Title

The Communication of Impressions and Incidentals through Poetry: A Study of Poetic Effects and the Humors in Shakespeare and Spenser

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Publication Date

2024

Peer reviewed|Thesis/dissertation

The Communication of Impressions and Incidentals Through Poetry: A Study of Poetic Effects and the Humors in Shakespeare and Spenser

By

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A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in

English

in the

Graduate Division

of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor David Landreth, Chair
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Summer 2024

Abstract

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This dissertation questions how affect is communicated to and felt by readers or audience members through the medium of poetry, namely the poetry of Shakespeare and Spenser. I lay out how affect is generated through impressions as discussed in terms of relevance theory, and how they were seen to be generated in humoral terms through impressions. I also put forth a term for phenomena in early modern poems that use impressions to create an extra organization that acts like a poetic device. I argue that this should be termed a poetic device that I call incidentals.

For Will

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Acknowledgements:

I would like to thank the following people on my committee: David Landreth for the many incredible discussions that helped shape my thesis and guide my research, and for his passion and expertise in Shakespeare and Spenser. You have been so encouraging and helpful over these many years! For Kristin Hanson who introduced me to the relevance theory when I came to her with my research question, and who inspired me in our talks about poetry. And thank you Ignacio Navarrete who served as an intellectually vibrant and very grounded person on my committee.

I give thanks to the late Janet Adelman who helped me grow intellectually at Berkeley, and who showed me how weird and amazing Spenser is.

I give thanks to the late Stephen Booth who was my beloved mentor.

A profound thanks to my children, Carolin and Jonathan, the most beautiful humans I know, to my parents, my family, my ancestors, and to all the friends and mentors that helped me along the way.

...the poet, he nothing affirmeth, and therefore never lieth.

— Sir Philip Sidney, *A Defense of Poesy*

The Communication of Impressions and Incidentals through Poetry: A Study of Poetic Effects and the Humors in Shakespeare and Spenser

The early modern philosopher Henry Crosse describes the dangers of poetry, warning that "careless reading habits cause disease." If readers lacked the proper discernment of choice in literature, or worse yet, read purely for pleasure, especially in private, then corrupting ideas hidden in the smoothness of "slippery syllables" could cause humoral perturbations. My question for this project is how did early moderns understand this phenomenon where words produce a materiality that can physically imprint on us and change us physically, spiritually and emotionally? How do seemingly immaterial things—immaterial to us—like "slippery syllables" act like "stuff" and make us feel? In light of this question, I will be mapping out some of the pertinent early modern ideas of materiality. The early moderns, whose ideas of humors came from the ancient Greeks, seem to believe in a phenomenon that makes odd sense: that feelings are generated by impressions that are somehow physical. Using relevance theory and formal analysis of poetry, I will show that an immaterial physicality in poetry is made palpable through layers of formal dimensions and through, as Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson describe it, the "vague impressions" generated by "a wide array of minute cognitive effects" (224). I will show how analyzing the processes of the brain moves us a step closer toward the early modern view of reading sensations.

The phenomenon of aesthetic experience was especially urgent for the early moderns, whose humoral medical model coupled with Christian morals insisted that reading practices be rigorously limited to works that would not detrimentally incite the passions. The question of how aesthetic experience is generated by hearing or reading poetry has been an important one for the ancients, the early moderns and the romantics, as well as for literary critics from the formalist tradition. Aesthetics as a philosophical study of the mind and emotions in response to beauty and art is more currently marginalized in literary criticism, in part due to the problem that this kind of question poses: how can a theory be developed based on subjective experience? How can we account for the effects that literary stimulus has on a reader? Yet this phenomenon of aesthetic experiences is arguably the primary reason for engaging with poetry in the first place.

I suggest that a motive for an aesthetic study of poetry is to address a problem that currently exists as a result of the dominant New Historicist critical studies: historical readings don't necessarily attend to issues of form, or to issues of the aesthetic experience of reading, except in an extrinsic manner. As linguist Adrian Pilkington argues,

> "the notion of the aesthetic, in much current Literary Theory, is seen as socially constructed. This view, which does not accept psychological reality of aesthetic experience, cannot accept an intrinsic approach to literary studies (and may not even be able to accept an intrinsic/extrinsic distinction)" (9).

Although I don't claim that literary theory truly excludes an intrinsic approach to literary studies it still seems important to consider what's at stake when current literary studies tend to be less attentive to intrinsic literary approaches. Perhaps aesthetic readings, at least from Pater on, no longer provide rigorous analytical power, but to neglect this field of inquiry seems to me a loss for literary studies. However, an intrinsic approach that focuses primarily on form and aesthetics has been emerging as is evident by the group of critics who endeavor to promote reading for

form as being as important as reading for other current trends. They call this approach "New Formalism."

"Form," "formalism" and "aesthetics":

Samuel Otter addresses this trend of New Formalism in his article, *An Aesthetics in All Things,* by first delineating terms that, he argues, are sometimes used interchangeably: "Although they are often conflated, "form," "formalism," and "aesthetics" have different histories and referents" (118-119). He differentiates them as "Form" referring to a "disposition, contour, structure, and specificity." He claims that form "opens, rather than closes, questions about the relations of parts to wholes and inside to outside… To attend to form, an object of sense and of thought, is to press those relations and to assess the circumstances of perception" (119-120). "Formalism" Otter defines as a "set of twentieth-century approaches, beginning with Russian and Czech efforts to define and chart the specialized literary uses of language, which (it was argued) deviated from ordinary practice and heightened consciousness of the medium of expression (Victor Shklovsky, Roman Jakobson, Jan Mukarovsky.)" Finally, he defines "aesthetics" as "a body of Continental theory, dating to the eighteenth century, whose thinkers reflect upon the sensory experience of art, the circumstances of perception and evaluation, the links between subjective and communal response, the status of the work of art, and the development of a bourgeois public sphere." According to Otter, "formalism" focuses on intrinsic readings, "aesthetics" focuses on "sensory experience of art" and "form" "opens, rather than closes, questions about the relations of parts to wholes and inside to outside." Overall, we could say that "form" belongs to the artwork itself, not to the experience of it.

Otter argues that the need to return to "form" and "aesthetics" which he states started in the 1990's, "indicates that we may not be as finished with questions of literary values as we thought we were" (117). This return to questions of literary value in relation to New Historicism is what is commonly called New Formalism or Historical Formalism. Historical Formalism advocates for a return to questions of literary value, but it's not necessarily a new approach. New Historicism was originally meant to integrate these questions of literary values, not reject them.

New Historicism, led by Stephen Greenblatt in the 1980's, is a literary critical approach that reintroduced the historical readings of texts widely known in the 30's and 40's but with a broader scope that includes poststructuralism and reader response theory of the 70's, as well as social and cultural critical approaches such as feminism and Marxism. Though New Historicism was not meant to do away with formalism but to include it, the trend has been to largely ignore formalist, intrinsic readings of the text.

Stephen Cohen and Historical Formalism:

It was Stephen Greenblatt's original intention for New Historicism to integrate intrinsic approaches with extrinsic ones. In defense of the original intention of New Historicism to include Formalism, Stephen Cohen argues,

> Greenblatt declared New Historicism's intent to renew the historical reading of literature but not at the expense of attention to form. Though pointedly rejecting a New Critical formalism in which literary works are treated "as a fixed set of texts

> that are set apart from all other forms of expression and confirm their own determinate meanings," he concluded with an assertion of the importance of formal analysis to a truly historicist literary criticism. 1-2

Cohen further argues that this promise of a New Historicist literary criticism that includes formalist criticism has been, for the most part, yet to be accomplished: "New Historicism has never systematically or consistently engaged the complex question of form" (2). He goes on to insist that the New Historicist's focus on "de-essentializing the boundaries between the literary and the non-literary has functioned to displace rather than instigate, an exploration of formal means" (2). Cohen concludes that New Historicism has essentially lost its position of "theoretical innovation in literary studies" and argues for a New Historicism that grapples with issues of form—an interest that seems to him to be emerging within the field—calling it "Historical Formalism." It has yet to be seen whether Cohen's vision for an Historical Formalism can be the new "theoretical innovation in literary studies" he hopes will replace New Historicism, or if what he calls Historical Formalism is just New Historicism on the formalist end of the New Historicist continuum. In any case, a call for more attention to form seems, to me, important and also inevitable, given that the pendulum has swung so far away from it.

My goals are similar to Cohen's in that I'm interested in issues of form, and of historicism, but Cohen discusses form in terms of historicizing it in various ways, and this historicist limitation doesn't quite allow for my own interest in form to delve into questions of aesthetic experience. Historicist readings of form touch on but do not delve into questions of how the poetic effects are generated by formal structures. My inquiry into the study of formal properties veers more towards phenomenological readings (based on the study of the structures of consciousness in relation to experience) and the experience of reading literature.

Historical Phenomenology and an early modern materialist view of emotion:

Gail Kern Paster's work *Humoring the Body* is an historical phenomenological study of early modern emotions that lends my project a part of the infrastructure needed to discuss how early moderns viewed and experienced emotions. One of Paster's crucial points is that the early moderns understood emotions to be material, and that when authors wrote about palpable emotion, it was at times literalized in what we may overlook as mere metaphor. In analyzing a passage from Thomas Wright, Paster asserts "The language Wright uses here is not a metaphorical expression of emotional tumult but a literal expression of what he understood to happen to a heart in the throes of various passions" (12-13). Paster delineates the early modern belief that the body was porous and permeable, a vessel of humoral liquids that were always prone to disturbances from the outside elements: "the passions are the winds and waves of the body" (19), an internal climate always susceptible the to environmental climate. For instance, the wind was thought to carry spirits which could enter a body and cause physical and/or emotional tumult. At the same time emotions, spirit, consciousness were all "stuff": "…emotions…[were] part of the fabric of the body" (5), and "the body was filled with moving currents of air in the bloodstream, [and] the air taken within the body became the stuff of consciousness" (41). Paster asserts that "the stuff of the outside world and the stuff of the body were composed of the same elemental materials. This is a literal early modern understanding of the relation of the body to the world" (4). She goes on to assert that the early

moderns had difficulty in imagining immaterial phenomena such as emotion and consciousness as being without material substance [1].

The early modern belief that the passions were material, and that outside phenomena could penetrate and imprint a body, travel through the bloodstream, and cause a psychophysiological disturbance makes for fertile ground in terms of thinking about how an external influence such as literature could be seen to affect readers. Paster suggests that "the experience of an emotion is… transactional not only in response to a stimulus—whether the stimulus is external or internal, real or imaginary, present or remembered—but also in occurring…within a dense cultural and social context" (8). Literature, more specifically Renaissance poetry and literature was thought to act on the humoral body as a quite powerful, often dangerous stimulus. Though I find Paster's work compelling and extremely useful for me in terms of beginning to think about the way early moderns might have imagined how literary impressions made their indelible mark upon readers based on the humoral model, Paster doesn't explore specifically how that might actually happen, in other words what exactly *is* occurring in the transaction of literature that the early moderns described as specific humoral thermal properties penetrating the body and imagination of readers. My aim is to explore this.

***Reading Sensations*:**

Katherine A. Craik in her book, *Reading Sensations*, however, uses the foundational work of Paster's historical phenomenology and moves in the direction of the historical phenomenology of early modern readerly experience.

