee fraught" (5). Here, the lover is "fraught" with joy, or filled with joy. Wroth's word choice here is important because while the image of a weary traveler certainly fulfills our search for imagery within the Love is a Journey family, her use of the word "fraught" carries a direct association with shipping and naval imagery. The transitive verb form, now obsolete, defines "fraught" as "to load a ship with cargo" ("Fraught, v1"). The word's etymology connects it to the verb "freight," still in use today. Wroth's use of shipping language in this sonnet further defines her use of the Love is a Journey metaphor. In this line, the traveler becomes the ship, freighted with joy. When she aligns Pamphilia's mind to the traveler, we can then also imagine the lover's mind as a ship, a point I will discuss more in a moment. First, I want to unpack the rationale Wroth provides in this sonnet for the traveler's lack of ease in spite of his freight of joy. In line 6, she writes: "When past is feare, content like soules assend." This line suggests that contentment ascends from the

body like souls ascending to heaven when one's past has been comprised of fear. Even though present joys might fill the mind, a history or past experience with fear prohibits ease and contentment in the present. With the traveler's state defined and explained, Wroth shifts to draw the link between this state and the lover's mind:

Then I, on whom new pleasures doe descend
 Which now as high as first borne bliss is wrought;
 Hee tired with his paines, I, with my mind;
 Hee all content receaves by ease of limms;
 I, greatest hapines that I doe find
 Beleeefe for fayth, while hope in pleasure swimms (7-12)

In this comparison, the traveler is tired with bodily pain from his journey, like the lover tired with mental pain from her thinking. This focus on thinking and reason as a possible escape from love's agony, or as a potential prison holding it close, is a theme Wroth will return to throughout her sequence. Our initial vision of it here, in a Love is a Journey metaphor, allows us to see a glimpse of the association Wroth often makes between physical and mental journeys. In this image, the lover has pleasures descending on her, opposite the previous image of contentment ascending, and she is carried to the height of bliss. However, she is still tired with her mind. Then, where the traveler finds contentment "by ease of limms" (10) or by putting his feet up, Pamphilia finds it in her faith and belief. The final line of the third quatrain reflects that same nautical quality as the transitive verb "fraught" in line 5: "Beeleeefe for fayth, while hope in pleasure swimms" (12). Wroth's use of the verb "swimms" in this line alludes to water. She imagines hope swimming in the water. In this way, the lover's hope becomes a traveler

itself, swimming in pleasure. Furthermore, this act of hope swimming finds its counterpart in the traveler resting his limbs. While the weary traveler can rest his limbs, the lover's hope is still in action. In fact, the lover appears to find contentment in action, whereas the weary traveler finds it in rest. This connects us back to that alignment Wroth creates between the traveler as a ship loaded with freight and the lover's mind, which I noted above. Although the traveler eventually ceases his journeying and rests, we see Pamphilia's mind, particularly her hope, still swimming in the water. I believe this image, "while hope in pleasure swimms" (12) further strengthens the idea that the lover's mind is like a traveler within the larger, love is a journey, metaphor.

Wroth returns to this imagery in P16. In this sonnet, the speaker is conquered by love. Pamphilia asks: "Must I bee still while itt my strength devowres / And captive leads mee prisoner, bound, unfree?" (3-4). Imagining love's captivity, she goes on to promote an escape: "Must wee bee servile, doing what hee list? / Noe, seeke some hoste to harbour thee: I fly" (10-11). In these lines, Wroth employs a journey metaphor to suggest an escape from love, a use seemingly opposite from imagining a journey as the love experience itself. And, although the end of the line, "I fly" begins an effort of the lover to escape love's bondage, the effort results in her heart being lost and abandoning such freedom:

[. . .] I fly

Thy babish trickes, and freedome doe profess;

Butt O my hurt, makes my lost hart confess

I love, and must: So farwell liberty. (11-14)

This image of a lost heart is something Wroth will explore again later in the sequence, and for now I want to return our attention to Wroth's use of journey imagery in the first part of line 11: "Noe, seeke some hoste to harbour thee." While the transitive verb "to harbor" could be used to suggest any act of providing lodging for shelter from the weather or for the night ("Harbor, v1"), it can be used to specifically indicate the sheltering of a ship in a haven or harbor ("Harbor, v5"). This nautical meaning was associated with the word "harbor" during the seventeenth century, although even at that time, the word could also more generally apply to any shelter. In addition, there is an explicit association between the verb form, to harbor, and the noun form, harbor, a place of shelter for ships ("Harbor, n3"). While I find the possibility that Wroth may be toying with nautical imagery within the language of this sonnet intriguing, that reading is not necessary. In fact, her language echoes that of Sir Philip Sidney's sonnet 65 and Sir Thomas Wyatt's translation of Petrarch in Sonnet 5. Sidney's sonnet addresses Love, as Cupid directly, and the speaker insists that he had lodged or harboured him: "For when, nak'd boy, thou could'st no harbour find / In this old world, grown now so too too wise, / I lodged thee in my heart" (5-6). And, Sidney's sonnet may echo Wyatt:

The long love that in my thought doth harbour
And in mine heart doth keep his residence
Into my face presseth with bold pretence
And therein campeth, spreading his banner (1-4)

Tracing Wroth's language back through these Petrarchan models reinforces the reading of "harbor" as a general shelter, not specific to ships. However, Wyatt's quatrain ends by connecting this sheltering imagery with that of warfare: "And therein campeth, spreading

his banner” (4). The OED identifies the proper meaning of “banner” as: “A piece of stout taffeta, or other cloth, attached by one side to the upper part of a long pole or staff, and used as the standard of an emperor, king, lord, or knight, under (or after) which he and his men marched to war, and which served as their rallying-point in battle” (“Banner, n.1.a”). Wyatt’s lines suggest that love has taken shelter or harbor in his heart, is residing in his heart, and is now boldly camping and displaying his banner in his face. In this way, Wyatt links this sheltering or harboring imagery with the language of warfare. Similarly, Wroth’s language may be offering this same subtle connection by following her use of “harbor” with “host.” Once again, I think Wroth’s use of the word “host” here seems more closely associated with that more general definition of providing lodging or shelter, much like its use in Sidney’s sonnet. In that case, the definition of a host as one “who lodges and entertains another in his house” (“Host, n.2.1”) seems to further the image of the lover as a traveler who seeks shelter in the harbor of a host. However, the word “hoste” also had a meaning related directly to warfare. For example, in Act 5 of Shakespeare’s *Macbeth* (1616), Malcolm gives the order for his men to cut down a branch and carry it ahead of them in order to increase the apparent size of his army:

Let every soldier hew him down a bough
And bear't before him, thereby shall we shadow
The numbers of our host, and make discovery
Err in report of us. (5.4.5-8).

This use of the word host reflects the archaic and poetic meaning of an army or armed multitude (“Host, n.1.a”). Shakespeare uses the word “banner” in a similar way as well the next scene: “Hang out our banners on the outward walls, / The cry is still, ‘They

come!” (5.5.1-2). Wroth’s use of the noun “host” gives the image a more militaristic meaning, perhaps recalling Wyatt, and one that could also be associated with the English Navy, particularly if we read a nautical suggestion in the word “harbour.” Wroth’s sonnet is easily understood as an example of love as journey, but the ambiguous possibilities in her language may reveal naval warships floating in the margins of the imagery.

After a series of sonnets exploring the daily and seasonal cycles, Wroth returns to touch on a Love is a Journey metaphor in sonnet P25, imagining Indians, scorched black by the sun. Now, although this sonnet does not contain direct metaphors like figuring the lover as a traveler or the love experience as a journey, I’ve included this sonnet for consideration within this chapter because of its engagement with exploration and new worlds. In his study of Milton’s *Paradise Lost* as part of seventeenth-century colonial discourse, J. Martin Evans argues that colonization and conquest of the New World had ambivalent responses in England and that this ambivalence is felt in Milton’s *Paradise Lost* through his fragmentation of figures such as the plantation, the colonists, the Indians or Noble Savages, and the contradictory stance of the narrator. (28) Alongside Milton’s text, Evans examines what he terms “the literature of colonialism” including letters, journals, biographies, and sermons that he contends “partake of a common discourse” (3). Evans recognizes that although they are vastly different in “genre, provenance, date, and purpose, the texts that comprise the literature of colonialism share not only a set of recurring themes – the nature of the colony, the status of the colonized, the character of the colonizers, for example – but also a common body of linguistic practices descriptive tropes, narrative patterns, and conceptual categories” (3). Evans finds some of the ambivalence toward England’s colonial ventures rooted in the financial gain that resulted

from ecclesiastical projects. He asserts that “the conversion of the Indians was often merely a pretext for territorial conquest and commercial exploitation” and finds this imperial reality “an ongoing source of anxiety in English colonial discourse” (27). Wroth may be registering some of this anxiety in sonnet P25 when the speaker compares herself to Indians, scorched by their god, the sun. While they turn dark, her god, love (or Cupid), makes her white with grief:

Like to the Indians, scorched with the sunne,
 The sunn which they doe as theyr God adore
 Soe ame I us'd by love, for ever more
 I worship him, less favors have I wunn,
 Better are they who thus to blacknes runn,
 And soe can only whitenes want deplore
 Then I who pale, and white ame with griefs store (1-7)

Not only does this sonnet raise an interesting contrast between white and black that warrants a closer reading, but it also highlights the religious efforts in the New World to convert pagan, sun-worshipping Indians to Christianity by focusing the sonnet on religious belief. When Edmund Spenser imagines “both the Indias” (15.3) in *Amoretti* and *Epithalamion* in 1595, his focus is commercial:

Ye tradefull Merchants that with weary toyle,
 do seeke most pretious things to make your gain:
 and both the Indias of their treasures spoile,
 what needeth you to seek so farre in vaine? (15.1-4)

Spenser insists that the trade merchants can find every precious stone they are looking for in a series of blazons highlighting his beloved's sapphire eyes, ruby lips, pearl teeth, ivory forehead golden hair, and silver hands. However, when Wroth imagines the Indians in *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, she focuses on their religious beliefs, not on the precious commodities that England trades with them. That said, Wroth's religious focus in this sonnet does not leave the language of trade and commerce completely behind. The sonnet's speaker says that she is "us'd by love" (3), asks to see "wher I may offrings give" (11), and hopes to give offerings to love for the rest of her life: "Nott ceasing offrings to love while I Live" (14), language that may hint at the financial profit associated with religious practice. While "offrings" suggest a direct correlation with religious practice, specifically the giving of tithes and offerings, Wroth's use of the word "us'd" is much more ambiguous. According to the OED, the verb "use" has carried religious meaning since the thirteenth century by implying "to observe, practice, or engage in" as it applies to observing religious rites, like communion ("Use, v1"). However, the OED also defines the verb: "to put to practical or effective use; to make use of, employ, esp. habitually" ("Use, v2"). The word includes financial meaning as to consume or to expend a resource or commodity. And, by the late seventeenth century, the verb especially indicated the taking or consumption of an amount of something from a limited supply. Because the speaker says she is "us'd by love," Wroth's meaning here seems to indicate that love is making use of her, rather than the religious meaning associated with using Mass or receiving the Eucharist. In particular, it seems that love, or Cupid, is using the speaker-lover, a meaning that highlights the profit gained from her through her "offrings" (11). This sonnet may be registering that anxiety that Evans

identifies as it highlights the prospect of financial gain through ecclesiastical projects. By aligning the speaker with the Indians, Wroth identifies similarities in the way both may be used for gain by those they worship, even though those worshippers may gain very little in return for their “worthless rite” (10).

Wroth engages with a standard topos of the sonneteers, the migration of the heart, in P30.¹³ The sonnet opens with the speaker’s heart having run away, choosing her beloved’s breast instead:

Dear cherish this, and with itt my soules will,

Nor for itt rann away doe itt abuse,

Alas itt left poore mee your brest to chuse

As the blest shrine wher itt would harbour still (1-4).

This opening quatrain again makes use of nautical language as it expresses a traditional theme. As she imagines the lover’s heart on a migrational journey from one breast to another, the speaker suggests that her heart has chosen her beloved’s breast as “blest shrine,” where it can “harbour still” (4). Similar to Wroth’s use of the word “harbour” in P16, we could interpret this word as either a general place of lodging or shelter or as a particular place to shelter ships. That this is a harbor where the migrating heart can be “still,” carries another association with the sea, albeit much less direct and one that could just as easily be aligned with wind, if not the general idea that the heart in motion has now stopped in a harbor. Nevertheless, Wroth’s still harbor is also termed a “blest

¹³ Introducing this metaphor in a song ahead of the sonnet, “Sweetest love returne again” (P28.1), Wroth begs her beloved, “In your journey take my hart” (9). In the final stanza, she wonders if she can survive without “Chiefest part of mee / Hart is fled” (20-21).

shrine,” and this association between migration, exploration, and religion rings familiar to what we saw in her figuration of the blackened Indians in P25. Wroth’s metaphor includes details about the nature of this migration. In line 2 we learn that “itt rann away,” and in line 6 we see “The hart which fled to you.” This language indicates an image of migration not necessarily based on economic need, social progress, or political mobility, but one instigated by a desire to escape, run away, or flee. Not only that, the speaker begs her beloved not to punish the heart for running away: “Nor for itt rann away do itt abuse” (2). This language sounds an awful lot like slavery or imprisonment, a situation where the heart has escaped or fled and would face punishment for doing so. With her heart now gone, the speaker makes a plea for exchange: “Butt if you bee kind, and just indeed, / Send mee your hart which in mines place shall feed” (9-10). Again, we see in a single sonnet the fusion of migratory, nautical, religious, and economic language. Wroth’s economic exchange is similar to that found in one of Sidney’s songs in *Astrophil to Stella*: “We change eyes, and hart for hart, / Each to other do imparte” (10.40-41). However, while in Sidney’s lines the exchange seems reciprocal and simultaneous, Wroth’s sonnet imagines a lover’s heart having already fled, and her speaker requests a fair exchange to replace it. Similar to the way she imagines her heart may be the recipient of punishment for having run away, this language reiterates the image of her heart as property, the loss of which deserves compensation. In the final sestet, we see Wroth again using religious language to describe what her beloved’s heart will find in her breast: “Ther shall itt see the sacrifices made / Of pure, and spottles love which shall nott vade / While soule, and body are together found” (12-14). These lines imagine pure and spotless love as sacrifices, a description that reflects the sacrificial image of life spilling out in line

8: “though hartles my lyfe spill.” Together, these lines present the lover as sacrificial object. Her life is spilled, and the beloved can find evidence of the sacrifice of her pure love in the speaker’s now empty breast. Although much of Wroth’s migratory language in this sonnet is suggestive of a runaway,¹⁴ “itt rann away” (2), “it left,” (3), and “fled to you” (6), the religious language, like considering the beloved’s chest a “blest shrine” (4) and her own a place of sacrifice and devotion, also hints at religious migration, or movement from one place of worship to another.

While sonnet P30 asks the beloved to send his heart, sonnet P32 imagines a different guest: “Grief, killing griepe” (1). In this sonnet, Wroth again figures the lover using both financial and religious language. Pamphilia asks: “Am I the only purchase thou canst winn? / Was I ordain’d to give dispaite her fill” (5). What is particularly interesting about Wroth’s use of the word “purchase” here is its meaning as both an acquisitional act of exchange, like purchasing goods or commodities with the exchange of money or service, as well as its meaning as an act of pillage, plunder, or “the action of seizing or taking something forcibly” (“Purchase, n2”). This second meaning seems a better interpretive fit because of the way the line ends: “Am I the only purchase thou canst winn?” (5) This suggestion that the speaker is a purchase to be won aligns more

¹⁴ Pushing beyond the idea of a “runaway,” the speaker’s request that the runaway heart not be abused or killed may even recall that of a runaway slave, an image that may be reiterated in P72, “And solde again to lovers slaverie” (6). While there is limited evidence of escaped slave narratives dating back to the 1620’s or before, studies of race in early Modern England are still emerging. For example, in her study of Elizabeth’s edicts of expulsion, Emily Weissbourd maintains that not only do the documents “represent blacks as a foreign and expendable population. But they also seem to offer ‘negars and blackaboores’ as a reward for services rendered” (6). I think that further investigation into Wroth’s language in terms of exchange and slavery may be productive, especially as the study of race in early Modern England expands.

with a forcible act than one with terms of exchange or payment. In the next line, the lover's ordination could indicate a role for giving in to despair or climbing a mountain of misfortune, but the term also carries a religious suggestion of the candidate admitted to the ministry ("Ordain, v"). From this image of the lover as a purchase or in an ordained role for grief, we see the speaker invite this emotion as a welcome guest: "If itt bee soe: Grief come as wellcome ghest" (9). Although the more typical use of travel and journey imagery assigns the lover, beloved, love experience, or even heart as a host or guest, this line imagines the emotion of grief as a guest. Because of this, Wroth's metaphor seems to recognize the emotion as a temporary state. Grief's impermanence here is different from Sidney's grief in *AS* 94. There, Sidney's Astrophil begins by asking grief to speak on his behalf and goes on to imagine himself as a "caitiff" or prisoner. The poem ends with their linguistic unification as one, wretched thing:

Yet wail thyself, and wail with causeful tears,
That though in wretchedness thy life doth lie,
Yet grow'st more wretched than thy nature bears,
By being placed in such a wretch as I. (12-14).

In Sidney's sonnet, the emotion of grief takes over the lover. His speaker needs it to speak for him; he's a prisoner waiting on death row: "Or if thy love of plaint yet mine forbears, / As of a caitiff, worthy so to die" (10-11). Like Wroth, Sidney draws on language of a more temporary stay in line 8, but the reference is to harbingers of death, imagining them as grief's entourage: "Though harbingers of death lodge there his train" (8). Sidney's grief seems to become a part of him, challenging its wretched nature with his own wretchedness. Together, the ultimate wretch, lover and grief become one. This

never occurs in Wroth's sonnet. Rather, even as she welcomes it, she names its temporary nature: "Griefe come as wellcome ghest" (9). Even more, she calls the emotion "good grief" (11) and asks it to leave those she loves alone and "lay all thy waits on mee" (14). Although Wroth's word "waits" here easily glosses to the now obsolete spelling of "weights," as Roberts notes in her edition, we can also see in Wroth's phrasing a pun on the verb wait, and more specifically, an adaptation of the phrase, "to lay wait" ("Wait, n"), as a hunter awaits prey. No matter how it is interpreted, this phrase carries associations common in traditional sonneteering, including both hunting and religion. Because of this, the speaker could be seen entreating grief to hunt, stalk, ambush, or lay wait for her. Or, we could read in the lines a speaker entreating grief in more religious tones, akin to the Christian directive to cast all their weights or cares on their Lord: "Casting all your cares upon him; for he careth for you" (*King James Version*, 1 Peter 5:7).

Wroth relies on religious language again in her engagement with the Love is a Journey metaphor in P53. As in P25, the speaker refers to herself as ordained: "as if for thee I were ordain'd" (2), also linking with the imagery of those sun-scorched Indians: "More in they sunn, when I doe seeke thy shade" (4). And, like P16, she uses military language, like "conquest" (3) and "invade" (5). The speaker is depicted here as a conquest of love, traveling and searching for shade and water: "When hott and thirsty to a well I came" (9). The traveled speaker arrives at the well with expectation and trust. However, her arrival doesn't lead to the expected result:

Trusting by that to quench part of my flame,
Butt ther I was by love afresh imbrac'd;

Drinke I could nott, butt in itt I did see

My self a living glass as well as shee

For love to see him self in truly plac'd. (10-14)

The sestet of this sonnet depicts a lover, presumably hot and tired from being dragged around as love's conquest, hoping that water from this found well will not simply satisfy her thirst, but "quench part of my flame" (10). It seems the lover is hoping to quench the flame of love, but she finds herself instead "afresh imbrac'd" (11). Unable to drink, she sees a reflection of herself in the well, and sees herself as a "living glass" as well as her own reflection. Not only that, this glass is ultimately for love to see itself in. In her reflection, the speaker sees herself as a container for and image of love. Mary Villeponteaux suggests that the persona created by Wroth in *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* is both a poet-lover and the traditional sonnet lady. "Pamphilia, rather than acting as the creator, struggles to obtain a beloved not of her creation, and in her struggle loses herself to become both the mirror image and the food of Love" (175). Villeponteaux asserts that Pamphilia is both the mirror and the drink, "reflecting and nourishing not herself but the male poet-lover, or in this case, love himself" (175). The journey, or her love experience, has brought the speaker to what seems a final embodiment of love, similar to Pamphilia's embodiment of Constancy at the end of *Urania*, but that reading is complicated by the fact that this is all a mirrored reflection. This mirrored image is unavoidably haunted by the most infamous reflected lover, Narcissus, tragically gazing at himself, but Wroth seems able to redeem the echoes of that imagery here because the speaker doesn't focus on her own beauty, but rather she focuses on the love "truly plac'd" there (14). This journey takes the lover to a well, to love, and also, essentially, to herself. Only third from

the end of the first section, it seems fitting that Pamphilia's assessment of her own feelings in this section would conclude with a journey back to herself. Although Villeponteaux sees in this poem a poet-lover's continued entrapment in the role of a traditional sonnet lady, Roberts asserts that the first section ends "with the persona's determination to love as an individual choice, rather than as an edict imposed by the gods" (44). In fact, by recalling the Narcissus myth only to offer a corrective focus on love instead of beauty or desire, the speaker may already be showing us a rejection of those outdated, classical ideas about love. Perhaps it is, at least in part, this journey and its conflicted conclusion which give the poet-lover the determination to reject the idea that love is controlled by the gods and assert her own agency, choosing to love "till I butt ashes prove" (P55.14).

The Love Journey: Unsettled, Uncertain, and Treacherous

In the second section, Wroth explores passion's troubling elements, and it comes as no surprise that her use of the Love is a Journey metaphor here imagines the journey as treacherous, strange, and beyond the lover's control. In P63, Wroth begins the section by imagining the love experience as uncertain and unsettled, constant only in its inconstancy. While this sonnet engages with the Love is Light imagery that I discuss elsewhere, Wroth also uses language associated with travel and migration. For example, after reflecting on the moon as a nighttime presence in the sun's room, the speaker imagines her own fortunes equally out-of-place: "Soe ar my fortunes, bard from true delight / Colde, and unsertaine, like to this strang place" (5-6). Furthermore, this is a space "Wher pleasure hath noe settled place of stay" (12). This language and imagery

points to a vision of the love experience as a constant journey. Love is a journey always in flux, never settled or steady, and always on the move.

Furthermore, the journey is treacherous. In P68, Wroth imagines the lover's experience like a ship, wrecked on the Goodwin Sands. This metaphor of a shipwrecked lover dates back to Petrarch, who imagined the love experience as a boat with Love at the helm, cruel thoughts manning the oars, and all the lighthouses shrouded in mist:

My vessel laden with oblivion
 sails through winter and midnight and the storm,
 past Scylla and Charybdis; at the helm
 there sits Lord Love, sworn enemy of mine.
 It seems a cruel thought mans every oar,
 scorning the tempest and its likely end;
 my sail is torn to shreds and soaked by wind
 of endless sighs and hope and huge desire.
 A rain of tears, a dense mist of disdain
 slacken the shrouds which were already wet,
 made up of twisted ignorance and error.
 My usual guiding lights cannot be seen;
 reason is drowned, as is the sailor's art;
 and I despair of ever making harbour. (189.1-14)

In Petrarch's imagination, the ship carries oblivion or forgetfulness. His nod to the classical, mythological figures of Scylla and Charybdis also recalls Lethe, the River of Oblivion. Although the ship seems to be at sea, it is laden with oblivion, or perhaps even

the waters of oblivion, which erased the memories of all who drank from it. That Petrarch's lover is on a "vessel laden with oblivion" suggests a love experience doomed to repeat past mistakes and victim to its own inability to remember. Mark Musa translates the line: "My ship full of forgetful cargo sails" (189.1), the line again figuring a boat carrying forgetfulness and oblivion. While an inability to remember or think clearly fills the cargo hold, thought does have a place on the ship. In Petrarch's sonnet, "a cruel thought mans every oar" (5). Or, in the Musa translation, "at each oar sits a quick and insane thought" (189.5). Petrarch's vision of thoughts in his shipwrecked lover metaphor is notably different from that of Wroth. In Wroth's sonnet, the ship is caught in the Goodwin Sands, a shoal off the coast of Kent notorious for thwarting tallships on their journeys. However, Wroth's thoughts do not stay with the boat, manning the oars or pushing it further into the sand, like Petrarch's. Rather, the speaker's "thoughts have scope" (10) and the speaker begs: "Goe then, my thoughts, and cry" (11). The speaker, smother'd in her own pain finds at last some hope of agency in the free will of her own thoughts, "Which wander may" (11). She sends these thoughts out from the shipwreck: "Goe then, my thoughts, and cry / Hope's perish'd; Love tempest-beaten; Joy lost" (12). In spite of despair killing the blessings of hope, love, and joy, "Killing despaire hath all thes blessings crost" (13), the speaker suggests that faith remains: "Yett faith still cries, Love will not falsefy" (14). The speaker's despair has destroyed her hope, her joy is nowhere to be found, and her love is as tempest-beaten as a wrecked ship, but her faith remains. Not only that, the speaker continues to have faith that love will not falsify. She believes in true love, even when all seems lost and hopeless. While the speaker's faith and constancy in love are honorable, readers of the sequence may be wondering at this

point whether or not that faith is well-founded. Has our speaker forgotten the pain and victimization love has caused her? Perhaps by allowing her thoughts scope and sending them away from the oppressive sands, Wroth's speaker is discovering a way to remain faithful in love while still recalling Petrarch's oblivion, forgetfulness, and "twisted ignorance" (11).

After a sonnet on jealousy, Wroth returns to a motif that I see running alongside the Love is a Journey metaphor, Cupid as Fugitive. While this sonnet does not focus on the journey itself, Cupid's flight serves to inform the idea that Love is a Fugitive, or on the run. In sonnet P70, the reader sees Cupid, led forward in chains by Diana and her nymphs. Although Cupid as Fugitive is a familiar motif (Lisle 195), Wroth's image is distinct in its addition of Diana and her nymphs. What does this addition contribute to our understanding of love and the concept of love as a journey? For one thing, the presence of Diana and her nymphs places emphasis on the way in which Cupid escapes. First, we see Cupid depicted as an "untaught lad" (3) who Diana vows should not have relief for his crimes. From there, "She call'd him theife" (5), a charge he disavows. Next, "She say'd hee murder'd, and therefore must dy" (9), a charge he again denies, saying he only caused love. It is during this discourse that Cupid is allowed to escape: "Butt, while she thus discoursing with him stood / The Nymphs unty'd him, and his chaines took off" (11-12). With Diana appearing to school this "untaught lad" on what is acceptable, why would her nymphs undermine her and untie him? According to the sonnet, they nymphs thought that Cupid was safe: "Thinking him safe" (13). The previous sonnet ended with a line suggesting the speaker learned through her bondage: "Thus is my learning by my bondage bought" (P69.14). However, in this sonnet we see that scenario complicated.

Here, love is in bondage and untaught. The learners, it seems, are taught by the binding, or unbinding of love. Taken together, we can see that love teaches, albeit untaught itself. In addition, the scene depicts a failure of reason. The nymphs *think* that Cupid is safe, but this thinking leads to their loss. With reason failed, love can escape and embark on a journey. The sonnet concludes: "Thinking him safe, butt hee loose, made a scofe / Smiling, and scorning them, flew to the wood" (13-14). The presence of Diana here also invites attention to the figure of love as a hunter. Figuring the love experience as a hunt is common in Petrarchan sonneteering, as in Wyatt's "Whoso list to hunt" (11.1). In Wyatt's sonnet, although the speaker "knows where is an hind" (1), he is futile in killing or capturing it. His hunt is figured like that of an unsuccessful journey, "The vain travail hath wearied me so sore, / I am of them that farthest cometh behind" (3-4), and he warns others not to waste their time as he has: "Who list her hunt, I put him out of doubt, / As well as I may spend his time in vain" (9-10). Similarly, Sidney figures Stella's cheeks as pits for trapping birds: "In her cheek's pit thou didst thy pit-fold set, / And in her breast bo-peep or couching lies" (11.11-12). In spite of this and other blazoned features, he warns readers: "But, fool, seek'st not to get into her heart" (14). Figured as a hunt in sonnets, love is usually hunted futilely. However, love itself may be more successful in it hunting, as suggested by the start of Sidney's next sonnet: "Cupid, because thou shin'st in Stella's eyes, / That from her locks, thy day-nets, none 'scapes free" (12.1-2). Diana's presence in the scene heightens the association here between the love experience and a hunt, as love seems to be caught by Diana and her nymphs, but he escapes successfully. Interestingly, this image does not seem to recall the story of Acteon, a mythical allusion employed by Shakespeare in order to figure Orsino's desire in *Twelfth Night*: "That

instant was I turn'd into a hart, / And my desires, like fell and cruel hounds, / E'er since pursue me" (1.1.20-23). Here, Orsino's lines recall the myth of Actaeon, a hunter who spies Diana bathing with her nymphs in the woods. When Diana sees Actaeon, she turns him into a stag, and he is devoured by his own hounds. Shakespeare figures desire as the hounds in this image and imagines the lover as prey. However, while Diana is the winning hunter in this myth, she fails in the hunt and capture of Cupid in Wroth's sonnet. Rather, the final line of this sonnet sends Cupid on his journey, a flight into the woods. Like other sonnets depicting a woods, including the speaker's discovery of Cupid there in P96, we can't separate this image from its literary significance at the time. Northrop Frye terms the "green world" in Shakespeare's forest comedies, like a *Midsummer Night's Dream*, as a place of escape and renewal. Serving as a counter to urban settings, the green space of the forest or woods allows for freedom and human transformation. Since then scholarship often views the forest as a symbol for human passions or serving as a representation of the human psyche. Forests also serve a key role in the idea of honor, particularly English honor. In a speech to the Star Council, Francis Bacon defended King James's hunting privileges: "Forests, Parks, and Chases, they are a noble portion of the King's Prerogative: they are the verdure of the King; they are the first marks of honour and nobility, and the ornament of a flourishing kingdom" (88). In Wroth's sonnet, we can see these associations working together. First, Cupid's escape to the woods reads as a typical move for lovers, or for love. Like Shakespeare's lovers, the woods can provide respite from the demands of the court and city and a place to renew their love and enjoy the freedom to practice it. Second, the move may be read as an escape into the psyche or a run toward human passions. With reason and rationale failing at the sonnet's end,

Cupid's escape to the woods might be read as a return to passion and emotion. Finally, aligning him with the woods may also prefigure his depiction as a monarch in the third section. As Cupid escapes Diana's charges against him near the end of this second section, he may be taking advantage of his prerogative as the Monarch of Love to enjoy exclusive access to England's treasured forests. Perhaps here, these "first marks of honour and nobility" can be returned to the denigrated boy god and prepare for his exaltation as a just king in the crown of sonnets.

How and Where to Journey: Labyrinths, Harbors, and Frozen Stasis

The third section of Wroth's sequence, the corona or crown, is dedicated to love and is dominated by depictions of Love as a Monarch, a metaphor I discuss elsewhere. Here, I want to focus on a few ways that the metaphor of Love as a Journey is also used in the corona. For example, Wroth begins by employing travel imagery to depict the speaker lost in a labyrinth:

In this strang labourinth how shall I turne?

Wayes are on all sids while the way I miss:

If to the right hand, ther, in love I burne;

Lett me goe forward, therin danger is (P77.1-4)

Like her previous travel imagery, Wroth depicts the lover's journey within the labyrinth as risky and dangerous. The speaker finds obstacles in each direction and doubts which way to move, although to "stand still is harder" (8). At the end of the third quatrain, the speaker asserts that she must her fears to rest and find the best route: "I must thes doubts indure with out allay / Or help, butt traveile find for my best hire" (11-12). In this sonnet, Wroth imagines love as a journey through a labyrinth. The experience is confusing, no

path seems right, and there is little for a lover to do but “leave all, and take the thread of love” (14).

Wroth picks up this thread in the first line of her next sonnet, but she doesn’t return to the use of travel imagery until P84. In this sonnet, Wroth highlights the experience of love as a journey by suggesting that those who do not love are frozen in a sea of ice: “Nor coldly pass in the pursuits of love / Like one longe frozen in a sea of ise” (P84.5-6).¹⁵ Wroth’s imagery here notably employs sea and shipping language, and while her previous metaphors involved the lover shipwrecked, the heart migrating, or the lover seeking a harbour, this image places the non-lover in these same seas, but frozen and with the capacity for movement. This inability to move runs opposite to travel, and the imagery here serves to strengthen the metaphor of Love as Journey. Those who do not pursue the love experience are static, frozen, and unmoving. The speaker implores them: “And yett butt chastly lett your passions *move*” (11 emphasis mine). In this sonnet, then, the love experience necessitates action and movement, and to love means to become unsettled, unfrozen, and to travel.

In the next sonnet, the speaker imagines the Court of Love and Venus as the goddess of sensual love. The poem begins:

Butt where they may returne with honors grace

Wher Venus follyes can noe harbour winn

¹⁵ Wroth’s imagery may also be recalling that of Dante’s ninth circle of hell, where Satan and other shades are frozen in ice. On this journey through the underworld, Dante describes his feeling in this space as neither living nor dead: “I did not die, and yet I was no longer alive. / Imagine if you can, what I became, / deprived of death and bereft of life” (24.25-27). Recalling Dante’s epic in this image, Wroth offers the suggestion that those who do not love are not living, even if they are not dead.

Butt chased ar as worthless of the face

Or stile of love who hath lasivious binn. (P85.1-4)

In this opening imagery, we see that lasciviousness and lust have no place. They are chased away and “can noe harbour winn” (2). Wroth’s use of the word “harbour” here is again suggestive of sea imagery. Read alongside its predecessors, we can see that love necessitates action or movement, but in this love-journey, lust has no harbor, whether that be a place to shelter ships or a general place of lodging for the traveler. In fact, the sonnet goes on to distinguish lust from love even further in the third quatrain: “If lust bee counted love t’is faulcely nam’d” (9). The imagery here furthers our understanding of the love experience and the way lust might be confused with true love. For, while non-lovers are frozen in ice and unmoving, lust is tossed about on the waves, moving through the water just as love does. However, Wroth’s metaphor seems to suggest that love can find a harbor and lust cannot. For the lover, in spite of all the danger, doubts, and pain, there may be a harbor or respite from the emotional toll. There is not, however, such a harbor available to lust. Lust is exhausting, it is constantly being chased and finding no place to rest. Somewhat troubling, Cupid is born of Venus, or love is born of lust. Wroth recognizes the close relationship between these two emotions, and distinguishes the experience of each by employing the Love is a Journey metaphor. In this case, Lust is a Journey as well, although one that is unsustainable and interminable.

Wroth’s final use of travel imagery in the corona comes at the end. This is unsurprising because the opening line of the corona repeats as the final line. If we see Wroth’s image of a lover lost in a labyrinth at the corona’s opening as a metaphor for love as a journey, then we must recognize it as such again at the end. In this case, P90,

the line is preceded by language associated with military force and taxation, including “conquest” (2), “tribute” (5), “debts” (7), “enimies” (10), “foes” (10), and “forces” (11). In this final sonnet of the corona, I see Wroth continuing to recognize journey and travel as an apt metaphor for love. By this point, however, Roberts asserts that it is “impossible to sustain her glorification of Cupid” (45). We see that in this sonnet, where the subtle use of language associated with military force employed earlier becomes a centerpiece for the speaker, still lost in the labyrinth.

Travails in Love: Resigned to Pain

Wroth uses travel imagery in four of the sonnets in the final section, mostly to figure the experience as a state of being lost. In P95, the first sonnet of this section after an interlude of songs, the speaker begins: “My hart is lost” (1). As the sonnet continues, Wroth returns to her continue her distinction between love and lust begun in P85. The speaker cries: “O Cupid! Lett they mother know her shame” (9), and she calls these lusty emotions “this youthfull flame” (10). In the final couplet, Wroth names the distinction directly, exalting love: “Thou God of love, she only Queene of lust” (13). It is in this environment of competing emotions that the lover’s heart is lost:

My hart is lost, what can I now expect,
An ev’ning faire; after a drowsie day?
(Alas) fond phant’sie this is nott the way
To cure a morning hart, or salve neglect, (1-4)

The speaker insists that a fair evening of “looce desires” (6) and “wanton bace delights” (7) are not the way to heal her mourning. This phrasing, “nott the way” (3), recalls the lover lost in a labyrinth and seeking the way out at the start of the previous section.

However, while the speaker resigns herself to dutifully picking up the thread of love at the start of the corona, here the speaker seems confident in asserting that at the very least, this particular path is not the right one. She recognizes lust as a dishonorable pursuit and sees the way it weakens true love in the poem's final couplet: "Thou God of love, she only Queene of lust, / Yett strives by weakning thee, to be unjust" (13-14). The love experience here is a journey, although one that remains unknown and confusing. The lover's heart is lost, but by the sequence's final section, the lover can at least determine one potential path that is assuredly not the way.

While the lover's heart is lost at the start of the section, the second poem here imagines a lost Cupid. Here, Cupid is lost in the woods. The poem begins when the speaker sees Cupid. He is lost, cold, wet, and crying:

Late in the Forest I did Cupid see

Colde, wett, and crying hee had lost his way,

And beeing blind was farder like to stray:

Which sight a kind compassion bred in mee, (P96.1-4)

The sight of Cupid, blindly trying to find his way through the forest, stirs compassion in the speaker, and she wants to help him before he wanders further astray. In the second quatrain, the speaker begins to help Cupid, drying him off, but he asks for more since he has been unable to find a host:

I kindly tooke, and dride him, while that hee

Poore child compain'd hee sterved was with stay,

And pin'de for want of his accustom'd pray,

For non in that wilde place his hoste would bee, (5-8)

In the sestet that follows, the speaker's downfall is brought on not simply by the act of bringing Cupid into her home, but also by her own rationale thought, a familiar foil by this point in the sequence:

I glad was of his finding, thinking sure
 This service should my freedome still procure,
 And in my armes I tooke him then unharmde,
 Carrying him safe unto a Mirtle bowre
 Butt in the way hee made mee feele his powre,
 Burning my hart who had him kindly warmd. (9-14)

The speaker decides to help Cupid further because she is “thinking sure” (9) that the act would help to acquire her freedom from his dominance over her. This language and outcome is similar to the fate of Diana's nymphs in P70 who, “thinking him safe” (13), took off Cupid's chains, allowing him to flee to the woods. Although the corona falls between this image in the second and fourth sections of the sequence, it seems significant that rational thought leads to Cupid's escape to the woods here and that rational thought leads to the speaker's injury when she later finds him there. The imagery of Cupid in the woods and the failure of rational thought link these two sonnets and demonstrate an idea of love as immune to reason, even prey to it. Wroth recognizes in these sonnets a separation, even incompatibility of reason and emotion. While she tries reason as a potential way of engaging with love, it proves impossible. Seen here, reason leads the lover to trust love and treat Cupid kindly, but the experience still leaves her burned. We also see in this sonnet a failed transaction. Whereas the speaker hopes that her kindness to Cupid will lead to her freedom from him, bringing him closer to her allows Cupid to burn

her heart, just as he did in the opening sonnet's dream sequence. We see here that Cupid's nature is unchanged. He is what we thought he was, a cruel master who injures even those who show him trust and kindness. The transaction that fails in this sonnet recalls the speaker's request for a fair exchange in her migration of the heart sonnet: "Send mee your hart which in mines place shall feed" (P30.10). In the first section, the lover naively asks for a fair exchange and an equal transaction for her heart. By the final section of the sequence, however, we see a lover learning through experience that fairness is not the result. Just as she insists near the end of the second section that "Thus is my learning by my bondage bought" (P69.14), this sonnet suggests that by her experiences is her learning bought. Taking Cupid in, he burns her heart. This is certainly not a fair payment for her services, but we see that when love is conceived as a journey, those who host the experience are always at risk for injury.

In the next sonnet, Wroth explores an extended journey, that of Juno traveling to earth in search of her husband, Jove. Like in the previous sonnet, the speaker witnesses this journey from a spot among the trees:

Juno still jealous of her husband Jove
 Descended from above, on earth to try
 Whether she ther could find his chosen love
 Which made him from the heavens so often fly;
 Close by the place, wher I for shade did ly
 She chasing came; (1-6)

In this image of a journey, we see a lover chasing her beloved. While the focus is on Juno's journey, we also see in these lines that Jupiter makes the journey to earth

regularly, “Which made him from the heavens so often fly” (4). The imagery allows a glimpse of the lover’s experience as not only a journey, but a chase, particularly in the case of a beloved who runs to other lovers. This imagery of a chase recalls that of the hunt, so common in traditional, Petrarchan sonneteering. Like Wyatt’s sonnet “Whoso list to hunt,” the lover is in pursuit of a beloved, chasing him and hunting him on earth. When Juno sees the speaker of the sonnet lying in the shade, she asks whether or not she may have seen her husband:

[...] butt when she saw mee move
 Have you nott seene this way sayd shee to hy
 One, in whom vertue never ground did prove,
 Hee, in who love doth breed to stirr more hate,
 Courting a wanton Nymph for his delight
 His name is Jupiter, my Lord by fate
 Who, for her leaves mee, heav’n, his throne, and light, (6-12)

In asking after her husband, Juno reveals a characteristic of the love experience she has with Jupiter, saying: “Hee, in who love doth breed to stirr more hate” (9). This image of love breeding does not create more love, as one might expect, but rather it creates more hate. Juno’s expression of her beloved’s infidelity suggests an unnatural breeding, a mating that doesn’t result in more of the same, but more of the opposite. Visiting the speaker in the woods, Juno’s image reiterates the very incongruity between Pamphilia and Amphilanthus. She is the all-loving lover of him, but he is the lover of many, or at least two. Like Jupiter and Juno, we can understand Pamphilia as Juno, chasing a man who will never be true to her, and Amphilanthus as Jupiter, courting another wanton

nymph rather than focusing his love on a single mate. This homage to monogamy ends with a revealing couplet about the way Wroth imagines this unnatural breeding of love: “I sawe him nott, sayd I, although heere are / Many in whose harts love hath made like warr” (13-14). In the speaker’s response to Juno, she pushes the imagery further to suggest that this kind of unfaithful love does not only create hate, but it creates war. This language returns to the martial, militaristic imagery we’ve seen earlier and that is so common in the sonnets of Sir Philip and Robert Sidney. Naomi J. Miller suggests that Philip and Robert represent a “lover’s predicament in martial terms” both as an act of conquest and as a way of resisting the captivating beauty of their beloved (298). However, Wroth’s use of the imagery here doesn’t appear to serve either purpose. Rather, the poem aligns this kind of conquest with lust, unfaithfulness, and the dalliances of Jupiter.

This may be the final sonnet of the sequence that engages with the journey metaphor directly, but I want to pause to address one more sonnet. In P101, the speaker reviews the potential escapes from the pain of loving and their inability to bring her ease:

No time, noe roome, noe thought, or writing can
 Give rest, or quiett to my loving hart,
 Or can my memory or phantsie scan
 The measure of my still renuing smart, (1-4)

In spite of this pain, the speaker pronounces that she wishes to remain a lover:

Yett would I nott (deere love) thou shouldst depart
 Butt lett my passions as they first began
 Rule, wounde, and please, itt is thy choyssest art

To give disquiēt which seemes ease to man; (5-8)

From there, the speaker reflects on her own thoughts and the pain she has experienced as a lover: “When all alone, I thinke upon thy paine / How thou doest traveile ovr best selves to gaine” (9-10). It is this line that gives me pause and leads me to consider this sonnet alongside other travel imagery. Wroth’s use of the word “traveile” here presents several interpretive possibilities. First, this word might gloss as “travail,” a verb indicating the labor and pains of childbirth (“Travail, v3”). This reading aligns the imagery with the other birthing metaphors I discuss elsewhere. Additionally, “travail” could carry the meaning associated with the transitive verb form, highlighting love’s ability to torment, to trouble, or to tire (“Travail, v”). As a noun, the word can refer to labor or suffering, both of the general sense and in reference to childbirth (“Travail, n1”). Additionally, the noun can signify a journey or journeying (“Travail, n2), and it carries a rare and now obsolete association with travel by sea, particularly “the straining movement of a vessel in rough seas (“Travail, n1”). This word can also gloss to the modern-day spelling, “travel,” simply indicating the act of travelling or journeying (“Travel, n.”). This association between journeys and pain is certainly not unique to Wroth. For instance, in Greek mythology, Hercules is given twelve travails, or monumental tasks to perform as penance for his insanity. Wroth appears well aware of the variances this term can suggest, and I see her employing the term as a way to indicate both movement and pain.¹⁶

¹⁶ For more on the use of this weighted term, particularly by Renaissance women, see *Travel and Travail: Early Modern Women, English Drama, and the Wider World* (2019), Ed. by Patricia Akhimie and Bernadette Andrea.

Conclusion: The Capacities of Love as a Journey

After locating and examining Wroth's journey, travel, and migration imagery across the sequence in its various forms, I will now return to the underlying metaphor that unites these various figurations: Love is a Journey. In particular, I want to examine what Love, when imagined as a journey is capable of. What are its capacities and what are its limitations? First, we see that love is exhausting. The speaker compares herself to a weary traveler: "Hee tired with his paines, I, with my mind" (P11.9). Not only is love tiring, but when thought of as a journey, love offers no rest or safe harbor. The speaker implores other lovers to "seeke some hoste to harbour thee" (P16.11), and later insists: "noe place for help have I left to invade" (P53.5). In addition, this imagery shows us that "pleasure hath noe settled place of stay" (63.12), and we see Cupid lost and wet in the forest, seeking food and shelter, but "non in that wilde place his hoste would bee" (P96.8). What happens next shows us one of the ways love is limited by the journey metaphor. When the speaker tries to offer Cupid shelter, he burns her. Similarly, when the love experience is compared to a journeying ship, it "cannot passage finde" (P68.2). Pushing this imagery even further, the speaker notes that "The more she strives, more deep in sand is prest" (6). It seems that by imagining love as a journey, love is unable to rest, unable to enjoy a safe harbor when it is offered, and only becomes more mired in place when it seeks to move forward. Even in Wroth's corona, intended to exalt love, we see the lover lost in a labyrinth in the opening line, seeming to journey through a series of meditations on Cupid, only to return to the original state in the final line: "In this strange labourinth how shall I turne?" (P90.14). The line itself further emphasizes the state of being stuck through its lack of the word "direction" or "way." Rather, the speaker

wonders “how shall I turne?,” a question that is suggestive of the previous boat imagery. Like a boat mired in sand, the speaker here seems to be stuck, wondering how to turn at all, forward movement or progress seeming absent from the question. The only thing love appears able to escape in these images is reason. Cupid escapes Venus and her nymphs when they are “Thinking him safe” and he burns the speaker when she is “thinking sure” (P96.9). However, while imagining love as a journey allows it to escape reason, it also seems doomed to continue in a cycle of capture and release, ever on the move.

Chapter 4 – Love is a Witch

The Enchanted Lover: Demons, Witchcraft, and “Phant’sies strang”

While many Petrarchan sonneteers imagined a lover caught in the spell of his beloved, Wroth’s use of this imagery is particularly important in light of seventeenth-century culture and King James’ personal interest and publications on witchcraft and demon possession. Wedgwood argues, “Those whom the wide arms of the Churches could not receive took refuge in the occult. Rosicrucianism had crept from Germany to France, Illuminism was gaining hold in Spain. Fear of witchcraft grew among the educated and devil-worship spread among the populace” (20). This fearful period and the notorious witch trials that resulted encouraged a great deal of writing and commentary on the political, religious, and societal implications of witchcraft and other occultish undertakings. For instance, in sonnet 52, Wroth picks up the thread of Petrarchan witch and demon imagery and develops it in a way unique to the seventeenth century. While the Petrarchan lover imagined himself caught in the spell of his beloved’s eyes or her bewitching smile and Sidney’s lover is figured rooted in the ground with a leaden heart as a result of evil witchcraft: “My feete are turn’d to rootes, my hart becommeth lead, / No witchcraft is so evill, as which man’s mind destroyeth” (5.77-78), Wroth reworks this traditional imagery and figures demon possession not as an arrested state, but as a means of avoiding the questions of others:

Well then I see noe way butt this will fright
That Divell speach; Alas I ame possesst,
And mad folks senceles ar of wisdomes right,
The hellish speritt absence doth arest

All my poor sences to his cruel might,

Spare mee then till I ame my self, and blest. (9-14)

The speaker here asks to be spared until she is herself again and free of the “the hellish spirit” (12). However, she also suggests that the mad or insane still possess wisdom in the line preceding it, “And mad folks senceles ar of wisdomes right” (11). While we could read this line as “mad folks are senseless of wisdom’s right,” it could also be read as “mad folks, senseless, are of wisdom’s right.” Because either interpretation requires a change to the line in the form of added punctuation or shifted word order, this line complicates the poem’s reading and reflects the complex discourses prominent in the sonnet’s historical context. This image and other of Wroth’s occultish language will be the focus of this chapter as I unpack her reworking of Petrarch’s enchanted lover through the lens of her early seventeenth-century culture. In particular, I will examine a variety of imagery that relates to the metaphor of Love as Witchcraft, including those metaphors that engage with ideas of spells, madness, spirits, demon-possession, and nightmares. While witchcraft is not necessarily a form of madness or mental disorder, when imagined as a conceptual metaphor, love puts the lover under a spell, an outcome I see running parallel to the idea of a madness that limits the lover’s capacity for clear, unimpaired thought. Additionally, while some might argue that ghosts, spirits, or demons are a real, traceable phenomenon and not a form of madness, I don’t see Wroth’s engagement with this sort of imagery as testing where we fall on the are-ghosts-real-or-not spectrum. Rather, I see the poet employing this imagery as a way to reflect the uncontrollable qualities of love and the sense of a mystery or madness that controls the mind and heart. Likewise, Wroth’s nightmare and dreamspace imagery does not necessarily reflect a state

of madness or witchcraft, but it does embody a sense of reality that is altered by forces outside of the lover's control. What the lover sees in these dreamspaces evokes that same sense of mystery, illusion, and the fantastic. Taken together, we can see Wroth's engagement of these conceptual metaphors participating in larger cultural discourses about the supernatural.

Dreams, Spells, Charms, and Madness

We first see this illusory state forming the foundation for the rest of the sequence in the opening sonnet. Here, the sequence begins with a dream state: "When nights black mantle could most darknes prove, / And sleep deaths Image did my senceses hierie / From knowledge of my self" (P1. 1-3). The speaker imagines sleep as an image of death, an image she appears to understand because of her self-knowledge. In these opening lines, the word "hierie" leads to a bit of mystery. Although the OED doesn't suggest "hire" as an option for this archaic spelling, I believe the context of this word choice suggests a similar meaning, as did Roberts in her gloss of "hierie" as "hire" in the 1983 edition. It seems the speaker has hired from her self-knowledge this image of sleep as death. Furthermore, her "senceses hierie," a phrase that suggests the senses like sight, sound, smell, and so on are absent, replaced by the death-like state of sleep. To take this a step further, the very ways that a human understands and experiences the world, through her sense of sight or sound or taste, are absent. The speaker is in an altered state where the human senses are stopped. And, it is in this state that love can take her body over. Upon waking, the speaker hopes that the feeling of love will vanish, but it remains, akin to a spell that cannot be escaped: "I, waking, hop'd as dreames itt would depart / Yett since: O mee: a lover I have binn" (13-14). These final lines draws an important distinction

between two potential metaphors for love: Love is a Madness and Love is a Dream.

Although the sequence opens in a dreamstate, the speaker insists that love is not like a dream. Love does not vanish upon waking. It isn't fleeting like a dream, ending when the dream does. Rather, the dream turns the speaker into a lover, even beyond that dream state. It changes her, and it is beyond her control.

Wroth utilizes this imagery again in P18, exploring not simply a dreaming state, but a nightmare. Here, the speaker begs sleep to leave her alone:

Sleepe fy possess mee nott, nor doe not fright
 Mee with thy heavy, and thy deathlike might
 For counterfetting's vilder then deaths sight,
 And such deluding more my thoughts doe spite. (P.18-1-4)

This opening quatrain suggest that counterfeiting or imitating death is even more vile than death itself. Furthermore, the poet asks sleep not to "possess" (1) her, suggestive of an idea of sleep similar to that of a demon possession, and she sees its imitation of sleep as "deluding more my thoughts" (4), a word choice that highlights a delusory impression, perhaps like that of a madness. In fact, nowadays we might say that someone experiencing delusions has a mental disorder, or a delusional disorder, to be specific. However, for Wroth, the condition seems to be part of sleep, specifically part of the lover's experience of sleep. Sleeping while in love can cause fear, and the speaker goes on to explore this potential in the next quatrain:

Thou suff'rest fauldest shapes my soule t'affright
 Some times in liknes of a hopefull spright,
 And oft times like my love as in despite

Joying thou canst with mallice kill delight, (5-8)

The speaker here is frightened by the false shapes in her dreams. These shapes appear to her as a hopeful spright and even in the form of her beloved. This counterfeiting continues as the shapes can change, even as the dreamer delights in them. The instability of these dream shapes seems to be part of the very characteristic that scares the speaker, and she continues the sonnet by considering the way these nightmares affect her wits:

When I (a poore foole made by thee) think joy

Doth flow, when thy fond shadows doe destroy

My that while senceles self, left free to thee,

Butt now doe well, lett mee for ever sleepe,

And doe for ever that deare Image keepe,

Or still wake, that my sences may bee free. (9-14)

Here, the speaker declares herself “a poore foole made by thee” (9), this “fool” being one who is “deficient in judgement or sense, one who acts or behaves stupidly, a silly person, a simpleton” (“Fool, n1”). This reading allows us to see the lover in terms of madness, because she becomes someone lacking sense or sound judgement. The dreamer, made a fool by the dream, is described as a “senceles self” (11). This recalls the description of the dreamer in the opening sonnet whose senses are now useless to her, hired out by an image of death in her sleep. Here, the senseless dreamer is “left free to thee” (11), an image that suggests the lover is under the influence of sleep or the nightmare and no longer in control of her own senses. This reading is reaffirmed by the final line, where the speaker aligns wakefulness with owning her senses again: “Or still wake, that my sences may bee free” (14). In the final stanza, we also see the poet using the word

“image” again. In her first poem on the dreaming lover, Wroth imagines “deaths Image” hiring her senses from her self-knowledge (P1.2). Here, she imagines death allowing her to keep the “deare Image” of her beloved forever: “But now doe well, lett me for ever sleepe, / And soe for ever that deare Image keepe” (12-13). Through these two uses of the word image, we can see that Wroth associates an “image” with something that is false or illusory. Acknowledging the associations of the word Wroth sets up in these early sonnets allows us to better understand the meaning and implications of the word when she uses it elsewhere, like to describe a picture of the beloved in a sonnet from the Folger manuscript, “Can the lov’d Image of thy derest face / Soe mirror like present thee to my sight” (F4.1-2). We can see from these first two dreamscape sonnets that Wroth does not think of an image as merely a representation or artificial imitation of something, but that she sees in the word “image” a more deceptive purpose, and one often associated with witchcraft, enchantment, and an absence of reliable sensory processing.

The following sonnet opens with “Sweet shades” (P19.1), and interpreting what these shades are can pose readers with a challenge. First, we might see in the “shades” a link back to the “shapes” in the previous sonnet’s dreamscape. In this way, the sonnet would continue the idea of imagined figures who disturb the lover’s dreams. Or, we could read these plural “shades” as suggestive of the evening, the darkness of night, or the growing darkness after sunset (“Shade, n”). Alternatively, we could see Wroth employing the word as a shadow, image, or phantom. More specifically, this could be the figurative and poetic sense of the term as “an unsubstantial image of something real; an unreal appearance; something that has only a fleeting existence, or that has become reduced

almost to nothing” (“Shade, n.II.b). It is this sense of the term that I believe makes the most interpretive sense here. Not only does this meaning pick up on the imagery of those “fauldest shapes” from the previous sonnet, it also reinforces the impossible experiential contradictions at the end of this poem as an unreal, reduced condition. This reading aligns with Roberts’ own glossing which recognizes a link between this sonnet and the contradictory Petrarchan imagery like: “I fear, and hope; I burn, turn icy cold” (134.2). Sidney mocks the imagery in his sequence, but here we see Wroth doing something unique. On the one hand, she presents the speaker as a Petrarchan lover. On the other, by placing these contradictions in a space with “Sweet shades” (1), she also suggests something insubstantial, illusory, and fleeting about the experience. Let’s look closer. Wroth imagines “Sweet shades” that seek to give delight when the speaker sees delight only as a torment and sorrow:

Sweet shades why doe you seeke to give delight
 To mee who deeme delight in this vilde place
 Butt torment, sorrow, and mine owne disgrace
 To taste of joy, or your vaine pleasing sight; (P19.10-4)

She marks this environment of the dream as a vile place and the sights of the shades as vain, albeit pleasing. In the second quatrain, the imagery hints back to that reading of “shades” as having something to do with being “in the shades” or the time after sunset when it grows ever darker:

Show them your pleasures who saw never night
 Of grief, wher joyings fauning, smiling face
 Appears as day, wher grief found never space

Yett for a sigh, a grone, or envies spite; (5-9)

Here, the speaker asks the shades to show their pleasures, the delights she can't enjoy, to those who have never experienced the "night of grief" (5-6) and who live in a space where joy appears like the day or a smiling, flattering face. In this space, the speaker insists, there is no grief, no envy, no sighs, and no groans. The description of the space the speaker wishes these shades would go to helps to define her own environment by opposition. We know that the speaker here inhabits a joyless place, where the grief is dark as night, and the accompanying signs and groans seem inevitable. In the sestet, Wroth pushes this image further, imagining not merely a world for the speaker distinct from the world others might inhabit, but a speaker supporting an entire world, an image suggestive of Atlas carrying the world on his back: "Butt O on mee a world of woes does ly" (9). Taken further, the speaker is described with all the harms of the world relying on her and attending to her like indentured servants: "Or eels on mee all harmes strive to rely, / And to attend like servants bound to mee" (10-11). Following this beleaguered description of the lover, Wroth shifts to the traditional Petrarchan contradictions: "Heat in desire, while frosts of care I prove, / Wanting my love, yett surfett doe with love / Burne, and yett freeze, better in hell to bee" (12-14). In these lines, the lover is hot with desire and cold with care. She wants for love but also has excessive amounts of it. The lover burns and freezes, and asserts that she would be better off in hell. This ending carries us back full circle to the start of the poem as hell would presumably be the most likely dwelling for the shades or spirits that haunt her.

Wroth picks up on the theme of night and day begun in this sonnet and explores those cycles, along with the seasonal cycles, before returning to another dreamscape in P24. Once again, Wroth describes the beloved as an “Image” (2) seen in a dream:

When last I saw thee, I did nott thee see,
 Itt was thine Image, which in my thoughts lay
 Soe lively figur’d, as noe times delay
 Could suffer mee in hart to parted bee; (1-4)

This sonnet’s opening quatrain echoes the earlier uses of the word “image,” where the senses are either not working or controlled by someone or something else, like sleep. Here, the speaker sees the beloved, but does not see him, indicating a false or misleading sense of sight. The speaker asserts that the image originates in her own thoughts, not through the sense of sight. However, a false image or not, the speaker sees the beloved looking lively or lifelike as though they had never been apart. The image is appealing to the speaker, because she goes on to note that she would prefer to stay sleeping, where she remembers the beloved clearly:

And sleepe soe favorable is to mee,
 As nott to lett thy lov’d remembrance stray,
 Least that I waking might have cause to say
 Ther was one minute found to forgett thee; (5-8)

Although the previous dreamscapes seem a bit more sinister, including nightmares and “faulcest shapes” (P18.5), the dreamscape of this sonnet makes sleep favorable to the poet. In dreaming, she remembers and sees her beloved so clearly that she wants to stay in this space and never risk forgetting him. In the third quatrain, Wroth pushes this

description of sleep even further, now finding the shades or shadows of previous sonnets as pleasurable:

Then since my faith as such, soe kind my sleepe

That gladly thee presents into my thought:

And still true lover like thy face doth keepe

Soe as some pleasure shadowe-like is wrought. (9-12)

Here, sleep is kind, gladly presenting the beloved to the dreamer, and yet this “pleasure shadowe-like” still hints at its fleeting, unsubstantial nature. The speaker seems to recognize the unsustainability of this space even before reaching the concluding couplet, and by the poem’s end, the speaker begs for pity, even reward, for housing the beloved within herself: “Pitty my loving, nay of consience give / Reward to mee in whom thy self doth live” (13-14). So lifelike is this image of the beloved in the dreamer’s sleep, she seems to be asking her beloved to pay some kind of rent or mortgage as a reward. This imagery is particularly interesting given the unlikelihood of a woman owning property in the seventeenth century. For instance, after the death of Wroth’s husband, Sir Robert Wroth, the estate fell to their son, James. Following his death in 1616, ownership passed to the boy’s uncle, John Wroth. These inheritance laws left Wroth with mounting debts and increasingly limited means to pay them. In this sonnet, Wroth imagines a new conception of ownership, figuring the lover’s body as a property for which she could ostensibly charge rent because of its occupation by a beloved. In the dream-world of this sonnet, the lover imagines herself as a space where the beloved can abide, and the lover’s self then becomes a stand-in for property, as she can ask the beloved to reward her for letting him live there. In these lines, I see Wroth exploring ideas of property ownership as

well as autonomy. Just as the dream shows the speaker a beloved who looks but is not real, the dream allows for a world where the female lover has autonomy, control, and even financial viability through the emotional and physical space the beloved takes up within her. Given Wroth's own financial struggles, it is perhaps unsurprising that we see the poet exploring potential sources of incomes in her poetic imagery, no matter how unsubstantial or unviable these might be in her lived experience. Roberts notes that "Although her financial problems were enormous, she insisted on handling them herself" (23). Interestingly, while the speaker of this sonnet first asks for pity in the final couplet, she then shifts to ask for a reward based on "conscience" (13). That the beloved's conscience would prompt payment seems to suggest that this option is the inherently right, good, or moral thing to do. Even as her sonnet seems to focus on the love experience, I think we may also be seeing in these lines a condemnation of the property laws that controlled and limited the rights and freedoms of early English women. In addition, I believe we may also see Wroth wrestling with the real, physical condition of a woman who must take a man inside of her during intercourse and house any offspring that results from the coupling. Certainly, women's bodies serve a real function as a kind of property for men's use, and Wroth's insistence that the beloved's conscience should prompt payment registers a sense of dissatisfaction with that status quo. While this poem ends with the speaker's hopefulness that her beloved might reward her with his presence outside of her dreams, the speaker rails against hope when she returns to a witchcraft metaphor in P31.

We reach this cluster of witchcraft, madness, and demon-possession imagery in the middle of the sequence's first section. Here, sonnets P31, 34, 36, and 39 all explore

the love experience through these occultish metaphors. Beginning in P31, the speaker imagines the hope she feels in love using a spell on her:

Fy tedious Hope, why doe you still rebell?
 Is itt nott yett enough you flatterd mee?
 Butt cunningly you seeke to use a spell
 How to beetray, must thes your trophies bee? (1-4)

The speaker imagines herself a trophy, acquired by hope through betrayal, flattery, cunning, and magic. The unnaturalness of this experience is highlighted in the second quatrain, where the speaker compares this betrayal to the expectation of sweet fruit that is met and disappointed by withered, dead fruit after the blossoms fall:

I look'd from you farr sweeter fruite to see
 Butt blasted were your blossoms when they fell,
 And those delights expected from hands free
 Wither'd, and dead, and what seem'd bliss proves Hell. (5-8)

Once again, deception and cunning are equated with hell, like when the lover experiences an onslaught of impossible contradictions while the “Sweet shades” (P19.1) try to give her delight: “Burne, yett freeze, better in hell to bee” (P19.14). These images equate deception, false hope, and insubstantiality with hell. The experience is the opposite of a heaven, opposite of the ideal, and becomes associated with the devils or demons that reside in this space. In this hell, hope betrays the lover with a spell and in the sestet, it ruins her like a town burned by sleight or deception, perhaps even recalling the sack of Troy: “Noe towne was wunn by a more plotted slight / Then I by you, who may my fortune write / In embers of that fire which ruind mee” (9-11). In fact, this imagery goes

beyond equating the lover with a sacked and burning Troy to say that this was even a more planned sleight than what the Greeks wrought with their deceiving gift-horse. The lover is reduced, like Troy, to smoldering embers, and her fortune is ruined. However, the final stanza seems to offer a bit of hope for the lover, as she imagines hope on trial for its deception: “Thus Hope, your faulsehood calls you to bee tride / You’re loth I see the triall to abide; / Prove true att last, and gaine your liberty” (12-14). In this image, Hope is on trial and it’s angry or loath, awaiting the trial’s conclusion. The speaker then offers hope back to Hope in the final line, suggesting that if this hope proves true, rather than betraying or putting a spell on her, it will be freed. Even as the speaker sees the falseness and deception in hope, she still offers it the potential for freedom, if a trial proves that hope isn’t false and her love is true. The trusting and forgiving nature of the speaker here certainly reflects the characterization of Pamphilia as a constant lover, but it also hints at the potential for danger, as when she thinks it is safe to harbor Cupid and he burns her in P96. The speaker holds out faith that her hopes might come true, that Hope will be acquitted on these charges and set free. In this sense, then, we might read the sonnet as a witch trial of sorts. While the charges levied against Hope might also indicate other offenses, like fraud or treason, any of these could be easily tried under the guise of witch trial because of her use of sorcery, “Butt cunningly you seeke to use a spell” (3). Additionally, while witch trials were growing in frequency under King James, treason trials were not. In fact, recognizing the number of Catholic gentlemen linked to the Bye plot who were never charged, de Lisle suggests: “Putting too many members of the gentry on trial for treason would have exposed the government’s unpopularity” (258). Instead, the speaker emphasizes Hope’s use of a spell and aligns her current state to Hell.

Reaching their height in the 1640's, witch hunts and persecution of those suspected of practicing witchcraft were well-established at the time of Wroth's writing. Following his interest and involvement in the trials of the North Berwick witches between 1590 and 1592, King James wrote his *Daemonologie*, a treatise on witchcraft in the form of a dialogue. In his introduction to the 2011 edition, Donald Tyson asserts: "The purpose of his book, which arose as a direct visceral reaction to the North Berwick trials and the supposed plots against his life by magic, was to increase the persecution of witches in Scotland and England. Everything in the work is tailored to achieve this end" (6). In fact, James ordered a new printing of his book in London shortly after he ascended to the English throne, and a year after his coronation, he abolished the 1563 witchcraft statute, replacing it with one containing both harsher and broader punishments for those convicted of practicing witchcraft (6). Tyson writes, "So keen was James on this matter that his reinterpretation of the witchcraft laws went to the House of Lords for consideration only eight days after the first sitting of parliament of his reign as the English king, and passed on first reading" (6). Under Elizabeth, the crimes committed through the employment of witchcraft were the object of punishment, preserving the most severe punishments for those who committed severe crimes, like murder. However, James pursued punishment for the practice of any form of witchcraft, making anyone who bewitched another person subject to death by hanging. It was now a felony to keep a familiar in the form of a cat, dog, or other pet, and anyone found to have any sort of witch's mark on their body could be tried in court and ordered to penalty by death. The use of spells, charms, and enchantments faced harsh penalties, and the accusations were often difficult to disprove. Putting hope on trial for suspicion of using a spell in 1620

certainly did not bode well for it. The speaker in this poem registers that almost inevitable outcome, yet still finds room to entertain the faith that her hopes may still prove true.