The early moderns did not think of the mind and body as separate but rather as a whole material organism; therefore, emotional states were also regarded as material substances in the form of liquids. Mental and physical health depended on the equilibrium of these liquids, or humors, and the imbalance of them caused the motion of liquids, perturbations and passions that then simultaneously caused physical disease. Therefore, emotional disturbance and physical malady were seen as inseparable. And due to the susceptibility of possible disturbance of the humors to all manner of environmental stimuli, including reading materials, there was much anxiety concerning the influence of the environment on the equilibrium of the internal world of the body. Craik discusses early modern theorists' ideas about the effects of literature on readers, including Henry Crosse's account of how "careless reading habits cause disease." If readers weren't careful readers, then corrupting ideas hidden in the smoothness of "slippery syllables" could cause humoral imbalance which could then lead to horrible physical consequences such as "disease, oozing skin rashes, plague, leprosy, infection, maceration, or softening of the flesh, cankers, biliousness, belching, buzzing in the ears and drowsiness." The list of consequences of such reading habits goes on to become yet more grave: "Secondary symptoms related to sedentary lifestyles of over-zealous readers include lesions, cracked bones, and impotence which together presage early death" (24-25). Impressions made on the senses from literature and poetic experience were believed to press into the imagination and souls of readers; they were a "stir or motion in words" (41) inciting the passions which simultaneously affected the body. Thomas Wright, in his treatise *The Passions of the minde in Generall*, explains:

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[1] Paster refers to the work of J.B. Bamborough, *The Little World of Man* (London: Longmans, Green, 1952).

> Impressions from the senses press upon the soul like a seal in soft wax, or else make a permanent and indelible mark 'as the sparrows attached to birdlime, or the flies sticke in honnie.' It is these subtle movements of the sensitive soul which are the driving force behind emotional experience, and which give rise in turn to passions or perburtations. 41

Poetic impressions for early moderns, as I will later discuss further, were also considered palpable and material; they impressed upon the imagination and soul.

Poetic impressions that emboss themselves onto soft, malleable readers account for the aesthetic experience of reading poetry for early moderns, and it is from this starting point that I plan to explore the early modern theories for what poetry was thought, in that period, to do to readers to cause the sensation that then generated affect. That is, what were the explanations for why poetry moved and stirred passions?

In this project I will explore an early modern idea about the liveliness of poems in terms of these poems being considered humoral bodies themselves ideas about energy in poetry and about form within the paradigm of early modern phenomenological thought. "Recalling the Neoplatonic theory that artists were capable miraculously of breathing life into art, [George] Puttenham describes the enlivening of literary subject matter through near-divine creative process. If poets are 'able to deuise and make all these things of thenselues,' they are properly understood (by manner of speech) as creating gods'" (Craik 37). Puttenham's classical viewpoint of poetry not only insists that poetry has a liveliness breathed into it by the poet, but also suggests that poems are bodies in and of themselves and are to be analyzed as forms in anatomical terms: "Just as 'great Madames of honour… would be halfe ashamed' to show their naked bodies, literary flourishes and figuarative speeches adorn the 'body' of the poem" (Craik 37). In this way, early modern theorists like Puttenham consider the lively body of a poem to be a humoral one that needs to be moral, noble, and proper. The humoral poem then has the ability to influence or infect the humoral body of its reader with various moral or immoral passions.

Craik's work takes Paster's humoral foundation in the direction I am most interested in: how reading literature caused sensation and affect in readers. Her analysis accounts for early modern ideas of the experience of reading poetry, which I find very useful in thinking about the aesthetic experience. As Craik shows, early modern theorists had ideas and intuitions about the intrinsic mechanism of aesthetic experience of reading literature and we have made progress in articulating this mechanism. Cohen and Craik both discuss literary value, but mostly in extrinsic terms. While Cohen and those in his volume, *Shakespeare and Historical Formalism,* discuss form, they touch only lightly—if at all—on how aesthetic experience is generated, and Craik, though she discusses reading sensations as early moderns theorized about it, is not interested in a return to aesthetic readings as a critical approach. However, I argue that Craik's work anticipates a linguistic model that does takes a step in that direction: relevance theory.

Relevance Theory:

Relevance theory was developed by an anthropologist, Dan Sperber, and a linguist, Deirdre Wilson. Building on H. Paul Grice's theory of linguistic communication first suggested in his "Logic and Conversation," as discussed further below, Sperber and Wilson, in their book, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition,* offer a cognitive pragmatic model for how communication occurs. The relevance theory offers an explicit account of how communication in

poetry works and how readers gain relevance from poetry. Communication is a complex cognitive process that involves decoding utterances and inferring meaning from the speaker. Relevance theory allows me to talk about the readerly interaction with the text in relation to the processes of the mind and serves as a way to discuss how communication of poetic impressions is experienced.

My interest is specifically in how communication occurs in poetry, but in regards to communication in general, Sperber and Wilson state:

> Our claim is that all human beings automatically aim at the most efficient information processing possible. This is so whether they are conscious of it or not; in fact, the very diverse and shifting conscious interests of individuals result from the pursuit of this permanent aim in changing conditions. In other words, an individual's particular cognitive goal at a given moment is always an instance of a more general goal: maximizing the relevance of the information processed. 49

To explain how "the very diverse and shifting conscious interests of individuals result from the pursuit of this permanent aim in changing conditions," Sperber and Wilson explain that the hearer interprets an utterance based on earlier assumptions: "the hearer retrieves or constructs and then processes a number of assumptions. These form a gradually changing background against which new information is processed" (118). The cognitive shifts continually take place within the hearer's "cognitive environment" as the changes in the environment offer new and changing information to be processed. Interpretation of an utterance requires that a hearer not just understand an assumption communicated, but that they synthesize it with previous assumptions that will in turn generate new information derived from the synthesis of old and new assumptions. This new information derived from old and new assumptions is called contextual effects. The extent to which the contextual effects are made manifest for the hearer is the extent to which they will achieve relevance and the hearer will find the processing of such information worth the effort. The goal of relevance is in gaining the most contextual effects with the least amount of processing, and if the contextual effects are significant, then the processing effort is justified.

There are many more subtleties involved in the communication process according to relevance theory, but one worth mentioning now is the mutual-knowledge hypothesis. "The set of premises used in interpreting an utterance (apart from the premise that the utterance in question has produced) …constitutes what is generally known as the context…[This] context is a psychological construct, a subset of the hearer's assumptions about the world" (15). Communication depends on the common assumptions, or the common knowledge of both speaker and hearer. A general example of mutual knowledge would be two physicists discussing string theory. In all likelihood their communication would be effective due to the common knowledge of their professions. Conversely, a physicist communicating string theory to a bartender would likely be quite laborious while generating minimal contextual effects. In other words, where common knowledge is great, chances for achieving relevance are also great.

The communication of poetic effects, according to Sperber and Wilson, depends not on common knowledge, but rather common impressions: "poetic effects create common impressions rather than common knowledge. Utterances with poetic effects can be used precisely to create this sense of apparently affective rather than cognitive mutuality" (224). Poetic effects register in the minds of readers and generate relevance through impressions and

"an impression might be better described as a noticeable change in one's cognitive environment, a change resulting from relatively small alterations in the manifestness of many assumptions, rather than from the fact that a single assumption or a few new assumptions have all of a sudden become very manifest" (59). Manifestness is the ability for assumptions to become apparent in an audience's cognitive environment as true: "a fact that is manifest to an individual at any given time if and only if he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true… To be manifest, then, is to be perceptible or inferable" (39). A person's ability for manifestness depends on their cognitive environment which is "the set of all the facts that he can perceive or infer: all the facts that are manifest to him" (39). What is communicated in poetry is common impressions; "noticeable change[s] in one's cognitive environment, a change resulting from relatively small alterations in the manifestness of many assumptions." So, in thinking about current ideas in the aesthetic experience of reading poetry, it seems valuable to look at poetic effects as impressions made manifest through the communication of what Sperber and Wilson call "a wide array of minute cognitive effects" (224).

I want to differentiate the terms I use from Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory for how poetry communicates, *impressions* and *poetic effects,* and my own term, *incidentals*, to make clear how these terms build upon one another to offer an explanation for many enduring early modern writers who communicated and generated affect in readers through poetry.

In chapter one, I explain impressions, poetic effects and incidentals in depth, so here I will give a quick version**.** However, I want to take a moment to explain two key terms Sperber and Wilson use to explain communication called explicatures and implicatures, central to their exploration of semantics, the meaning of language. They state, "…an explicitly communicated assumption [is] an *explicature*." And, "Any assumption communicated, but not explicitly so, is implicitly communicated: it is an *implicature*" (182). Stated simply, explicatures are communicative content that is explicitly stated, and implicatures are communicative content that is implied. For my purposes, implicatures are the foundation for my discussion of impressions and later incidentals.

Sperber and Wilson also see communication as, "enlarging mutual cognitive environments, not of duplicating thoughts…Sentence meanings are sets of semantic representations, as many semantic representations as there are ways in which the sentence is ambiguous. Semantic representations are incomplete logical forms, i.e., at best fragmentary representations of thoughts" (193). According to Sperber and Wilson, semantics itself is not enough to determine a full meaning of an utterance, since it is based solely the language itself, on its lexicon and grammar. Among the multiple possibilities, one cannot settle on one meaning convincingly enough to do anything with it, as there are, "as many semantic representations as there are ways in which the sentence is ambiguous." Semantics alone is therefore insufficient as a source of representations of thoughts; it only allows decoding of a narrow meaning based on the language itself. But this can then be pragmatically interpreted to give its broader meaning in its context in the distinctive ways that relevance theory describes: its implicatures and impressions.

Impressions are a form of communication that Sperber and Wilson explain as "a noticeable change in one's cognitive environment" from small changes in the manifestness of many assumptions. They assert that "impressions fall squarely within the domain of things that can be communicated, and their very vagueness can be described" (59). Impressions are felt rather than deduced by the hearer or reader. According to Sperber and Wilson, literary devices

like rhymes, meter, metaphor, etc., can communicate impressions that generate affect in the audience.

They call this kind of communication *poetic effects*, and they theorize that impressions generated by *poetic effects* can be seen as the "driving force behind emotional experience." They argue that poetic effects communicate by creating common "impressions" rather that common knowledge. In other words, a hearer can be capable of experiencing the impression if the impression is in their cognitive environment and can be made manifest.

I use the term *incidentals* to explain of an aspect of poetry that neither Sperber and Wilson nor Pilkington recognize as a poetic device, but which I argue works like one. This aspect, common in poetry, consists of incidental material in poems that communicate something different from the plot of the poem. In other words, incidentals give the hint of a different idea from what the lines are literally talking about. Because they are made of weak implicatures and poetic impressions, they are not recognized or retained by the hearer, but instead are discarded as not part of the plot. However, because they are fragmentary meanings made of implicatures, the hearer has a felt experience of them. Incidentals work like a formal device, or a literary convention in that they create an extra organization and are quite widespread in early modern poetry. I am using the term "extra organization" to discuss incidentals, but any poetic device can be seen as an extra organization.