While the spell is a form of deception and betrayal in P31, in P34 the speaker imagines love as a curing charm. The sonnet opens with the now familiar shades, this time described in notably religious terms as “blessed” (1):

You blessed shades, which give mee silent rest,
 Wittness butt this when death hath clos'd mine eyes,
 And separated mee from earthly ties,
 Being from hence to higher place adrest; (P34.1-4)

There are several distinctions between the earlier shades and shapes we saw associated with deception, fear, and sleep and these shades that are blessed and provide silent rest. In previous sonnets, the speaker encounters the shades in a sleep or dream space or as part of the contradictory lover's experience as she bears the world or burns and freezes. In this sonnet, she seems to imagine the shades bearing witness to her experience after her death. In the first sonnet, sleep is imagined as an image of death, but this sonnet doesn't seem to present an image or suggest a death-like sleep. Rather, the blessed shades are asked to witness how much she has lay oppressed by them in life:

How oft in you I have laine heere oprest,
 And have my miseries in woefull cries
 Deliver'd forth, mounting up to the skies
 Yett helples back returnd to wound my brest, (5-8)

This description doesn't seem to track with the initial description of the shades as “blessed” or giving “silent rest” (1). In this quatrain, the speaker describes herself laying

in the shades oppressed: “How oft in you I have laine heere oprest” (5). This use of the term shades could suggest a meaning like that contained in the phrasing, “in the shades,” as de-marking the time after sunset when it grows darker. The speaker, then, could be referring to the nights she laid in darkness, bemoaning the pain and suffering of the love experience. This could even lead us back to a nighttime dreamspace, revealing a speaker whose senses are unable to distinguish the line between natural darkness or shade and supernatural spirits or shades. The speaker contemplates her death and merges death with sleep just as in the opening sonnet, “when sleepe deaths Image did my senceses hiere” (P1.2). The speaker recalls her misery and “woefull cries” (6), imagining sending the cries out to the skies only to have them return and wound her breast. This wounding causes the lover even more harm, and she asserts that she can be cured only by a charm: “Which wounds did butt strive how, to breed more harme / To mee, who, can bee cur’d by noe one charme / Butt that of love, which yett may mee releeve” (9-11). For the first time, we see Wroth applying this metaphor directly to love. This isn’t hope using a spell or the lover haunted by nightmares and false shapes; it is a direct metaphor: Love is a Charm. In addition, the charm imagined here doesn’t result in her ruin or torment. Rather, the charm is a cure for the troubles she has described. It will bring an end to her cries and pain. However, Wroth returns to that image of death from the opening quatrain as the eventual result should she not be cured: “If nott, lett death my former paines redeeme, / My trusty friends, my faith untouch’d esteeme / And wittnes I could love, who soe could greeve” (12-14). In the final imagery of the sonnet, Wroth could be returning to a court scene like that in P31, where hope is on trial. In this case, the shades will serve as witnesses, testifying that she could love and grieve. That said, I don’t think that the use of

the term “witness” here necessarily suggests a court trial. Wroth could merely be using the term to suggest that they have seen her experience. Either way, the shades now serve in a useful role to the poet, offering her a chance at redemption because of her love experience, even if her pains are never redeemed by reciprocity. This use of the word “witness” in the poem’s final line links us back to the opening quatrain so that by the poem’s end, readers can finally understand why the speaker considers these shades a blessing.

Disrupted only by a song, Wroth returns to witchcraft or occultish imagery in P36. In this sonnet, the speaker is no longer comforted by blessed shades or enjoying a silent rest. Rather, she lays down hoping for rest, only to be possessed by torments:

After long trouble in a taedious way

Of loves unrest, lay’d downe to ease my paine

Hopeing for rest, new torments I did gaine

Possessing mee as if I ought t’obay: (1-4)

In these lines, the lover is not merely troubled by torments, but she describes them as possessing her, even controlling her so that she must obey them. This language is suggestive of demon-possession, and the lover is taken over by them when she lies down, similar to the way shades torment her when she tries to sleep. From there, the speaker describes Fortune coming to her, detailing her experience as though she is thawing out when she becomes the servant of true love:

When Fortune came, though blinded, yett did stay,

And in her blesse’d armes did mee inchaine;

I, colde with grieve, thought noe warmth to obtaine

Or, to dissolve that ice of joyes decay;

Till, 'rise sayd she, Reward to thee doth send

By mee the servants of true lovers, joy: (5-10)

This imagery introduces the idea that non-lovers are frozen in a sea of ice, which Wroth explores later in the corona: "Nor coldly pass in the pursuits of love / Like one longe frozen in a sea of ise" (P84.9-10). In this case, the lover seems to thaw out in service of love, but the process also chains her to Fortune, a situation readers easily recognize as precarious and inconstant. However, Fortune offers joy as a reward and the speaker obeys:

Bannish all clowds of doubt, all feares destroy,

And now on fortune, and on Love depend.

I, her obey'd, and rising felt that love

Indeed was best, when I did least itt move. (11-14)

This ending is an interesting contradiction to the idea that Love is a Journey as here the speaker seems to suggest that love is best when she doesn't try to move it. Although the other conceptual metaphor sees love as a constant motion, the lover a traveller that seems ever on a journey, the final line here is more suggestive of a love that does not move.

However, I think it is safe to assume that we can read this "move" more along the lines of "control." Perhaps the lover finds the love experience most pleasant when she doesn't try to control its movements but lets herself be a servant to it. However, there is still a subtle movement in the penultimate line. The speaker obeys Fortune, "and rising felt that love" (13). Popularly imagined as an inconstant wheel, Fortune raises and lowers the recipient on a whim. In this case, the speaker is rising, but the inevitable, albeit unspoken

implication is that she will also fall. But, resisting the urge to control her situation, the speaker gives herself over to Fortune's movements. In this way, she steps back from the experience, moderating her need to control, in a move similar to the way she moderates her eyes and the act of looking in P39.

Wroth works explicitly with the idea that love is a form of madness in P39. In this address to the eyes, the speaker implores them to "take heed" (1) and "bee true unto your selves" (3). She insists that they keep her heart's thoughts secret and avoid looking with doubt or jealousy. In the third quatrain, Wroth explores the alternate, as those "waching eyes" (5) of jealousy from the third quatrain that seem to look too much, and, in seeing, go mad:

Then looke, and looke with joye for conquest wunn

Of those that search'd your hurt in double kind;

Soe you kept safe, lett them themselves looke blinde

Watch, gaze, and marke till they to madness runn, (9-12)

In this metaphor, it is not love, in and of itself, that is imagined as a madness. Rather, Wroth explores the possibility of madness as a result of a lover's looking too much. Within this quatrain, she uses the word "looke" three times in addition to another four synonyms for looking: "search'd," (10), "watch, gaze, and marke" (12). This lingual surplus of looking concludes in madness. Interestingly, Wroth's exploration of the love experience as a form of madness here seems to poke holes in the conception of love traditional in Petrarchan sonneteering, where the sonnets are founded on the lover's gaze and the beloved object of his gaze. These sonnets objectify the beloved, gazing at her hair, her lips, her neck, or her fair skin and cataloguing the physical attributes of the

beloved. For example, in Sidney's *Astrophil and Stella*, the lover imagines Stella's face as a court. Her lips the door, teeth the locks, cheeks the porches, and eyes the windows:

Queen Virtues Court, which some call Stella's face,
 Prepar'd by Natures choicest furniture,
 Hath his front built of alabaster pure;
 Gold is the couering of that stately place.
 The door, by which sometimes comes forth her grace,
 Red porphir is, which locke of pearl makes sure,
 Whose porches rich (which name of chekes indure)
 Marble, mixt red and white, doe interlace.
 The windowes now, through which this heau'nly guest
 Looks ouer the world, and can find nothing such,
 Which dare claime from those lights the name of best,
 Of touch they are, that without touch do touch,
 Which Cupids self, from Beauties mine did draw:
 Of touch they are, and poore I am their straw. (AS 1-14)

As others have noted, Wroth works against this tradition by avoiding Petrarchan objectification in her sequence. Naomi Miller asserts that "Pamphilia, as a speaking subject, decenters the repeated absences of that lover through an increasingly empowering revision of her own subjection to love" (61). The example here shows that Wroth not only avoided this poetic device, but also derided it, suggesting that it leads to madness. She presents a final counter to this way of loving in the couplet: "While you, mine eyes injoye full sight of love / Contented that such hapinesses move" (13-14).

Unlike the Petrarchan sonneteers who gaze in parts at their beloveds, Wroth's lover enjoys "full sight of love" (13). This love experience is not equated with madness, deception, spells, or charms. Instead, the lover sees all and betrays nothing.

Wroth engages with a metaphor for madness again in P45, where she considers her own writing to be "witt sick" (8). In this case, the metaphor is again used not as a description of love, but to describe the lyrics written to express the love experience. In this sonnet, the speaker considers her silent sorrow, noting that grief can not destroy one so used to loss: "Butt silently I beare my greatest loss / Who's us'd to sorrow, grieve will nott destroy" (3-4). Although silent, the speaker has presumably been writing her experience, and it is this writing upon which she now looks with self-contempt:

Nor can I as those pleasant witts injoy

My owne fram'd words, which I account the dross

Of purer thoughts, or reckon them as moss

While they (witt sick) them selves to breath imploy, (5-8)

In these lines, we see that the speaker views her writing as having sick wits. Her lyrics may be mad, although she doesn't view herself or her love experience directly in that way. Viewing one's own writing with self-contempt is a common move in traditional sonneteering, as Sidney does in sonnet 50 of *Astrophil and Stella*: "With sad eyes I their weak proportion see" (7). However, while Sidney grows furious with his lines and attempts to strike them out, "And now my pen these lines had dashed quite" (12), he finds himself unable to do so because he sees Stella's name at the start of the poem: "But that they stopped his fury from the same, / Because their forefront bare sweet Stella's name" (13-14). In Sidney's sonnet, the frustration over his lines is calmed by the beloved's

name. In a sense, Sidney's self-contempt is turned around by shifting focus back outward to his beloved. This is markedly different from Wroth's depiction of a poet's contempt for her own writing. In Wroth's sonnet, the speaker begs forgiveness and identifies the real root of her crossness: "T'is nott to you that I dislike doe owe / Butt crost myself, wish some like mee to make" (14). In this final line, the speaker asserts that she is cross with herself, not her lyrics, and she wishes to write some that reflect her state, rather than "the dross / Of purer thoughts" (6-7) that now appear "witt sick" (8) to her. In short, the speaker thinks her happy love poems sound crazy now. The plentiful words are evidence of how much is lacking: "Alas, think I, your plenty shewes your want, / For wher most feeling is, words are more scant" (9-10). The speaker here seems to be registering a desire for more authenticity. She wants to write lyrics that are more like her and that reflect her experience. In this way, the speaker-poet's self-contempt is not solved by a re-focusing on the beloved, but by a re-focusing on the self. The speaker here seeks empowerment to write her own experience and make lyrics that reflect who she is and her condition.

Pamphilia's budding confidence in asserting and giving voice to her own experience is furthered in Wroth's final engagement with an occultish metaphor in the first section. Nearing the end of this first section of sonnets, Wroth employs the figure of devil possession.¹⁷ In P52, the speaker addresses an acquaintance, begging them to stop asking her questions:

Good now bee still, and doe nott mee torment

¹⁷ Although Worth's first sonnet on the topic of demon possession is P52, she does engage the image of a devil a few poems earlier in a song, P49. Here, she imagines sorrow as a devil: "As sad a Divell as thee" (3).

With multitudes of questions, bee att rest,
 And only lett mee quarrell with my brest
 Which still letts in new stormes my soule to rent;
 Fy, will you still my mischiefs more augment?
 You say I answere cross, I that confest
 Long since, yett must I ever bee oprest
 With your tounge torture which will ne're bee spent? (1-8)

Finding her requests ineffective, the speaker lands on an alternative way to stop the “tounge torture” (8) at the volta: telling her friend she is possessed. At a point in history when witchcraft and possession were handled so aggressively, it may seem impossible that Pamphilia would confess to possession as a cover to avoid questioning. However, possession narratives from the period include those that were determined to be counterfeit, like that of Katherine Malpas. Malpas “pretended to be subject to fits of demonic possession, and accused two women of bewitching her” (Tyson 9). King James questioned the young woman from Upton, West Ham, and her family was charged with counterfeiting before the Star Chamber in 1621. Article 15 of the charges ask: “What moved you . . . soe to persuade and direct her, was it not that the people which saw it might conceive and thinke that she was possessed with an evil spirit and that the devil would not let her read? (qtd. in Cambers 14). Her deception was apparently revealed by a few signature moves that Andrew Cambers identifies in his study of possession narratives and their relationship to literacy and superstition. Cambers focuses on the importance of books, particularly the Bible, to these narratives, in order “to understand how exorcism worked for godly Protestants” (8). In fact, a critical giveaway to King James in this case

was that she threw down the Bible, a move Cambers identifies as “a well-known sign of possessed behavior” (14). However, having become so well-known, these signature moves could easily be adapted by counterfeiters and anyone who wished to pretend they were possessed. In this sonnet, the speaker simultaneously aligns both the questioner and herself with possession, “Well then I see noe way butt this will fright / That Divell speach; Alas I ame possesst” (9-10), and consequently silences them both. This move echoes another common element in possession narratives, an arrest of the senses. Cambers explains: “The devil frequently acted against the senses in possession cases: making the tongue black (or sitting on it), making the voice hoarse, and inducing dumbness; stopping the ears of the bewitched from hearing prayers and sermons; and acting against sight, causing demoniacs, such as Mary Glover, to vigorously rub their eyes” (22). While Wroth’s sonnet may not present readers with a complete possession narrative, the details included here echo the cases of possession resounding in her culture.

In the sestet, the speaker suggests that she is possessed by a “hellish speritt” and asks a final time to be spared of questions:

Well then I see noe way butt this will fright
 That Divell speach; Alas I ame possesst,
 And mad folks senceles ar of wisdomes right,
 The hellish speritt absence doth arest
 All my poore senses to hs cruel might,
 Spare mee then till I ame my self, and blest. (9-14)

In these lines, the speaker imagines the words and questions of the acquaintance as devil's speech. From there, she extends the imagery to herself, suggesting that she is possessed. Not only that, she is possessed by "The hellish speritt absence" (12).

Narratively speaking, we might imagine that the beloved is absent and that this absence is seen as a kind of haunting spirit. Within the context of the poem, however, that reading is not supported. Instead, the absence seems to be of the speaker from herself. She suggests that the spirit has arrested her senses and tries a final time to implore her acquaintance to stop asking questions until "I ame my self" (14). This might lead to a reading of the absence as that of her own sound mind, her autonomy, or perhaps even her sense of self as a lover, so that with her lover now absent, she is also not fully herself. Furthermore, once she is herself again, she is also blessed.

Notably, Wroth continues the trend she began in the first sonnet of the sequence by aligning devil possession with an inability to use her senses. This move not only fits within the larger context of her sequence, it also echoes a common theme in possession narratives, identified above. In P1, "deaths Image did my senceses hie" (2). Here, "The hellish speritt absence doth arest / All my poore senses to his cruell might" (12-13). Again, the speaker's ability to use her senses, her ways of understanding the world around her, are no longer her own. They are possessed by a devil, and she is not in control of herself. In this case, Wroth does not seem to align the love experience with devil possession. Rather, she uses this as a way to avoid the questions of others. Woven through this sonnet on devil-possession are several religious images. In line 6, Wroth seems to pun on "cross" as she shifts to confession: "You say I answere cross, I that confest." At the poem's conclusion, she also aligns being herself again with being

blessed: “Spare mee then till I ame my self, and blest” (14). In addition, she draws attention to her soul in the first quatrain: “Which still letts in new stormes my soule to rent” (4). The sonnet’s focus on the fate of the soul, Christ’s passion, confession, and eventual blessing outlines the redemption process even as the speaker presents herself as possessed by a devil. Interestingly, if we read in those images an outline of redemption, the speaker is possessed just where her Calvinistic beliefs might suggest. That is, in the oppressed state of dwelling on earth as one of God’s elect while awaiting sanctification in heaven. In her study of Wroth’s Calvinist imagery in the sequence, Madeline Bassnett suggests: “By the end of the first section, Pamphilia may appear trapped in her constancy to Amphilanthus, but she also experiences a distinct spiritual progression, suggesting implicitly the personal connection of Wroth - and the Sidneys - to the divine” (123). It is perhaps this reassuring grip on the divine that allows our speaker to leave this assessment of her own feelings behind and embark on a study of passion’s most troubling elements.

Jugglers, Tricksters, and Witches

In the interlude of songs that serve as the prologue to section two, Wroth develops the idea of witchcraft begun by her uncle, Sir Philiip Sidney in Song 5 of *Astrophil and Stella*. Sidney writes: “My feete are turn’d to rootes, my hart becommeth lead, / No witchcraft is so evill, as which man’s mind destroyeth” (77-78). His lines focus on a witchcraft that destroys man’s mind. Wroth’s song P57 begins at a time when the speaker and her beloved must part, he to joyous experiences and she to woeful ones:

O mee the time is come to part,
 And with itt my lyfe-killing smart
 Fond hope leave mee my deer must goe

To meet more joy, and I more woe; (P57.1-4)

While not rooted in place at her feet, as in Sidney's image, the speaker seems just as confined to her place. Her beloved goes on to "meet more joy," while she remains in place, devoid of hope, joy, and even life itself, "and with itt my lyfe-killing smart" (2). This opening suggests a death-like state, again resounding with the echoes of the sequence's opening dreamspace and "deaths Image" (P1.2). The next quatrain imagines the speaker's heart, "soe well to sorrow us'd" (7), and the third presents the opposite: a beloved who "Showld never sitt in mourning shade" (10). The final two lines of this third stanza reinforce the idea that the beloved is leaving the speaker-lover behind to mourn in place: "Noe I alone must mourne, and end / Who have a lyfe in grief to spend" (11-12). After this stasis, movement propels the start of the fourth stanza: "My swiftest pace to waylings bent" (13). While offering a sense of movement in "swiftest pace" and "bent," the speaker is presumably only moved in the emotional sense, as her wailing begins at the beloved's absence. This rush to weeping, though, shows the speaker that these woes are a form of witchcraft: "Shews joy had butt a short time lent / To bide in mee wher woes must dwell, / And charme mee with theyre cruell spell" (14-16). Here, the speaker imagines that joy was a temporary guest, but her usual inhabitants, woes, can return to charming her with their spell. Like Sidney's witchcraft that destroys man's mind, the spells and charms used here make the speaker wish she was dead: "And yett when they theyr wichrafts try / They only make me wish to dy" (17-18). This image returns the speaker to a death-like state, ranging in darkness. However, the final rhyming couplet of the song returns to the speaker's constancy and her "faith in love," showing her resigned to wander in darkness: "Butt ere my faith in love they change / In horrid darknes will I

range” (19-20). Through this song, Wroth sets up the premise for the second section of sonnets, where she “explores a darker side of passion: the lover’s susceptibility to doubt, jealousy, and despair” (Roberts 45). Through the metaphor of witchcraft, she figures her woes as witches, charming her with spells and trying their witchcrafts on her. Their efforts are so effective, in fact, that they make the speaker wish she was dead before finally resigning herself to wander in darkness. However, in spite of the enchantments, Pamphilia remains constant in her faith in love. We will see the lover tested by dark forces like these time and again, particularly in this section, and we’ll see both how and how well she is able to remain faithful and constant.

In the second sonnet of this section, P64, the speaker encounters love itself embodying a form of witchcraft of enchantment: “Love like a jugler, comes to play his prise” (1). The opening words, “Love like a jugler” sets up the way in which love approaches. Here, the term “jugler” requires a closer look. Rather than suggesting someone who literally juggles, tossing objects around in the air, a reading we might associate with Amphilanthus, who juggles women as “the lover of two,” in the seventeenth century, “jugler” suggests a magician, a sorcerer, or “one who works marvels by the aid of magic or witchcraft” (“Jugler, n”). This sonnet, then, is another direct metaphor for love as witchcraft. The speaker identifies that love comes like a witch or a magician, deceiving by means of trickery and magic. From there, we see the purpose for his approach: “Love like a jugler, comes to play his prise” (1). Although we may be tempted to gloss this “prise” as “prize,” at the time of Wroth’s writing, “prise” can refer to “the taking or seizing of anything by a lord for his own use from his feudal tenants or dependants” (“Prise, n2”). Not only that, the word “prise” is also used in reference to

blowing a blast on a hunting horn (“Prise, n1”). In that case, however, the term would be used with the verb “to blow” or “to sound.” Wroth’s phrasing, “to play his prise” hints at the sound of a hunting horn, although reading this word as a reference to a sovereign’s right of seizure seems to gloss more evenly with the rest of the sonnet, as well as Wroth’s use of the word in the Folger manuscript.¹⁸ In F5, Wroth uses military imagery to depict the love experience. The speaker claims: “Two sparckling eyes were gainers of my loss / While love-begetting lips theyr gaine did cross, / And chaleng’d haulf of my hart-master’d prise” (9-11). In this case, Wroth’s use of “prise” is associated with what is gained in battle. Although we may read these battle scenes depicting a “prize” won on the field of battle, “Itt humbly did confess they wan the field” (12), the sovereign who does the winning here is love, or even the beloved. In the final lines of the sonnet, the speaker reveals that she is subject to her beloved: “Yett equall was theyr force, soe did itt yeeld / Equally still to serve those lips, and eyes” (13-14). By looking to Wroth’s use of “prise” in this sonnet outside the *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* sequence, we can better understand her use of the word in P64. Here, the martial imagery is replaced by a childlike, anacreontic Cupid, but his magic is no less powerful. He comes to play, but his game is taking. I discuss this imagery and its relationship to the Love is a Monarch image

¹⁸ Since Wroth later uses “hart” as a pun on “heart” in line 10, this hunting reference is certainly not without substance. However, the passage resists a direct interpretation because Wroth’s use of the word ‘play’ contains several interpretive possibilities. Does love come to play his prise in the sense of playing with or toying with what he has seized or caught? Is love attempting a disguise and playing his prise as in acting like what he has or is planning to seize? Or, is love announcing his victory by playing or sounding a prise? Perhaps our uncertainty here is purposeful. We focus in to understand what love is doing, just as the next line suggests: “And all minds draw his wonders to admire” (2).

elsewhere, and here I want to focus on the element of magic or witchcraft that Wroth associates with love in this sonnet.

The element of trickery becomes more apparent as the poem continues, the first quatrain setting up a space for love's magic, and importantly, a space for love's audience:

Love like a jugler comes to play his prise,
 And all minds draw his wonders to admire,
 To see how cunningly hee, wanting eyes,
 Can yett deseave the best sight of desire: (1-4)

The ambiguity of "play his prise" in the first line is heightened by the addition of the juggler's audience. The second line is unclear: "And all minds draw his wonders to admire" (2). We can't be sure, based on syntax alone, whether the minds draw as in draw near in order to admire his wonders, or whether the minds draw as in literally create, write, or paint his wonders. The ambiguous use of the word "draw" leaves open the possibility that the deceit could be in the minds of the audience as they self-create these wonders and admire them when in fact there are none there to begin with. The ambiguity continues: "To see how cunningly hee, wanting eyes, / Can yett deseave the best sight of desire" (3-4). These lines reveal love's ability to deceive the vision, particularly the vision of desire. Here, Wroth's depiction of love playing tricks on the lovers' eyes is associated directly with the lovers' desires. This is reminiscent of Wroth's P39, where her use of a Love is Madness metaphor is associated with sight and an abundance of looking: "Watch, gaze, and marke till they to madness runn" (12). In P64, once again, Wroth associates sight with a metaphor for love acting in a way that deceives the senses or sound mind. In looking, the lover may be driven mad or deceived.

The second quatrain heightens our understanding of love in this sonnet as the embodiment of Cupid. He makes a literal appearance in line four: "The wanton child, how hee can faine his fire / So pretely, as none sees his disguise!" (5-6). Once again, the eyes of the audience are deceived, this time suggesting the lovers are blind to love's disguise. The word "faine" can be used in multiple ways, but I believe the most suitable gloss is "feign," or "to fashion fictitiously or deceptively" ("Feign, v"). This reading is well-suited to a juggler, who feigns his fire, or fashions it deceptively to trick his audience. And, once again, the audience is tricked through their own vision, "as none sees his disguise" (6), pointing to the obfuscation of the senses that Wroth associates with love when imagined as a madness, devil, or witch. Not only is the audience deceived by the juggler, they go so far as to promote him to a position of authority, "while wee fooles hire / The badge, and office of his tyrannies" (7-8). The authoritative positioning of Cupid prepares for the speaker's exploration of Cupid as a monarch in the corona portion of the sonnet sequence, while easily working with this sonnet by reflecting the earlier use of the word "prise" (1) as the king's seizure of his dependent's property. In the next lines, the exact nature of the seizure is revealed: "For in the end; such jugling hee doth make / As hee our harts, in stead of eyes doth take" (9-10). Although the juggler deceives the audience's vision, it is not their eyes that are seized for his use, it is their hearts. Like the lovers of P39, driven to madness by their looking, the lovers here are tricked through their looking, and it is their hearts, presumably instead of their minds, that are lost. Wroth goes on to distinguish between the tricks of man and the tricks of love: "For men can only by their sleights abuse / The sight with nimble, and delightful skill; / Butt if hee

play, his gaine is our lost will” (11-13).¹⁹ While men are only able to deceive vision through their deceit, Cupid’s deception enables him to seize the will. This seizure of will points back to the way Cupid deceives “the best sight of desire” (4) by aligning will with desire and marking the capture as a seizure of agency. Whether by madness or by deceit, the looking lovers in either case seem to lose their agency, or the ability to think and act for themselves.

Exploring another form of enchantment in P65, Wroth employs the myth of Argus, lulled to sleep by Mercury. The speaker begins by praising night, a time of happiness for lovers and a hopeful, joyous season.

Most blessed Night, the happy time for love,
The shade for Lovers, and theyr loves delight,
The Raigne of Love for servants, free from spite,
The hopefull seasons, for joy’s sports to move; (1-4)

This description of night imagines a carnivalesque environment, upsetting the social order with servants freed and love reigning as a monarch. Then, she asserts that night has even more glory than Mercury in enchanting Argus, further enhancing the suggestion that night is a time when the traditional social hierarchy is turned on its head. Following on the heels of Wroth’s juggler, we can see these two sonnets working together as a pair. Although Wroth certainly complicates the idea of love as a mere fool in P64, his figuration as a juggler, tricking and entertaining his audience with his sports, preludes a

¹⁹ May Paulissen first suggested that Wroth’s sequence offers a number of possible puns on a lover named Will, a reference to Wroth’s known philandering lover and cousin, William Herbert.

more fully-realized carnivalesque scene in P65. In this space, Wroth imagines night closing the eyes of lovers like Mercury does to Argus:

Now hast thou made thy glory higher prove
 Then did the God, whose pleasant reede did smite
 All Argus eyes into a deathlike night
 Till they were safe, that non could love reprove, (5-8)

As we've seen previously, Wroth aligns an enchanted state, in this case night, as "deathlike" (7). The sestet unpacks the metaphor further, showing readers not only how night closes eyes like Mercury, but also what that blindness blocks out:

Now thou hast clos'd those eyes from prying sight
 That nourish jealousie more than joys right
 While vaine suspition fosters theyr mistrust
 Making sweet sleepe to master all suspect
 Which els theyr privatt feares would nott neglect
 Butt would imbrace both blinded, and unjust. (9-14)

By shutting their eyes, night makes the lovers blind to sights that nourish or feed their jealousy. It limits their suspicion, mistrust, and private fears. Furthermore, night makes sleep the master, putting the lover in a place of subjection to sleep. Although this exaltation of night and sleep does create a happy space for lovers to joy in love and forget their suspicions, Wroth's concluding couplet shows us the alternate to that: a space where the lovers' private fears would not be neglected, but would be embraced by the lover, whether justified or not. That final line, "both blinded, and unjust" (14), complicates our understanding of sight and blindness. While the poem previously aligns blindness with

the lovers' state at night, like Argus with closed eye, the turn in the couplet suggests that the real blindness might be during the day, when lovers let their private fears rule them instead. Like the sonnet before it, the imagery used here calls the sense of sight into question. Love as a juggler deceives "the best sight of desire" (P64.4), and lovers blinded by night and sleep are free of suspicion, whereas their waking state is one where they embrace their fears, albeit "blinded, and unjust" (14).

Wroth picks up this theme again in P69, this time imagining jealousy as the trickster. In the opening quatrain the speaker describes jealousy's "hidenest" and "most secret art" (2). She asserts that in spite of these secret arts, she has already seen and felt everything jealousy can do to her:

Thou canst noe new invention frame butt part

I have allredddy seene, and felt with woe,

All thy dissemblings which by fained show

Wunn my beeleeffe, while truth did rule my hart (3-6)

The speaker insists that jealousy's disguises and deceit have won her belief in the past, even while truth continued to rule in her heart. Wroth carefully distinguishes here between belief and truth, aligning belief with the senses, particularly sight and feeling, "I have already seene, and felt with woe" (4), and aligning truth with the heart, or emotional core. This runs counter to the traditional idea that what we can see, hear, or touch is truth, while we might consider belief to be less stable, grounded only on emotional response. Wroth flips this idea, figuring the love experience as a kind of resistance to mere belief, based on what we sense, and the embrace of what we know, based on our emotion. Wroth unpacks this dichotomy further in the sestet: "I thought excuses had been reasons true, /

And that noe faulcehood could of thee ensue; / Soe soone beeleeffe in honest minds is wrought” (9-11). Here, she reinforces that alternative view of belief, not as the result of emotional whim, but as a construction in an honest mind. Wroth’s use of the word “wrought” here emphasizes her sense of belief as a creation, something made in the lover’s mind and perhaps not existing in reality. The final tercet presents the speaker’s current, enlightened state: “Butt now I find thy flattery, and skill, / Which idly made mee to observe thy will; / Thus is my learning by my bondage bought” (12-14). In contrast to her previous faith in the inventions of jealousy, she now sees it as mere flattery and skill. The speaker is enlightened, recognizing jealousy’s tricks, dissemblings, and feigned shows for the secret arts they are. The final lines shows us the price of that enlightenment, as her learning is bought through bondage. Who is the speaker in bondage to here? Presumably, the speaker is bound by love. Thus, it is her very condition of being a lover that has allowed her to see beyond the feints of jealousy and trust her heart.

When Love Brings a Garden of Madness

The third section of the sonnet sequence, the corona, offers only one hint of madness or enchantment. In P87, picking up on the garden imagery from the previous sonnet, Wroth explores the contradictions in delights from the earth that cause illness or even death:

Unprofitably pleasing, and unsound
 When heaven gave liberty to frayle dull earth
 To bringe forth plenty that in illis abound
 Which ripest yett doe bring a sertaine dearth. (1-4)

Although we may be tempted to read Wroth's "dearth" here as a variant of "death," a reading I believe the poet alludes to, it is important to recognize its meaning as a "dearth," a point I believe Wroth drove home by rhyming with "birth" at the end of the next line. The noun "dearth" refers to a scarcity, particularly of food ("Dearth, n4"). I believe our understanding of this line is best when we read it as a companion to the line above. Line 3 sets up a contrast between bringing forth plenty and a plenty that abounds with ills. Similarly, line 4 sets up a contrast between ripeness and scarcity. In this way, both lines show us something ripe, in plentitude, ready to eat, but contrasted against something unedible or scarce. That said, I believe Wroth intends to allude to "death" in this line. Read as a companion to the previous line, the plenty that abounds with ills pairs with something ripe that brings certain death. Both readings provide insight into Wroth's figuring of love here as both something pleasing and also unsound. The second quatrain unpacks this metaphor further:

A timeles, and unseasonable birth
 Planted in ill, in wurse time springing found,
 Which hemlock like might feed a sick-witts mirthe
 Wher unruld vapors swimm in endles rounde, (5-8)

The contradictions presented in the first quatrain are continued here with a birth that is both unseasonable and timeless. Both words suggest a birth without season or time, but timeless also suggests something eternal, everlasting, and outside the bonds of time ("Timeless, adj1"). The timing of this birth is emphasized again in the next line's "in wurse time springing found" (6). Here, the poet puns on the typical time for birth in the garden, spring, using it as a verb for the act of springing forth, or budding up from the

earth. Then, she compares this birth to that of hemlock, described by John Gerarde as “one of the deadly poisons which killeth by its colde qualities, as Dioscorides writeth, saying, Hemlock is a very evill, dangerous, hurtfull, and poisonouse herbe” (904). This comparison to the deadly poison of hemlock reinforces a reading of “dearth” as “death” and it gives a specific example of the “plenty that in ills abound” (3). The remainder of line 7 provides the detail that links this garden or even food imagery back to our current focus on madness: “Which hemlock like might feed a sick-witts mirthe” (7). Although “sick-wit” doesn’t have an exact match in the OED, its suggestion of lack-wit provides some clarity, as in a stupid person or someone who is witless (“Lack-wit, n”). However, Wroth’s term does not point to a person who is without wit, or the faculty for thinking, reason, intellect, or understanding (“Wit, n”). Rather, her “sick-witt” seems to suggest someone who has all their mental capacities, but whose ability to reason is sick, or impaired. Like madness, spells, demon-possession, charms, or even sleep, Wroth’s image here presents a lover that is not in control of their own thoughts or senses. Just as a poison like hemlock might dull one’s thinking faculties, Wroth paints a picture of love that is poisonous and dangerous. She clarifies this contrast between “unprofitably pleasing” love (or wantonness as suggested in P86) and the true, faithful love she promotes throughout the sequence in the third quatrain:

Then joy wee nott in what wee ought to shun
 Wher shady pleasures showe, butt true borne fires
 Ar quite quench’d out, or by poore ashes wunn
 Awhile to keepe those coole, and wann desires. (9-12)

This quatrain serves as a direct address to other lovers in the corona's Court of Love. She implores them not to seek joy in "shady pleasures" and imagines that space as one where "true borne fires," or true loves, are quenched out. Here, if the fires of true love remain, it is only in the form of warm ash that keeps "those coole, and wann desires" (12). This image of desire as cool and sickly aligns with Wroth's hemlock in the second quatrain. Like her father's "Poisonous weeds of colde despayre / In Loves garden" (22.2-3), Wroth sees this unprofitable or unsound love as cold. However, while her father toes the Petrarchan line with a lover begging his beloved for an end to his despair, Wroth aligns this sense of coldness with desire and even pleasure. This seems to be an aspect of the lover's experience, but not a quality of true or faithful love. For this kind of love, Wroth suggests giving due honor to Cupid in the couplet: "O noe lett love his glory have and might / Bee given to him who triumphs in his right" (13-14). While Wroth's glorification of Cupid is unsustainable (Roberts 45), this sonnet allows us to see a distinction between the types of love and lust that the poet explores throughout the sonnet and in particular here in the corona. She presents an image of a love that is pleasing, albeit unprofitable and unsound. This love is ripe and plentiful, but it is also full of poison. Characteristically Petrarchan, it is both timeless and unseasonable, feeding mirth, and stuck in an "endles rounde" or eternal, vicious cycle. In contrast, Wroth also alludes to a different kind of love here. One that is sound, profitable, and not led by desire. She assigns this love to those who triumph in his right, suggesting true or right lovers. Therefore, this metaphor goes beyond figuring love as a form of madness. It suggests that lust or desire may be a form of madness, but that love in its true or right form can avoid these poisonous pitfalls.

Spirits and Fantasies

In the fourth section, Wroth returns to imagery involving spirits and the supernatural. Once again, this imagery allows us to see the poet distinguishing between a true form of love and one driven by desire and lust. The poem opens with the speaker considering her reaction to an image of her beloved:

When I beeheld the Image of my deere
 With greedy lookes mine eyes would that way bend,
 Fear, and desire did inwardly contend;
 Feare to bee mark'd, desire to drawe still neere, (P98.1-4)

The sight of her beloved stokes greed, fear, and desire in the lover, and Wroth's insistence on linking fear with desire points to the jealousy that develops at the sight of this image. Line 4 seems to hint at an alignment between these emotions and archery, a common Petrarchan motif with love figured as a hunt, like Sir Thomas Wyatt's "Whoso list to hunt, I know where is an hind" (1). The words "mark'd" and "drawe" suggest the acts of aiming and drawing the bow to shoot. This image is also suggestive of Cupid and his bow, so we can see in this opening image a figure of love that is traditional, Petrarchan, aligned with Cupid, but problematic. These potential problems are developed in the second quatrain:

And in my soule a speritt wowld apeer,
 Which boldnes waranted, and did pretend
 To bee my genius, yett I durst nott lend
 My eyes to trust wher others seemed soe cleere, (5-8)

Seeing the image of her beloved causes a spirit to appear in her soul, boldly pretending to be her genius, a reference to the classical pagan belief of a tutelary god or attendant spirit (“Genius, n”). Once again, this image points back to Cupid as the potential tutelary god, further aligning this figure with the traditional, Petrarchan form of love, which to “others seemed soe clear” (8). The speaker doesn’t trust the spirit, although others before her have. Instead, the speaker attempts to discover where this spirit comes from in the third quatrain:

Then did I search from whence this danger ‘rose,
 If such unworthynes in mee did rest
 As my sterv’d eyes must nott with sight bee blest;
 When jealousie her poyson did disclose (9-12)

This image of the lover seeking the origins of this spirit makes several key connections with previous sonnets. First, she aligns this bold spirit with an inability to use her senses: “As my sterv’d eyes must nott with sight bee blest” (11). Like her dream in the first sonnet, “And sleepe deaths Image did my sencses hier” (P1.2), the speaker’s ability to use her sense of sight is limited, even absent, after beholding the image of her beloved. Second, the poet suggests that sight is a blessing: “with sight bee blest” (11). Notably, Wroth uses this term, “blest” only one other place in the sequence, when she pretends to be possessed by a devil in order to bring an end to questions: “The hellish speritt absence doth arest / All my poore sencses to his cruell might, / Spare mee then till I ame my self, and blest” (P52.12-14). Once more, this image draws a sharp contrast between the state of having one’s senses arrested and the state of having the use of one’s senses, marking the second as a blessed state. Third, the poet aligns jealousy with poison. Like her

hemlock in P87, this potential for poisoning arises out of pleasure and desire. These elements within the sonnet not only link it to others that employ similar imagery, but also demonstrate further the way Wroth's use of imagery involving spirits, spells, and madness are united in their conception and definition of love.

Finally, Wroth offers a counter to the fear and jealousy caused by an image of her beloved in the couplet: "Yett in my hart unseene of jealous eye / The truer Image shall in triumph lye" (13-14). In this final image, the speaker imagines the truer image of her beloved hidden in her heart. It seems that the speaker is placing a higher value on her memory or mind's eye than on her vision or a picture of her beloved. This "truer Image" is "unseene of jealous eye," a detail that fails to distinguish between the eyes of the lover and the eyes of others. While we might assume this "jealous eye" belongs to a rival, the sonnet presents this jealousy arising within the speaker when she sees the image. In this way, the "truer Image" is unseen by the lover's own jealous eye. By avoiding images of her beloved, the speaker could presumably avoid this fear, jealousy, and desire embodied by the spirit or genius. Interestingly, Wroth's final word in this sonnet is "lye." This spelling clearly connects the word to the other half of its rhyming pair above, "eye," but it also suggests something a bit different than her ending for sonnet P47: "His sight gives lyfe unto my love-rulde eyes / My love content because in his, love lies" (13-14). In that case, Wroth still rhymes with "eyes," but chooses against the spelling "lyes" to suggest the potential for falsity and deception. In P98, by choosing the spelling "lye," Wroth still suggest reading this verb as the truer image resting or lying in her heart. However, it also suggests the meanings associated with cooking, now obsolete. That meaning suggests that "lye" could be used here as a verb for binding or tying, particularly

in 1621 (“Lye, v1”). I believe this meaning within Wroth’s spelling is no accident. Rather, it suggests that this hidden, truer image of her beloved strengthens her bond with him. True love ties or binds or her to the beloved. That said, this meaning also hints at the state of the lover as bound to love, similar to other sonnets that figure the lover as a prisoner, tied, enslaved, or in bondage to love. In this way, I think we are still seeing hints of the speaker’s constant and unshakeable status as lover from the first sonnet and Pamphilia’s characterization as faithful in love.

Wroth touches on supernatural imagery again in P101. In this sonnet, the speaker laments her experience of love as continual pain:

No time, noe roome, noe thought, or writing can

Give rest, or quiett to my loving hart,

Or can my memory or phantsie scan

The measure of my still renuing smart, (1-4)

In this opening quatrain, Wroth uses a poetic metaphor to explore the love experience, suggesting that neither memory nor fantasy can scan the measure of her pain. This image of scanning a line of poetry allows the poet to distinguish between two ways of accessing her beloved without his presence, the first through memory, and the second through fantasy. While Wroth’s use of the word “phantsie” here could be read as the “mental apprehension of an object of perception” (“Fantasy | Phantasy, n1”), it could also be read as a spectral apparition, a phantom, or an illusory appearance (“Fantasy | Phantasy, n2”), or even as delusive imagination or hallucination (“Fantasy | Phantasy, n3”). These meanings connect the image to other spectral figures in her poetry, like the bold spirit in P98 or the sweet shades in P19. By placing this two terms adjacent to one other, the poet

could be suggesting that we read “phantsie” as mental apprehension, akin to memory or thoughts of her beloved. However, we can’t ignore the suggestion that these memories are fantasies of her delusive imagination or even phantasies, spectral apparitions or illusions.

Wroth uses a similar term in her final sonnet in the sequence. In this apostrophe to her muse, the speaker finally finds peaceful rest and quiet in faithful love:

My muse now hapy, lay thy self to rest,
 Sleepe in the quiett of a faithful love,
 Write you noe more, butt lett these phant’sies move
 Some other harts, wake nott to new unrest, (P103.1-4)

The final sonnet offers a full-circle compliment to the sequence’s opening scene and the poet’s continued struggle with restless sleep and lover’s nightmares throughout the sequence. Here, in “faithful love,” the speaker’s muse can sleep quietly and without disturbance. She leaves “phant’sies” to someone else. Once again, these “phant’sies” could merely allude to mental apprehension, but the term is also suggestive of imagination, delusion, and even hallucination. Wroth drives her point home in this final sonnet, as she connects those “phant’sies” that could “move / Some other harts” (3-4) with the potential for “new unrest” (4). She counters this against the “quiett of a faithfull love” (2) that her muse can now enjoy, unpacking that vision of love in the second quatrain:

Butt if you study, bee those thoughts adrest
 To truth, which shall eternall goodness prove;
 Injoying of true joye, the most, and best,

The endless gaine which never will remove; (5-8)

The speaker entreats her muse to focus on truth and true joy, again emphasizing the false or illusory nature of “thes phant’sies” that have moved her writing up to this point.

As we reach the conclusion of the sequence, Wroth’s use of this metaphor allows us to recognize the important distinction she makes in this work between a true, faithful form of love and other forms of love lauded in popular sonnet sequences and supported by their traditional, Petrarchan imagery. By enjoying faithful, true love, Pamphilia, whose name is signed to the end of this last sonnet, is free to “leave off” (13). She asserts that “what’s past shoves you can love, / Now lett your constancy your honor prove” (13-14). This concluding couplet once again complicates our understanding of love because it suggests that all the pain she has felt in love is part of what proves she is a lover. In this way, Wroth seems both to have discovered a “faithful love” that runs counter to the love experience portrayed earlier and also to have asserted that this love experience is a key part of loving or being a lover. It is her constancy in love throughout all these pains that allows her to find an eventual rest in faithful love. In the conclusion of *Urania*, Pamphilia even comes to embody the virtue of constancy, accepting the keys to the Throne of Love, “at which instant Constancy vanished, as metamorphosing her self into her breast” (I.i.141). This sonnet finds that the speaker’s love has been proven and going forward, her constancy will prove her honor. This is an important point because it demonstrates that Wroth does not figure constancy as the proof of love. Although she seems to suggest that she has now discovered a faithful love or true love, the couplet insists that all her past and painful experiences are the proof that she can love or that she is a lover. Her constancy will not prove that she loves. Rather, her constancy is going to prove her honor

in the days and years ahead. That honor is distinct from love reflects Wroth's own biography and our knowledge of her love experience with William Herbert, Earl of Pembroke. Bearing children with her first cousin, a notorious philanderer who was married to Lady Mary Talbot even as he was romantically involved with several other courtiers, Wroth included, she flaunts convention and throws her honor into question, costing her the privileged position she held in Queen Anne's inner circle. Like her speaker, Pamphilia, Wroth seems acutely aware of lost honor, and she sees the demonstration of her constant love as a way to win this honor back.

Conclusion: The Possibilities and Limits of Love as Witchcraft

Wroth's use of imagery depicting forms of madness, demon-possession, witchcraft, and other supernatural enchantments assigns certain possibilities and limits to the love experience. First and foremost, this depiction of love limits the lover's ability to use and rely on her own senses. The lover's experience of the world around her is filtered through spirits, dreams, shades, and phantasies. This conception of love is haunted by the possibilities of illusion, delusion, hallucination, and trickery. However, conceiving of love in this way also allows the lover a form of empowerment to give voice to her own experience and to escape the penetrating questions of others. It gives her a way out and a way to remove her experience from the incessant interrogation of others because she can assert: "I am possessed" (10) and ask to be spared from more questioning. Finally, conceiving love as a form of madness or something supernatural allows us to see the distinction between false, lust-driven desire and true, faithful love. Although a dream wakes the speaker to love, she can also find quiet rest as a lover through her constancy. By employing these metaphors within her sequence, Wroth is able to distinguish her

conception of love from that of other sonneteers. She nods to the traditional, Petrarchan idea of love as a kind of enchantment and the beloved as some kind of witch, but she suggests that enchantment and illusion are simply the fare of lovers who feed their desires, seeking pleasure and delights rather than focusing on constancy and faithfulness.

Chapter 5 – Love is Light

The Illuminated Lover: “Forbeare darke night, my joys now budd againe”

The importance of religion in Wroth’s culture may be one of the reasons why one scholar has already begun to note the significance of her sonnet sequence in light of seventeenth-century religious discourse. Madeline Bassnett suggests that the lover’s complaint in Wroth’s sonnet sequence “exists alongside a Protestant narrative that records the stages and struggles of the elect individual” and asserts that this politically charged religious discourse gives reason to the style adopted in the sequence. Bassnett finds much of Wroth’s language here reflecting the common parlance of Puritan preachers and Anglican ministers like William Perkins, and she argues that they would have been “as obvious to Wroth’s readers as the coexisting Petrarchan tropes” (113). While Bassnett’s article focuses on sonnet P78, her work with the religious language in Wroth will direct much of my study in this chapter. I will explore Wroth’s use of common Petrarchan motifs such as love figured as light, sun, and star, and I will look to the way her work participates and responds to the religious discourse in the politically charged atmosphere of the seventeenth century. Through a close reading of her light metaphors, I will seek to discover and analyze her participation in religious discourse and, in particular, her adaptation of the Petrarchan lover’s language to suit her particular place and time while engaging with timeless, conceptual metaphors.

Before I begin analyzing specific instances of Wroth’s light imagery, I want to begin with a broader examination of the kinds of light images utilized by the poet and where in the sequence these images appear. Of the 103 songs and sonnets included in the sequence, at least 25 contain significant light images. I have deliberately excluded from

this paper those images that deal solely in setting up a binary between day and night.

Although these images are associated with light and deserve closer examination, they have been left out of this study for the sake of time and focus. Among these 25 light images, I find the figures sorting into four prominent groups: Love, Eyes, Emotion, and Exposure.

Categories of Light

First, Wroth figures Light as Love. Or, to express this as a conceptual metaphor akin to those described by Lakoff and Johnson: Love is Light. From there, we might better recognize the way this “metaphor highlights certain features while suppressing others” (141). Throughout her sonnet sequence, Wroth explores light as a metaphor for love, and the entailments of that extended metaphor seem to fall across four general themes. The first is when Wroth uses light as a direct stand-in for love, as in Wroth’s sonnet 78, where she describes the “light of true love” (7) and writes, “Love is the shining starr of blessings light” (9). Second, Wroth utilizes traditional Petrarchan imagery by figuring the eyes as lights, or sometimes stars as in sonnet P50: “O dearest eyes the lights, and guides of love” (1). While sometimes the light shining in the beloved’s eyes is characterized on its own accord like these “eyes the lights” (1), at other times the light of the eyes is closely associated with love and it is love that shines through the eyes. This kind of light imagery can be seen near the start of her sequence in sonnet P3 when the speaker pleads that love “Shine in those eyes which conquer’d have my hart” (3). The third grouping shifts to light imagery that reflects an emotional quality, like the “Light of my joye” (P47.10). Often, this imagery highlights the absence of light in grief or sadness as in sonnet P4: “All light of comfort dimb’d” (7). In these poems, light helps Wroth to

shape her emotional landscape. She seeks darkness in her grief and exalts in the light of day when her beloved smiles on her. The fourth group I see emerging from these light images are those in which Wroth's figurations of light focus on its quality of exposing and illuminating wrongdoings, shame, and other "black deeds of darkness" (P50.12).

There are two sonnets that defy easy categorization into one of these four general groupings. In these two sonnets, Wroth uses light as a metaphor, and in ways related to the four dominant ways she engages with light imagery, but I think their resistance to categorization is significant, and I'll explore each of these outliers on their own.

Love is Light

Let's begin by further exploring the overarching conceptual metaphor at work in Wroth's sonnets, the idea that love is a light. Wroth begins her sonnet sequence in darkness: "When nights black mantle could most darknes prove" (P1.1). Here, under this mantle of darkness, the speaker dreams of "bright Venus, Queene of Love" (6) and her son, Cupid. She awakens to find that she is now a lover: "I, waking hop'd as dreams itt would depart / Yett since: O mee: a lover I have binn" (P1.13-14). By beginning her sequence in darkness as a non-lover and awakening as a lover, Wroth establishes a world for her poetry where love is associated with light and the absence of love is associated with darkness. The idea that love seems to emerge out of a dreamspace associated with darkness is not unproblematic, and it is these very inconsistencies that Wroth's continued use of the metaphor will bring to the forefront. From there, Wroth's second sonnet draws on light as a metaphor, associating it with eyes, sight, and vision, and I'll discuss this sonnet more below. Here, I want to focus on Wroth's third sonnet, the first that expresses a direct correspondence between love and light. While sonnet P2 imagines eyes as lights,

specifically the eyes of her beloved, these are imagined as “Two starrs of Heaven” (P2.9) and the eyes are themselves are figured as light: “When pleasing looks from those bright lights apeere” (P2.6). The light is associated with love because it shines in the eyes of her beloved, but the poem does not directly assign qualities of light to the feeling of love. In the next sonnet, however, the third in the sequence, Wroth makes a direct connection between imagining the eyes as light and imaging love as light. In this poem, the speaker implores love to “play thy part” (P3.1). She demands: “Shine in those eyes which conquer’d have my hart” (P3.3). This line gives love the quality of light and the power to shine in the beloved’s eyes. By making this association early in the sequence, Wroth not only associates herself with the sonneteering tradition of her uncle, I’ll discuss this more below in my section on light as vision and sight, but also she allows the reader to understand that anytime she engages with these light as sight metaphors, they can be understood as part of the larger, conceptual metaphor: Love is Light.

Wroth makes the association between love, light, and vision early in her sequence, but she does not return to a direct connection between love and light until almost the end of the first section. In the intermediary sonnets, light is associated with eyes, emotions, and exposure, and Wroth returns to imagining love as a light in sonnet P53. Here, Wroth revisits the binary between light and darkness, sun and shade. She seems to associate love with the light of the sun, but complicates that in the very same line as she also associates love with shade:

Love, thou hast all, for now thou hast mee made

Soe thine, as if for thee I were ordain’d;

Then take thy conquest, nor lett mee bee pain’d

More in thy sunn, when I doe seeke thy shade (P53.1-4)

In these lines, we see a speaker conquered by love, ordained to love, and owned by love, begging not to be pained any more by the bright sun of love. We could imagine the speaker having been burned by love, or even more specifically, sunburned by love.

Through this metaphor of love as light, specifically light from the sun, we can see an example of the way metaphors are grounded in our experience, as asserted by Lakoff and Johnson: “metaphors are grounded in systematic correlations within our experience” (61).

Wroth’s use of light as a metaphor for love highlights the quality love has for causing pain and hurt. It engages with the human experience of love and resonates with readers who have felt the burn of love. Wroth’s metaphor here significantly aligns that pain-causing aspect of love to light, while seeking out respite from that light in love’s shade.

This complicates our reading of Love as Light because in this sonnet we see love providing both sun and shade. If love has a light side, we might say, love also has a dark side.

Wroth furthers this depiction of love as a burning light like that of the sun in the final sonnet of the first section. In this poem, Wroth imagines love as a fire, highlighting its capacity to burn. The poem begins with a simili: “How like a fire doth love increase in me” (P55.1). In this opening figuration of love, the poet focuses her attention on the way love grows like a fire, becoming stronger and brighter with time:

How like a fire doth love increase in me,
 The longer that itt lasts, the stronger still,
 The greater purer, brighter, and doth fill
 Noe eye with wunder more, then hopes still bee

Bred in my brest, when fires of love are free

To use that part to theyr best pleasing will,

And now impossible itt is to kill

The heat so great wher Love his strength doth see. (P55.1-8)

In these first two stanzas, we see that love is not only a light or a fire, it is a wildfire, uncontainable and dangerous. We see it taking over the speaker, smothering her ability to breathe: “My breath nott able is to breathe least part / Of that increasing fuell of my smart” (P55.12-13). By figuring love as light through the form of stars, daylight, sun, and fire, the poems express the warmth and purity of love alongside the destructiveness and even suffocating aspects of love. In spite of love’s capacity for destruction, the poem’s speaker is unable (or unwilling) to escape its grasp: “Yett love I will till I butt ashes prove” (P55.14). Even as love ultimately burns the speaker completely, turning her to ashes, she refuses to stop loving.

These dangerous and negative aspects are further explored in the second section of the sequence. Roberts writes that after an interlude of songs, “the second section explores a darker side of passion: the lover’s susceptibility to doubt, jealousy, and despair” (45). As we might expect, while the first section of sonnets contains light metaphors in at least 14 of its 55 poems, the second section contains only 2. The second section is shorter, with only 16 poems total, but its 12% of poems with light imagery is only half of the 25% of poems with light imagery in the first section. Additionally, neither of the poems in this section that engage with light imagery use light as a metaphor for love. Rather, the eyes are imagined as lights “and the spies of my desires.” (P62.2-3). However, in the third section of Wroth’s sequence, we see a marked increase in the use of

the love is light metaphor. In this corona of poems, 13 total, Wroth employs a light metaphor in at least five of the sonnets. Additionally, four of these instances directly engage with the conceptual metaphor, Love is Light. In the second sonnet of the corona, Wroth refers to the “Light of true love” (P78.7). She takes this a step further, figuring the light as a star, a fire, and a lamp: “Love is the shining starr of blessings light; / The fervent fire of zeale, the roote of peace, / The lasting lampe fed with the oyle of right” (9-11). Picking up on this fire image, the speaker asserts that love’s “flames ar joyes” (14). While the first section ended by exploring the dangerous and destructive aspects of love as a fire, this sonnet reimagines these flames as joy. Wroth’s figurative language here imagines love associated with the positive aspects of light. Furthermore, these positive aspects of light engage with what Bassnett identifies as “easily recognized - and, by 1621, politicized - Calvinist terminology” (112). She writes: “Conflating love with the light of faith and the demonstration of God’s grace, Wroth evokes the experience desired by many English Protestants - the assurance of election. In linking light to love, zeal, and peace, Wroth alludes specifically to the Calvinist-influenced belief in predestination” (112-113). So, as the corona opens, the reader sees Love as Light in not just a positive sense, but a righteous sense. Love becomes sacred.

Wroth’s religious imagery in this sonnet finds a counterpart in Sir Robert Sidney’s Sonnet 4, designed as the introductory poem of his sequence:

The purest flames, kindled by beauties rare,
 Strengthened by Love, assured by Destiny,
 In whom I live, which in me cannot die,
 Which are what I am, and I what they are, (1-4)

In this opening quatrain, the flames are kindled by beauty. Although Sidney refers to them as the “purest flames” (1), the suggestion that they are kindled by beauty raises the possibility that these fires are founded in lust or desire, rather than the true form of love that Wroth seeks in her sequence. Furthermore, Sidney’s flames are only strengthened by love, lacking the direct association between love and a flame’s light that we find in Wroth. The second quatrain further this reading by comparing the lover to a priestess:

True Vestale like, which with most holy care
 Preserve the sacred fyres, relligiously
 I doe mantein, and that no end they try
 Of my best parts their subject I prepare. (5-8)

In Sidney’s sonnet, the speaker is imagined as maintaining the sacred fires like a “Vestale,” a word associated with chastity, purity, and virginity. Sidney aligns his speaker with these pure virgins, suggesting that he tends to the sacred fires of love just as they tend to the sacred fires as Roman priestesses. In doing so, Sidney participates in a long tradition of imagining the lover at a lady’s altar. While similar, Wroth’s use of this imagery replaces the figure of a lover at the altar of the beloved with the image of love itself as the altar and sacred fire. In these lines, she imagines love as a fire, lamp, and a womb. While this image of love as a “wombe for joyes increase” (12) recalls the lady’s altar in traditional sonnetteering, it gives love the active role. Love is the lasting lamp, and it does not appear to require the diligent attention of the lover in order to sustain it.

Wroth’s glorification of love continues throughout the corona, and in the third sonnet of this section, she imagines love as a fire and a sun:

His flames ar joyes, his bands true lovers might,

Noe staine is there butt pure, as purest white,
 Wher noe clowde can apeere to dimm his light,
 Nor sport defile, butt shame will soone requite (P79.1-4).

Not only that, love's bright white purity is undarkened by clouds. This figurative language hearkens back to the metaphor of love as a sun, which burns the speaker when she longs for love's shade, in sonnet P53. However, unlike the discomfort love can cause, which Wroth highlights in that poem, here she uses the same metaphor to highlight love's purity and undiminishability. The poem goes on to assert that affections are tried by love as gold is tried by fire:

Heere are affections, tri'de by loves just might
 As gold by fire, and black desernd by white,
 Error by truthe, and darkness knowne by light,
 Wher faith is vallwed for love to requite (P79.5-8).

This comparison casts love as the trying fire. Moreover, it extends the characterization of this fire by comparing it to other ways in which a certain quality is defined by its opposite. Black is discernible through whiteness, error is found through truth, and darkness is known through light. In these figurations, affection is associated with gold, the color black, error, and darkness, while love is associated with fire, the color white, truth, and light. However, because these qualities are only known through their opposite, the imagery hints at the idea that these positive qualities are only possible through their negative counterparts. The comparisons here highlight the complexity of love even as they seemingly exalt it. Wroth implores her audience to revere Cupid, the embodiment of love in the corona: "Please him, and serve him, glory in his might" (P79.9). She insists

that this reverence will result in his firmness, innocence, and clarity: “And firm hee’ll bee, as innosencye white, / Cleere as th’ayre, warme as sunn beames, as day light” (P79.10-11). Again, these lines reinforce the idea that love is light. Love is a clear day. Love is a warm sun beam. Love is daylight. And, to push the metaphor even further, Love’s obedient subjects can become light too: “Then love obay, strive to observe his might, / And bee in his brave court a glorious light” (P79.13-14). In this sonnet we see Wroth not only imagining love as light, but lovers themselves become lights in Court of Love. This imagery of lovers as light is suggestive of the Platonist idea that there is a spark of divinity in every living soul. For Calvinists, election was the process of responding to that inner light. In his treatise, *A Guide to Godlynesse*, John Downname insists that God will fill his elect with light: “Secondly, having given unto us this life of grace, hee will in the next place indue us with spirituall light, and illuminate the blinde eyes of our mindes” (7). In her Court of Love imagery, readers can see allusions to the Calvinist ideas of election and inner light, which John Morgan maintains is “an obvious and common metaphor for the instilling of faith” (55). By figuring the lovers themselves as the light, Wroth engages with this common metaphor, depicting the lovers as elected, or embodying their inner, divine light. In this particular image, we can see Wroth figuring lovers in the court as God’s elect on earth. Imbued with light, even a divine spark, the lovers embody grace and faith. Sarah Apetrei’s study of anti-Calvinist sentiment in seventeenth-century women writers finds that after the Restoration, Quaker tracts soon made it “just as common to speak of the ‘universal concept of love, light or grace’ as of the ‘inner light’” (134). By this time, Apetrei insists, “the language of ‘universal love in Christ’ was rhetorically useful for political as well as theological purposes” (135). Pre-

dating these Quaker responses to Calvinistic ideas of predestination for a limited group of the elect, Wroth's imagery may be depicting a religious belief in God's elect becoming imbued with a divine light or faith, while also linking her "with other militant Protestants, who, by 1621, vociferously opposed the political and religious policies of James I (Bassnett 112). Wroth figures the lovers as God's elect, a unique and predetermined group of people who respond to and embody this inner light.

Picking up on this imagery in the following sonnet, Wroth further depicts the vision she has of lovers in this court:

And bee in his brave court a gloriouse light,
 Shine in the eyes of faith, and constancie,
 Maintaine the fires of love still burning bright
 Nott slightly sparkling butt light flaming bee
 Never to slack till earth noe stars can see,
 Till Sunn, and Moone doe leave to us dark night,
 And second Chaose once againe doe free
 Us, and the world from all devisions spite"(P80.1-8).

We can identify several light-based metaphors at work in these lines as love is a light, but it also shines in the eyes, is a brightly burning fire, and is a sun-filled day or even a starlit night. In fact, the only end to this love and light is the end of the world, a second Chaos. Love, it seems, is almost inevitable. It is as constant as the sun by day and the moon by night. However, it also seems to rely on the lovers in this Court of Love. It is their responsibility to maintain the fires of love and to keep them not just sparkling slightly, but in bright, roaring flames: "Maintaine the fires of love still burning bright / Nott

slightly sparkling butt light flaming bee” (3-4). When we encounter this poem on the heels of the previous one, we can see a subtle association between the lovers that maintain love’s fire here and those negative qualities that defined their positive counterparts above. Just as white needs black, truth needs error, and darkness needs light, love needs lovers. By extending this binary through two poems, we might even begin to associate the lovers with the negative aspects of the metaphor while love itself retains the positive aspects. Love becomes aligned with white, truth, and light, while the lovers align with the color black, error, and darkness. This detail highlights the divine aspects that Wroth’s imagery associates with love, particularly when imagined as a light. For instance, by setting up this binary, we can recognize the theological underpinnings, where humanity spoils the divine perfection created by God in the book of Genesis.

As the corona progresses, Wroth suggests that love may have the capacity to cleanse and purify the lovers of these dark, negative qualities. She returns to that black/white binary, suggesting that love can turn a lover white:

Soe may love make you pale with loving care

When sweet injoying shall restore that light

More cleare in beauty then wee can compare

If nott to Venus in her chosen night, (P88.5-8)

In these lines, love has the power to make the lover pale, to restore their clear light. Love, it appears, has the capacity to cleanse the lover of the very same negative aspects that love relies on to define itself. This ability casts love as divine. Wroth ends the sonnet by suggesting: “Thus love to bee devine doth heere apeere / Free from all fogs butt shining faire, and cleere” (P88.13-14). These lines depict love as as a fair, fogless day. However,

Wroth's language suggests that this vision of love may not be as it seems. She suggests that love *appears* to be divine. This word casts doubt over the imagery. The tensions we've seen lurking beneath the surface of these poems as love is cast as impossibly positive, but defined by the negative, now seem to be bubbling up in Wroth's suggestion that love is only appearing to be divine. It only looks like a fair, clear, and fogless day. By suggesting that love appears as something, Wroth hints at the risk that love may actually not be what it appears. As the corona draws to a close, the unsustainability of love's glorification becomes more apparent. Roberts asserts: "Pamphilia begins by acknowledging the tremendous power exercised by the ruler in his Court of Love, but she soon finds it impossible to sustain her glorification of Cupid" (45). The speaker still finds herself lost in a labyrinth, even as she burns in love: "Soe though in Love I fervently doe burne, / In this strange labourinth how shall I turne?" (P90.13-14). Through her exploration of the Love is Light metaphor, Wroth reveals contrary, complicated aspects of love. While love may be bright and warm, it is also uncontainable and destructive. While lovers may glorify and revel in it, they are also subject to its power.

Sight is Light

The second way I see Wroth engaging with light metaphors in her sonnet sequence is by figuring light as sight. In these metaphors, light is associated with the eyes and vision. As I noted above, her use of the light metaphor in this way is still related to the overarching, structural metaphor, Love is Light, because Wroth figures this light in the eyes of her beloved and sometimes even in the eyes of the lover. I've also already noted the way Wroth's opening sonnet sets up a world in which the darkness of night is associated with the non-lover who awakens as a lover in the light of day. Pushing that

metaphor further, we can see Wroth setting up the experiential concept of love as light because the speaker would presumably open her eyes upon waking. The closed eyes of sleep are therefore associated with the speaker's pre-love experience, and the open eyes of wakefulness are associated with the state of being a lover. Wroth continues to extend this metaphor throughout the sequence, claiming light as a figure for the eyes and sight. After the speaker awakens at the end of the first sonnet to find herself a lover, she addresses the eyes of her beloved directly:

Deare eyes how well (indeed) you doe adorne
 That blessed sphaere, which gazing soules hold deere:
 The loved place of sought for triumphs neere:
 The court of glory, wher Loves force was borne:
 How may they terme you Aprills sweetest morne
 When pleasing looks from those bright lights apeere:
 A sun-shine day, from clouds, and mists still cleere
 Kind nursing fires for wishes yett unborne! (P2.1-8)

This metaphor figures the eyes in the sphere of the head as stars in the spheres of heaven, "Deare eyes how well (indeed) you doe adorne / That blessed sphaere, which gazing souls hold deere" (P2.1-2). Or does it? Although the opening lines suggest this reading, the image is pushed further to suggest that the sphere is the Court of Love, imagery that will also continue throughout the sequence. Given that reading, the eyes the speaker refers to here may not be those of her beloved at all. Rather, the lines may refer to the eyes of lovers in general, making eyes of central importance in the Court of Love. "That blessed sphaere, which gazing soules hold deer" (2) sets up a series of appositives leading

up to “The court of glory, wher Loves force was borne” (4). This reading emphasizes the role of the eyes and of the gaze. It’s those “gazing souls” who hold dear the Court of Love because their gaze ignites the love experience. However, while this reading complicates any simple interpretation of the lines, the speaker seems to continue addressing the eyes of her beloved in the second quatrain, as she suggests that pleasing looks from those eyes creates a cloudless day: “When pleasing looks from those bright lights apeere: / A sun-shine day; from clouds, and mists still clere” (6-7). This imagery again draws a link between a figuring of the eyes as light and the figuring of love as daylight. In the following octave, the speaker once more figures the beloved’s eyes as stars, and she unites that image of the court and the lover’s face: “Two starrs of Heaven, sent downe to grace the Earthe, / Plac’d in that throne which gives all joys theyr birthe” (9-10). Here, we see the eyes as stars set in the face of the beloved, and we also see the eyes as stars placed in the throne of the Court of Love. By bringing these images together, Wroth emphasizes the role that eyes play in the love experience, as they are given the throne. In this image, we no longer see the eyes of lovers adorning the court in general, but we see the beloved’s eyes sitting in the throne, “Shining, and burning; pleasing yet theyr charmes” (11). The verbs in this line reflect both the brilliance of the love experience, “shining,” and the potential pain of a love experience, “burning” (11). That potential pain is picked up in the final octave of the sonnet: “Which wounding, even in hurts are deem’d delights, / Soe pleasant is there force!” (12-13). Here, Wroth engages with a traditional sonneteering metaphor, the beloved’s wounding eyes. Petrarch refers to Laura’s eyes: “Those lovely eyes, that struck me in such guise that only they themselves could heal the wound” (75.1-2). In Petrarch’s lines, the beloved’s eyes wound the subject,

and they are also the only source of his healing. Wroth's lines do something similar, although she doesn't so much suggest healing, as that the hurt is also a delight. The lover here is wounded by the eyes of her beloved, but she joys in that pain. The sonnet concludes with a focus on that contradictory sense of harm and happiness: "Soe great theyr mights / As, happy, they can triumph in theyr harmes" (13-14). As is often the case in Wroth's sonnets, it can be difficult to establish a clear antecedent for all her pronouns. In these lines, the reader is never offered an alternative, so we read each plural "they" as a reference to the eyes. Therefore, while the beginning of the octave notes the delight the lover feels in her pain, the end of the octave highlights the happiness the beloved's eyes take in their wounding power.