In looking at the communication of poetic impressions, I make the claim that what is felt when reading poetry is communicated impressions. Communication depends on shared assumptions, and in the case of poetic effects, shared impressions. My analysis of poetic effects and impressions is an attempt to revisit an aesthetic approach only from the standpoint of what I can arguably show is being communicated in poems, and what impressions can be expected to be felt by a general reader who has shared assumptions and shared impressions with the author. By analyzing poetic impressions in poetry in relation to the mental processes—as explained by Sperber and Wilson—I suggest a way to revisit an aesthetic reading.

Poetic Effects:

Pilkington's work with relevance theory in his book, *Poetic Effects*, discusses in more depth how poetry communicates and makes readers experience feeling and affect. Pilkington argues that proving that literature can generate an aesthetic experience is impossible; though many critics from the Russian formalists to I.A. Richards to Barthes argue for how poetry generates affect, their ideas are not testable. He asserts that "…there is a descriptive and explanatory gap between the linguistic patterns and the various loosely described aesthetic effects to which Jakobson and others allude" (21). The problem of proving how poetry affects readers, Pilkington argues, has not yet been solved in linguistic theory (grammatical analysis) or in the study of patterns, but this gap "between linguistic patterns and loosely described aesthetic effects," can be bridged with relevance theory.

The defining point of contact for me in this exploration is the mutual influence between the experience of reading and the experience of passions or sensations and affect: between the current psycholinguistic paradigm (a branch of linguistics that studies the mental processes involved in the acquisition, use, and interpretation of language) of relevance theory, and a historicized phenomenological paradigm derived from a psychophysiological model (the medical model that assumes mental and bodily processes as inseparable) of early modern theorists. Poetic effects on readers in both paradigms, I suggest, intersect at the concept of impressions: for

early moderns, poetic impressions were from poetic effects as "Crosse imagines the 'embossed words' of poetry literally putting pressure upon young bodies which are so pliable that 'they easily take the impression'" (Craik, 26), and, as mentioned earlier, for Sperber and Wilson, impressions are "a noticeable change in one's cognitive environment," a change resulting from relatively small alterations in the manifestness of many assumptions. They go on to assert that "impressions fall squarely within the domain of things that can be communicated, and their very vagueness can be described" (59). Pilkington's work takes on the task of explaining how these vague impressions are communicated in poetry and the process by which readers are intuiting and experiencing this communication of impressions.

My intention is to analyze poetic impressions from the two paradigms in order to show how these impressions stir passions or affect according to these models. I argue that the early modern concept of lively humoral poems stirring passions in readers through covert ideas hidden in the "slippery syllables," and the relevance theory concept of "a wide array of minute cognitive effects" that generate a change in one's cognitive environment, are both ways of suggesting that what is *felt* when reading poetry is a communication of impressions through poetic effects.

Although relevance theory is a vital component to my project in terms of supporting an aesthetic study, I have noticed that certain ideas in relevance theory are echoed by early modern thinkers. Augustine (354-430), who was widely read in the Renaissance, states in *Confessions*,

> I remember speaking. Though I learned only later *how* I came to speak. It was not by the teaching of my elders, arranging words in some prescribed order, as when I learned grammar. All by myself, using the brain you gave me, my God, for want of getting each thing I wanted from each person I wanted, when my screams, my noises random and random flailing of limbs, did not convey the desires within me, I began to use my memory to pull in what I desired. Whenever people named something, and used the same inflections when indicating that thing with their bodies, I would take note and store in memory the fact that they made the same sound when they wanted to indicate that thing. It was clear they wanted to do this from the physical action that is a body language for all humans—facial expressions, glances or miming actions, that linked with vocal inflections, convey an intention to get or retain, repel or evade something. 11

Augustine comes to many of the same conclusions that pragmatists like Sperber and Wilson do, he demonstrates ideas that communication isn't only about grammar or only about sign and signifier, nor is it only a matter of screams, random noises and flailing limbs. For Augustine, memory is used to weaken and strengthen assumptions about his environment in order to expand what Sperber and Wilson call the cognitive environment, an encyclopedic storehouse of cognitive information about the world used for communication. Augustine's "desires," he discovers, are not communicated simply by uttering, but by making the utterance deliberate and shaped by the memory of things that conveyed meaning before—a mutual cognition between him and his hearer. These memories of inflections, body language, facial expressions, etc., all "convey an intention to get or retain, repel or evade something."

Augustine's keen observation about communication is echoed in relevance ideas about ostention, intention and inference, all things I will later discuss. But for the purposes of this Augustine passage, I want to explain, briefly, the notion of ostention. According to Sperber and Wilson, ostention is any "behaviour which makes manifest an intention to make something

manifest" and included in these behaviors is "human intentional communication" (49). Augustine's initial attempts to make manifest his intention through ostention failed, "when my screams, my noises random and random flailing of limbs, did not convey the desires within me…I would take note and store in the memory fact that they made the same sound when they wanted to indicate that thing" and his need to make manifest his desires to others led him to interpret information, process particular information and memorize it precisely for the high degree of relevance it would have for others in order to make his ostentive behavior make his desires manifest.

I am concerned with how communication works in poetry, and how that communication generates feeling and affect. As I said earlier, I think that both the paradigms of popular early modern thinkers like Augustine, and those of modern pragmatists like Sperber and Wilson share similar intuitions, theories and conclusions that seem to me worth pairing together. The similarities are remarkable, but their differences are even more fascinating. Relevance theory is a more rigorous model, but the theories of the early moderns, so charming in their materiality (for instance the description of "animal spirits…moving in the neural pathways along the sinews between the body's recalcitrant flesh and its immaterial soul"), are, for us, interestingly figurative rather than literal. Paster describes "our tendency as post-Enlightenment readers—with residual tendency toward mind-body dualism even in an age of cognitive science—to underestimate the materialism governing pre-Enlightenment thought about embodied passions and thus to find abstraction and bodily metaphor where early the moderns found materiality and literal reference" (26). We don't imagine emotions as liquids splashing around in some internal climate that is in reaction to the environment, but we do know that when we walk into a room of hostile people, we feel it, or when we read a gorgeous poem, we feel it; we have a *physical* sensation. We do know that things in our environment that don't physically touch us can make us feel: we say a poem "touches us" or "moves us."

A study of humors and poetic effects on Shakespeare and Spenser:

My reasons for using examples primarily from Shakespeare and Spenser are because of their poetic richness and Renaissance literary conventions, as well as for their ubiquitous humoral references that demonstrate poetic communication. What these poets do, I argue, is generate sensation and affect in readers through an unrelenting abundance of poetic impressions, made up of extra organizations that suggest a different idea from what the lines are literally talking about. This is a phenomenon, as noted above, I call incidentals and that I argue acts like a formal device (I go into more detail at the end of Chapter 1). By extra organizations I mean extra from the content of the works that can be communicated through formal devices like rhyme, meter, etc. By content here I mean the plot of the lines. I suggest that these impressions are felt because they are communicated through implicatures and do not register as knowledge but as feelings. These two authors provide choice examples of lively poetic impressions that communicate—as I will show—through a wide array of minute cognitive effects. The early moderns' concern with how reading practices affected them, were, I argue, anxieties about how the minute cognitive effects generated sensation and affect in readers. For example, they worried about how poetry could imprint them and stir the passions, threatening social and religious boundaries in a time when literature was becoming more and more accessible. Besides using Shakespeare's and Spenser's poetic impressions, I touch briefly on other Renaissance poets from time to time to solidify a point or provide additional examples.

Chapter 1 will lay out the basic ideas of the relevance theory in terms of how poetry communicates through a "wide array of minute cognitive effects," and explain how the hearer or reader gains relevance through incidentals (a phenomena in early modern poetry that I want to argue is an unnamed poetic device) and impressions.

In Chapter 2 I focus on sexual incidentals that register and communicate covertly. I assert that these sexual implications are one kind of example of the very thing early modern moralists were anxious about: hidden sexual impressions imprinting themselves on the soft bodies of vulnerable young men. I use examples from Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, and Spenser's Book One of the *Faerie Queene*. Using *Venus and Adonis*, I show the difference between overt, bawdy sexual content, compared to more covert sexual impressions made by certain incidentals. This chapter also discusses the conflict in *Faerie Queene* between what the content communicates and what the impressions communicate. As a quintessential moral poem in the Renaissance, my interests are concerned with Spenser's method for "fashioning a gentleman" as well as his early modern reader, and the constant slippage between the moral and the hedonistic, the beautiful and the ugly, the good and bad, and so forth. I examine the power of Spenser's "naughty" impressions and what they might be communicating about the virtues he promises to teach. I weigh what's being covertly communicated and what's overtly communicated against the backdrop of what it means to maintain moral and emotional equilibrium in early modern England.

In Chapter 3, I examine dangerous, poetic witchcraft in *Othello* as conjured by Iago, and I demonstrate how the "witchy" incidentals of the play can generate the feeling of witchcraft in a play that has no witches, and which, unlike *Macbeth*, does not take witchcraft seriously.

Finally, in chapter 4, I look at the role of "bad poetry," in *As You Like It*. I analyze early modern moralists who viewed ornamental poetry as dangerous—we are reminded of "slippery syllables"—in juxtaposition to Orlando's tasteless poetry. Since Orlando is the kind of virtuous young man untainted (by poetry) that the moralists were trying to protect, I argue that his poetry is a mockery of what the moralists wanted, and that there is also an immoral danger in that kind of poetry. I suggest that Shakespeare is not concerned with making moral impressions but rather aesthetic ones.

Using humoral theory and relevance theory, I will show how they combine to offer fresh insights into the aesthetic effect of high caliber early modern poetry. I will argue that these two theories illuminate how poetry generates feeling and affect in the reader. I also narrow down to a phenomenon in these poems I call incidentals to pinpoint the areas in these poems where this generation of affect occurs.

Chapter 1: Communication, The Relevance Theory, and the Communication of Incidentals

Pragmatics is a branch of linguistics that studies the mental processes by which meaning is derived through speaking and hearing language in context. It is the study of how linguistic human communication works. In this chapter I will outline a major pragmatic model, Relevance Theory, which is comprised of the code model and the inferential model. I will then discuss the main thesis of the Relevance Theory in its broader terms of communication of propositions, and then more specifically the communication through impressions and particular poetic effects, namely epizeuxis (repetition) and metaphor, and then I will discuss Pilkington's work on the aesthetic experience in poetry. The works of Sperber and Wilson and Pilkington extend the relevance theory of verbal communication to literary practices which is extremely useful for my project. Finally, I will argue for poetic incidentals—which I define as material extraneous to the plot of the work, and to the information of the sentence—as a poetic effect that communicates impressions.

The code model and structuralism:

Semiotics and the code model are foundational to the modern literary approaches of Structuralism and Post-Structuralism. Structuralism (1920-present) emerged from the work of Ferdinand de Saussure and his theory of signs which derive their significance from their position in a system of signs, as discussed further below. Post-Structuralism (1966-present) is concerned with analyzing structures, frameworks, and systems as constructs that we cannot depend on to express any universal truth. In this section I will take time to discuss semiotics and the code model as Sperber and Wilson explain it in order to have a basis on which to discuss the relevance theory.