In spite of this shadow cast on any idealized fantasies about an altruistic love, Wroth finds hope in the following sonnet: "Yett is ther hope" (P3.1). Here, she begs Love to think about her and shine in the eyes of her beloved: "Then Love butt play thy part / Remember well thy self, and think on mee; / Shine in those eyes which conquer'd have my hart" (1-3). Although Wroth emphasizes the association between eyes and light in these opening sonnets of the sequence, she doesn't return to this kind of imagery again in her sonnets until almost halfway through the first section.²⁰ In P29, Wroth returns to imagery of eyes, light, and sight: "Poore eyes bee blind, the light behold noe more / Since that is gon which is your deer delight" (1-2). Rather than addressing her beloved's eyes

²⁰ Although Wroth does not engage any light metaphors in her sonnets between P3 and P29, she does use them in some of the songs interspersed throughout the sequence. For example, in the song just before P29, the beloved has departed and the speaker asks him to take her heart with him: "Yours itt is, to you itt flyes / Joying in those loved eyes" (P28.11-12). The focus then shifts to her own eyes and their state without the beloved: "Butt can I live having lost / Chiefest part of mee / Hart is fled, and sight is crost" (9-11). Wroth retains this focus on the speaker's eyes in the sonnet that follows.

here, the speaker addresses her own. She begs her eyes to be blind, to no longer see the light, and to cry:

Oreflow, and drowne, till sight to you restore
 That blessed star, and as in hatefull spite
 Send forth your teares in flouds, to kill all sight,
 And looks, that lost, wherin you joy'd before. (5-8)

We see the speaker here wishing for blindness because those pleasing looks from the eyes of her beloved are now gone. While she figures the beloved's eyes as stars in this sonnet, "That blessed star" (6) and "that bright starr" (12), she implores her own eyes to "Bury thes beames" (9). Until her beloved returns to her sight, the speaker insists that she does not want to see at all: "Till that bright starr doe once againe apeere / Brighter then Mars when hee doth shine most cleere / See nott: then by his might bee you redeem'd" (12-14). Wroth's figuring of the beloved's eyes as stars in this sonnet has precedent not only in the earlier sonnets within the sequence, but also in the sonnet tradition. However, in this sonnet Wroth also seems to associate these star-eyes with the Christian redeemer: "We have also a more sure word of prophecy; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts" (*King James Version*, 2 Peter 1:19). In charting Pamphilia's ordeal of election through the sequence, Bassnett suggests that "this light is not the temporary glow of a mortal, but the enduring and eternal effusion of the divine" (121). She sees this sonnet as a moment when Pamphilia "finds strength to move more definitively toward the light of knowledge" (121). In her movement toward election, Pamphilia is leaving behind the vacillation of earlier sonnets to seek the promise of an end to this untethered state. In the

poet's connection between light, love, and redemption in this imagery, we can see highlighted the way light functioned as "an obvious and common metaphor for the instilling of faith" (Morgan 55). Like the subtle shifting between the lover's face and the Court of Love in P2, Wroth is again able to suggest more than one idea simultaneously as her metaphor for the love experience runs alongside that of the election experience. Understanding one reading of the lines doesn't negate the other reading, but considering their multiple meanings at once adds to a nuanced understanding of both. The beloved stands in the role of Christ in these lines, and understanding them in this way allows the reader to understand love as a form of redemption and Christ as a figure for love.

Wroth takes another break in associating her light imagery with the eyes until sonnet P50.²¹ In this sonnet, the speaker reflects on the eyes as lights and guides to love:

O dearest eyes, the lights, and guides of love,
 The joyes of Cupid who himself borne blind
 To your bright shining doth his triumphs bind
 For in your seeing doth his glory move (P50.1-4).

²¹ In the interlude, Wroth engages with the light as eyes metaphor in a song, P42:
 You happy blessed eyes,
 Which in that ruling place
 Have force both to delight, and to disgrace,
 Whose light allures, and ties
 All harts to your command
 O! looke on mee, who doe att mercy stand (P42.1-6).

In this song, the speaker again addresses the eyes of her beloved, noting their ability to both delight and disgrace. She begs the eyes to look on her and continues to employ imagery that uses light and eyes interchangeably throughout. For example, "'Nor lett the frownes of stryfe / Have might to hurt those lights / Which while they shine they are true loves delights" (10-12). Or, "And when hee shines, and cleares / The heav'ns from clouds of night / How happy then is made our gazing sight" (16-18). The song closes with a charge to look on liars with "killing eyes" (38) and on her with "sweete lookes" (41).

These lines make another distinct connection between Cupid's Court of Love and the lovers' eyes. The speaker insists that although Cupid is blind, the bright shining of lovers' eyes are bound to his triumphs and that the act of seeing creates the space for his glory. The speaker goes on to suggest that the sun is envious of her beloved's eyes: "Your heavnly beames which make the sunn to find / Envy" (6-7). Furthermore, the "cleer lights" of the beloved's eyes "mach his beames above" (8), suggesting their light as an equal. However, the turn between the second and third quatrains depicts a darker scene and a space without sight:

Butt now, Alas, your sight is heere forbid
 And darkness must these poore lost roomes possess
 Soe bee all blessed lights from henceforth hid
 That this black deed of darkness have excess,
 For why shold heaven afford least light to those
 Who for my misery such darcknes chose. (9-14)

In this imagery, we see lack of sight associated with darkness. Not only that, but this space also allows for the "black deed of darkness" (12). Although the context of this poem alone does not offer further explanation for this black deed or what it refers to, we might need the context of Wroth's *Urania* for that, the significant aspect of the imagery employed here is the consistent use of a lighted space for love and darkness for the lack of love, for sorrow, misery, and black deeds.

Wroth returns to this imagery in a song near the middle of the second section of her sequence, a section I noted earlier as sparse on light imagery. In this song, the speaker asks: "Fairest, and still truest eyes / Can you the lights bee, and the spies / Of my

desires?” (P62.1-3) She reflects on the contradictory results of seeing, as the eyes shine for love’s delight but also breed jealousy and spite: “Can you shine cleere for loves delight, / And yett the breeders bee of spite, / And jealous fires? (4-6). The speaker wonders how the eyes can allow such joy while also allowing such jealousy, and she notes the looks of others who desire her:

Mark what lookes doe you behold,
Such as by jealousie are told
They want your love;
See how they sparcle in distrust
Which by a heat of thoughts unjust
In them doe move (7-12).

In the eyes of others, the speaker identifies jealousy, want, the sparkle of distrust, and the heat of unjust thoughts. In response to this, she seeks a way to avoid looking at others by turning her eyes inward: “Learne to guide your course by art / Chang your eyes into your hart” (13-14). I think it is significant that this song, which promotes looking inward, comes just before one of the two sonnets that defies easy categorization, and I’ll return to this idea again below. For now, let’s move forward into the third section of the sequence and the one sonnet in the corona that engages an eyes are lights metaphor.

In the fourth sonnet of the corona, the speaker commands: “And bee in his brave court a glorious light, / Shine in the eyes of faith, and constancie” (P80. 1-2). In this poem, the command is directed at lovers in general, including herself, as evidenced in the lines: “Till then, affections which his followers are / Governe our harts, and prove his powers gaine” (9-10). This use of the word “our” groups the speaker in with lovers in

general, placing them all in the Court of Love. By grouping herself in with the rest, Pamphilia further defines her characterization as faithful and constant, as seen in the opening two lines. She tells herself and other lovers to be a glorious light in the court and to “Shine in the eyes of faith, and constancie” (2). However, there is a line here that assigns the power of sight outside the realm of lovers, and it again highlights the association of love with daylight and the absence of love with darkness: “never to slack till earth noe stars can see, / Till sunn, and Moone doe leave to us dark night” (5-6). In this imagery, it is the earth itself that will no longer see or be able to view the stars. I see this imagery reflecting that idea of love shining as stars in the sphere of the beloved’s face, only this time the idea is cast outward to encompass the solar system and the eventual end of the world. This imagery further intensifies Pamphilia’s constant love, as she urges herself to remain constant until “second Chaos” (7) or the end of the world. Although this is the final sonnet in the sequence to employ such eyes are light imagery, Wroth uses it a final time in a song between the corona and her final grouping of sonnets. The speaker implores the lover: “Sweet lett me injoye thy sight / More cleere, more bright then morning sunn” (P91.1-2). She adds that “Present sight doth pleasures move” (5), and insists that “loves force lives / As just in hart as in our eyes” (11-12). While the speaker earlier commanded her eyes to look inward at her heart to avoid jealousy, here she seems to suggest that love lives as justly in the eyes as in the heart. Distrustful of the eyes and the contradictory results that seeing can have, Wroth’s final use of this metaphor finds a more noble characterization in the lover’s eyes.

Emotion is Light

The third way I see Wroth using light imagery in her sonnet sequence is in association with the emotions. While this categorization certainly runs alongside the metaphor Love is Light, as love is surely an emotion, I use this category to distinguish Wroth's use of light imagery that assigns an emotional quality to light outside of direct association between light and the emotion of love. For example, in Wroth's fourth sonnet of the sequence, the speaker admonishes the darkness as her joy returns: "Forbeare darke night, my joyes now budd againe" (P4.1). The next lines go on to consider that joyless state as a dark winter where "All light of comfort dimb'd" (7).

Wroth again makes an association between the speaker's emotional state and light in P9, where the speaker's grief leads to her wailing and inability to find comfort in poetry. She insists:

Itt makes mee now to shunn all shining light,
 And seeke for blackest clouds mee light to give,
 Which to all others, only darkness drive,
 They on mee shine, for sunn disdaines my sight. (P9.9-12)

In these lines, the speaker seeks out the darkness of "blackest clouds" (10), yet asserts that while these clouds give only darkness to others, they shine on her. In the final couplet of the sonnet, the speaker reinforces her constancy in love, suggesting that in spite of living in darkness, she still loves: "Yett though I darke do live I triumph may; Unkindness, not this wrong shall love allay" (13-14). In these final lines of the poem we can see that Wroth is engaging with light imagery in a way that is unique from a direct association with love. While the speaker's grief over her beloved's unkindness leads her

to seek the darkness, she insists that this does not diminish her love. In this way, it is not a direct love equals light and an absence of love equals darkness image. Rather, light remains associated with joy, as it did in P4, and grief is associated with darkness. While these emotions are associated with the lover's experience, they do not determine the state of her love. Pamphilia's love remains constant, whether grieving in darkness or enjoying in the light. Sidney finds a similar sentiment in the final sonnet of his sequence as well. In Sonnet 108, the speaker insists: "Through that dark furnace to my heart oppressed / There shines a joy from thee, my only light" (3-4). Similarly, Sidney aligns joy with light, and suggests that the beloved is a light to his dark and oppressed heart.

Wroth furthers her engagement with the idea that light represents an emotional state by considering the light of day and the darkness of night. In P13, the speaker begins feeling cloyed by a tedious night and wishing for the day, and joy: "Cloy'd with the torments of a tedious night / I wish for day; which comes, I hope for joy" (P13.1-2).

When day causes her hurt and pain, she again cries for night:

Then cry for night, and once more day takes flight

And brightnes gon; what rest should heere injoy

Usurped is; hate will her force imploy;

Night can nott grieffe intombe though black as spite. (5-8)

These lines present a seeming contradiction in the way the speaker associates brightness with the day: "and once more day takes flight / And brightness gon" (5-6). In Roberts's edition, there is no punctuation to separate the day taking flight and the brightness gone. However, an examination of the 1621 manuscript at Newberry Library appears to contain a period after the first line: "Then crye for night and once more day takes flight." The

presence of an end-stopped line here would help to clarify this contradiction, although P9 does set a precedent in those blackest clouds that give the speaker light. The final line of this second quatrain suggests an uncontainable nature to grief, suggesting that it cannot be satisfactorily aligned and assigned to the darkness of night: “Night can nott grief intombe though black as spite” (8). Rather, grief follows the speaker into the day where “My thoughts are sad,” (9), “My paines are long.” (10), and “My grieffe is great” (11). The final couplet returns again to welcome the night: “Then wellcome Night, and farewell flattring day / Which all hopes breed, and yett our joyes delay” (13-14). The final lines of this sonnet reinforce the idea that hope is associated with the day, and correspondingly with light, but joy is delayed in this space nevertheless, whether because of some new unkindness shown by the beloved or the continuation of grief that was not shaken off with the light of day. While Wroth seems to be exploring the possibility that light and day could be associated with love and joy and darkness and night with sadness and grief, she does not settle on a clear distinction between these two binaries. The speaker finds comfort in neither, although the hurt lover continues to welcome the darkness of night as a respite from her pain.

Wroth welcomes night in P17, praising its dark countenance: “Truly poore Night thou wellcome art to mee” (1). She compares the night to a fire that rages in joy but turns to ashes in misery:

I love thy grave, and saddest lookes to see,
Which seems my soule, and dying hart intire,
Like to the ashes of some happy fire
That flam'd in joy, but quench'd in miserie (5-8).

Once more these lines seem to associate light or fire with happiness and joy and the darkness of a quenched fire with sadness and misery. In the sestet of this poem, the speaker praises the sober pace of night that provides peace, quiet, and solitude, but she ends with a line that seems to upset the binary and again assign qualities of light to the night:

I love thy count'nance, and thy sober pace
Which evenly goes, and as of loving grace
To uss, and mee among the rest oprest
Gives quiet, peace to my poore self alone,
And freely grants day leave when thou art gone
To give cleere light to see all ill redrest. (9-14)

These lines address the night directly, “*thy count’nance*, and *thy sober pace*” (9 emphasis mine). So, when we reach the end and the speaker asserts “when thou art gone to give cleere light” (13-14), it seems as though the night is the entity giving clear light to see the wrongs of the day set right again. Like Wroth’s blackest clouds giving light in P9, her night gives light here as well. This again emphasizes the way this light imagery is used to illuminate the emotional state of the speaker without necessarily assigning a strict binary, like day as light and joy and night as dark and sad.

Continuing the debate between night and day from P13 in P20, the speaker asks: “Which should I better like of, day, or night” (P20.1). In this sonnet, we see Wroth returning to that light/dark binary to consider the qualities of each time. She designates day as a time of light: “Since all the day I live in bitter woe / Injoying light more cleere my wrongs to know, / And yett most sad, feeling in itt all spite” (2-4). While the day is a

time of light, this light illuminates her wrongs and gives her a feeling of sadness. On the other hand, the speaker identifies night as a time of darkness, and a time when grief, jealousy, and doubt can flourish:

In night, when darknes doth forbid all light
Yett see I grief aparant to the show
Follow'd by jealousie whose fond tricks flow,
And on unconstant waves of doubt allight (5-8)

While Wroth assigns light to day and darkness to night as we might expect, she does not assign light to feelings of joy and darkness to feelings of sadness. Rather, the speaker admits that negative emotions accompany her in either space:

I can beehold rage cowardly to feede
Upon foule error which thes humours breed
Shame, doubt, and feare, yett boldly will think ill,
All those in both I feelee, then which is best (9-12)

Whether night or day, dark or light, the speaker feels shame, doubt, and fear. She finds favor with neither time over the other because these negative emotions are present no matter the time. While the first 12 lines of the sonnet assign the expected light to day and darkness to night, the final two lines of the poem seem to upset this distinction: “Darke to joy by day, light in night oprest / Leave both, and end, thes butt each other spill” (13-14). These lines confuse a straightforward reading of the imagery. Here, we see an association of joy with day, “joy by day” (13), but this is aligned with darkness. Then, we see oppression aligned with the night, but there is light in that space: “light in night oprest” (13). The syntax is such that we could read that phrasing as the night oppressing the light

of day, but this doesn't seem to fit with the first part of the line, which aligns darkness with day. To find a stable meaning here, we have to consider the final phrase, which suggests that both times spill into the next, giving the speaker no escape from either. As these two times spill into each other, they become almost indistinguishable, perhaps making our understanding of her untraditional alignment of light with night and darkness with day a bit more meaningful.

After the interlude of a song expounding on the usefulness of rational thinking, Wroth entreats the night:

Come darkest night, becoming sorrow best;

Light, leave thy light; fitt for a lightsome soule;

Darknes doth truly sute with mee oprest

Whom absence power doth from mirthe controle (P22.1-4)

In the opening lines of this sonnet, we see Wroth again engaging with a traditional sense of light and dark for her imagery. The night is associated with darkness, and, furthermore, that time is designated as the best time for sorrow. The following line addresses light directly, asking it to leave its light. This light, the speaker insists, is fit for a lightsome, or a merry and cheerful soul. Wroth's use of the word "lightsome" here offers us not only a punning repetition of light and a cheery disposition, but also it suggests a flirty frivolity or even one who is changeable. This reading of lightsome as one who is changeable is well-suited to rest of Wroth's imagery here because it depicts the seasonal change to fall: "With leavles, naked bodies, whose huese vade / from hopefull greene, to wither in theyr love" (11-12). Taken together, we can understand these first two lines as an invitation for night to come and day to leave. While the word day is never used, Wroth's replacement,

“Light, leave thy light” (2) seems to use light as a stand-in for day. The speaker insists that darkness suits her better, suggesting that this is because she is oppressed and absent of power. The final line of this first quatrain is troublesome, but I think we can understand it as a speaker whose lack of power controls her ability to be merry or mirthful. Fitting with Wroth’s other explorations of power and powerlessness in love throughout the sequence, this sonnet aligns such powerlessness with darkness and night. In this sonnet, however, the speaker doesn’t so much seek to escape that emotion with the light of day or vacillate between a desire for night and day on an endless loop. Instead, the speaker invites the night and finds it suitable for her oppression and powerlessness. From there, the poem returns to an exploration of the seasons as a metaphor for the emotions, much like in sonnet P4, where the speaker first engages with a light as emotion metaphor.

In the next sonnet, Wroth switches gears to ruminate on the day and the sun rather than the night. In this poem, she aligns the sunshine with day and with happiness:

The Sunn which glads, the earth att his bright sight

When in the morne hee showes his golden face

And takes the place from taedious drowsy night

Making the world still happy in his grace (P23.1-4)

These opening lines show a sun that brings light and gladness to the earth. The sun, and day, takes the place of a tedious night. In looking to the sun for an emotional metaphor, Wroth articulates the way happiness can be hidden for a while, like the sun at night:

Shewes hapiness remains nott in one place,

Nor may the heavens alone to us give light,

Butt hide that cheerful face, though noe long space,

Yett long enough for triall of theyr might (5-8)

Just as the sun hides from view during the night, happiness can be absent too, and will still return again. The cheerful face of the sun seen in this sonnet is notably different from the light that causes pain and jealousy in earlier sonnets, and the speaker seems to be finding a sense of stability and constancy even in the inescapable cycle of night and day, sorrow and cheer. However, Wroth's next quatrain unpacks the metaphor to reveal that the speaker's current pain is greater than any darkness caused by the sun's absence:

Butt never sunn-sett could bee soe obscure

No desart ever had a shade soe sadd,

Nor could black darknes ever prove soe badd

As paines which absence makes mee now indure (9-12)

Wroth's repetition of the negative, "never," "no," and "nor," in these lines emphasizes just how great the pain felt at the absence of the lover is. The sunset could never be as obscure, the shade could never be as sad, and the darkness could never be as bad as the pain felt at the lover's absence. By emphasizing this comparison, Wroth's lines also emphasize an alignment between obscurity, shade, darkness, and pain. This imagery highlights the binary where light, day, and sunn aligns with joy, happiness, and cheer, and where darkness and night aligns with sorrow. Then, the final couplet of the poem seems to answer one of those lingering questions that result from Worth's previous disruptions of this binary: "The missing of the sunn awhile makes night / Butt absence of my joy sees never Light" (13-14). In this final line, we can now understand why the speaker might have previously associated darkness with day, lightness with dark, or a

spilling of light and dark between the two: the absence of her joy means she can never see light. Now, while the final lines suggests an absence of joy, I read this as an absence of the speaker's beloved because of the preceding lines. In line 12, the speaker asserts that absence causes her to endure pain. Although the lines never mention who or what is absent, we can look to other sonnets which engage with this theme to help illuminate the way Renaissance sonneteers imagined an absent lover as an absent sun. For example, Sidney compares Stella to the sun in Sonnet 91:

Stella, while now, by honour's cruel might,
I am from you, light of my life, misled,
And that fair you, my sun, thus overspread
With absence' veil, I live in sorrow's night (1-4)

This imagery presents the beloved as a sun and the "light of my life," and the speaker claims that when his beloved is absent, he lives in "sorrow's night." Similarly, Robert Sidney addresses Absence directly in Sonnet 30, insisting that his sun has set forever: "Absence, I cannot say thou hid'st my light, / No darkened, but for ay sett is my sun" (1-2). The speaker's sentiment here is similar to Wroth's: "The missing of the sunn awhile makes night, / Butt absence of my joy sees never Light" (13-14). We can recognize the way that Wroth participates in Petrarchan tradition here. Even without stating the comparison directly, Wroth aligns her beloved with the sun, with light, and with joy, and his absence is a dark and endless night.

After taking a break from imagery that engages with light as a metaphor for emotion, Wroth returns to it in P43. Here, the speaker considers the night a welcome companion to her distressed mind: "Night, welcome art thou to my mind destrest"

(P43.1). Beyond distress, the speaker finds apt comparison to her emotions: “Dark, heavy, sad, yett not more sad then I / Never could’st thou find fitter company / For thine owne humor then I thus oprest” (2-4). In these lines, Wroth aligns a sense of sadness, distress, heaviness, and oppression with darkness and night. This comparison carries into the second quatrain, where, “If heavy, joy from mee too fast doth hy / And care outgoes my hope of quiett rest” (7-8). These lines emphasize that not only is night and darkness a time of sadness and heaviness, it is a time when joy is absent. Taking this even further, the sestet makes a direct association between the speaker’s sadness and darkness: “Then now in freindship joine with haples mee, / Who ame as sad, and dark as thou canst bee / Hating all pleasure, or delight of lyfe” (9-11). Here, the speaker is sad *and* dark, hating pleasure and delight. While the experiential nature of these conceptual metaphors is readily apparent, I think we can also find in Wroth’s dwelling on the state of darkness as a sadness, a link to the response to Prince Henry’s sudden death from typhoid in 1612. While King James had disappointed many of the hopes for a return to England’s glory days, many looked to Prince Henry as “the rising sun on the political horizon” (de Lisle 286).

Prince Henry grew to be loved and admired for being everything that his father was not: he was gracious and elegant, a young man who enjoyed sports and soldiery. While James’s policy of peace with Spain came to be seen as a threat to national security and the national religion, Henry was held up as a future champion of Protestantism in Europe and of a sea-borne empire. (287)

While his life might be thought of as a rising sun, his death was often figured as darkness, or the end of light. For example, Bishop Hacket describes Henry’s death at the

age of eighteen “as if so much light was extinguished that England had fallen into a darkness akin to hell” (287). For Protestants, like the Sidneys, Prince Henry’s death was especially disappointing. David Norbrook notes: “Several works dedicated to him expressed apocalyptic hopes that he might marshal a decisive Protestant victory. There were rumors that after his sister’s marriage he planned to go to Germany to fight alongside the Protestant princes. Attempts were being made to mould him into the new Protestant leader on the model of Leicester, Sidney, and Essex” (181). Following his death, literary output in England reflects these thwarted hopes, and reinforce his memory in terms of light and darkness. For example, in *An Epicede or Funerall Song*, George Chapman refers to Prince Henry as “this spotless sun” and describes his detractors, “they prey in darkness, and abhorre the light” (Stanza 14). John Donne’s *Elegy upon the untimely death of the incomparable Prince Henry* laments his death as though it is the death the country, “he’is not dead; and we are” (82) and insists that Prince Henry “embraced the fires of love with us” (88). In *Funerall Elegies* by Robert Allyn, he expressed hope that God will “restore / This darkened Iland to her former gloire” (qtd. in Streete 95). John Webster’s “A Funeral Elegy” in *A Monumental Column*, insists: “We should not grieve at the bright sun’s eclipse, / But that we love his light: so travellers stray, / Wanting both guide and conduct of the day” (10-12). In her study of the literary responses to Prince Henry’s death, Adrian Street finds that the prophetic voice central to this elegiac writing “allows writers to offer political advice and critique by using the divine sanctions of the prophetic voice, advice that in other contexts would probably not be possible” (88). For example, she identifies nostalgia for Elizabeth fusing with general

criticism of James in Wither's *Obsequies*, dedicated to Wroth's father, Robert Sidney, Earl of Leicester:

Thrise happy had I bene, if I had kept
 Within the circuit of some little village,
 In ignorance of an honest halfe-plough tillage:
 Or else I would I were as young egen,
 As when Eliza our last Phoenix dide (qtd. in Streete 96)

Although Wroth's poems do not read as elegies in response to Prince Henry's death or as prophetic warnings for the future, they do register the link between sadness and darkness, like that expressed so widely in the aftermath of the young Prince's death. By dwelling on sadness and grief as a form of darkness, Wroth may be reflecting a general sentiment of the period, particularly for Protestants. Her imagery reflects the way that darkness and grief are often imagined as companions in the period, an idea she develops in the poem's conclusion.

The poem ends with an address to three companions: Night, Silence, and Grief, echoing Sidney's sonnet 96 in *Astrophil and Stella*. Wroth writes: "Silence, and grieffe, with thee I best doe love / And from you three, I know I can nott move, / Then lett us live companions without strife" (12-14). In the final lines, Wroth associates night and its darkness with silence and grief, and places the lover as another member of this somber company. Compared to Sidney's lines,

Thought with good cause thou likest so well the night,
 Since kind or chance gives both one liverie,
 Both sadly blacke, both blackly darkned be,

Night bard from Sun, thou from thy own sunne's light;

Silence in both displaies his sullen might. (*AS* 96.1-5).

Wroth's engagement with this theme pushes that companionship image further. While Sidney considers the night a fine time for the lover's sad, black thoughts, Wroth imagines the lover as another member of this company. The lover in her poems is not merely compared to the darkness of night at an emotional level, but her emotions make her one with the night, with silence, and with grief. The lover seems to embody these qualities herself and wants only to live in a strife-free companionship with them.

The final time Wroth uses light as a metaphor for the lover's emotional state is in P47. In this sonnet, the speaker reflects on the stars and the way their bright light is like the light of her joy. In doing so, she makes a direct link between light and happiness: "Cleere, bright, and shining as you are, is this / Light of my joye, fixt stedfast nor will move" (9-10). Unlike the light of the sun that cycles away, the light associated with the stars here is considered steadfast. The beloved will not move his light, and the lover will not change from his love:

Light of my joy, fixt stedfast nor will move

His light from mee, nor I chang from his love,

Butt still increase as th-eith of all my bliss. (10-12)

This stability in the lover's experience is far different than imagined elsewhere, particularly in terms of the light metaphors we've been focusing on. Also notable is the way these stars, unlike others I've written about above, are disassociated from the beloved himself. The stars are not shining in the beloved's eyes, for instance, and the light of the stars is not dependant on fair looks or kindness from the beloved. In the

opening lines, we see a distance between the stars above and the eyes below that admire them:

You blessed starrs which doe heavns glory show,

And att your brightnes makes our eyes admire

Yett enjoy nott though I on earth beelow

Injoy a sight which moves in mee more fire (1-4)

The stars and the light from them, which the speaker compares to her joy, are celestial and placed in the heavens far above the “earth beelow” (3). In this way, the lover’s experience is grounded, earthly, even as the light used in the imagery is decidedly not. The sight of these stars can cause admiration (2), breed desire (5), and inspire warmth (7), but not as much warmth as the sight of her beloved on earth. While the difference between the stars above and the lovers on earth below is emphasized in this sonnet, the earthly lovers seem to have a stability in their love, light, and joy that has previously been absent. In addition, the light imagery used in this sonnet makes its most direct association with the emotional quality of joy yet. Here, the speaker considers the “light of my joye” (10), and establishes that it is as clear, bright, and shining as any star. In this poem, we might finally find a better understanding of the way the speaker has previously disrupted the binaries between night/dark and day/light. The light that does the love experience the most justice is not the sun, which cycles out of the sky each night, or the moon, whose shape and brightness change with the lunar cycle, but stars, which shine in the sky day or night, even if the brightness of the sun overpowers them. These bright lights that shine in the darkness of night may give the poet at last a stable metaphor for her love experience. All of that said, the final couplet of the poem hints at the unsteadiness and doubt that

continues to haunt the lover: “His sight gives lyfe unto my love-rulde eyes / My love content because in his, love lies” (13-14). A straightforward reading of the lines suggests that love is in the beloved’s eyes, making the lover content. Alternatively, we could read the “lies” here as a untruths. The speaker’s eyes are ruled by love, a subjectivity we’ve discussed elsewhere, and her love is content because of what she sees in her beloved’s eyes. Is that love? Or is it lies? With the unspoken ambiguity of this homonym hanging at the end of the sonnet, Wroth abandons any imagery that associates light with the emotions. All of the images are contained in the first section of the sequence, the section where Roberts suggests that Pamphilia assesses her emotions. Roberts writes: “The first section of fifty-five poems is designed to show Pamphilia’s conflicting emotions as she attempts to resolve the struggle between passionate surrender and self-affirmation” (44). It makes sense, then, that Wroth would engage with light imagery in regards to her emotions only in the first section of the sonnets. No longer concerned with her emotions, the remaining sonnets find no use for light as a representation of the lover’s emotional state. However, the final categorization of light imagery that I have identified can be found across the sequence.

Exposure is Light

I now want to examine the fourth and final way that I see Wroth using light imagery in her sonnets: Light as Exposure. In these images, the light exposes and reveals, perhaps its most literal use in figurative language. Wroth first uses light in this way in P20, where the speaker considers the question of whether night or day is preferable. When she considers the day, the speaker highlights the way more light reveals her wrongs: “Since all the day I live in bitter woe / Injoying light more cleere my wrongs to

know” (3). In P43, as Wroth figures the lover as a companion to night, silence, and grief, she emphasizes the way darkness leaves her wrongs unredressed and is unable to illuminate bliss: “If thou beest dark, my wrongs still unredrest / Saw never light, nor smalest bliss can spy” (5-6). While bliss remains unseen in the darkness, Wroth explores the way black deeds thrive in the darkness in P50. In this sonnet, Wroth imagines the eyes as light and reflects on the dark time when they are unable to see:

Butt now, Alas, your sight is heere forbid
 And darknes must thes poore lost roomes possess
 Soe bee all blessed lights from henceforth hid
 That this black deed of darknes have excess (9-12)

In these lines, the “black deed of darknes” suggests a direct association with darkness and the excess of black deeds. Once more, this sonnet imagines light as something that would illuminate and even cause happiness, “How happy are those places wher you prove” (5), and darkness as a time when black deeds take over, unseen.

In the second section of the sequence, Wroth uses light imagery in a song to highlight its ability to expose or see. P62 opens: “Fairest, and still truest eyes / “Can you the lights bee, and the spies / Of my desires?” (1-3). In these lines, the eyes are given two functions: to be lights and to be spies, associating light with the act of spying. Then, in the corona, Wroth again uses light as a means to expose: “darknes knowne by light” (P79.7). Light takes center stage in this sonnet, working as a metaphor for love as I discussed above, and its function as a means of exposure or knowledge is considered alongside other, similar correctives:

Heere are affections, tri’de by loves just might

As gold by fire, and black desernd by white,
 Error by trouth, and darkness knowne by light,
 Where faith is vallwed for love to requite (5-8).

Listed among these companions, light's ability to expose or make known is seen as a positive quality, unlike her engagement with the imagery in the first section of the sequence.

Wroth returns to those more negative qualities associated with a light that exposes in the final section of the sonnet. In P100, the speaker wishes that no day would appear, leaving only light to accompany her sadness:

O! that noe day would ever more appeare,
 Butt cloudy night to governe this sad place,
 Nor light from heav'n thes haples rooms to grace
 Since that light's shadow'd which my love holds deere (1-4)

However, while these opening lines seem to suggest a sad, hapless space without light, Wroth goes on to uncover why the light is so despicable:

Lett thickest mists in envy master heere,
 And sunn-borne day for malice showe noe face,
 Disdaining light wher Cupid, and the race
 Of Lovers are dispisde, and shame shines cleere. (5-8)

This quatrain depicts the light of day as a time where Cupid and lovers are despised and where their shame is clear and exposed. Night's darkness becomes the time for love and lovers because light is associated with their shame. Once again, this imagery seems to reverse the more typical association of light with joy and dark with sadness. Although

the speaker calls for night to govern “this sad place” (2), her rationale reveals the more negative aspects of light’s functionality.

Light - Categories & Outliers

As I noted at the beginning of this survey of Wroth’s light images, there is a lot of crossover and similarity between the four categories I’ve used as a way of better understanding the poet’s engagement with these metaphors. The categories are not perfect, stable, or complete, but they offer a way of seeing the differences and similarities between the various uses of light imagery in her sequence. My hope is that this categorization and survey of the images can help us to better understand the way they are used not just in a single sonnet, but across the sequence as a whole. In her introduction to the sonnets, Roberts identifies and defines four sections within the sequence that provide a useful framework for understanding Wroth’s poetry. Although light images explicitly begin as early as the second sonnet and, arguably, in the first sonnet as “bright Venus Queene of love” (6) or the “one hart flaming more than all the rest” (9), their use drops off as the sequence continues with only two explicit cases in the final section of the sequence. While Wroth’s figuration of the eyes as light begins in the second sonnet, it is used only twice by the time we get to the third section of the sequence, the corona. Her figurations of light as joy occur only in the first section of the sequence, during the portion Roberts identifies as describing Pamphilia’s assessment of her own feelings. This section of the sequence dramatizes the speaker’s mental processes, and in doing so Wroth relies on light images characterized by their emotion qualities. Wroth’s fourth way of imagining light, focusing on its qualities of exposure, is perhaps her most negative image of light. Not only does this image appear throughout the sequence, it is the only image

that Wroth utilizes in every section of the sequence. These images seem to keep reminding the reader that while these bright, beautiful, and joy-giving qualities of light are most apparent, light's ability to expose or illuminate wrongdoings and to let shame shine clear (P100.8), is an ever-present threat to the lover's experience. Wroth imagines love as light throughout the sequence, even in the final section. However, this image dominates the third section, the corona of poems. This section focuses on imagining Cupid as a monarch, and the speaker urges his subjects to "bee in his brave court a glorious light" (P79.14).

Once I started to categorize these light images, I began to see patterns emerging about where those various images occurred within the sequence. As I noted earlier, Wroth's figurations of light as a metaphor for the lover's emotions occur only in the first section of the sequence. While she engages with a direct, Love is Light metaphor in a handful of places in this first section, it is the central focus of her corona, where Cupid is imagined as a monarch and he, his throne, and love itself are figured as light. I found the two categories with the most similarities, Light as Eyes and Light as Exposure, scattered across the entire sequence. The eyes imagined as lights occurs most often in the first section, again suggesting this part of the sequence as a space for Pamphilia to assess her feelings: what she sees and feels in love, and the self-examination that love demands. While the first section of the sequence most heavily relies on light images and the corona takes a strong second, the second and fourth sections of the sequence contain markedly less use of this imagery. I found light imagery only twice in each of these sections. Even more significant, I believe, is that each of these sections contains one of the two sonnets

whose depiction of light resists the categorization I used across the rest of the sequence. Let's take a look at those now.