"Semiology" is a term used by Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure (1857-1913) to describe a new field of linguistics based on the arbitrary element of the sign. A sign is the pairing of a signifier and a signified. His claim is that though there are a diversity of languages, there seem to be no connection underlying the selection of the signifier (sound-image) assigned to a signified (concept) in languages. In his explanation of the "arbitrary" nature of the sign, Saussure notes that "[t]he term should not imply that the choice of the signifier(sound-image) is left entirely to the speaker …I mean that it is unmotivated, i.e. arbitrary in that it actually has no natural connection with the signified" (965). He explains that "[t]he atom of language is the sign, which is functionally split into two parts: a *signifier* (sound-image) and a *signified* (concept), brought inseparably together like two sides of a sheet of paper." The "sign," in language is only recognizable when it contains both a "signifier" and the "signified." The two are inseparable except in abstract terms, "one can neither divide sound from thought nor thought from sound; the division could be accomplished only abstractly, and the result would be purely psychological or pure phonology" (967). In other words, the signified and the signifier are interdependent and do not have autonomy apart from the other. As in the example of the sheet of paper, the two sides constitute the whole and the whole is the indivisible sign.

Within structuralism, the linear nature of the signifier is fundamental in explaining the mechanism of language and linguistic value[2]. The auditory signifier is unfolded in time; it "(a) represents a span, and (b) the span is measurable in a single dimension; it is a line" (966). The elements of language are successive and form a chain, and for Saussure, the signs of the chain are relational: each sign in the chain depends on the sign that precedes it and the one that proceeds from it for it to have value. Without this relation there is no context from which to weigh the value of the sign. This point of language being "unfolded in time" is significant to my project, as I will be discussing experiential accounts of moment-by-moment reading in time for readers in relation to how poetic effects are processed.

Saussure differentiates between signification and the value of a sign, explaining that though the two terms are similar, signification is dependent on value. Saussure argues that "language is a system of interdependent terms in which the value of each term results solely from the simultaneous presence of others" (969). Value paradoxically refers to both a dissimilar thing that can be exchanged for the thing in question, and to a similar thing that can be exchanged for the thing in question. He cites the example of the value of a five-franc note. To know its value, "one must therefore know: (1) that it can be exchanged for a fixed quantity of a different thing, e.g. bread; and (2) that it can be compared with a similar value…with coins of another system (a dollar, etc.)" (969). This value system is the same with words, and Saussure gives an example using the words "sheep" and "mutton":

> Modern French *mouton* can have the same signification as English *sheep* but not the same value, and this for several reasons, particularly in speaking of a piece of meat ready to be served on the table, English uses *mutton* and not *sheep*. The difference in value between *sheep* and *mouton* is due to the fact that *sheep* has beside it a second term while the French word does not. 969

Hence, the French word *mouton*, while it may sometimes have the same signification as the English word *sheep*, has a different value and the signification depends upon its value if the meaning is to be understood. The value of the sign that represents the animal "sheep" "is therefore not fixed so long as one simply states that it has this or that signification: one must also compare it with similar values, with other words that stand in opposition to it. Its content is really fixed only by the concurrence of everything that exists outside it" (969).

Saussure makes the same argument for the linguistic value from a material viewpoint that he does for the linguistic value from a conceptual viewpoint. That is, the material element of the sign is its sound: "The conceptual side of value is made up solely of relations and differences with respect to the other terms of language, the same can be said of its material side" (971). In other words, just as the conceptual value of a sign is weighed against other signs within the system, so is the sound of a sign weighed against the different sounds--down to the smallest measurement of sound, or phoneme—of the language system.

To sum up Saussure's main argument, language is made up of signs, the sign is composed of signified and signifier (concept and sound-image), and the signifier and its materiality gain their value through a differential relationship with other signifiers and sounds within the whole system. Similarly, signs as a whole are understood through the same

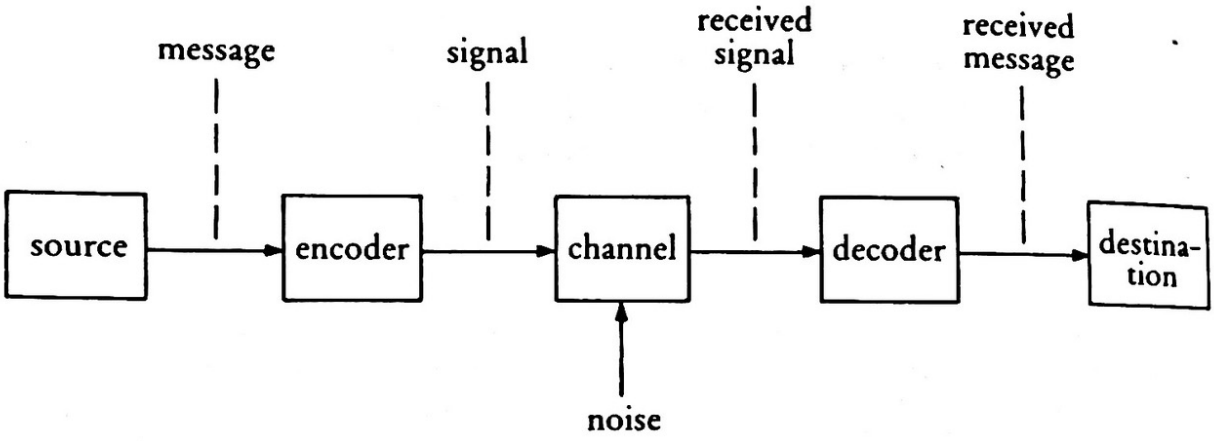
[2] Though Kiparsky (1987) suggests that the insufficiency of linear considerations to explain properties of language was in fact a source of its shortcomings.

differential process. The arbitrariness of the sign stems from the idea that the signifier (the word) is an arbitrary sound-image linked to the signified (what is being referred to). The signified depends on the whole sign (the concept and the sound-image) while the value of the sign depends on its comparison to other signs within the whole system.

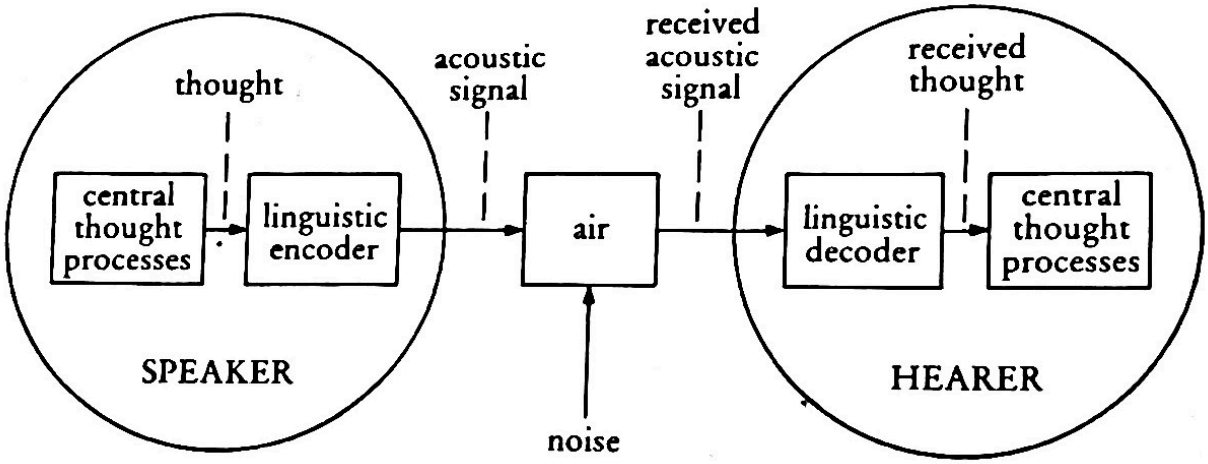
Saussure's new theory of language based on the arbitrariness of the sign launched a new field of interpretation, in which linguistics played only a part, known as semiology.

Although critics have challenged or adapted parts of Saussure's theory to include, for instance, the "referent" as a major component for the development of the sign--Saussure was, for the most part, against including social or cultural influences over the development of the sign--his work continues to be a foundation in literary criticism. I discuss Saussure to introduce the basics of semiology as it pertains to the literary field, and as a segue into the theory of the code model.

Dan Sperber and Dierdre Wilson in their book, *Relevance: Communication and Cognition* (1986), critique the code model. They use the diagram of Shannon and Weaver's (1949) code model to demonstrate how it works, and then later argue why the code model is inadequate as a model for communication:



Shannon and Weaver's version of this code model was used to describe how communication worked between two telecommunication workers using telex machines. In short, the *source* and *destination* are the person conveying the message and the person receiving the message, the encoder and decoder are the telex machine used by the source and destination, and the channel is the electric wire, text, etc. Sperber and Wilson diagram the following code model to show how human verbal communication is claimed to work:



Sperber and Wilson explain that

> Here the source and destination are central thought processes, the encoder and the decoder are the linguistic abilities, the message is a thought, and the channel is the air which carries the acoustic signal. There are two assumptions underlying this proposal: the first is that human languages…are codes and that the codes associate sounds to words. 5

The code model shows how communication works in a basic way. The two assumptions Sperber and Wilson point out—1) that human languages are codes, and 2) that codes associate sounds to concepts—are the similar assumptions in all code models. For communication to be effective according to the code model we only need to know how to decode the utterance. However, the code model describes only part of what makes communication successful. It takes into account how the signs of an utterance are understood but not what is communicated by those signs in any actual interpretation of an utterance. In simple unambiguous communication decoding is all that is needed; this is not so for more complex communication where decoding does not answer the question of how the communication is achieved. The code model's flaw, argue Sperber and Wilson, "is that comprehension involves more than the decoding of a linguistic symbol" (6).

Though semiotic approaches, such as Structuralism, flourished in the mid to late 1900's with such scholars as Roland Barthes, Sperber and Wilson argue that "it has failed to live up to its promise" (7). Sassure's intent, as we recall, was to create a new field in literary studies, semiotics, in which linguistics was only a part. That is, semiology as a whole field was the theory of signs, in general, that could be applicable to linguistics in particular. "However, no semiotic law of any significance was ever discovered, let alone applied to linguistics" (8). Though language is a code "which pairs phonetics and semantic representations of sentences," it doesn't explain the gap between "semantic representations of sentences and the thoughts actually communicated by utterances" (9). This gap, argue Sperber and Wilson, is bridged by the notion of *inference*.

The process of inference explains, in large part, how utterances are interpreted. Semantic representations of sentences are the end product of decoding language, since language pairs "phonetic and semantic representations of sentences" (9). If we refer again

to the "gap" between the "semantic representations of sentences and the thoughts actually communicated by utterances," however, most semantic representations of sentences in context can produce such varied interpretations that it is difficult, if not impossible, to know what the intended meaning of any given sentence has to do with the semantic representations of the sentence. The hearer must be able to interpret the meaning of the sentence not by decoding but through inference and choosing the right meaning among other possibilities. According to Sperber and Wilson, semiotics falls short as a model of how communication works for this reason. Decoding is an issue of grammar: the interpretation of the structure of language, and not the interpretation of its semantics in context. The interpretation of semantics is an issue of pragmatics, pragmatics dealing with the use and context of language.