Light as Fortune

In the first outlier to my categories, Wroth uses light, particularly the moon, as a metaphor for Fortune. In P63, the opening sonnet of the second section, she refers to the moon at night as "some kind of light" (1), setting its use of light imagery apart from the rest in its first line. Already, we can see that the light written about in this sonnet is not quite the same kind of light as that written about elsewhere. Unlike the stars or sun, because its light is reflected rather than created, the moon's light is a different kind of light, albeit a bright presence in the darkness of night. In the first quatrain of the sonnet, Wroth not only suggests a difference in kind for the moon's light, she also suggests that the moon is not in a space of its own:

In night yett may we see some kind of light
 When as the Moone doth please to show her face,
 And in the sunns roome yeelds her light, and grace
 Which otherwise must suffer dullest night (1-4)

In these lines, we see a light that is in the Sun's room, but it is not the sun. The moon is out of place, it is in a room that belongs to the sun. The moon is a light of a different kind. Wroth then uses this difference in kind to consider light as a metaphor for fortune:

Soe ar my fortunes, bard from true delight
 Colde, and uncertaine, like to this strang place,
 Decreasing, changing in an instance space,
 And even att full of joy turn'd to despite (5-8)

Like fortune, the moon's light is uncertain and changing. The moon decreases as it wanes and grows as it waxes to full. Even in its fullness, when joy is at its greatest, the light wanes back to darkness, just as fickle fortune quickly changes and turns. In this quatrain we can see emphasis again on the "strang place" (6) where the moon visits. Wroth goes on to further the comparison, unpacking the figure of Fortune and her wheel in the sestet:

Justly on Fortune was beestow'd the wheele
 Whose favors ficle, and unconstant reele;
 Drunk with delight of chang, and sodaine paine;
 Wher pleasure hath noe settled place of stay
 Butt turning still for our best hopes decay,
 And this (alas) wee lovers often gaine (9-14)

In this comparison, we see the changeability highlighted through that unsettled state of pleasure where the wheel could turn at any moment. This sonnet aptly sets up the second section of the sequence, where Pamphilia explores the troubling aspects of love and passion. She sees a love beset by jealousy, doubt, anxiety, and hopelessness as this section develops. Imagining light as fortune, changing and unpredictable, Wroth turns to the moon, a stranger in the Sun's sky.

Light as Location

And now, as promised, I want to return briefly to consider the second outlier to the four general categories of light imagery that I identified in the sequence. This sonnet helps to set up a contrast in the idealization of love, especially in its divine form. In sonnet P97, Pamphilia is approached by Juno in one of her jealous searches for Jupiter. Finding Pamphilia laying in the shade, Juno says:

Have you nott seene this way sayd shee to hy
 One, in whom virtue never ground did prove,
 Hee, in whom love doth breed to stir more hate,
 Courting a wanton Nymph for his delight
 His name is Jupiter, my Lord by fate
 Who, for her leaves mee, heav'n, his throne, and light (7-12)

In this image, light is listed among the things that Jupiter leaves behind for his assorted sexual dalliances. Light is included alongside his wife, Juno, his home, heaven, and his authority, position, and seat of power: his throne. This use of the light is interesting because Wroth doesn't necessarily figure it as something else at all, but rather presents it as an entity unto itself. What is this light that Jupiter leaves behind? What are its qualities and capabilities? Is light a location that Jupiter leaves, like the throne? Is light a person that Jupiter leaves behind, like Juno? This sonnet uses light in a way markedly different from other sonnets in this sequence, and I believe that an extended study of this light imagery is fodder for another paper.

Conclusion: The Capacities of Love as Light

After locating and examining Wroth's light imagery across the sequence in its various forms, I want to return to the central metaphor that underlies and unites all these figurations: Love is Light. In particular, I want to examine what this Light, or Love, is capable of. In sonnet P53, Wroth imagines Love as a too-bright sun when the speaker desires shade. In this sonnet, Love is a conqueror. The sonnet opens with an address to Love: "Love, thou hast all" (1). Narrowing this broad assessment of its power, the speaker narrows her focus on Love's power over her:

...for now thou has mee made

Soe thine, as if for thee I were ordain'd:

Then take thy conquest, nor lett mee bee pain'd

More in thy sunn, when I doe seeke thy shade (1-4).

She calls herself "thy conquest" (3), but also suggests that his rule over her is somehow destined or "ordain'd" (2).

In sonnet P55, Wroth likens love to a fire: "How like a fire doth love increase in mee" (1). Like the sun in the earlier sonnet, she describes this fire as too bright: "Mine eyes can scarce sustaine the flames" (9). The fire, and love, are ever-increasing: "The longer that itt lasts, the stronger still / The greater purer, brighter, and doth fill / Noe eye with wunder more" (2-4). Her description of this light filling eyes with wonder, allows for further unpacking of this image as the poem continues: "And now impossible itt is to kill / The heat soe great wher Love his strength doth see" (7-8). While at first the speaker focuses on the brilliance, heat, and wonder experienced through the eyes, she shifts to draw a contrast with the experience of the heart: "Mine eyes can scarce sustaine the flames my hart / Doth trust in them my passions to impart, / And languishingly strive to show my love" (9-11). Contrasts like this one involving the lover's experience and fire are not uncommon. However, sonneteers often focused on the contrast in the lover's physical reaction to love as in Sir Thomas Wyatt's sonnet: "I fear, and hope; I burn, and freeze like ice" (2). Wroth shifts her focus onto that of the contrast between the physical experience of sight and the emotional experience in the heart. The speaker struggles to align this inner experience with what is revealed. Eventually, she is overcome by the fire. Unable to blow it out, "My breath nott able is to breath least part / Of that increasing fuell

of my smart” (12-13), she is eventually consumed by it: “Yet love I will till I butt ashes prove” (14). This sonnet concludes the first section identified by Roberts and is signed by Pamphilia, naming herself as she suggests the possibility of her own demise and writing a name that might be erased.

In sonnet P78, the “Light of true love, brings fruite which none repent” (7). This line suggests a divine quality to love, an aspect of the sonnet’s portrayal of love first introduced by Petrarch, especially after the death of Laura. Wroth imagines the fruit of true love in a way that echoes Genesis and the original sinful act of eating forbidden fruit. Here, the fruits of true love won’t be repented, signaling that they are not forbidden by god or even, like sonnet P53, “ordain’d” (2), and Wroth continues to further this definition of a divine love in her figures of Love as a Light throughout the corona portion of the sequence.

In sonnet P79, Wroth imagines a personified love: “His flames ar joys, his bands true lovers might, / Noe staine is ther butt pure, as purest white, / Wher noe clowde can appeere to dim his light” (1-3). This imagery mixes two of the categories by describing Love’s flames as Joy. This description of love furthers the earlier characterization of Love as ever-increasing by also suggesting that it is undimmable: “Where noe clowde can appeere to dim his light” (3). The power of this light also includes its ability to know darkness, hinting at the exposing qualities of light: “As gold by fire, and black desernd by white, / Error by truthe, and darkness knowne by light” (6-7). Furthermore, love imagined as a light is “Cleere as th’ayre, warme as sunn beames, as day light, / Just as truthe, constant as fate, joy’d to requite” (11-2). The speaker ends by demanding obedience to Love: “Then love obay, strive to observe his might, / And bee in his brave

court a glorious light” (13-14). This sonnet’s final line, and the opening line of the next, shifts the light away from love and a quality of the lovers in his court. She explores this light in the following sonnet:

And bee in his brave court a gloriouse light,
 Shine in the eyes of faith, and constancie,
 Maintaine the fires of love still burning bright
 Nott slightly sparkling butt light flaming bee
 Never to slack till earth noe stars can see,
 Till sunn, and Moone doe leave to us dark night,
 And secound Chaose once again doe free
 Us, and the world from all devisions spite (1-8)

This image draws on the figuring of the eyes as light, but is distinct from it by suggesting the light shines in the eyes of faith and constancy, not necessarily the eyes of the beloved, as is traditional in Petrarchan sonneteering. Here, the light again seems to emphasize a purer, more divine love, and the absence of this light plunges the earth back into a second Chaos, a formless void before the Genesis creation.

Finally, Love as Light is capable of making the lover pale and of restoring light, as in sonnet P88: “Soe may love make you pale with loving care / When sweet injoying shall restore that light” (5-6). This sonnet once again highlights the divine qualities of love: “Thus love to bee divine doth here apeere / Free from all fogs butt shining faire, and cleere” (13-14). Divine love is described as clear and shining and the lovers who “give them selves in this deere kind” (9) are attended by “hapinesses” (10), “suplyd with joys” and “inrichd in mind / With treasures of content, and pleasures fill” (11-12). The divine

light and love that the speaker describes has ideal, almost Utopian qualities, a description that is starkly countered in other descriptions of both love and light. While the light imagined as love in Wroth's earlier sonnets suggests an overpowering, too-bright, oppressive quality, the divine light in love brings joy and enriches the mind, although it always runs the risk of being spoiled by its sinful, human lovers.

Chapter 6 – Love is Food & Love is a Child

The Domestic Lover: “Your sight is all the food I doe desire”

Wroth’s sonnet sequence not only engages with standard Petrarchan metaphors, like love as journey or light, but also it offers domestic metaphors as a means for exploring the lover’s experience. For example, we can see Wroth imagine Love as Food and Love as a Child, and in ways that offer a unique commentary on the life of Jacobean Englishwomen and their domestic affairs. Although her sonneteering predecessors, including her uncle Sir Philip Sidney, engaged with metaphors related to pregnancy and childbirth, Wroth’s images offer some striking contrasts. These maternal metaphors have already drawn critical attention. Naomi Miller claims that Wroth’s texts present “several alternative constructions of maternity,” reconfiguring the “literally ‘patriarchal’ strategies of her male predecessors,” and “bearing witness to the complex range of familial bonds represented by her female contemporaries” (64). Drawing on Sidnean family correspondence, Miller studies the mother figures in Wroth’s play, *Love’s Victory*, and in her romance, *Urania*, and analyzes the way these protagonists function as “ruling mothers” (108). She asserts that “Wroth’s major female protagonists inhabit a state of maternity which, far from being restricted to sexual reproduction, works to authorize the emergent subjectivity of each successive generation” (108). In fact, Miller maintains that female-authored texts, like Wroth’s, can “restore some measure of authority to maternal discourse even as they explore the limitations and ambiguities attendant upon women’s efforts to claim speaking positions in resistance to a familial ideology predicated upon their silences” (74). Beyond its figurative depictions in literature, motherhood itself became one of the ways that women found authority in their homes. Suzanne Gossett

studies the way male anxiety over the control of children by women in the early modern period are given tangible shape in plays, pamphlets, and ballads depicting “murderous mothers” (206). Gossett maintains that “exercising control over children, over their placement, religion, finances, and eventual marriages, was one of the few ways in which women could resist the imperatives of patriarchy” (193). In Wroth, we find her own resistance to both patriarchy and Petrarchanism in her domestic metaphors, and through these metaphors, we are allowed a glimpse into the domestic life of an aristocratic lady and into the households of the early seventeenth century. In this chapter, I will explore Wroth’s use of domestic metaphors, including Love as Food and Love as Child, throughout her sonnet sequence.

Love is Food

Fare for the Eyes

Wroth’s use of food imagery in her sequence is confined almost entirely to the first section of sonnets. In these first fifty-five poems, she employs food and feeding language in seven sonnets, beginning with sonnet P15. In this poem, the speaker addresses her beloved directly, pleading with him to give her sight of him:

Deare fammish nott what you your self gave food;

Destroy nott what your glory is to save;

Kill nott that soule to which you spiritt gave;

In pittty, nott disdain your triumph stood; (1-4)

The opening quatrain sets up four negative commands, “fammish nott,” “destroy nott,” “kill nott,” and “pittty nott,” with the fourth serving as a reverse of the others, asking the beloved to pity, not disdain her. This quatrain combines militaristic imagery, common in

the sonnets of both Sir Philip and Robert Sidney, with domestic imagery. The first line puts a heavy emphasis on food, asking the beloved not to famish, or starve, what he has given food. This imagery suggests that the beloved has fed the lover previously, but he is now absent or unavailable to her. The speaker sets herself up as the recipient of food, giving the power to feed or not feed her to the beloved. The power structure at work is furthered in the shift to militaristic imagery, asking the beloved not to destroy what he can glory in saving. Line 3 pushes that violence forward, suggesting that the beloved not only gave the speaker food, but also gave her soul spirit, or life. The final line causes a stumble at the command as it breaks the form of the first three, “In pitty, not disdaine your triumph stood” (4). This line’s “triumph” continues the militaristic and violent imagery from lines 2 and 3, and it sets the speaker up to unpack the rationale behind that important shift in the second quatrain:

An easy thing itt is to shed the blood
 Of one, who att your will, yeelds to the grave;
 Butt more you may true worthe by mercy crave
 When you preserve, nott spoyle, butt nourish good; (5-8)

This quatrain once again mixes violent, militaristic imagery with domestic images of food, preservation, and nourishment. The first two lines continue the appeal against violent triumph, leading to the alternative idea of victory in the form of mercy. In these first two quatrains, Wroth has set up a contrast between the masculine, militaristic, and even violent conception of love that dominated the sonnets of her male successors and the feminine, domestic, and nourishing conception of love prompted by the poem’s speaker. The speaker suggests that the beloved can crave true victory and worthiness not in killing

her or starving her of the sight of him, but by showing mercy, preserving, and nourishing.

The use of food as a metaphor for love is not absent in sonnets by previous writers. For example, consider Shakespeare's Sonnet 75, "So are you to my thoughts as food to life" (1), or Petrarch's Rime 193, "I feed my mind on such noble food" (1), where the speaker claims: "from one face I drink a double sweetness" (8). However Wroth's engagement with the domestic acts of food go beyond eating to include preservation, prevention of spoilage, and good nourishment. In the sestet, Wroth continues to unpack the concept of food as a representation of love or desire:

Your sight is all the food I doe desire;
 Then sacrifices mee nott in hidden fire,
 Or stop the breath which did your prayes move:
 Think butt how easy t'is a sight to give;
 Nay ev'n deserte; since by itt I doe live,
 I butt Camaelion-like would live, and love. (9-14)

While her use of a food metaphor here still emphasizes desire, "Your sight is all the food I doe desire" (9), Wroth's engagement with this imagery suggests a lover more concerned with feeding, preserving, and nourishing the love experience than a quick snack to satiate desire.²² The poet pushes beyond the concept of food in general to suggest that the sight of her beloved will be "deserte" (13). This word offers more than one interpretive possibility. First, the word offers the meaning of "desert," as in the reward or punishment,

²² As in other sonnets, like P39, Wroth links this sense of sight, or the act of looking, to desire, a state she continues to differentiate from love as the sequence progresses.

merit or demerit, for one's character or conduct ("Desert, n1"). This interpretation is supported by the line, meaning the speaker sees herself as deserving of her beloved's sight because she lives on it. Because her very being relies on the beloved, she deserves to see him, the speaker suggests. However, given the sonnet's focus on food and feeding imagery, it is not unreasonable to also read a meaning like dessert, or "the last course at an entertainment," as Samuel Johnson defined it. This reading is also supported by the lines because of the punctuation. By putting this phrase, "Nay ev'n deserte," between two semi-colons, Wroth makes it difficult to read the phrase as a continuation of the previous line or as part of the line that follows it. In that case, the phrase can be read as more of an exclamation, the poet's realization that the sight of her beloved is not merely food, but dessert, the course that graces the end of the feast and tops off the meal. That reading takes us back to the poem's opening line, where the speaker suggests the beloved has already fed her. She begins by begging not to be famished or starved, but with his sight having fed her previously, this sight of him could be imagined as the dessert to that meal. The final image of the poem seems to suggest that either reading of "deserte" may be acceptable: "I butt Camaelion-like would live, and love" (14). The chameleon was believed to live off the air, as in Shakespeare's use of the image in *Hamlet*:

KING. How fares our cousin Hamlet?

HAMLET. Excellent, i' faith; of the chameleon's dish: I eat

the air, promise-crammed: you cannot feed capons so. (Ham. 3.2.92-94).

Wroth's speaker seems to suggest, then, that she is like the chameleon, feeding only off the air and not requiring food. If his sight is dessert, this could serve to emphasize that she has no need of food, and his sight is not needed for nourishment, but is a sweet

addition to her air-feast. Or, if his sight is her just reward, or desert, this could serve to emphasize that, like a chameleon who has no need for food, only air, she too has no need of food, and deserves his sight as reward for living off of it entirely. Wroth's play with this term, like so many of the other interpretive difficulties in her sonnets, seems deliberate. She appears to recognize the word's use as both a signal to show her deserving of his sight and as a punning continuation of her food imagery and the larger, conceptual metaphor that Love is Food.

Wroth offers another food metaphor, albeit in a sonnet dominated by a journey, specifically the migration of the heart topos that I have discussed elsewhere. In P30, the speaker imagines her heart having run away from her breast and fleeing to her beloved's. In the sestet, Wroth's imagery takes on the language of food and feeding: "Butt if you will bee kind, and just indeed, / Send mee your hart which in mines place shall feed / On faithfull love to your devotion bound" (9-11). In this image, the lover is asking for her beloved to send his heart, in exchange for her own, to feed on faithful love. In this metaphor, love is directly figured as food, specifically food for the heart. To flesh out this image, we might imagine the speaker's heart as a sort of temple, housing the faithful, pure, and spotless love that she has for her beloved. These religious images of sacrifice enter in the final stanza: "There shall itt see the sacrifices made / Of pure, and spotless love which shall nott vade / While soule, and body are together found" (12-14). By combining food imagery with sacrificial religious imagery, the reader is reminded of the holy communion and the Christian symbolism of believers eating the body of Christ. The speaker places herself in the role of Christ, offering her pure and spotless love for the beloved to consume. Philip Sidney employs this standard sonneteering topos of the

migrating heart in a song: “We change eyes, and heart for heart / Each to other do impart” (*AS* 10.40-41). Even more significant for the current study, Sidney also engages with food imagery in the stanza just before that migration:

Think of my most princely power,
 When I, blessed, shall devour
 With my greedy lickerous senses,
 Beauty, music, sweetness, love,
 While she doth against me prove
 Her strong darts but weak defences. (31-36)

Although the lover in Sidney’s sequence is also imagined as feeding on love, his imagery is much more aggressive. Sidney imagines his beloved unable to defend against his hungry advances, while Wroth’s lover invites the beloved’s heart to come feed, Sidney’s devours while his beloved is unable to stop him. In addition, Wroth’s lover is aligned with a Christ-like sacrifice of body and love, while Sidney’s is “greedy” and “lickerous” (33). The word “lickerous” contains food-related meaning as anything “pleasing or tempting to the palate,” or to describe someone who is “fond of choice or delicious food” (“Lickerous, adj”). However, it can also push further than that to describe lecherous, wanton, or lustful behavior. Both shades of meaning are supported by Sidney’s lines. His lustful greed is demonstrated in the next line, where he goes beyond feeding on love to devour sweetness, music, and beauty as well, all figuratively imagined as part of the beloved whom he consumes. Beyond the demonstrated contrast in their language and imagery, Sidney’s placement of this feeding scene also reveals a more aggressive approach to love. Wroth begins her poem with her heart already gone from her and in her

beloved's breast. From there, she asks for his heart back in exchange, offering to let it feed on love in her heart's place. In Sidney's song, the lover imagines overcoming his beloved with the "Strength of liking, rage of longing" (24), and he describes kissing her using traditional, Petrarchan imagery: "There those roses for to kiss / Which do breath a sugared bliss, / Opening rubies, pearls dividing" (28-30). From there, the speaker goes on to imagine devouring his beloved, whether she defends against him or not, and all of this occurs before the more docile dallies and exchange of eyes and hearts. Sidney uses food as a means of demonstrating Astrophil's hungry greed and lust, whereas Wroth uses food as a means of demonstrating Pamphilia's faithfulness, devotion, and self-sacrifice. These remarkably different outcomes for the same standard topos demonstrate once again Wroth's ability to not only learn from her uncle and further his poetic projects, but also to transform and reimagine the metaphors for love seen throughout the heyday of Elizabethan sonneteering to offer a unique vision of love and the love experience.

In P33, Wroth again compares the love experience to food, suggesting that loss has now replaced the better food she previously enjoyed:

Fly hence O! joy noe longer heere abide
 Too great thy pleasures ar for my dispaire
 To looke on, losses now must prove my fare
 Who nott long since, on better foode relide (1-4)

In this image, the speaker is now sustained by loss. Although she notes that loss as food is not as good, the speaker commands joy to leave her because the pleasures are too great. The speaker here seems to choose despair and to feed on her losses. After exploring her

sorrow in temporal and seasonal terms, she returns to food imagery again in the final stanza:

Absence more sad, more bitter than is gall

Or death, when on true lovers itt doth fall

Whose fires of love, disdaine rests poorer sparke. (12-14)

Continuing her image of losses as food, the speaker insists that absence is more sad and more bitter than gall. This imagery not only gives us a taste of the bitterness that might characterize loss as food, but also it links the speaker with Christ, who was offered gall while he was dying on the cross. In that biblical image, Christ is separated from his father in heaven, and he refuses the gall. In Wroth's image, the speaker is separated from her beloved, and she accepts the gall as "losses now must prove my fare" (3). While the speaker seems to align herself with a crucified Christ in the poem's final stanza, she is also notably different because she doesn't offer an image of herself refusing this bitter gall of absence to focus on joy or pleasure instead. Rather, she accepts that losses are her food, no matter how bitter, and swallows them as a martyr for love.

Wroth's P37 offers one of her most richly developed metaphors, although it might arguably be one of her most complex. This direct address to Time opens by figuring Time as riding on the wings of love: "How fast thou fliest, O Time, on loves swift wings / To hopes of joy, that flatters our desire / Which to a lover, still, contentment brings!" (1-3) This happy image is disrupted with a turn in the poet's sentiment even before the end of the first quatrain: "Yett, when we should injoy thou dost retire" (4). This disrupted hope for joy and the speed of time presents the central image for the second quatrain:

Thou stay'st thy pace faulse time from our desire,

When to our ill thou hast'st with Eagles wings,
 Slowe, only to make us see thy retire

Was for dispayre, and harme, which sorrowe brings; (5-8)

Now, at this point, it can be tempting to go back and re-read that first image of “loves swift wings” (1) as the wings of an eagle. I think this would be a mistake. Rather, I believe that Wroth is using the figure of eagles’ wings as a common allusion to speed, while those wings in the first quatrain are still part of her figuration of love. Stick with me. In the third quatrain, the speaker implores time to slow down for the sake of love. Furthermore, she asks that time be like the bee, and begins to turn this imagery toward food as she imagines honey as sweet joy:

O! Slacke thy pase, and milder pass to love
 Bee like the Bee, whose wings she doth butt use
 To bring home profitt, masters good to prove
 Laden, and weary, yett again pursues,
 Soe lade thy self with honnye of sweet joy,
 And do nott mee the Hive of love destroy. (9-14)

Wroth’s extended metaphor across this poem is the very kind of thing that demands what Brian Boyd calls an “immediate invitation to return to reread, to catch the uncaught, to savor the parts again in knowledge of the whole” (30). Reaching the end, we must dive back into the thick of her language and imagery to sort out the meaning and better understand her metaphoric conception of love. In this case, let’s work our way backward. The final image of the poem presents the speaker as the “Hive of love” (14). Serving as the home for honeybees, it is notable that Wroth does not figure the speaker as a queen

bee surrounded by adoring worker drones, a metaphor that likely would have appealed to her troubadour predecessors. Wroth's father alludes to apiary imagery in two sonnets, associating nectar with the lady's lips: "Those ruby lips, full of nectar divine" (10.9) and "And of her lips the nectar someway taste" (28.12-14). Just prior to this association between nectar and the beloved's lips, Sidney may be developing this metaphor even further when he aligns falsehood, perhaps something that emerges from the lady's lips, with a sting: "Falsehood: how long did I your stings endure" (27.1). Although this imagery remains undeveloped in his sequence, it also reinforces the association male writers most often made between the lady's lips, bees, nectar, and honey, like Romeo, in Shakespeare's *Romeo in Juliet*, who cries in the final Act: "O my love, my wife, / Death, that hath suck'd the honey of thy breath, / Hath had no power yet upon thy beauty" (5.3.91-93). Wroth also does not use bees to suggest anything sexual, like Shakespeare's Ariel in *The Tempest*: "Where the bee sucks, there suck I: / In a cowslip's bell I lie; / There I couch when owls do cry" (5.1.88-90). Rather, Wroth focuses on the bee as a hard worker, bringing home profit, specifically honey. As she casts this bee in the providing, bread-winning role, she uses a feminine pronoun, "shee doth butt use" (10). This worker bee flies slowly, laden with honey, or nectar, and returns to do it again and again, even as she grows weary. The food in this case is not love, but joy: "Soe lade thy self with honnye of sweet joye" (13). That said, when we look at the elements within the metaphor, lover as hive and joy as honey, we can identify love as this bee, or diligent provider of food. This places the bee in the same role as the beloved in P15. There, the speaker implores the beloved not to starve what he has already fed: "Deare fammish nott what you your self gave food" (1). Furthermore, she provides a richly detailed description of

how she would like the beloved to behave as a provider of food: “When you preserve, nott spoyle, butt nurrish good” (8). Here too, Wroth uses a food metaphor for a didactic purpose. In this instance, the sonnet is addressed to Time instead of the beloved, and she implores it to “slack thy pase,” giving her longer to enjoy love and presumably, her beloved. This ultimate goal aligns again with P15. There, the speaker wants nothing more than to see her beloved: “Your sight is all the food I doe desire” (9). And here, the speaker wants time to slow down, giving her more of it to spend with her beloved. Although addressed to time, the sonnet serves a didactic purpose for the beloved as well, showing him the way to please her through his undivided time and presence.

Wroth’s repetition and patterns provide additional insight into this rich metaphor. In the first two quatrains, she repeats both of the end-rhymes, alternating the order from ABAB to BABA. Rhyming “wings” with “brings” twice, she also repeats the word “retire” in both the fourth and seventh lines, rhyming it both times with “desire” in the second and fifth lines. This structure shows an important relationship between the words. In the first rhymed set, the wings, belonging to love, are given the role of providing, or bringing. That aligns with the other bee, hive, and honey imagery in the rest of the poem. The second rhymed set pairs “retire” with “desire,” a pairing that emphasizes a possible militaristic reading. Wroth’s father and uncle provide myriad examples of militaristic imagery in their sonnets, but we see Wroth merely hinting at it in this image through the intransitive verb’s meaning as “retreat” or “to fall back or give ground” (“Retire, v1”). Although this verb can also be used to suggest a more general moving away, withdrawal, return, departure, or leaving of one’s office, its use as a military term for retreat was dominant in the period and supported by the Sidney family’s sonneteering tradition. In

her alignment of desire with the violence of military battle, Wroth highlights desire's dangerous potential. At the same time, she sets up a contrast between the more masculine efforts at war and traditionally feminine efforts at supplying food. Wroth's final line cements this homefront idea by putting the speaker, or lover, in the role of a hive. The hive is where bees live, eat, and raise their young. It is a home for bees just as any human home might be, and the poet's emphasis on the speaker as a hive puts the role of the lover not simply as an enjoyer of love, but a home to it, a place where that preserving and nourishing of P15 can happen. Using this food metaphor, Wroth highlights the work involved in love. The bee becomes the representation of love. It works hard to bring joy, as honey, and it continues to work, even as it grows tired. The speaker asks Time to behave like this, but the implication in this didactic imagery and gendered language seems also to serve as a request to the beloved to slow down and bring more of his love home to her.

In P39, the speaker offers another domestic, food image, this time suggesting a possibility for the refusal of food or of a lack of food. In this sonnet, the speaker entreats her eyes to "Take heed" (1), so they don't betray her thoughts. She begs: "Bee true unto your selves for nothings bought / More deere then doubt which brings a lovers fast" (3-4). In this sonnet's imagery, the lover's eyes could spot things that make her jealous or doubt her beloved, and she suggests that this doubt would cause a lover's fast. Like her previous food images, we do not see a speaker here refusing food or starving. Rather, we see a lover who wants to eat the food of love, and is asking her eyes to take heed so as to not cause an unwanted fast. While this is similar to the speaker's request for food in the form of seeing her beloved in P15, it is notably different because in that case the speaker

seems happy, even eager to use her eyes and sight to get a view of her beloved. In this sonnet, the speaker promotes the opposite disposition, preferring not to look. The speaker suggests that this seeing or looking is for other lovers: “Soe you kept safe, lett them themselves look blinde / Watch, gaze, and marke till they to madness runn” (11-12). In P15, the speaker seemed eager to look and gaze upon her beloved, his sight feeding here. In P39, the speaker prefers her eyes not to look as this looking could cause doubting and fasting. The speaker here seems no longer chameleon-like, living on the air, but seems in need of food and love, finding doubt and jealousy a hindrance to eating and loving. Continuing this food imagery in the next sonnet, Wroth claims that false hope feeds in order to destroy: “Faulce hope which feeds butt to destroy” (P40.1). This line echoes the sentiment to her beloved in P15: “fammish nott what you your self gave food; / Destroy nott what your glory is to save” (1-2). While that sonnet addressed the beloved directly, asking for sight of him to feed her, this sonnet focuses on false hope as the feeder and its food destroys rather than nourishes.

In P45, Wroth’s imagery touches on domestic concerns related to food in her exploration of plenty and scarcity: “Alas, think I, your plenty shews your want / For wher most feeling is, words are more scant” (9-10). Words like “plenty” and “want” echo strains of Joseph’s story in Genesis, preparing Egypt for seven years of plenty and seven years of want: “Behold, there come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt: And there shall arise after them seven years of famine; and all the plenty shall be forgotten in the land of Egypt; and the famine shall consume the land” (*King James Version*, Gen. 41.29-30). However, Wroth does little else in the poem that ties this language to food. The implication here may be similar to Sir Philip Sidney in *Astrophil*

and Stella: “Dumb swans, not chattering pies, do lovers prove; / They love indeed, who quake to say they love” (54.13-14). In this case, the employment of food imagery would seem to suggest that when love is considered a food, perhaps less is more, moderation is key, or preparation for a potential famine is necessary.

Similarly, in P51, Wroth combines natural, seasonal imagery with that of food and feeding as she describes the spring melt feeding rivers and streams:

How fast though hast'st (O spring) with sweetest speed

To catch thy waters which befor are runn,

And of the greater rivers wellcom wunn,

‘Ere thes thy new borne streames thes places feed, (1-4)

Although Wroth's language here, “new borne streams thes places feed,” engages with food imagery, the rest of the poem does not further this food image. The speaker compares the river overrunning its banks to her eyes flooded with tears. We could read this grief, then, as part of what feeds or sustains the lover, similar to the speaker feeding on her losses in P33. Just as these new streams caused by spring flooding feed their environment, the speaker's tears and grief would be feeding her. However, because the food metaphor is not sustained in this poem, it is difficult to understand exactly how its use informs the poet's conception of love.

The final food-related metaphor in the first section, engages with the sense of thirst instead of than hunger. In this sonnet, the speaker's journey metaphor, discussed earlier, takes her, hot and thirsty, to a well:

When hott and thirsty to a well I came

Trusting by that to quench part of my flame,

Butt there I was by love afresh imbrac'd;

Drinke I could nott, butt in itt I did see

My self a living glass as well as shee

For love to see him self in truly plac'd. (P53.9-14)

In this image, the lover is hot, thirsty, and desiring water to quench her thirst. Like her previous employment of food imagery, the speaker is depicted wanting food or nourishment. However, she is unable to drink from the well. Perhaps like her predicament in P15, having been fed by the sight of her beloved before but now starving for it, the speaker is in need of water, but unable to drink. Once again, the trouble here seems connected to her eyes. In P15, the speaker needs to see her beloved for food and in P39 jealous sights can cause a lover's fast. Here, she sees herself in the water's reflection and is unable to drink. While her arrival at the well renews her feelings of love, she doesn't drink from it.

Taken together, Wroth's use of food imagery in the first section of the sonnets imagines love as a way of feeding the eyes. She craves sight of the beloved like she craves food, she feeds on her losses and the beloved's absence from her sight, and she guards her eyes in order to avoid an unwanted fast caused by doubt or jealousy. The speaker in these sonnets never seems to feast on love or indulge in it. However, the emphasis on the preservation, spoilage prevention, and nourishing qualities of food in P15 does reinforce the idea that Love is Food, with feasting and fasting both integral to the love experience.

Faithful Love, Rich Fare

Wroth introduces food imagery into the second section in a pair of songs, P59 and P60. In the first, Wroth's concluding rhyming couplet uses food as the last in a series of Petrarchan contradictions: "I, that must nott taste the best / Fed must sterve, and restless rest" (15-16). This image sees the lover as having plenty; she is fed, but also starving. In P60, the speaker imagines the way love can take hold in both a faithful shepherd or in princes with "thoughts sliding" (3). The second stanza imagines the prince feeding on his changing mind while the shepherd feasts on his faithfulness as food:

Chang to theyr minds is best feeding

To a sheapheard all his care

Who when his love is exceeding

Thinks his faith his richest fare;" (5-8)

Interestingly, both would-be lovers are fed here. Wroth's imagery puts food into the love experience for both kinds of lovers, the inconstant mind feeding on its own changing thoughts and the constant lover feeding on his faithfulness. Although she never denigrates the inconstant prince's food, she does describe the shepherd considering his food as "his richest fare" (8). While the audience would assume rich fare for a prince and meager fare for a shepherd, Wroth subtly flips that here to associate rich food with the poorer shepherd whose love is faithful and constant. This imagery furthers Wroth's conception of love and the "true forme of love" (P100.14). By distinguishing in this song between two kinds of lovers and two kinds of food, she offers an evaluation of love, favoring the constant variety.