The decoding and inferential processes work very differently from each other: "an *inferential process* starts from a set of premises and results in a set of conclusions which follow logically from…the premises. A *decoding process* starts from a signal and results in the recovery of a message that is associated to the signal by an underlying code. In general, conclusions are not associated to their premises by a code, and signals do not warrant the messages they convey" (12-13). Therefore, I am choosing in my project—as a project that is interested in how readers interpret and process poetic effects—to analyze poetic effects and impressions from a pragmatic standpoint. However, before I delve into how poetic effects communicate and how readers interpret that communication, it's important to explain the communication of propositions a little more thoroughly in terms of pragmatics in general and in terms of relevance theory more specifically.

Intention and inference:

To get a thorough understanding of how "comprehension involves more than the decoding of a linguistic symbol" it is important to break down the components of this assertion. First of all, we understand that generative grammar (a set of grammar rules for any given language) is a code. In Sassure's code model, he defines the code as a pairing of concept and sound-image. The code portion of Sperber and Wilson's version of how communication works, in contrast, pairs phonetic representations with semantic representations based on the lexicon and grammar of the language, that is, its systems of phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics. In terms of phonetic representations, the assumption, according to the code model, is that utterances and phonetic representations are connected. For example, the utterance *dog* and the phonetic representation of the animal *dog* are closely linked: "an utterance can generally be perceived as a realisation of the phonetic representation of a single sentence.., it is reasonable to regard the phonetic representations of sentences as corresponding closely to the actual sounds of speech" (9).

Connecting semantic representations of sentences to thoughts becomes highly problematic. Thoughts cannot be reliably linked to the semantic representations due to the variety of meanings a sentence can have. For instance, "I'm having a ball" can mean I am throwing a dance party or I am having a lot of fun, or I am eating a ball, or I am giving birth to a ball, and so on.

> The semantic representation of a sentence deals with a sort of core meaning shared by every utterance of it. However, different utterances of the same sentence may differ in their interpretation…the study of semantic representation

> of sentences belongs to grammar; the study of the interpretation of utterances belongs to what is now known as 'pragmatics.'10

A generative grammar might identify semantic properties shared by any utterance of "I am having a ball" in common terms, but it does not deal with the "different utterances of the same sentence." It will give a (or several) semantic representation(s) but not necessarily convey what the speaker means when they utter it. Take for instance the different interpretations I pointed out earlier: they have to do with different interpretations of the words *having* and *ball*. The process by which a hearer interprets is a process of narrowing down the possible meanings to the one that is inferred.

The intention of the speaker is key to interpreting the utterance. "Utterances are used not only to convey thoughts but to reveal the speaker's attitude to, or relation to, the thought expressed; in other words, they express 'propositional attitudes,' perform 'speech-acts' or carry 'illocutionary force'" (10-11). For example, the attitude of the speaker who says "don't go" must be inferred before a hearer can decide whether to interpret the statement as uttered threateningly, ironically, lovingly, etc.

An utterance can explicitly communicate one thought while also conveying other implicit thoughts. Implied communication is central to my project, and I will discuss it further later in this chapter, but for now I will give a brief summary. According to Sperber and Wilson, "Whereas a thought that is explicitly expressed must be in some kind of correspondence to the semantic representation of the sentence uttered, those that are implicitly conveyed are under no such constraint" (11). One of the examples of this used by Sperber and Wilson is the utterance "Do you know what time it is?" In this utterance, the explicit question is whether or not the hearer knows the time. However, there could be other implied questions such as, "shouldn't you be leaving now?"

I have discussed the main flaws of the code model as a model for communication—they do not explain how a hearer can know the correct interpretation of the utterance since semantic representations of sentences can have varied meanings, and it does not account for implicit meanings an utterance may communicate. However, this does not mean the code model is no longer useful. To the contrary, many pragmatists use the code model coupled *with* the inferential processing. The code model on its own claims that grammar can explain how communication works; however, as I have shown, it is only a part. The code model is not rejected but rather joined to the interpretation theories of pragmatists.

Jakobson's Poetic Function:

Influenced by Saussure's semiotics, Roman Jakobson outlines, in "Linguistics and Poetics," (1960) a model for effective communication to explain the "poetic function" of language. Jakobson asserts, "many poetic features belong not only to the science of language but to the whole theory of signs, that is, to general semiotics" (1258). Analysis of poetics, for Jakobson, like analysis of painting, involves thinking about structures: "Poetics deals with problems of verbal structure, just as the analysis of painting is concerned with pictorial structure. Since linguistics is the global science of verbal structure, poetics may be regarded as an integral part of linguistics" (1258). He goes on to say that not all "devices studied by poetics [are] confined to verbal art." That is, certain structures in poems may remain intact in a different art form. He gives the example of making the *Iliad* and *Odyssey* into comic book form and how

"certain structural features of their plot are preserved despite the disappearance of their verbal shape" (1258). This is why he emphasizes, "many poetic features belong not only to the science of language but to the whole theory of signs."

Jakobson explains six general functions of language involved in all types of verbal communication to argue for his "poetic function." These functions were based on the Organon model formulated by Karl Bühler, which includes an expressive function that relates to **addresser**, the referential function that relates to **context** and conative function that relates to the **addressee**. Jakobson adds three more functions to his communication model: the poetic function that relates to the **message** for its own sake, the phatic function that relates to the channel of communication for the sake of interaction, or **contact**, and the metalingual function that relates to language used to refer to itself, or **code**. The six general functions work as follows:

> The ADDRESSER sends a MESSAGE to the ADDRESSEE. To be operative the message requires a CONTEXT referred to (the "referent" in another, somewhat ambiguous, nomenclature), graspable by the addressee, and either verbal, or capable of being verbalized; a CODE fully, or at least partially, common to the addresser (or in other words, to the encoder and decoder of the message); and finally, a CONTACT, a physical channel and psychological connection between the addresser and the addressee, enabling both of them to enter and stay in communication. All these factors inalienably involved in verbal communication may be schematized as follows:
>
> Context
>
> Addresser Message Addressee
>
> Contact
>
> Code
>
> 1260-1261

Depending on the specific function of the communication, one of these general functions is more operative than the others. For instance, in phatic communication, which usually involves interactions such as small talk, greetings and communication meant for the sake of interaction, the general function of "contact" is more operative than the others. In the poetic function, the "message" is more operative, and the focus on the message for its own sake constitutes, according to Jakobson, the poetic function. This function is not confined to literature but to other types of texts or utterance, such as slogans. For instance, repetition in a poem or slogan functions to call attention to itself: the code is used to call attention to the message. Jakobson revealed that communication is not just a data exchange, but happens in context. His analysis of factors and functions addresses the complexity of communication. In literature, then, we see the poetic function at work, where embellishments of language serve to support the message—it is not so much a puzzle that needs to be decoded, but an illumination of the message itself. "Context" is the referential function and the function I will spend some time explaining in the next section. It is a crucial element in understanding communication theories, and, more specifically, for my purposes, relevance theory.

The mutual-knowledge hypothesis:

In addition to the *coding*, *decoding*, *intention* and *inference*, *context* is also a determining factor in explaining how communication works. Jakobson's code model diagram shows context, contact and code as integral to understanding the meaning of communication:

Context

Addresser Message Addressee

Contact

Code

However, Jakobson's use of the term *context* is limited from a pragmatic point of view. Pilkington states that "The context helps to fix the meaning provided by the linguistic code, but here is treated as pre-given, a fixed component of the overall speech event. In other words, given a particular utterance in a particular language, and given a context in which that utterance occurs, then a particular meaning will be communicated" (Pilkington 55). For communication to be successful the *message* must be stable and unambiguous to everyone in order for the context to be fixed, but context continually shifts, as I will soon show.

Context is "the set of premises used in interpreting an utterance… [It] is a psychological construct, a subset of the hearers' assumptions about the world" (Sperber and Wilson 15). When talking about communication, what we are specifically referring to is the communication of thoughts and assumptions. Sperber and Wilson define thoughts and assumptions this way: "By *thoughts* we mean conceptual representations (as opposed to sensory representations or emotional states). By *assumptions*, we mean thoughts treated by the individual as representations of the actual world (as opposed to fictions, desires, or representations of representations)" (2). This means that any of the possible assumptions a hearer may have about the world are likely to play a role in how utterances are interpreted. For instance, societal beliefs, religious beliefs, beliefs about sex and gender, and so on, may influence how a hearer interprets the meaning of an utterance. *Context* is important to take into account because "while it is clear that members of the same linguistic community converge on the same language, and plausible that they converge on the same inferential abilities, the same is not true of their assumptions about the world" (Sperber and Wilson 16). The context in which a person frames any given utterance can be very different from that of another person in the same community. This is why even people within a family can have a different understanding of the remembrance of the same utterance. *Context* determines how individuals come to conclusions based on their already held assumptions: "While grammars neutralise the differences between dissimilar experiences, cognition and memory superimpose differences even on common experiences" (Sperber and Wilson 16). Though grammars present a standardized version of experience, there is never a guarantee that the meaning of an utterance is ever fully recovered by anyone because of the many influences that shape any hearer's assumptions about the world. In addition, each new experience adds to the range of potential contexts" (Sperber and Wilson 16). Thus, though *context* plays an important role in helping the hearer to frame the experience,

and generative grammar offers the hearer a common experience of the utterance, it is still not enough to insure that communication will be successful.

To make matters even more complex, successful communication depends on the sharing of contexts between speakers and hearers as expounded by the mutual-knowledge hypothesis. The speaker must rely on his hearer to provide the proper context in order to understand and infer the intention of the speaker. Therefore, in a most general way, the hearer and the speaker must have shared assumptions about the world in order to have successful communication. This assertion is more complicated—including the process involved of making numerous assumptions on top of first-order assumptions—than I will explain in this project. The main idea of how shared assumptions play a part in effective communication was first called *common knowledge* by David Lewis and *mutual knowledge* by Stephen Schiffer. They assert that if "a hearer is to be sure of recovering the correct interpretation, the one intended by the speaker, every item of the contextual information used in interpreting the utterance must be not only known by the speaker and hearer, but mutually known" (18). That is, for every piece of contextual information they must know that they know that they are sharing the same assumptions every step along the way.

The code model, as I have described so far, depends on *encoding* and *decoding* a message. Now we must add another component: that in order for communication to be successful, *context* must be based on *mutual knowledge*. However, the ideal of mutual knowledge is actually impossible to achieve: how do we ever know, in communication, that all the assumptions are shared, and to what degree? Also, for the mutual-knowledge hypothesis to work both speaker and hearer must know that they know that they share the assumption. Since, in most communication speaker and hearer do not constantly acknowledge that they are sharing the same assumptions, then whenever they are not acknowledging this, there is no mutual knowledge according to the mutual-knowledge hypothesis. They have to know that they know, i.e., right interpretation cannot be guaranteed.

Since *context* depends on the mutual-knowledge hypothesis, and Sperber and Wilson see the "mutual-knowledge hypothesis as untenable [;] [they] conclude, therefore, that the code theory must be wrong" (S & W 21). This conclusion provides a departure point for the formulation of their model of communication.

I will now examine the various theories and ideas that lead to the formulation of the Relevance Theory, a more reliable model for how communication works. Moreover, Sperber and Wilson and Pilkington extend this theory of verbal communication to literary practices. I will later extend it to discuss the notions of poetic impressions and poetic effects.

Inferential model:

Sperber and Wilson take a departure from the code model using an idea that springs from Paul Grice's article, "Meaning," published in 1957. In this article Grice analyzes what it means for an individual to "mean" something by an utterance: "'[S] meant something by X' is (roughly) equivalent to '[S] intended the utterance of X to produce some effect in an audience by means of the recognition of this intention" (Grice 1957/1971:58) "'[S] meant something by X' is (roughly) equivalent to '[S] intended the utterance of x to produce some effect in an audience by means of the recognition of this intention" points out the importance the intention of the speaker and the recognition of the intention by the hearer which is used for Sperber and Wilson, as the "point of departure for an inferential model of communication" (21).

That human communication is achieved by a hearer recognizing the speaker's intention is not what is original in Grice's analysis, according to Sperber and Wilson, but rather the notion that "inferential abilities that humans ordinarily use in attributing intentions to each other should make communication possible even in the absence of a code" (25). Sperber and Wilson use the following example:

> Peter asks Mary,
> "How are you feeling today?"
> Mary responds by pulling a bottle of aspirin out of her bag and showing it to him. Her behavior is not coded: there is no rule or convention which says that displaying a bottle of aspirin means that one is not feeling well…Mary successfully communicates with him and does so without the use of any code. 25-26

Sperber and Wilson point out that the inferential model and the code model are completely different models and cannot therefore be combined into one theory of communication. In the inferential model, "communication is achieved by the communicator providing evidence of her intentions and her audience inferring her intentions from the evidence"(24). In the code model, communication is achieved by coding and decoding messages. They argue that "there are at least two different modes of communication: the code-decoding mode and the inferential mode" (27). Further, communication is achieved not just when the hearer decodes the linguistic meaning, but when they are able to infer the speaker's intention. Therefore, in most communication, both code and inferential modes are needed for communication to be achieved.

Grice argues through his Co-operative Principle of Conversation that in conversation it is assumed that people intend to be informative, truthful, relevant and clear. However, through the reworking of the Gricean model by Sperber and Wilson and others, the criteria for communicative intention became clearer: "that a true communicative intention is not just an intention to inform the audience of the communicator's informative intention, but an intention to make the informative intention mutually known to the communicator and the audience" (31). In other words, in communication it is not enough for the speaker to have an intention, but she must make the intention mutually known for the "stimulus" to be considered communicative.

However, the question is raised, how does an audience understand a speaker's intentions? In another of Grice's ideas from his *William James Lectures*, he discusses the communication process of *co-operative* efforts in which a speaker can follow certain standards known to the audience so that that audience, knowing these standards, and taking into account the speaker's behavior and the context in which the utterance is spoken, can correctly infer the intention of the speaker. Grice breaks down his co-operative principle into a list of nine maxims:

Maxims of quantity

1 Make your contribution as informative as is required (for the current purposes of exchange).

2 Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

Maxims of quality

Supermaxim: Try to make your contribution one that is true.

1 Do not say what you believe to be false
2 Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence.
Maxim of relation:
Be relevant
Maxims of manner:
Supermaxim: Be perspicuous
1 Avoid obscurity of expression
2 Avoid ambiguity
3 Be brief (avoid unnecessary prolixity)
4 Be orderly

Explicatures and implicatures:

Sperber and Wilson "call an explicitly communicated assumption an *explicature*," and "any assumption communicated but not explicitly so…an *implicature*" (182). To delve a little further into the notion of implicatures (since implicatures are more central to my project), the following is an example, used by Sperber and Wilson, of implicit communication:

(32) Peter: Do you want some coffee?
Mary: Coffee would keep me awake.
Suppose that Peter is aware of (33). Then from the assumption explicitly expressed by Mary's answer, together with assumption (33), he could infer conclusion (34):
(33) Mary does not want to stay awake.
(34) Mary does not want any coffee.
In just the same way, if Peter is aware of (35), he could infer the conclusion of (36):
(35) Mary's eyes remain open when she is awake.
(36) Coffee would cause Mary's eyes to remain open.
…The explicit content of her utterance does not directly answer Peter's question; it is therefore not relevant as it stands. If Mary had obeyed the maxim 'be relevant', it must be assumed that she intended to give Peter an answer. Since he can obtain just the expected answer by inferring (34) from what she said, she must have intended him to draw precisely this conclusion… Hence, just as the Gricean maxims help the hearer choose, from among the senses of an ambiguous sentence, the one which was intended by the speaker, so they help him choose, from among the implications of the explicit content of an utterance, the ones which are implicitly conveyed. 35

The additional assumptions Peter makes, (36) Coffee would cause Mary's eyes to remain open, because (35) Mary's eyes remain open when she is awake, leads him to the same conclusion, that (34) Mary does not want any coffee. These are additions that Peter makes knowing Mary and knowing that Mary, through her answer (32) Coffee would keep me awake, intends to be relevant. He is therefore able to choose the correct implication. "Grice calls additional assumptions and conclusions such as (33) and (34), supplied to preserve the application of the co-operative principle and maxims, *implicatures*" (35).

Sperber and Wilson question what forms of inference are involved in the workings of the maxims, and if inference, as used in inferring the meaning of implicatures occurs, then how does that form of inferential process work? In Grice's *William James Lectures*, he argues that

linguistic problems such as words that have a more complex meaning in natural language than they do in logic be categorized as "conventional implicatures"—inferences we draw from them, not the words themselves, are what Grice defines as, "implicatures." This idea spurred much debate which led Sperber and Wilson to rethink Grice's intuitions about communication and ask the following questions: "what form of shared information is available to humans? How is shared information exploited in communication? What is relevance and how is it achieved?" (38).

Cognitive environments and mutual manifestness:

In response to these questions, "what forms of shared information is available to humans? How is shared information exploited in communication? What is relevance and how is it achieved?" (38). Sperber and Wilson worked out two notions, Cognitive Environments and Mutual Manifestness and then ultimately their theory of Relevance.

Earlier I discussed *mutual knowledge,* as the shared assumptions a speaker and hearer must have in order for communication to be successful, and that based on it "a hearer is to be sure of recovering the correct interpretation, the one intended by the speaker, every item of the contextual information used in interpreting the utterance must be not only known by the speaker and hearer, but mutually known." I also explained the core of Sperber and Wilson's objection to that hypothesis, "Since, in most communication speaker and hearer do not constantly acknowledge that they are sharing the same assumptions, then, whenever they are not acknowledging it there is no mutual knowledge, according to the mutual-knowledge hypothesis. They have to know that they know." As a solution to this problem of the hearer and speaker knowing or not knowing that they are sharing the same assumptions at every step of communication, Sperber and Wilson constructed the notion of *mutual manifestness*.

As mentioned before, when talking about communication, what we are specifically referring to is the communication of thoughts and assumptions. Sperber and Wilson define thoughts and assumptions this way: "By *thoughts* we mean conceptual representations (as opposed to sensory representations or emotional states). By *assumptions*, we mean thoughts treated by the individual as representations of the actual world (as opposed to fictions, desires, or representations of representations)." The problem with the *Mutual knowledge Hypothesis* is that it does not explain how the message or the thought in the mind of the speaker is reproduced in the mind of the hearer. Sperber and Wilson's notions of the cognitive environment and of *mutual manifestness* provide a theory for this phenomenon. The *cognitive environment* is Sperber and Wilson's foundation for their *mutual manifestness* notion, which seeks to explain how it's possible for mutual understanding to occur in human communication.

Sperber and Wilson define the cognitive environment as follows:

> (39) A fact is *manifest* to an individual at a given time if and only if he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true.
> (40) A *cognitive environment* of an individual is a set of facts that are manifest to him. 39

By "manifest" they mean perceptible or inferable; therefore a cognitive environment includes the set of facts and assumptions that an individual can perceive or infer or access. In addition, an

individual's total cognitive environment is a function of his physical environment and of his cognitive abilities; and the cognitive environment "consists of not only of all of the facts he is aware of, also all the facts he is capable of becoming aware of, in his physical environment."

Sperber and Wilson explain that not all assumptions that become manifest are facts. An individual is capable of representing mentally based on the evidence provided by the physical environment that will not necessarily be a "fact, but it could appear to be a fact: "from a cognitive point of view, mistaken assumptions can be indistinguishable from genuine factual knowledge, just as optical illusions can be indistinguishable from true sight…[Also], manifest assumptions which are more likely to be entertained are more manifest" (39). There are also varying degrees of *manifestness* depending on what phenomenon is most salient to an individual at any given time.

To show how a manifest assumption does not need to be fact, and how assumptions that are more likely to be entertained are more manifest I'll use an example from *Othello*. After Iago has planted many false assumptions about Desdemona's infidelity with Cassio to Othello, Othello asks for ocular proof of this infidelity. Iago, as a way to provide this ocular proof links the infidelity to the beloved handkerchief that Othello gave to her as a token of his love, and claims to have seen Cassio with it. Iago then plants the handkerchief in Cassio's lodgings where he finds it later and orchestrates a moment in which Othello witnesses a conversation between Cassio and Bianca, his love interest, where he gives Bianca the handkerchief and asks her to duplicate it, which ensues in Bianca having a jealous fit. The evidence of the handkerchief is most salient due to the previous false assumptions Iago makes manifest for Othello that Desdemona gave the handkerchief to Cassio. It is through this crafty exploitation of making manifest false assumptions that—as I will argue in the Othello chapter—Iago manipulates other characters.

The idea of *manifestness,* "what is manifest to an individual [,] is clearly weaker than the notion of what is actually known or assumed…In a strong sense, to know some fact involves having a mental representation of it. In a weaker sense, to say an individual knows some fact is not necessarily to imply that he has ever entertained a mental representation of it" (40). In the case of Othello, I argue, in part, that Iago's tactics involve the understanding and manipulation of weakly manifest facts and assumptions in Othello that he is then able to make into strong facts and assumptions that Othello is capable of mentally representing.

The mutual cognitive environment:

To reiterate, a cognitive environment is a set of facts and assumptions that are manifest to an individual and a fact or assumption is manifest only if he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting the representation as true or probably true. "The same facts and assumptions may be manifest in the cognitive environments of two different people" (41) and this is what Sperber and Wilson call the *mutual cognitive environment*. Instead of *shared knowledge*, what is shared in effective communication is a *cognitive environment*. Sperber and Wilson explain it this way:

> …The same facts and assumptions may be manifest in the same cognitive environment of two different people. In that case, these cognitive environments intersect, and their intersection is a cognitive environment that these two people share. The total shared cognitive environment of two people is the intersection

> of their two total cognitive environments: i.e. the set of facts that are manifest to them both. Clearly, if people share cognitive environments, it is because they share physical environments and have similar cognitive abilities. Since physical environments are never strictly identical, and since cognitive abilities are affected by previously memorised information and thus differ in many respects from one person to another, people never share their total cognitive environment. Moreover, to say that two people share a cognitive environment does not imply that they make the same assumptions: merely that they are capable of doing so. 41

The "cognitive environment" implies that it is an internal phenomenon: the cognitive environment of an individual is a set of facts that are manifest to him that he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true. However, thinking about a shared cognitive environment where "the same facts and assumptions may be manifest in the same cognitive environment of two different people" and that the "intersection" at which the set of facts become manifest for both people is regarded as the same cognitive environment, suggests that in this instance two people have the same cognitive environment; they have the same facts manifest to them. Sperber and Wilson call this phenomenon a *mutual cognitive environment*. The *mutual cognitive environment*, and its notion that two people can share the same psychological environment--that is, that there is a certain fluidity between minds that enables communication to occur--will be discussed again in chapter two in comparison to the notions of the physical and psychological permeability between an individual and her environment that is key in the humoral theory.