Purposeful Starvation

In the third section of her sequence, the corona, Wroth never employs food imagery, but she returns to it a final time in the last section. Here, in P98, Wroth's brief engagement with a food metaphor reiterates her use of it in the first section as having a close relationship with sight. In this poem, the speaker describes the way her eyes can lead her to fear and jealousy. The third quatrain shows the speaker seeking out the cause for these thoughts:

Then did I search from whence this danger 'rose,
 If such unworthyness in mee did rest
 As my sterv'd eyes must nott with sight be blest;
 When jealousie her poyson did disclose; (9-12)

Here, the speaker seems to be starving her eyes deliberately, as a way of avoiding the poisoning effects of jealousy. Instead of looking and bending toward fear and desire, the speaker instead holds the image of her beloved within her heart: "Yett in my hart unseene of jealous eye / The truer Image shall in triumph lye" (13-14). Like the lover of P15, famished for sight of her beloved, the lover here is starved with lack of sight, this time finding it a way to avoid fear and jealousy and to focus on an image of the beloved in her heart instead of through the sense of sight. Although perhaps still as famished for sight of her beloved as she was in P15, the speaker at least seems to have found a reason to appreciate that feeling by the final section. And, I think we can see her revisiting of this metaphor here as a way of demonstrating the speaker's eventual arrival at that "true forme of love" (P100.14) and "the quiett of faithfull love" (P103.2) by the end of the sequence.

Looking closely at her Love is Food metaphors reveals that this particular concept provides a nuanced way for Wroth to imagine the love experience. As food for the eyes, love runs the risk of spoilage. When the beloved is absent too long, the lover is left unnourished. Furthermore, this metaphor allows Wroth to distinguish between a lustful form of love, which starves the lover even as it feeds her, and the rich fare of a faithful love. Finally, the speaker can choose to eat or not, purposefully choosing to starve herself in order to avoid the poisoning effects of jealousy and fear. This metaphor offers the poet a vast menu from which to articulate love in terms of food, and its nuanced use in the sequence highlights Wroth's deft ability to employ her experiences and surroundings in the creation of richly articulated metaphors for the love experience.

Love is a Child

Wroth employs another set of domestic metaphors for love by comparing the love experience to aspects of motherhood. Although images of childbirth are present in other sonnet sequences, like Sir Philip Sidney's depiction of the appetite of desire in sonnet 71: "As fast they virtue bends that love to good. / But ah, desire still cries: 'Give me some food.'" (13-14), Wroth's engagement of the metaphor is unique. In "Rewriting Lyric Fictions: The Role of the Lady in Lady Mary Wroth's *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*," Naomi Miller asserts: "Wroth translates other metaphors common to the sequences of her uncle and father in terms that reveal her lady endeavoring increasingly not only to give voice to her own particular plight but also to acknowledge the shared female experience of suffering for love" (303). She claims that for Wroth, "metaphors of pregnancy and childbirth become a vehicle to convey the falsehood of male lovers, who disguise their lust with the name of love in order to 'begett / This childe for love' without shame"

(303). Mary Villeponteaux asserts: “While for some Renaissance men the metaphors of maternity invoke creative interiority or power, for Wroth’s Pamphilia these metaphors usually invoke frustration and failure” (169). Villeponteaux highlights the way “Pamphilia frequently fashions herself as a receptacle or the conveyance of an enclosed object” (170), claiming that “the metaphor which encapsulates the frustration of the woman lover-poet in the sequence is that of childbirth” (165). In these metaphors, we see Wroth exploring maternal and child-bearing images in ways that depict the experiences of women, particularly of women in love, and offer a counter to the use of this imagery by male sonneteers.

In the second sonnet, the speaker reflects on the eyes of her beloved. She imagines them as an April morning, bright lights, a sunny day, and as a fire nursing her unborn wishes:

How may they terme you Aprills sweetest morne
 When pleasing looks from those bright lights apeere:
 A sun-shine day; from clouds, and mists still cleere
 Kind nursing fires for wishes yett unborne! (5-8)

This imagery seems to suggest pregnancy, as the speaker is full of wishes for the eyes to nurse, but the wishes are “*yett unborne*” (8 emphasis mine). Much like Wroth’s use of food imagery and its association with sight, the imagery here presents the eyes as a form of food for the lover, feeding her wishes like a mother feeds her newborn. The potential and possibility of her wishes dominates the image as a mother already nursing, but the wishes still remain unborne, almost on the verge of birth. This birth becomes even more realized in the sestet: “Two starrs of Heaven, sent downe to grace the Earthe, / Plac’d in

that throne which gives all joyes theyr birthe” (9-10). Here, it seems perhaps the speaker has given birth to her wishes, now experiencing joy in the presence of her beloved. Line 12 may also serve to describe childbirth and motherhood: “Which wounding, even in hurts are deem’d delights.” Although this line literally works as a description of the eyes, I can imagine any mothers in her audience might see a reminder of their own experiences with childbirth and motherhood in this description.

Returning to our previous discussion of P40, Wroth shifts quickly from the feeding imagery in the first line to explore false hope in love like a miscarriage:

Faulce hope which feeds butt to destroy, and spill

What itt first breeds; unaturall to the birth

Of thine owne wombe; conceaving butt to kill,

And plenty gives to make the greater dearth, (1-4)

This image portrays false hope first feeding what it will destroy and then spilling what it breeds. The internal rhyme in this line between “feeds” and “breeds” highlights the comparison while also demonstrating the internal nature of this experience, like the rhyming words internal to the line. Hope feeds and breeds, spills and kills, conceiving in its own womb only to miscarry that conception. The final line of this quatrain picks up on food and feeding imagery again, highlighting the contrast between plenty and scarcity, like the poet explores further in P45. Here, food, feeding, and plenty are aligned with breeding, conception, and pregnancy. All of this, however, was founded on false hope, so the seed is starved out, as it were, and the pregnancy miscarries. An unnatural or unseasonable birth is used as a figure for the love experience again in P87, where “A timeles, and unseasonable birth / Planted in ill, in wurse time springing found (5-6).

Although these two sonnets appear more than 40 sonnets apart and in different sections of the sequence, they are connected not only through this miscarriage imagery, but also by their use of the problematic word, “dearth.” Furthermore, both uses of the word place it as the final end-rhyme of the first quatrain. In P40, Wroth rhymes “dearth” (4) with “birth” (2). In P87, she rhymes it with “earth” (2). Like its problematic use in P87, suggesting both plentitude and death, the term suggests these same multiplied meanings in P40. Read as “dearth,” or scarcity, particularly of food, the interpretation is supported by the structure of the preceding lines. Wroth sets up four contrasting pairs in these first four lines: “feeds” and “spill” (1), “breeds” and “birth” (2), “conceaving” and “kill” (3), and “plenty” and “dearth” (4). By using these pairs to structure the line, Wroth suggests “dearth” as the opposite of “plenty,” supporting its interpretation as scarcity or want. However, the second pair of concepts in line two, “breeds” and “birth,” do not seem to contrast. Rather, they seem like two, interconnected stages of the same overarching event. However, the birth here is unnatural, and the baby is presumed dead on arrival. Because of this and Wroth’s use of words like “destroy” (1), “spill” (1), and “kill” (3), reading “dearth” as suggestive of “death” is an interpretation also supported by the lines. The remainder of this sonnet goes on to unpack the image of hope as a tyrant. While these lines further the reading of hope as a form of death, for example: “Hope kills the hart, and tirants shed the blood” (12), Wroth does not engage with birthing imagery here again.

In other of Wroth’s motherhood imagery, she does not focus on death as an outcome of birth, like a miscarriage, but instead unpacks imagery that imagines love as child. For example, in P38, the speaker addresses love directly: “How many eyes poore Love has thou to guard / Thee, from thy most desired wish, and end?” (1-2). Considering

the traditional ideas of love as blind, the speaker suggests that it is lovers who are both blind and bold:

Art thou, while wee both blind, and bold oft dare

Accuse thee of the harmes, our selves should find

Who led with folly, and by rashnes blind

Thy sacred power, doe with a child's compare. (9-12)

Here, the speaker suggests that love's power is no greater than a child's, because the lovers it controls are blindly led by folly and rashness. In this image, the power of love seems to be diminished, giving greater responsibility to the lovers. Later in the sequence, we'll see that imagining love as a child may not actually diminish its powers at all, as perhaps any parent could testify. Wroth returns to a birthing image again in the final line, suggesting that those non-lovers are born without fire: "Yett Love this boldness pardon: for admire / Thee sure wee must, or bee borne without fire" (13-14). This image is particularly interesting in the way it suggests that the ability or tendency to love are innate, inborn characteristics. These lines depict those who do not admire love as born without fire, another common figure for love throughout the sequence. Unlike the dream sequence at the start of the sequence that instigates the speaker's characterization as a lover, "Yett since: O mee: a lover I have binn" (P1.14), this image of love depicts it as a born condition. By imagining love as a born, innate condition, Wroth seems to reiterate a similar sonnet by her uncle. In sonnet 5 of *Astrophil and Stella*, Sidney's lines at the start of the second quatrain, "It is most true, what we call Cupid's dart, / An image is, which for ourselves we carve" (5.5-6), correspond to the first two lines of Wroth's third quatrain: "Art thou, while wee both blind, and bold oft dare / Accuse thee of the harmes,

our selves should find” (P38.9-10). These lines suggest that the cause of love might be found within the lover, but their final lines both point to something more innate. Sidney’s speaker reflects on the state of man as a pilgrim on earth, seeking his soul’s true home in heaven. Despite these heavenly aspirations, the speaker finds himself unable not to love Stella on earth, suggesting a more innate, inborn quality to his love:

True, that true beauty virtue is indeed,
Whereof this beauty can be but a shade,
Which elements with mortal mixture breed;
True, that on earth we are but pilgrims made,
And should in soul up to our country move;
True; and yet true, that I must Stella love. (5.9-14)

The speaker seems to try to reconcile his temporary status as a mortal man and his innate, undeniable love for a mortal woman. X. J. Kennedy finds that making these sort of large and universal analogies, Sidney has two intentions: “one, to put his love in the same elevated class as these empyrean and cosmic details; and two, to justify it as being also inevitable and in the natural and preordained system of things, like those mentioned in the analogies” (86). Wroth echoes this sentiment, but avoids the suggestion that love is on par with the empyrean images found in Sidney. Instead, she reduces the power of love, even as she continues his suggestion that it may be preordained in the lover from her birth.

In the second section of sonnets, Wroth engages a motherhood metaphor in a song. Falling near the end of this section, the speaker imagines loves as the constant cries of a child:

Love a child is ever criing,
 Please hm, and hee strait is flying,
 Give him hee the more is craving
 Never satisfied with having” (P74.1-4)

This imagery blends the concept of food with mothering, suggesting the child craves more when he is given food and is never satisfied with what he has. The song goes on to unpack the image of love as a crying child, ending with the suggestion he be left to it: “As a child then leave him crying / Nor seeke him soe giv’n to flying” (19-20). Although this childish imagery reflects the concept of love not just as any child, but as its embodiment in Cupid, it also reflects the lived experience of motherhood and reverberates with the tired exasperation of a new mother.

In the third section of the sequence, Wroth extends her engagement with the Love is a Child metaphor as she explores the idea of Cupid as a Monarch. I focus on these sonnets and their depictions of Cupid elsewhere, but here I want to look specifically at those images of Cupid that engage with his characterization as a child and his relationship with his mother. For example, in P83, Wroth imagines the love experience in terms of birth and nursing:

How blest bee they then, who his favors prove
 A lyfe wherof the birth is just desire,
 Breeding sweet flames which hearts invite to move
 In thes lov’d eyes which kindle Cupids fire,
 And nurse his longings with his thoughts intire,
 Fixt on the heat of wishes formd by love, (1-6)

In these lines, Wroth depicts the stages of early motherhood as the breeding, birth, and nursing of love. She imagines the lover breeding the flames of love and giving birth to desire. More specifically, she asserts the birth of “just desire” (2), a distinction that highlights the “true forme of love” (P100.14) that she seeks in her poetic project. Once the desire has been bred and born, the speaker imagines the lover’s eyes kindling Cupid’s fire and nursing his longings. The lover’s thoughts are fixed entirely on the heat of these desires or wishes instigated or formed by love, again suggesting that love is like motherhood, forming or conceiving desire, birthing it, and nursing it.

This nursing image is repeated in P85, where Wroth figures Cupid as a baby suckling his mother’s breasts: “What faults hee hath, in her, did still begin, / And from her brest hee suckd his fleeting pace” (7-8). In these lines, Wroth not only imagines love as a nursing baby Cupid, but also she engages with the idea that the sins of the child begin with the mother. Villeponteaux finds in this imagery “an interesting reiteration of the anxiety about a woman’s power to corrupt her offspring” (172). Mary Beth Rose identified a cultural anxiety about the influence of mothers on their children in the early modern period (300), and we can see Wroth registering some of this anxiety in her depiction of Cupid’s faults beginning in his mother, Venus. The imagery also reflects the idea of predestination, echoing the sentiment in Wroth’s birth imagery from P38. This idea is certainly a part of Wroth’s Calvinistic religious beliefs, and it hints at the idea of love as a result of original or ancestral sin, an image much different than the “devine love” of P81 or the “faithfull love” found in P103. In fact, Wroth’s depiction of “devine love” in P81 even suggests that “true desire” (2) as a “faithfull and unfained heate (5) can abolish sin and inspire virtue:

Butt faithful and unfained heate aspire
 Which sinne abolisheth, and doth impart
 Saulves to all feare, with vertues which inspire
 Soules with devine love, which showes his chaste art, (1-4)

Imagining love as a fire, Wroth distinguishes between desire and “true desire” (2), finding this faithful and honest love an antidote to sin and fear and a testament to chastity. However, imagining love as a child, even with that fire imagery still dominant, Wroth finds love tainted by the sins of his mother. Only separated by three sonnets, why does Wroth’s conception of love and desire seem to change so much? I assert that these distinctions are guided by the metaphors themselves. Fire’s natural ability to cleanse and purify allows Wroth the freedom to see it as a redeeming force in P81, whereas Wroth’s own lived experience of motherhood seems to inform her metaphor when she imagines love as a nursing child. Reading this metaphor, one can see hints of the author’s autobiography. Birthing two illegitimate children by Pembroke, Wroth seems interested in promoting a merit-based approach to advancement, neglecting the birth-order and noble birth rules ordering the English aristocracy. In the unfinished and unpublished second half of her *Urania*, Wroth describes the continuing struggles of Pamphilia and Amphilanthus alongside the second generation of princes and princesses. Wroth depicts several children who are born out of wedlock, like her own, but whose virtue and individual merit allow them to occupy important positions at court. Wroth seems to hint at that ideal here by insisting that the child’s sins began in his mother, freeing him from the responsibility for his innate, flawed nature. The child depicted here sucks from his mother’s breast at “his fleeting pace” (8), nodding to the child’s greedy desire. In this

imagery, Wroth follows the Court of Love tradition, which imagined Venus as the goddess of sensual love, love of the body, and Cupid as the god of “l’amour du coeur,” or love of the heart. Wroth’s suggestion here is that even though Cupid may represent a more honorable or true form of love, he cannot escape the inherited traits passed down from his mother. Aligning Venus with lust and Cupid with love, Wroth seeks to disentangle these related terms in the third quatrain:

If lust bee counted love t’is faulcely nam’d
 By wikednes a fayrer gloss to sett
 Upon that vice, which els makes men asham’d
 In the own frase to warrant butt begett (9-12)

The poet acknowledges that lust is easily confused with love or even counted as an aspect of it, but she sees this as a wicked recasting, setting a fairer gloss to the vice of lust. Furthermore, this vice “makes men asham’d / In the own frase to warrant butt begett” (11-12). Wroth’s language here demands a closer look. Here, “frase” could be a now obsolete spelling for phrase, or a small group of words (“Phrase, n2”). Or, when considered alongside her own phrase, “In the owne,” where “the owne” takes on that typical meaning from the fourteenth to the seventeenth century, “its own,” the word “frase” may be more like the first meaning of “phrase” as a “manner or style of expression” (“Phrase, n1”). Taken that way, the line would point to the inherent contradiction contained in the identification of lust as love. In its manner, it appears to “warrant,” or guarantee as true, but it begets, or brings into existence. It seems that Wroth’s line here suggests that calling lust a form of love guarantees the acceptance of this as truth. She unpacks this image and aligns it directly with the irrationality of this son

of Venus in the couplet: “This child for love, who ought like monster borne / Bee from the court of Love, and reason torn” (13-14). Although distinct from the quatrain as a couplet, the lack of an end-stop in line 12 allows us to read that complex imagery as something akin to: Lust is a vice that makes men ashamed in its style of expression by both guaranteeing and creating lust as a form of love. I think there is another meaning in Wroth’s “warrant” that is also supported by her child and mother imagery, that of protection. Reading the term in that way, we might imagine the men who count lust as love both protecting its status as such and giving birth to this confused misidentification. For instance, the lines could suggest that this vice makes men ashamed even as their conception of it is protected and created by them. This reading places lust, or Venus, in the role of mother, both birthing and protecting her child, love. Wroth asserts that given his parentage, Cupid ought to have been born a monster. However, the child is torn from reason and somehow manages to embody love, even as the son of lust.

Wroth picks up on this idea in the next sonnet, working to unpack the concept of reason. The last line of P85 now serves as a direct address to lovers at the start of P86:

Bee from the court of Love, and reason torne
 For Love in reason now doth putt his trust,
 Desert, and liking are together borne
 Children of love, and reason parents just,
 Reason adviser is, love ruler must” (1-5)

Here, the speaker implores lovers to be torn from reason. She places them in the Court of Love, subject to love as their ruler. In his role as ruler, love puts his trust in reason as an advisor. While the rest of the poem’s imagery continues its exploration of love in

governmental terms, a conceptual and didactic metaphor I discuss elsewhere, these opening lines help us to better understand Wroth's conception of love in terms of parentage and motherhood. Figuring love as a ruler, she imagines "desert" and "liking" as love's children, parented justly by reason. Although this might suggest both love and reason as parents, I think Wroth's intent here is to imagine the children of love parented by reason in the same way their biological parent, love, is advised by reason. Or, Wroth's lines could be read to suggest that "desert and liking" are born together as the children of love and reason. I don't see much support for that reading in either the poem's imagery or the punctuation of the lines, however unsteady that can be in Wroth's writing. Rather, I see her seeking a stable home life for these children, imagining them cared for by reason at the Court of Love, in perhaps the same way aristocratic children might be cared for by nursemaids, governesses, or tutors in the Jacobean court.

In the final section of sonnets, Wroth returns to the characterization of Cupid, or love, as the son of Venus, or lust. In sonnet P95, introducing the final section, the speaker laments her mournful state. She asserts that those who would help her are instead embracing their baser desires and engaging in wanton play:

My hart is lost, what can I now expect,
 An ev'ning faire; after a drowsie day?
 (Alas) fond phant'sie this is nott the way
 To cure a morning hart, or salve neglect,
 They who should help, doe mee, and help reject,
 Imbrasing looce desires, and wanton play,
 While wanton bace delights doe beare the swaye,

And impudencie raignes without respect: (1-8)

Feeling neglected, rejected, and alone in her pursuit of a faithful and true love for her heart, the speaker cries out to Cupid:

O Cupid! lett thy mother know her shame

T'is time for her to leave this youthfull flame

Which doth dishonor her, is ages blame,

And take away the greatnes of thy name; (9-12)

These lines beg Cupid, or love, to let his mother, Venus, or lust, know her shame. She suggests that his mother continues to dally with a youthful flame, bringing dishonor and blame to the name and status of her child. It's hard not to read autobiographical elements in Wroth's figures of mother and child, particularly given her own dishonor at court and as the mother of illegitimate children by a known philanderer. Whether or not these poems contain elements of her own lived experience, a suggestion that I assert is quite plausible, supported by both the lines of the poem and the author's biographical elements within her other works, like the poems' container in her prose romance, *Urania*, we don't need to read Wroth's biography into these sonnets in order to examine her conception of love in their imagery. Here, we can see the echoes of ancestral sin in a child affected, even dishonored by his mother's actions and by her essential nature as the embodiment of sensual love. Wroth goes on to assert a greater status for the child than for the mother, perhaps giving voice to many a mother's desire: "Thou God of love, she only Queene of lust, / Yett strives by weakning thee, to bee unjust" (13-14). Wroth's language here assigns divinity to Cupid. He is the God of love, whereas Venus is only a Queen, a man-made and inconstant title. Now, while the divine right of the monarchy might suggest the

title is not created by man, the language serves its purpose to designate Cupid with a heavenly, divine throne and Venus with an earthly one. The final line of this poem heightens the tension by insisting that Venus does not merely dishonor Cupid by nature of his birth. This passive, inherited blemish is rejected for an active form of aggression toward the son. Venus strives to weaken Cupid. Not only that, she seems to do this simply for the sake of being unjust. Wroth entreats Cupid to alert his mother to her bad behavior, “lett thy mother know her shame” (9), calling on love to teach and reform lust, shaping it into the truer form of faithful love the speaker strives for. In doing so, the poem might also serve another didactic purpose, teaching children to advise their parents and parents to listen.

Conclusion: When Love is Domestic

Through a close reading of Wroth’s domestic metaphors, *Love is Food* and *Love is a Child*, we can see the possibilities and limitations of this imagery. When imagined as a food, love can be nourishing and sweet, but its absence or contamination can lead to starvation or even death. Seeking a more stable ground for this metaphor, Wroth offers the possibility that faithful love, free of contaminants like lust, can provide the “richest fare” (P60.8). In recognition of the dangers inherent in feeding her eyes with the sight of her love, the speaker uses purposeful starvation to avoid the risk of jealousy in the final section of the sequence. Imagining Love as Food, the lover seems able to regulate her desire, control her portions, and feed off the nourishing aspects of love, while purposefully refusing the empty calories and poison of jealousy and fear. By imagining love in this domestic metaphor, the female lover appears able to find some authority and

control over her love experience. And, in so doing, is able to teach her partner how best to “nourish good” (15.8).

While this food imagery may give the lover some control, imagining Love as a Child is more problematic. Depicted in maternal terms, love can be as hopeful as a pregnant mother. However, the pregnancy might lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, or infant death. If the child, love, survives, it may be “ever crying” and impossible to satisfy (P74). Or, the child may be born with innate traits and characteristics from its mother or develop these traits as it grows because of her influence. As a mother figure, Venus may be “notable for the scope of her maternal authority” (Miller 96), but this notoriety remains associated with lust throughout Wroth’s sequence. Although Pamphila may give voice to a “nascent maternal subjectivity” (87), a close reading of Wroth’s parturition imagery still registers a lingering anxiety common in the seventeenth century. While risky, perhaps most promising in these maternal metaphors, however, is the potential for instruction. The maternal influence on a child’s education provided the early modern woman with some authority in her household, but Wroth’s sonnet 95 puts the child in the role of teacher. In this way, we can begin to see the didactic potential of love, a topic I’ll explore in the final chapter.

Chapter 7 – Love is a Teacher

Pedagogical Applications: “Hee may our profit, and owr Tuter prove”

The pedagogical applications of this project have two main tracks. First, is the teaching of early English literature. This project will explore ways to enhance students’ understanding of the literature through an expanded contextualization of the work within the dominant culture. Now that more female authors are being included in the canon, this project will enhance our teaching of those authors by revealing approaches to the texts not limited to or restricted by gender comparisons and a woman-as-voiceless-victim narrative. Second, this project has pedagogical applications in the teaching of poetry. Although students often struggle to understand and think critically about the elusive and abstract language and imagery used by poets, these figures are rooted in experience and culture. George Lakoff and Mark Johnson insist: “Metaphors as linguistic expressions are possible precisely because there are metaphors in a person’s conceptual system” (6). Further, these metaphors are often grounded in our cultural and physical experiences. Lakoff and Johnson argue: “The most fundamental values in a culture will be coherent with the metaphorical structure of the most fundamental concepts in the culture” (22). By teaching historical poetry through the lens of that culture, I believe that we will enhance our students’ ability to work with metaphorical concepts and figurative language. By using the critical framework established in the first six chapters of this dissertation, this final chapter will propose a critical pedagogy for the teaching of early modern poetry. Significantly, this chapter will draw on my coursework in online pedagogy and instructional technology to develop a teaching approach designed for twenty-first-century classrooms. First, as is always my preference, let’s return to the poetry.

Wroth first engages with the idea of love as a teacher in the seventh song of her first section. In a song on sorrow, grief, and mourning, the speaker proclaims her desire “to leave this cursed shore” (8). She insists that this is a place

Where harmes doe only flow
Which teach me butt to know
The sadest howres of my lives unrest,
And tired minutes with griefs hand oprest: (P49.9-12)

In this song, we see Wroth claiming that harm or pain is her teacher, an idea she returns to when she engages with this imagery again later in the sequence. In the second section of the sequence, Wroth reflects on jealousy, expounding on its capacity for dissembling, trickery, and flattery. She concludes the sonnet by resigning: “Thus is my learning by my bondage bought” (P69.14). Like her song in the first section claiming that harms teach her, here she claims that bondage teaches her.

While Wroth’s engagement with this teaching imagery in the first two sections finds learning to be the result of the painful aspects of the love experience, Wroth shifts her perspective to extol love as a monarch in the corona, and claims Cupid as teacher. The line of importance here, “Hee may our profit, and owr Tuter prove,” comes, characteristically, at the end of P81 and beginning of P82. In order to explicate her imagery, we need to examine the line in both contexts. In P81, Wroth imagines love as a fire, discussed more elsewhere, and compares this fire to the cleansing fires of divine love, “Which sinne abolisheth” (6). She claims Cupid as a guide to joy:

And guide hee is to joyings; open eyes
Hee hath to hapines, and best can learne

Us means how to deserve, this hee descries,

Who blind yett doth our hidenest thoughts deserue. (9-12)

Although Cupid is traditionally imagined as blind, Wroth depicts him here with eyes open to happiness, an image that is far different than her depiction of love teaching through pain and bondage. She sees Love, or Cupid, as a teacher that guides lovers to joy and happiness and teaches them “how to deserve” (11). This phrasing suggests that she imagines Cupid teaching lovers how to acquire or claim love, perhaps even how to be entitled to it. Furthermore, she says that he describes this deserving or entitlement to love because, in spite of his blindness, he can discern lovers’ most hidden thoughts. Because of this power and love’s ability to cleanse and make would-be lovers deserving of love, the poem concludes with the lovers living in a blessed love, and learning from Cupid: “Thus wee may gaine since living in blest love / Hee may our profitt, and owr Tuter prove” (13-14). Roberts identified in this final line a pun on “profit” or gain and “prophet” or foresee. In fact, the spelling, “prophet” was used in the 1621 text, further emphasizing love’s ability to predict or foresee. At the same time, Wroth sees blessed love benefitting lovers and considers love itself to be a profit. In all of this, love is a tutor, teaching his students to enjoy love and deserve it.

This same line at the start of P82 introduces an extended reflection on Love as Teacher. Wroth begins by assigning greater power to Love, or Cupid, as a tutor, suggesting this as the only place to find this power to join two bodies in the same soul or mind:

Hee may owr profitt, and our Tuter prove

In whom alone wee doe this power finde,

To joine two harts as in one frame to move;

Two bodies, butt one soule to rule the minde; (1-4)

Like two hearts operating in a single frame, Wroth depicts lovers as two bodies operating under the direction of a single mind. And, she sees this aspect of the love experience resulting from Love, or Cupid's tutelage. The second quatrain develops this idea further, imagining the lovers' senses attuned to each other and their kind contentment as the demonstration of true love:

Eyes which must care to one deere object bind

Eares to each others speech as if above

All eels they sweet, and learned were; this kind

Content of lovers wittniseth true love, (5-8)

While suggesting that this kind contentment is a demonstration of true love, the phrase, "this kind / Content of lovers wittniseth true love," also pushes the lovers into a demonstrative or didactic role of their own. Outsiders can witness their union and see what true love is, while these actions also seem to prove the trueness of the love back to the lovers. This reading allows us to see not only Cupid, the embodiment of love, as a teacher, but also the lovers themselves as teaching about love. In this way, Wroth's imagines a decentered classroom, a pedagogy where authority and power do not rest solely in the hands of the instructor, but where they are shared with students. Although considered a novel approach to teaching and promoted by theorists like Peter Elbow, Donald Murray, and Ken Macrorie in the 1960's and 1970's, Wroth's imagery asserts a preference for this pedagogical arrangement, insisting that Cupid is not the only authority on love. This idea is developed in the third quatrain:

Itt doth inrich the witts, and make you see
 That in your self, which you knew nott before,
 Forcing you to admire such guifts shold bee
 Hid from your knowledge, yett in you the store; (9-12)

Here, Wroth claims that love, or true love in particular, enriches the wits, emphasizing the role that the love experience itself plays in teaching about love. This instructional role for the love experience is part of what I believe makes this sonnet sequence especially suited to classroom use. Looking to the poetry's reception by Wroth's peers, in fact, the possibilities her poems offered for instruction are acknowledged immediately.

When Ben Jonson finished reading *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, he wrote in reply, "A Sonnet to the Noble Lady, the Lady Mary Wroth." In this sonnet, Jonson asserts that he is a lover, but that reading her sonnets has made him both a better lover and a better poet: "Since I exscribe your sonnets, am become / A better lover, and a much better poet" (3-4). In the second quatrain, he goes on to explain his rationale, claiming that Wroth's poetry has shown him the way some graces charm the senses and others overcome the head and the heart:

Nor is my Muse or I ashamed to owe it
 To those true numerous graces, whereof some
 But charm the senses, others overcome
 Both brains and hearts; and mine now best do know it (5-8)

It seems that Wroth's poetry has revealed to Jonson the way that a lover's senses, emotional state, and even capacity for reason can be overcome by the love experience, and he points specifically to the way her poetry has disarmed the strengths of Cupid: "For

in your verse all Cupid's armory, / His flames, his shafts, his quiver, and his bow, / His very eyes are yours to overthrow" (9-11). Jonson's imagery here pits Wroth against Cupid and depicts her overthrowing his rule. In particular, Jonson notes that Wroth has the ability to overthrow his flames, shafts, quiver, bow, and eyes. These particulars resonate with the imagery examined above through Wroth's various figurations of love, and they also gesture back to the Petrarchan images of the lover burning in desire, wounded or pained by love, and charmed or wounded by the beloved's eyes. In this way, we might see in Jonson's sonnet the claim that Wroth has supplanted these traditional, masculine ideas of love with one that helps the reader better put their love into action. Wroth's poetic exploration of the love experience allows readers to love better. Jonson was a lover before reading Wroth, and could prove it, "I that have been a lover, and could show it" (1), but he becomes a better lover by moving past these outdated, objectifying ideas about love to better understand the experience and, I would argue, to act in ways that promote a more sustainable love experience. It is this quality of Wroth's metaphors that give them the ability to change readers, and even, as asserted by Lakoff and Johnson, to change reality itself:

The idea that metaphors can create realities goes against most traditional view of metaphor. The reason is that metaphor has traditionally been viewed as a matter of mere language rather than primarily as a means of structuring our conceptual system and the kinds of everyday activities we perform. It is reasonable enough to assume that words alone don't change reality. But changes in our conceptual system do change what is real for us and affect how we perceive the world and act upon those perceptions. (145-146)

Through the careful study of Wroth's metaphors, readers can evaluate their current conceptual systems of love and structure new ones that better suit their present reality or even the reality they desire. In Wroth, Jonson can find the love experience laid bare, revealing its pains and inconsistencies as well as its joys and promise of hope. Like Jonson, today's readers of Wroth's poetry can find imagery that resonates with their own love experiences and, I assert, the study of her work can help its readers better understand both poetry and love. In his sonnet, Jonson asserts that reading Wroth's sonnets made him a better poet and a better lover, and I maintain that this echoes the very goal of the humanities: to develop better writers and better humans. Our work as educators in these humanities fields calls on us to teach critical thinking, written communication, close-reading, and analysis. But it also calls on us to help students apply this learning to their lives. In this way, we might accomplish what bell hooks terms an "engaged pedagogy," or one that "aims to restore students' will to think, and their will to be fully self-actualized" (8). Although responding to students' general resistance to critical thinking, I think hooks's demand for self-actualization can be difficult to wrap our minds around. Asking us to teach a skill like writing or close-reading, sure, but can we really be expected to help students realize their talent and potential? But hooks does call on educators to make their students self-actualized. Rather, she calls on us to restore their *will* for self-actualization. I assert that we can awaken this desire for self-actualization and show students a path towards it through pedagogical practice that focuses on the conceptual metaphors of lyric poetry. This high-demand of the poetic canon can then echo the potential hooks identifies in the literary canons formative to her: "The only canons I formed in my mind were filled with the writers with whom I felt a soul inspiring

resonance, the writers whose works were great to me because they gave me words, wisdom, and visions powerful enough to transform me and my world” (104). Through the approach I propose here, we can help students create their own canons, founded on an attention to conceptual metaphors that give them the power to transform themselves and the world we share.

Engaging Pedagogy with Technology

Integral to the approach I suggest in this chapter, is the use of educational technology. Much of the academic response to online pedagogy and instructional technology falls into three general moods. The first is excited and hopeful about the digital era. They are eager to try to technologies in their classrooms and to experiment with evolving course delivery methods through programs like *WebCT* and *Blackboard*. The second group is quite the opposite and shudders at the idea of losing the traditional brick and mortar halls, chalkboards, and energetic classroom discussions. In the third group, I see a number of academics facing the digitization of education with a sort of resigned interest. Their response is exemplified by a fellow graduate student who reported on the first day of a seminar on teaching composition online: “Like it or not, online teaching is an inevitable part of my future in higher education. I might as well learn how to do it well.” I sympathize with the skepticism toward these new instructional technologies and understand the nostalgia, but I also see a number of significant contributions that instructional technology and online pedagogy can offer instructors of Elizabethan and Jacobean literature. Before diving into some specific teaching applications for *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*, I want to examine three important tools –

Hypertext, Internet Archives, and Digital Communication – and demonstrate the way they might be useful in teaching early modern texts more generally.