The idea of a cognitive environment explains that there are assumptions that an individual is capable of mentally representing and accepting as true but it does not explain how that individual goes about choosing the assumptions they will make in any episode of communication. Sperber and Wilson argue that there is a way of knowing how an individual arrives at his assumptions and it is determined by the property of relevance.

Relevance:

Relevance is a term used by Sperber and Wilson to describe a psychological property, and they seek: "to define relevance as a useful theoretical concept" (119). The idea of *relevance* is an expansion of Grice's maxim of relation: be relevant. It is based on the understanding that human beings are "efficient information-processing devices" (46) and that *efficiency* means different things in different contexts. Sperber and Wilson claim that "it seems that human cognition is aimed at improving the individual's knowledge of the world," and that "long-term cognitive efficiency consists in improving one's knowledge of the world as much as possible given the available resources" (47). The Relevance Theory deals, in particular, with the processes of short-term cognitive efficiency. Where long-term cognitive efficiency is generally concerned with adding more information or refining our information about the world, the short-term information process is a more complicated to track since it's hard to show the moment-by-moment process of sifting through the overwhelming amount of information surrounding an individual at any given moment.

In an example I offer, consider choosing what information to process in a crowded subway station when the goal is to get to work on time. Information bombards our sensory

perceptions from the smells of food, coffee and urine to the sights of people in work clothes, vendors, all the visual details of, say a news stand, not to mention all the sounds we may hear, or the various physical sensations of bumping into people, standing on a hard floor, feeling warm and stuffy in our coats, and so on. As "efficient information-processing devices," we are constantly choosing the most relevant information toward a goal (making it to work on time), in the most efficient way possible. In the case of getting to work on time, we may choose to filter out the newspaper headlines as we pass the newspaper vendor or the individual people as we pass them or the lights in the ceiling or the color of the walls in order to figure out the time the next train is coming, or filter conversation, or music, etc. in order to listen for our train. This is all to say that there are several cognitive tasks we could perform at any given moment because there's more sensory information than "central conceptual abilities" can process, and central abilities are already loaded with processing works in progress.

> The key problem for efficient short-term information processing is thus to achieve an optimal allocation of central processing resources. Resources have to be allocated to the processing of information which is likely to bring about the greatest contribution to the mind's general cognitive goals at the smallest processing cost. 48

The degree of Relevance in processing certain information depends on what Sperber and Wilson call the multiplication effect. The multiplication effect occurs when an individual's old information about the world gets combined with new information to be used. "When these interconnected new and old items of information are used together as premises in an inference process, further new information can be derived: information which could not have been inferred without this combination of old and new premises." This multiplication effect, the new information derived from old and new, is what Sperber and Wilson refer to as *relevance* and, "the greater the multiplication effect, the greater the relevance" (48). [(7) Relevance: An assumption is relevant if and only if it has some contextual effect in that context (122).

Sperber and Wilson claim that "all human beings automatically aim at the most efficient information processing possible" and that "an individual's particular cognitive goal at a given moment is always an instance of a more general goal: maximizing the relevance of the information processed" (49).

Ostention:

The principle of relevance explains how a speaker gets her intention across, and "it is this principle of relevance that is needed to make the inferential model of communication explanatory" (50). The principle of relevance generally states that a speaker makes her information relevant for the hearer through ostensive behavior. *Ostension* is any behavior (including using language) that "makes manifest an intention to make something manifest" (49). Let's imagine a simple example of ostension: Jill yawns during a conversation in which Alice is talking incessantly. Let's say that after the yawn, Alice notices the behavior and concludes that there is some reason, relevant to her, that Jill is yawning. Alice might ask herself why Jill is yawning, and search for the answer: Jill may lack oxygen, Jill may be tired from staying up late, Jill may be bored. If suddenly Alice realizes that she herself has been talking too

much and that Jill is bored, then Jill's ostensive behavior has successfully conveyed her intention and Alice is able to infer the correct conclusion.

Ostension comes with a promise of relevance. The cognitive processing involved in deducing information will only be made if there's a degree of relevance in it for the audience. In ostensive behavior there must be a promise of relevance for the audience otherwise there's no point in performing it. Jill's ostensive behavior communicates to Alice that the behavior of yawning has an intention to communicate something relevant for Alice, otherwise there's no reason to draw her attention to it: "just as an assertion comes with a tacit guarantee of truth, so does ostension come with a guarantee of relevance" (49). Sperber and Wilson's main thesis is that the principle of relevance states that ostention comes with a guarantee of relevance and this fact "makes manifest the intention behind the ostension" (50). Sperber and Wilson assert that ostensive communication, in which the speaker "makes manifest an intention to make something manifest," and inferential communication in which the audience is involved arriving at the correct inference, are the two aspects of the same communicative process which they call "ostensive-inferential communication." Sperber and Wilson define ostensive-inferential communication as follows: "The communicator produces a stimulus which makes it mutually manifest to communicator and audience that the communicator intends, by means of a stimulus, to make manifest to the audience a set of assumptions" (63).

The vaguer aspects of communication, informative intention and impressions:

Pragmatists view "meaning" as that which is communicated by the speaker, and what the hearer attempts to uncover; however, the idea of meaning is so hard to define that explanations of what is *meant* by an utterance are limiting insofar that they do not account for what Sperber and Wilson call the vaguer aspects of communication, or the communicated implications. In addition, to analyze implied communication in traditional semiotic terms means to analyze implied communications in some explicit way. As in the case of the code model, where meaning is coded and decoded, only explicit meaning is conveyed and implied meanings are left unexamined. Explicit content can be decoded whereas implied content needs to be inferred, which suggests that implied content has to be spelled out in order for communication to be successful according to the code model. Sperber and Wilson argue that "when the implicit import of an utterance is explicitly spelled out, it tends to be distorted by the elimination of this often intentional vagueness" (56). Metaphor is a good example of a kind of vagueness that loses its communicative power if it has to be explicitly expressed. Most verbal communication has a degree of implicit communication; therefore "meaning" needs to take into account the vaguer aspect of communication that cannot be explicitly expressed without losing much of what it communicates. For example, if I say to someone who is physically powerful and gifted, "you're a beast," then the implications of a physical power beyond humanness is implied: the beautiful power of a wild, aggressive and enormous animal like an apex predator. The implicature "beast" makes manifest many small assumptions that communicate a compliment. To take the metaphor literally would likely be construed as an insult; the metaphor loses it communicative power. Therefore, to have the communication be successful, the hearer would need to entertain the vaguer aspect of the metaphor to get the positive meaning of it.

This paradigm has also made it difficult for critics interested in the vaguer aspects of communication to discuss it in any precise way.

> The only people who have been quite consistently concerned with the vaguer aspects of communication are the Romantics, from the Schlegel brothers to Coleridge to I.A. Richards, and their many acknowledged or unacknowledged followers, including many semioticians such as Roman Jakobson in some of his writings, Victor Turner, and Roland Barthes. However, they have all dealt with vagueness in vague terms, with metaphors in metaphorical terms, and used the term 'meaning' so broadly that it becomes quite meaningless. 57

Sperber and Wilson distinguish "meaning from communication, accepting that something can be communicated without being strictly speaking meant by the communicator or the communicator's behavior." Meaning is regarded as a proposition entailed by an utterance by a speaker for which the hearer then forms the expected propositional attitude. Therefore, "the communicator's informative intention [is] an intention to induce in an audience certain attitudes to certain propositions…[and] the informative intention is treated as an intention to induce in an audience the belief that a certain proposition is true" (57). In other words, the distinction between meaning and communication that Sperber and Wilson propose widens the scope of what communication is, and allows the vaguer, non-propositional aspects of communication to be acknowledged. These vaguer aspects of communication are also implicatures, and an implicature, as Grice defines it is "any assumption communicated but not explicitly so." Implicatures are propositional, but they are not asserted. The claim that the vaguer aspects of communication are dealt with in vague terms by the Romantics and their followers can now be addressed, according to Sperber and Wilson, in precise terms using the framework of the principle of relevance.

The notion, widely accepted by pragmatists, that the communicator's informative intention is an intention to induce in an audience certain attitudes to certain propositions and to induce in an audience the belief that a certain proposition is true, is revised by Sperber and Wilson to reflect the principle of relevance: The *informative intention* of a speaker is "to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a set of assumptions " (58). In this notion of communication, both what is meant and deducible, and what is implied and inferable, is included, and we may assume that the *informative intention* of a speaker will also include both kinds of communication. Remembering Sperber and Wilson's definition of thoughts as "…conceptual representations (as opposed to sensory representations or emotional states," the goal of the informative intention of the speaker is not to alter the thoughts of the audience, but to alter the cognitive environment of the audience.

Sperber and Wilson define the cognitive environment of an individual as a set of facts that are manifest to him. The goal of the speaker is to make manifest in the listener a certain set of assumptions. Iago makes manifest in Othello's cognitive environment a set of assumptions about Desdemona's infidelity. His method of convincing Othello of the infidelity is aimed at altering Othello's cognitive environment about Desdemona. Othello's set of assumptions about Desdemona's faithfulness alters as a result of Iago's informative intention, and the set of assumptions he makes manifest in Othello's cognitive environment. In the chapter on *Othello,* I will show that Iago's ability to alter Othello's cognitive environment comes about from the vaguer aspects of communication, from assumptions that are inferable, and I will show how these assumptions about Desdemona already exist, in part, in Othello in order for Iago to be able to make manifest in Othello the assumption that Desdemona is unfaithful.

The main focus of my project is on this vaguer aspect of communication in Shakespeare and Spenser. My attempt is not to address what a given set of lines mean but what impression their implicatures generate. Again, implicatures are propositional, but they are not asserted. Impression, according to Sperber and Wilson is "described as a noticeable change in one's cognitive environment, a change resulting from relatively small alterations in the manifestness of many assumptions, rather than from the fact that a single impression or a few assumptions have all of a sudden become very manifest" (59). They give the example of Mary and Peter at their seaside lodging:

> She opens the window overlooking the sea and sniffs appreciatively and ostensively. When Peter follows suit, there is no one particular good thing that comes to his attention: the air smells fresh, fresher than it did in town, it reminds him of their previous holidays, he can smell the sea, the seaweed, ozone, fish; all sorts of pleasant things come to mind, and while, because her sniff was appreciative, he is reasonably safe in assuming that she must have intended him to notice at least some of them, he is unlikely to be able to pin her intentions down any further. Is there any reason to assume that her intentions were more specific? Is there a plausible answer in the form of explicit linguistic paraphrase, to the question, what does she mean? Could she have achieved the same communicative effect by speaking? Clearly not. 55-56

In the case of Mary's nonverbal communication, we can assume that she meant to convey something to Peter by breathing in the ocean air with gusto, but what is meant is not propositional, not deducible. Though it's not deducible, the communication sets off a series of "small alterations in the manifestness of many assumptions" for Peter who suddenly recalls a fond memory of their previous vacation, who notices the smell of the ocean air, the smell of fish, ozone, etc. He never concludes Mary's intention but rather has several small assumptions that are triggered as a result of her vague, non-explicit communication. What Mary communicates to Peter then is an impression of her experience of smelling the ocean air, an impression that all of a sudden becomes very manifest to Peter through the many assumptions that are triggered in him.