The first tool that I believe can provide a significant pedagogical advantage is hypertext. Hypertext was defined by foundational digital pedagogy theorist George Landow, as “an information technology consisting of individual blocks of text, or lexias, and the electronic links that join them” (“What’s a Critic to Do?” 1). Johndan Johnson-Eilola further describes hypertext as “a network, or web, of connections between nodes of a text, and readers choose which links to follow, which nodes to read, and which nodes to skip” (197), and Michael Joyce explains: “Hypertext embodies information and communications, artistic and affective constructs, and conceptual abstractions alike into symbolic structures made visible on a computer-controlled display” (19). At this point in time, creating hypertext can be done quite simply through HTML editors like those in most email services and in online course delivery systems. One simply highlights the words or phrases that they want to use as hypertext and selects an icon that looks like two chain links. This allows the user to add what is termed a hyperlink to that selection and, when a user clicks on the hypertext later with their mouse, their internet browser directs them to whatever has been linked, like a related text or a different version of the text, for instance. In the course of its evolution, the idea of hypertext has expanded to include the ability to add hyperlinks to images, videos, and other media. Joyce explains: “When hypertext content extends to digitized sound, animation, video, virtual reality, computer networks, databases, etc., it is referred to as *hypermedia*” (21 *emphasis Joyce*). But beyond providing a definition of tools like these, I want to explore the kinds of things they can do.

Hypertext affords the users new and expanded ways of accessing and discovering information. Joyce maintains: “Exploratory hypertexts encourage and enable an audience to control the transformation of a body of information to meet its needs and interests” (41). This ability can be useful in course design by creating exploratory hypertexts where students can discover and follow their own path through the information. In an online or hybrid course, this tool allows not only for vastly increased reading options, but also turns that online text into a body of information that cannot be replicated in a printed textbook. Because, as Joyce asserts, “even the simplest hypertexts present an enormous number of reading choices” and because they present a vast increase in the choices for readers, “hypertexts can never be adequately represented in print” (21).

Another valuable feature of hypertext is the possibilities it affords for breaking down the traditional distinctions between reader and writer or between teacher and student. “The dissolving of distinctions between writer and reader,” Joyce argues, “makes hypertext a valuable tool for learning and information management as well as a revolutionary artistic medium. Indeed, some theorists argue that hypertext represents a shift in human consciousness comparable to the shift from orality to print” (20). George Landow not only recognizes the shift between writer and reader, but also teacher and student, asserting that hypertext,

changes the roles of teacher and student in much the same way it changes those of writer and reader. Its emphasis upon the active, empowered reader, which fundamentally calls into question general assumptions about reading, writing, and texts, similarly calls into question our assumptions about the nature and institutions of literary education that so depend on these texts (*Convergence* 219).

One might imagine the pedagogical potential hypertexts can offer instructors, and especially so in literature where ideas of textual closure, reader response, and authorship are routinely challenged and questioned.

One way that these hypertexts could be used in a course on Renaissance literature might be found in teaching works that draw heavily from the classical tradition, like Shakespeare's *Antony and Cleopatra*. By creating a hypertext summary of an Act or a scene, for instance, users could follow links to discover more about the classical background, history, and source texts, or to explore the play's performance history and adaptations. Links from the original text could take users to other of Shakespeare's Roman plays, *A Mirror for Magistrates* (1559), a definition of *De Casibus* Tragedy, or to source material from Plutarch. Michael Best describes creating what he calls a "sandbox for students to play in" (256) using hypertext technology as a means for them to explore Shakespearean contexts and determine subjects that provided sufficient interest for a research paper. This technology could also be used to design close-reading assignments as students themselves could create a hypertext version of a short poem or passage with links to OED definitions, their own paraphrases, or classical source material. I propose this approach as a particularly valuable method for teaching lyric poetry, like Wroth's, and I'll explore these possibilities more below. This assignment touches on the second valuable tool for instructors of Elizabethan and Jacobean literature: Internet Archives.

The internet provides an ever-increasing number and ever-improving system of archives that include *Early English Books Online*, *Oxford English Dictionary Online* and *Oxford Reference Online*, *Complete Works of Shakespeare Online*, *Internet Shakespeare Editions*, *Lexicons of Early Modern English*, *Literature Online*, and *Records of Early*

English Drama. In addition, an increasing number of libraries now offer expanded options via the Internet including the ability to see manuscripts and rare books online and to have greater access to more current books through eBooks and digital lending libraries like *Folger Digital Texts* and *Huntington Digital Library*. Best finds these advances exciting and promising for instructors of early modern literature, asserting that this “astonishing expansion of the Internet and associated electronic media has turned the desktops of students and teachers alike to portals that open on a seemingly inexhaustible ocean of data” (254). However, alongside these brilliant sources, there is also an ever-increasing body of shoddy sources and unreliable information. Best explains that when he introduces academic, peer-reviewed, and reliable resources to students, “I also warn them of the limitations of sites like *SparkNotes*, which provide seductively simple explanations of passages but do not invite the exploration of the ambiguity and uncertainty inherent in the originals” (263). He maintains that it is “important to co-opt rather than resist materials of this kind; accordingly I take a passage from the *Wikipedia* and discuss its strengths and weaknesses. Then again, not every book in our university library is current and reliable, so the electronic world is simply making more obvious and necessary the need for critical evaluation of sources” (261). By engaging with viable and useful sources on the Internet, we open up a discussion about them and can help our students to think critically about source material and to question what they read. Best insists that “discussion of teaching – online or off-line – must start with an acceptance that students will use their computers for research online long before they force themselves to go to the library; as teachers, we need to take advantage of the new shape of research. Whether a

course is offered in a traditional classroom or online, we need to anticipate and exploit our students' propensity for online activities" (265).

Some of the valuable affordances these Internet Archives allow students of Elizabethan and Jacobean literature include the "Search" and "Find" functions available through *Internet Shakespeare Editions* that allow users to quickly locate words and phrases in a particular work or even in the entire body of his work. Furthermore, the ability to see manuscripts or early English books through *Early English Books Online* or *Folger Digital Texts* can help students enhance their understanding and appreciation of historical documents. In addition, one way that I have used these Internet archives in my own teaching is through an assignment I developed for a survey course on early British literature. In this assignment, I asked students to select an Elizabethan sonnet by one of the assigned authors, including Shakespeare, Spencer, Sidney, or Raleigh. They were then directed to use *Oxford English Dictionary Online* to look up at least eight words from the chosen sonnet as part of their close reading of the text. Next, the students selected at least four of those to include in a two-page written analysis where I asked them to demonstrate a careful reading of the sonnet, illuminated by the meaning(s) of significant words and phrases. This assignment not only introduced the students to a valuable tool for reading early British texts that many chose to rely on again and again as they continued the course, but it also enhanced our discussion of the readings as students were able to share their research with the rest of the class and illuminate our understanding of the language and meanings behind some of these difficult works. Best suggests another variant on assigning a passage for close reading by assigning 30-40 lines from a Shakespeare play and asking students to edit the passage, "explaining words and

phrases to help a student at a level just below their own understand it fully” (263). He explains how, using a variety of Internet archives, the class creates something like an edition of an entire play that he is able to post online for the class to enjoy and reference later. Best promotes using assignments like this in hybrid or online courses, insisting that they not only evaluate what a student has learned and can do, but also provide learning experiences in themselves. He asserts: “Just as the best teaching online blends technologies from traditional and electronic media, the most effective evaluation of students’ work provides a variety of tasks that demand different skills, not all of which involve a traditional thesis supported by a linear argument” (264). While the popular, thesis-driven essay need not totally disappear from twenty-first-century classrooms, there are useful and pedagogically sound alternatives and additions to those assignments that might be especially valuable for instructors teaching hybrid or fully online courses.

The third tool that holds significant value for instructors is digital communication, a term I use to refer to a variety of media from discussion boards and chat rooms to forums and email. In the English classroom, these mediums are especially useful in the way that they privilege reading and text over oral discussion. Although many instructors exalt face-to-face classroom discussion, the increased amount of both reading and writing required in courses that utilize these technologies affords more practice in writing and critical thinking. Another significant aspect of these digital communications is the increase that instructors and theorists have noted in class participation. Best insists that these mediums encourage “students who find it difficult to talk in a standard classroom situation: they have time to think and are less intimidated by other students in the privacy of their own study or a computer lab” (259). He argues: “In an extension of the classroom

handout and discussion, the Web offers a method of communication that is both effective and democratic, giving voice to the previously silent members of our classes” (266).

Kathy Cawsey and Ian Lancashire describe their experience using *WebCT*’s chat feature in poetry courses at the University of Toronto, highlighting the democracy of discussion they saw:

The chat room technology leveled the playing field: no one could type more than two or three sentences at a time, and everyone could edit a contribution before publishing it. Teachers could not dominate the class, and students could contribute without stage fright. Protected in this way, students freely engaged instructors, other students, and the subject matter (311).

James Fitzmaurice praises the virtues of digital communication in his experience teaching Shakespeare to both undergraduate and graduate students. One of the aspects of this technology that he appreciates is the ability to insert text and passages directly from the discussed works of literature into discussion board posts. In fact, in one of his graduate courses, a student inserted a passage from a play that they were not discussing, bringing a new dynamic to the discussion. While most students do not generally read direct passages from the reading in class discussions, the ease of doing so using this feature more readily allows it. And, instructors could even structure a discussion board assignment so as to require that a student’s initial post on *Roaring Girl*, for instance, should include a passage illustrating Moll Cutpurse’s characterization as “roaring” like one of her lines in the second Act, “I have no humor to marry. I love to lie o’both / sides o’th-bed myself” (2.2.37-38) and explain how this is an apt illustration. Fitzmaurice also values what he

terms “asynchronous spontaneity,” referring to “messages that are composed quickly” and delivered through an asynchronous medium like a discussion board (269).

Fitzmaurice agrees that while “quick back-and-forth dialogue often is lost . . . there are important gains to be found in considered written expression and in thoughtful, text-based reading” (268). He describes considered, spontaneous postings where “a student brings an important remark or maybe a substantive question into the dialogue,” asserting that “such premeditation as there is in a considered spontaneous post comes from a student’s mulling over a problem in advance and then, perhaps unexpectedly, stumbling on an opportunity to comment on the problem in a way that is not fully formed or finalized” (270). It is, in part, this premeditation and consideration that makes asynchronous discussion so valuable. In the classroom, there are often questions that students are not able to answer immediately, and these questions require and encourage extended thinking on the topic. By using these technologies for discussion, students (and instructors) have time to think carefully about what they want to say and, in some cases at least, to revise and edit their comments for clarity and content in ways that increase the value of the discussion and offer additional writing and revision opportunities for students. Furthermore, these forms of digital communication can be left open or closed, depending on the instructor’s preference. Even if the ability to post additional comments or entries are restricted by the instructor, these forums can be left available for students so that they may continue to access them throughout the course. This feature allows a transcript of the discussion that would be difficult, if not impossible, to replicate in a classroom setting. Students are able to access this as a valuable resource as they study for exams, write papers, or develop their critical and close reading skills.

Finally, these digital forms of communication afford an interaction between students and instructors that Fitzmaurice argues will enhance learning and increase knowledge retention:

If students interact personally with one another and their instructor as a part of academic discussion, they are more likely to remember the material that they have covered than if they had worked alone. They are more apt to have an in-depth sense of the texts that they have studied. The skills honed in such an environment are more likely to stick. I myself have found that when there is strong personal interaction, I remember material more vividly and accurately, my depth of understanding increases, and my skills in interpretation grow (275).

In addition to assigning discussion board posts that require close reading of a text with specific examples included, another way to utilize digital communication mediums in a class on early modern literature might be in teaching the Renaissance Epic. Because texts like Milton's *Paradise Lost* or Spenser's *Faerie Queen* are lengthy, complex, and difficult texts, and because they are part of a much larger, historical epic tradition, the creation of forums focusing on important issues at play in the work can help students access the texts and return to these discussion boards as their reading continues in order to further illuminate their understanding and appreciation of the literature. For instance, the instructor might create a forum to coincide with Book I of the *Faerie Queene* where students contribute to the creation of a character list with descriptions and important plot points for Redcross, Duessa, and Una, or for significant locations like the House of Pride or House of Holiness. Spenser's text is challenging even to the experienced reader, but

creating assignments like this not only creates spaces for students to think about and respond to the epic, but to create useful study tools and resources to help them find their way through this daunting text rather than “wander too and fro in waies vnknowne” (I.i.10).

Teaching *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus*

Like Spenser’s errant knight in the Wandering Wood, students of Wroth’s poetry may find themselves asking: “In this strange labourinth how shall I turne?” (P90.14). Wroth’s poems are opaque, paradoxical, and syntactically complex. On top of that, they reflect a Jacobean Age that seems far-removed from our twenty-first-century classrooms. To address that difficulty, I propose that the study of Wroth’s sequence begin with some attention to her cultural context. I’ve found Peter Ackroyd’s book, *Rebellion: The History of England from James I to the Glorious Revolution* (2014), to be remarkably accessible, and he offers a readable history, which can provide a valuable, albeit sweeping overview of the age. Ackroyd describes the mood the period through the illustration of Jacobean Tragedy, particularly Webster’s *The Duchess of Malfi*:

It signifies melancholy, morbidity, restlessness, brooding anger, impatience, disdain, resentment; it represents the horror of life. The exuberance and optimistic inventiveness of the Elizabethan years have disappeared. The joy has gone. The vitality has become extremity and the rhetoric has turned rancid. (98)

He goes on to assert that “Melancholy was the time’s delight, its presiding deity,” and points to John Dowland’s musical compositions, “In darkness let me dwell” and “Flow my tears” as illustrative of the period, titles that will resonate with the language found in Wroth’s lyrics as well. In addition to a time when the natural world was becoming free

from its association with the divine, Ackroyd notes the prominence of dark imagery, “They seem to be possessed by will and desire rather than belief; they are united only in the quest for survival in an unstable world. They run towards darkness. This is in fact a most significant image of the age and one to which, as we shall see, Hobbes *Leviathan* is addressed” (100). Furthermore, Ackroyd identifies space for Wroth’s style in his assessment of the age in the example of Lancelot Andrewes, bishop of Winchester:

The style is hard and elliptical, almost torturous in its slow unwinding of the sense. It relies upon repetition and alliteration, parallel and antithesis. It is knotty and difficult, almost impossible for the hearers to understand. Yet it is the devotional style of the Jacobean period . . . He does not express a thought but rather, the process of thought itself; he dramatizes the act, or art, of creative reasoning. This is the luxuriant etymology of Jacobean scholarship. (103-104)

Although Ackroyd finds this age “sceptical, ambiguous, and ambivalent” (105), he also notes the importance of music, pointing out that over ninety collections of madrigals, airs, and songs were published between 1587 and 1630. “In the time of James,” Ackroyd tells us, “the island was filled with sounds and sweet airs” (96). Wroth’s lyric voice is among these songs, and her style resounds with the “luxuriant etymology” and melancholy of the age.

This historical context can provide students with a foundational understanding of the world into which Wroth contributed her poetic voice. Unless the course schedule allowed for it, I would not propose giving students an entire book of history as assigned reading. Rather, present students with Ackroyd’s chapter 10, allowing them to read the passages I’ve included here in their original context, and use class time to discuss some

of these broad characterizations of the age and the way they might encounter or experience these characteristics in their reading of Wroth. Then, through the use of technologies like hypertext. Significant passages could be used by the student in their own, hyper-linked readings of the poems and students could even find a hyperlink out to the entire book at their university library within the course material you provide. An approach like this will allow students the opportunity to glimpse the broader context for Wroth's poetry, and it will provide valuable opportunities for further investigation into sermons, plays, masques, and madrigals that resonate with their own reading of the poetry.

After the introduction of the historical time period, my approach rests on the musical features of the age notes by Ackroyd above. By this, I mean that I attune to Wroth's lyrics as lyric, as the words of a song or a musical stanza. While I recognize that early modern sonneteers, like Wroth, did not write all of their sonnets to be sung, the term itself hearkens to its musical roots. A sonnet, or little song, remains, I would argue, irrevocably tied to this tuneful history. In fact, Lady Mary Wroth is depicted in portraiture holding an archlute, a stringed instrument from the seventeenth century recognizable in iconography by its long neck, short string length, and fourteen courses (Carlone 82). Show students this image. Engage both their close-reading skills in a low-stakes reading of this image as a text. What can they learn about the poet from this portrait? What do they assume about her poetry based on this image? In so doing, we can promote visual literacy in our classroom, and engage our learners who are more averse to text-based learning or even textual literacy. In their book, *Looking and Learning: Visual Literacy Across the Disciplines*, editors Deandre Little, Peter Felton, and Chad Berry

assert that “learning to look, it turns out, is more complicated than it seems” (1). However, they maintain that today, these visual skills are no different than reading and writing skills in that “students bring some capacities with them to campus, but even the strongest students should be challenged and supported to further hone their abilities to make meaning with and from visuals” (3). To accomplish this mission, they maintain that both colleges and their faculty must cultivate these visual literacies across their curriculums, and one way that I believe we can accomplish that successfully in the early modern classroom is through iconographic portraiture like that in the college of Viscount De L’Isle at Penshurst Place.

The relationship between Wroth’s sonnet sequence and music has seen a creative and critical response in the work of Paul Hecht, and I find Hecht’s work particularly useful to this pedagogical application. Hecht argues that Wroth’s sonnet sequence should be read as punk rock. He claims that “we can make much better headway in teaching Wroth’s poetry if we read it as the opposite of inhibited, the opposite of an intricately and artfully sculpted labyrinthine object, and certainly the opposite of boring . . . we should read her poetry as punk rock” (92). Dick Hebdige defines punk rock as music that pursues “relentless (un)melodic lines against a turbulent background of cacophonous drumming and screamed vocals” (109). Through the lens of this musical genre, Hecht offers an approach to Wroth’s poetry that embraces her rawness and identifies her success in irony, earthy eroticism, and invective style. Although I don’t believe we need to read *Pamphilia to Amphilanthus* as punk rock, per se, I do think it is valuable to our students when we read her lyric poetry as song. In particular, I assert that by structuring our pedagogical approach around the same conceptual metaphors addressed here and

allowing for students to create their own comparative canon from the songs they know best, our students can, like Ben Jonson, grow their writing and emotional skills.

To accomplish this, I propose the design of a project based around students' reading of Wroth's lyrics and the lyrics of contemporary and popular lyrics of their choice. By engaging students with the poetry at the level of conceptual metaphor, we are tapping into a knowledge they already know, although perhaps more innately than realized. Because these conceptual metaphors are based on our physical, spatial conceptualization of the world, and because they are an integral part of our language and conceptual systems, students are already accustomed to conceiving of Happy as Up, for instance, or Time as Money. Our first project, then, is to awaken students to the conceptual metaphors, entailments, and associated language that they already use and act upon. To do this, I would turn to Pharrell Williams. In his 2014 hit song, "Happy," Pharrell Williams employs a Happy is Up orientational metaphor by relying on language that continually reinforces this image. As he does so, he uses a variety of metaphors for happiness, demonstrating the way that each distinct metaphor still rests on this orientational system. In the first verse, Williams sings: "I'm a hot air balloon that could go to space" (3). Throughout the chorus, he appeals to readers to "Clap along if you feel like a room without a roof" (6). And, in the bridge, Williams insists: "Can't nothing bring me down / My level's too high to bring me down" (26-27). These lyrics offer students an accessible way of recognizing and understanding the way Williams's metaphorical language like "Clap along if you feel like a room without a room" (6) taps into the larger, conceptual metaphor: Happy is Up. This line pushes the boundaries of that happiness up, beyond the limits of a roof. Williams appeals to his audience directly through this

metaphor, even assuming that they will understand that this roofless feeling is synonymous with happiness. Using these lyrics as a model of conceptual metaphor and their spatial design, we can then bring the same analytical lens to our reading of early modern lyrics, a pedagogical approach that I maintain is effective in helping our students connect with, understand, and appreciate poetry, even when they are detached from by time and language.

From there, allow students to start identifying other conceptual metaphors that shape their realities and their language. This early brainstorming work will fill the space, whether classroom air or a digital forum, with promising ideas for further study and analysis as students progress with their own, unique study into the poetry. With this foundational work in conceptual metaphors to guide them, students are now ready to approach Wroth's poetry with a toolkit for appreciating it. Don't send them in empty-handed. Give them contextual and conceptual tools to inform their reading, and assign that deceptively small reading homework that gives students the time and attention to attend to the words, rhythm, and stylistic details of the text. Assign a single sonnet to begin, or a small selection depending on course needs, and ask students to identify the conceptual metaphor(s) at work and to identify the language and imagery that furthers that metaphor, much like I have done in the chapters above. This first, introductory experience into Wroth's poetry, when handled methodically and deliberately, will provide students with an emerging skill set that they continue to apply as the project continues. Depending on the nature of your course, any number of Wroth's sonnets could serve as an apt starting point, although I tend to favor Sonnet 1. Given that the text is presented as a sequence and that Wroth introduces several of the metaphorical imagery

she will develop in the rest of the sonnet, starting students here presents a challenging poem, but one that can be appreciated and understood when read closely and especially in the communal environment of the literature course.

From there, the particular course needs will necessarily shape the project's structure. This could be an excellent opportunity to spread the poems out among students, so that the entire class can create a sort of edition of Wroth's poetry, like suggested above. In this case, students might work with a handful of assigned poems, working together as a class to create a strong analysis of each. This approach can be especially valuable in lower-division course, like an Introduction to Literature or an Introduction to Poetry. The shape of this project would weigh more heavily the act of close-reading and analysis itself, and working with a smaller text can allow the professor adequate time to teach those skills alongside the literature. In upper-division courses, like a course on Renaissance Poetry, students will be equipped to handle a larger body of text, and the structure of the project might change. For instance, students would be assigned the entire sequence, and would build their project from a collection of those poems at their own discretion. With contextual and conceptual introductions done, the focus in this central portion of the course project will be to practice close-reading and comparative reading of lyric metaphor. Assign an OED project like the own I discussed above, focusing on word choice and word meaning. This will allow students to build their informed understanding of what the poem says. Then, allow them to analyze how the poet makes her meaning. What metaphors is she engaging? How? Does this conception of love appear satisfactory to the speaker? Why or why not? Let students meander with their analytical claims in these early stages. Ask open-ended questions, encourage discussion of common themes

or ideas that students identify, and create forums where this growing knowledge can be shared and where students can actively learn from their peers and showcase their unique approaches.

Given the particular focus of the project so far, students will naturally start to recognize in Wroth's lyrics echoes of sentiments they are already familiar with in their own musical preferences, so asking them to find comparative lyrics will not be a challenge. The greatest challenge for students will be the act of critical thinking about these comparisons, and we need to guide them in their analysis, as they work to discover how these authors make meaning out of these conceptual metaphors in creative and unique ways and also how they participate in traditional forms of lyric poetry, like Petrarchan soneeteering, using these same sorts of conceptual metaphors. Students will, hopefully, choose a wide range of music as they begin to make these comparisons, and I believe that this comparative analytical work will not only enrich our students' understanding of poetry like Wroth's that is historically and linguistically distant from them, but it will also help them see immediate applications for these critical thinking and close-reading skills on the media they are surrounded by every day. In this way, the pedagogy is informed by a brain-targeted teaching model, in that it is a "cohesive, usable model of effective instruction informed by findings from the neuro- and cognitive sciences" (Hardiman). Mariale Hardiman recognizes six ways that we can target the brain through our teaching: emotional climate, physical environment, learning design, teaching for mastery, teaching for application, and evaluating learning. Although I won't cover the way this project can address all of these needs now, I do want to highlight the ways a project like this can create a teachable, emotional climate and teach for application. First,

Hardiman asserts that learning is most possible in a positive emotional climate and that an emotional connection to the content promotes learning. By launching the project with Pharrell Williams' "Happy," we establish a positive emotional climate, even as we present a challenging and critical concept. Whether the song is played through speakers in your classroom or through the students' headset or speakers at the click of a link, this music will literally fill that environment with positive emotion. This initial step is key to establishing that positive emotional climate from the project's outset. From there, although Wroth's poetry is insistent in its melancholy and despair, our focus on the metaphors of love allow students to make emotional connections to the content. And, because this emotional connection is so critical to learning, the project promotes even more through the comparative analysis with modern lyric. Students will choose the metaphors and lyrics that resonate with them, that inspire them, and that give them "words, wisdom, and visions powerful enough to transform" their world (hooks 104). Second, Hardiman finds that life-long learning is promoted when students apply the content to real world contexts, engaging in higher-order thinking and problem-solving skills. By asking students to attend to these same conceptual metaphors in the modern lyrics they are already surface-reading (or hearing) on a regular basis, we show them ways to creatively apply these close-reading and analytical skills and use the knowledge meaningfully.

The central portion of this project is also informed by the work of Brian Boyd, who argues that the patterns in lyric voice appeal to our evolutionary development: "The many manifestations of patterned play in language across time, place, and life-stage suggest that we have evolved human predisposition for play with the patterns of

language” (13). In his study of Shakespeare’s sonnets to explore the lasting power of lyric, Boyd asserts:

Art needs to attract attention fast, but great art attracts it again and again.

Returning to reread a lyric can be a rich and multilayered experience. With the first reading fresh in our minds, with the text there is a series of fixed and exact prompts to memory, we can both relive and reconstruct our initial impressions - except that we can also now be aware of what we have already understood, and no longer have the anxiety we felt on a first exploration - and augment them. (43)

In this central portion of the project, send students back into their lyrics, both Wroth’s and the contemporary lyrics they have chosen as comparative touchstones, again and again. Ask new questions of the texts, and encourage your students to ask their own questions. Using our literary expertise and the course needs, we can design these re-readings around foundational literary elements like form and rhyme scheme, and around stylistic elements like alliteration, repetition, and word choice.

For example, in my reading of Wroth’s sonnet P47 above, I highlighted the ambiguity in the poem’s final line: “My love content because in his, love lies” (14). Here, relying on a Love is Light metaphor, the speaker calls her beloved “Light of my joy” (10). However, the poem’s final word questions the stability of her joy and her love experience. The reader, and perhaps not even the speaker, can satisfactorily determine if the beloved is lying, or if love is lying in the beloved. The ambiguity of this word lie finds a contemporary use in the lyrics of Eminem and Rihanna in their song, “Love the Way You Lie.” In this song, the speakers engage with a metaphor closely related to the concept of Love as Light, Live is a Fire. Rihanna asks in the chorus: “Just gonna stand

there and watch me burn?” (1). She insists she doesn’t care, “Well, that’s all right because I like the way it hurts” (2), before asking: “Just gonna stand there and hear me cry? (3). And then the resignation: “Well, that’s all right because I love the way you lie / I love the way you lie” (4-5). Here, the speaker’s question includes the word “hear,” marking her use of the word “lie” as a spoken falsehood. However, the language also works as an erotic pun. The interpretive possibilities of this word in the more accessible and relatable lyrics from the twenty-first century allows students to make an emotional connection with the concepts they are learning, and it illuminates their reading of a similar linguistic play in Wroth’s sonnet. Read together, historic and contemporary lyric can reinforce the shared conceptual nature of our language and our understanding of reality.

Another productive example of lyric pairing can be found in Bruce Springsteen’s 1977 lyrics, “Because the Night.” While encouraging our students to use contemporary lyrics that resonate with them, we must recognize that our students will not all be in their early 20’s or fans of the current Top 40 hits. Modeling this close-reading and comparative work with songs that may appeal more to the older students in our courses is an effective way to engage them with the material and reduce the anxiety and apprehension they may feel as non-traditional students. Released in 1978 on Patti Smith’s album, *Easter*, the song achieved mainstream success and has subsequently been covered by several artists. In Springsteen’s lyrics, we can attend to the metaphor, Love is Food, through the first stanza:

Take me now, baby, here as I am

Pull me close, try and understand

Desire is hunger is the fire I breathe

Love is a banquet on which we feed (1-4)

Here, Springsteen figures desire as a hunger and love as a banquet. Like Wroth's line in sonnet, P15, "Your sight is all the food I doe desire" (9), Springsteen imagines desire for the beloved as hunger, but seems to suggest a feast of love in his banquet imagery, rather than Wroth's "Camaelion-like" satisfaction with a meal of air. And, while Wroth uses her food imagery to distinguish between forms of love and lust, Springsteen's chorus seems to suggest that love and lust are the same, both belonging to the night:

Because the night belongs to lovers

Because the night belongs to lust

Because the night belongs to lovers

Because the night belongs to us (10-13)

In his chorus, Springsteen asserts that the night belongs to lovers and the night belongs to lust. Then, after repeating that the night belongs to lovers, he aligns his and his beloved's love experience to lust through the final end-rhyme: "Because the night belongs to us" (13). He complicates that further in the second verse: "Love is an angel disguised as lust / Here in our bed until the morning comes" (16-17). Springsteen's conception of love and lust is noticeably different from Wroth's. He doesn't seem eager to portray his experience as a truer, purer form of love, aligning it with love rather than lust, and even his angel of love comes disguised as lust, complicating the experience even further. Are Springsteen's lyrics about the lust experience or the love experience? Is his conception of love distinguishable from lust? What does figuring desire as a hunger and love as a banquet indicate about Springsteen's conception of both love and desire? Using questions like

these to guide a class discussion on the comparative elements in Springsteen and Wroth's use of the Love is Food metaphor in their lyrics can help students to think critically about this metaphor and its entailments.

Using a more recent example, Taylor Swift's lyrics offer several valuable opportunities for pairing with Wroth's sonnets, and I find "The Archer" on her 2019 release, *Lover*, and "I Know Places" on her 2014 album, *1989*, to be particularly helpful in teaching the sonnet tradition. In both of these songs, Swift employs a traditional Petrarchan metaphor, Love is a Hunt. While I've touched on this metaphor lightly in this project, it isn't a metaphor that Wroth relies on as much as earlier sonneteers, like Petrarch and Wyatt, most notably. However, the metaphor informs some of Wroth's imagery, like in P70, where Cupid is caught by Diana, but escapes into the woods. If course needs allow, Wroth's poetry may be taught as part of the sonnet tradition, and beginning with the works of Sir Thomas Wyatt, for example, offers a valuable opportunity for comparison with Taylor Swift. In "The Archer," Swift reflects on her failings at love, singing: "I've been the archer / I've been the prey" (9-10). Her lyrics acknowledge this traditional image of love as a hunt, and she depicts herself as both the one doing the hunting, like a lover, and the one being hunted, like the beloved. She seems to find both options untenable as she asks: "Who could ever leave me, darling? / But who could stay?" (11-12). Swift's development of this metaphor in "I Know Places" is even more intricate, as she figures her beloved and herself as foxes, trying to outrun the hunters: "'Cause they got the cages, they got the boxes / And guns, they are the hunters, we are the foxes / And we run" (9-11). Swift's employment of the Love is a Hunt metaphor is distinctive in that it does not align either the lover or the beloved as the

hunter. Rather, the hunters in her metaphor are outside forces, seeking to exploit or harm the lovers. This image unites the lovers in their resistance and escape, drawing them together rather than Wyatt's lines, which keep the lover at a constant distance from his beloved and prey: "Yet may I by no means my wearied mind / Draw from the deer, but as she fleeth afore / Fainting I follow" (5-7). Swift's re-imagining of Petrarchan metaphor is a fertile ground for critical thinking and analysis, and her lyrics offer several productive comparisons with early English literature. Bringing her lyrics into discussion might be especially helpful in a course where Wroth is one poetic among the larger sonnet tradition or in a course where gender or women's writing is the focus.

When choosing lyrics to use as examples in the classroom, the most important thing is to choose those that will best reflect the goals for a particular course. Start with a few examples like those I've shared above, but let your students bring in the bulk of these outside, lyrical texts from their own favorites. Their selections will enrich the classroom and ensure that students are engaging with texts that resonate with them and that they connect to. For example, in a recent literature course, one of my students found a delightful comparison between Petrarch's sonnets and one of her own favorite songs from a popular young adult book-turned-movie, *The Twilight Saga: Breaking Dawn*. Having only a faint knowledge of these books and their subsequent movies, I would never have made this connection myself or considered the lyrics for classroom discussion. However, her writing in an essay on Petrarch demonstrates the way thinking about this song helped the student find meaning and shape in Petrarch's *Rime Sparse*:

Lyrics from Christina Perri's hit single "A Thousand Years" played on repeat through my mind as I studied Francis Petrarch, and his obsession with his beloved

Laura. As the song “A Thousand Years” accelerates from a timid thought, to “one step closer,” and then finally to a love that cannot be separated by a thousand years, Petrarch’s series of 366 sonnets follows the same pattern. (Perri qtd in Eddy)

By thinking about the sonnet sequence alongside this song about a vampire’s eternal love for the beloved, the student was able to trace the progression in Petrarch’s sonnets and connect his conception of love to a text she already knew but had not analyzed or studied closely. From that point, the student was able to apply the same critical thinking and analysis skills to a text in popular culture and enrich her analysis of a nearly 700-year-old text. Launch the class discussion with a favorite song of your own, and be open to the lyric texts your students add to the discussion. In this way, you’ll share in the collection of texts for your classroom canon, and you’ll ensure that students are invested in the analytical work you’ve asked of them.

The conclusion of this project will most likely end with a written assignment in the form of an analytical essay. The parameters for such an assignment would again be determined by course and scheduling needs, and a variety of approaches would be a well-suited capstone to the extended of Wroth’s poetry conducted in the middle of the project. However, I encourage professors not to limit students to written assignments, particularly in a course that engages with music. Again, this is a place where hypertext and hypermedia can engage learners across distance in a similar way to the effect of switching the radio in the middle of your brick and mortar classroom. By letting students engage with the media we’ve asked them to analyze in creative ways, we are again permitting for the life-long learning Hardiman argues is promoted through such

application, and we are encouraging their emotional connection to the work. While a written capstone is certainly suited to any literature capstone, allow students to blur the edges of the page, using auditory files to supplement what they write on the page. A final project like this is engaging to students and a delightful addition to our grading labor. At the end of an analytical project in an introductory course at the University of Idaho, I asked students to submit a “mix tape” of the songs they had collected to illustrate their chosen theme during the project. Students were creative in their approaches, some sharing their musical cannon on a physical disc, some creating a playlist using software like Spotify, and others simply ordered a series of links out to the music videos created for their chosen songs. The experience was a joy. Although the project took a much different shape than what I have outlined here due to the course needs, students’ creative, thoughtful, and engaged work with the contemporary lyrics they chose served as the seed for this project’s conception.

I have long been a lover of poetry, but discovering the way an inclusion of contemporary lyric might promote a better understanding and appreciation of historical lyrics and other forms of difficult poetry for even those readers for whom the form holds no particular appeal was a watershed moment in my teaching of and engagement with the texts I love. I hope that the pedagogical applications I have explored here can enhance your own teaching of poetry as well as your students’ learning. As I have shown, an analytical project focused on conceptual metaphors for points of comparison will enrich the poetry classroom, whether face-to-face or online, and it will promote learning through strategies grounded in evolutionary, cognitive, and learning science.

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