Sperber and Wilson see communication not simply as assumptions communicated, but as assumptions strongly or weakly communicated which become more or less manifest for the hearer: "When the communicator makes strongly manifest her informative intention to make some particular assumption strongly manifest, then that assumption is strongly communicated" (59). In the case of impressions, and vague communication in general, they can be described as weaker forms of communication. Sperber and Wilson talk about the weaker form of communication in terms of weak implicatures to support their idea of *poetic effects*. They differentiate between strong implicatures and weak implicatures, stating that "implicatures of an utterance—like assumptions in general—may vary in strength. To communicate an assumption *A* is to make mutually manifest one's intention to make *A* manifest or more manifest. The greater the mutual manifestness of the informative intention to make manifest some particular assumption, the more strongly this assumption is communicated…Strong implicatures are those premises and conclusions…which the hearer is strongly encouraged but not actually forced to supply. The weaker the encouragement, and the wider the range of possibilities among which the hearer can choose, the weaker the implicatures"(199). They use the following example to demonstrate strong versus weak implicatures:

(33) (a) *Peter*: Would you drive a Mercedes?
(b) *Mary*: I wouldn't drive ANY expensive car.

This example contains both strong and weak implicatures. The strong implicature clearly encourages Peter to conclude that Mary wouldn't drive a Mercedes, while the weak implicatures open up Peter's imagination to conclude a range of other possibilities, for example:

(43) An Alfa Romeo is an expensive car.
(44) A BMW is an expensive car.
(45) Mary wouldn't drive an Alfa Romeo.
(46) Mary wouldn't drive a BMW.

He may also imagine that she wouldn't like any expensive thing, such as a cruise or a diamond. Peter can begin entertaining all kinds of luxury items and experiences that Mary wouldn't like. These many assumptions may arise because the weak implicature leaves room for that kind of exploration of what she means.

Impressions, style, and poetic effects:

As discussed earlier, critics of literary communication lack feasible theoretical approaches for substantiating their claims for the aesthetic effects of literary forms, and Sperber and Wilson assert that the theoretical framework of *relevance* can explain how these effects affect their audience, that is, how aesthetic experience is generated through the communication of literary language. By aesthetics I mean a philosophical study of the mind and emotions in response to beauty and art. In this section, I will discuss "impressions" and "style" as a foundation for discussing "poetic effects." Demonstrating how poetic effects generate the sense of affective mutuality is the purpose of my project.

Sperber and Wilson claim that earlier critics' inability to rigorously argue how literary structures generated aesthetic effects, and to explain the vaguer aspects of communication except in vague terms, were due to their inability to discuss the cognitive and psychological dimensions of communication. It is difficult to discuss how a formal structure can affect a hearer or reader without some framework with which to represent the psychological and cognitive processes that take place during such an experience. Through their relevance theory of communication, Sperber and Wilson promise to provide this framework to show how the vaguer aspect of communication is achieved, how implicatures in literary forms are communicated by a speaker, and how they are inferred by a hearer. The speaker is the one making the utterance and the hearer is the one who is interpreting the utterance.

To understand an utterance a hearer must first identify the propositional form, and the explicatures of the utterance. If this involves disambiguation, Sperber and Wilson argue that a hearer's "criterion for identifying the propositional form of an utterance [is that] the right propositional form is the one that leads to an overall interpretation which is consistent with the principle of relevance" (184); and to reiterate, the *principle of relevance* states "…that an act of ostension carries a guarantee of relevance, and that this fact… makes manifest the intention behind the ostension." (50). In other words, the guarantee of relevance for the hearer promises that it will be worth the processing effort involved in recovering the propositional form and the intention of the speaker. Also, the guarantee of relevance depends on the degree of contextual effects for the hearer. Contextual effects are derived from the synthesis of old information and

new information that enable the hearer to make new conclusions that could not be made by the old or new information alone.

In the case of implicatures, Sperber and Wilson argue "that the implicatures of an utterance are recovered by reference to the speaker's manifest expectations about how the utterance should achieve optimal relevance" (194).

In more stylized forms of communication, such as poetic language, the style of communication determines the degree of cognitive engagement expected of the audience. The more sophisticated the style, the more sophisticated the audience's cognitive capabilities need to be: "In aiming at relevance, the speaker must make some assumptions about the hearer's cognitive abilities and contextual resources, which will necessarily be reflected in the way she communicates, and in particular in what she chooses to make explicit and what she chooses to leave implicit" (218). Sperber and Wilson conclude, "style arises…in the pursuit of relevance" (219).

This idea that "style arises in the pursuit of relevance" suggests that the speaker, through the features of style, is intending to communicate something relevant to her audience, and what she is communicating falls into the category of the vaguer aspects of communication.

As we recall, the *informative intention* of a speaker is "to make manifest or more manifest to the audience a set of assumptions," and with this notion that communication includes both what is meant and what is implied, inferable, we may assume that the *informative intention* of a speaker will include both. The goal of the informative intention of the speaker is not to alter the thoughts of the audience, but the cognitive environment of the audience. In most literature, as in most communication, there will be a combination of explicatures, implicatures and impressions.

Sperber and Wilson break implicatures down into two categories, *implicated premises* and *implicated conclusions*.

> Implicated premises must be supplied by the hearer, who must either receive them from memory or construct them by developing assumption schemas retrieved from memory. What makes it possible to identify such premises as implicatures is that they lead to an interpretation consistent with the principle of relevance, and that they are manifestly the most easily accessible premises to do so. Implicated conclusions are deduced from the explicatures of the utterance and the context. What makes it possible to identify such conclusions as implicatures is that the speaker must have expected the hearer to derive them, or some of them, given that she intended her utterance to be manifestly relevant to the hearer. 195

The hearer creates the implicated premises by retrieving them from memory, or constructs "them by developing assumption schemas retrieved from memory," and these implicatures "lead to an interpretation consistent with the principle of relevance" which states that "an act of ostension carries a guarantee of relevance, and that this fact—… the principle of relevance—makes manifest the intention behind the ostension" (50). "The implicated conclusions are deduced from the explicatures of the utterance and the context" (195) and what identifies them as implicated conclusions is that "the speaker must have expected the hearer to

derive them, or some of them, given that she intended her utterance to be manifestly relevant to the hearer" (195).[3]

The notions of implicated premises and conclusions show that the psychological and cognitive dimensions Sperber and Wilson claim are not accounted for in the semiotic model. The semiotic model does not account for how a hearer chooses one interpretation out of several possible interpretations, and it does not account for how the speaker decides on a particular act of ostension in order to ensure that the hearer will recover the correct interpretation. Communication based on the search for relevance and on the idea that communication is a function of enlarging mutual cognitive environments provides a framework from which to track the cognitive processes of communication.

Communication based on the search for relevance in literature depends greatly on the recovery of implicatures and what Sperber and Wilson call *poetic effects*. *Poetic effects* describe "the peculiar effect of an utterance which achieves most of its relevance through a wide array of weak implicatures" (222). The "peculiar effect" of poetic communication accounts for affective communication in poetic language: "…poetic effects create common impressions [i.e., in the cognitive environment] rather than common knowledge. Utterances with poetic effects can be used precisely to create the sense of apparently affective rather than cognitive mutuality." Poetic effects create common impressions and an impression is a vague, non-propositional aspect of communication. Though it's non- deducible, the communication of an impression sets off a series of "small alterations in the manifestness of many assumptions." Unlike propositions, impressions and poetic effects "do not add new assumptions which are strongly manifest in this environment. Instead, they marginally increase the manifestness of a great many weakly manifest assumptions" (224). Peter's series of assumptions resulting from Mary's ostensive breathing exemplifies this point.

The assertion that "utterances with poetic effects can be used to create the sense of affective…mutuality" specifies that a *sense* of a shared affect is created. Just as a certain amount of knowledge needs to be shared between speaker and hearer in order for communication to be successful, so also a certain density of impressions need to be shared between speaker and hearer in order for the communication of poetic effects to be successful. Just as communicating propositions is not a matter of duplicating thoughts, but of making previously held assumptions manifest, the communication of impressions is not a matter of duplicating impressions, but of making them manifest. In other words, for impressions and poetic effects to be successfully communicated, the speaker and hearer must share common impressions.

Before moving on, I would like to take the time to re-clarify some of the terms I have just used: 1) "Implicatures" are "any assumption communicated but not explicitly so." According to Sperber and Wison, "Strong implicatures are those premises and conclusions…which the hearer is strongly encouraged but not forced to supply" (99). 2) "Weak implicatures" are implicatures that are not as clearly implied. 3) An "impression" is a "noticeable change in one's cognitive environment, a change resulting from relatively small alterations in the manifestness of many assumptions, rather than from the fact that a single impression or a few assumptions have all of a sudden become very manifest." 4) "Poetic effects" are "the peculiar effect of an utterance which achieves most of its relevance through a wide array of weak implicatures," and "poetic effects"

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[3] Context as defined by Sperber and Wilson is "the set of premises used in interpreting an utterance… a psychological construct, a subset of the hearers' assumptions about the world"

create common "impressions" rather that common knowledge. By these definitions, according to Sperber and Wilson, we see that "poetic effects" create "common impressions" instead of "common knowledge." Their difference is that "poetic effects" *are* the peculiar effect that *create* "common impressions." One leads to the other: the "poetic effect" creates the common impression, and the created "common impression" is what "affects the mutual cognitive environment of speaker and hearer" (224).

Pilkington and Literary Communication:

In his book *Poetic Effects*, Pilkington uses pragmatics and relevance theory to make his own argument for how current linguistics can provide a theoretical framework for literary studies. In his examination of theories of literariness—literariness being the properties of a text that distinguish literature from other forms of writing--he points out the flaws of formalist, structuralist and post-structuralist approaches to showing how aesthetic experience is generated from reading literary texts. Most of the arguments for literariness concern linguistic foregrounding in which the poetic function becomes salient to the reader. He argues against the notions that structures and patterning in poetic language, such as those claimed, for instance, by Jakobson and his followers, are responsible for the aesthetic experience readers have: "…the link that Jakobson, Shklovsky and others draw between linguistic organization and aesthetic effects was always, and necessarily, vague and intuitive. The formalists had a clear, precise way of analyzing the formal linguistic properties of texts, but no correspondingly clear, precise way of analysing the aesthetic effects in psychological or cognitive terms" (18).

Post-structuralists, Pilkington argues, have discounted any possibility for a linguistic theory of literariness by insisting that there can be no objective scientific account of language due to the instability between signifiers and signified, and the fact that fixing a reference is not possible. The instability of language both makes theory impossible and "denies the traditional literary critical claim to interpret the author's meaning in a text" (39). He refers to Barthes who says, "We know now that a text is not a line of words releasing a single 'theological' meaning (the message of the author-God) but a multi-dimensional space in which a variety of writings, none of them original, blend and clash…Once the author is removed the claim to decipher a text becomes quite futile." Barthes (find citation: Image-Music-Text). According to the structuralists, engagement in textual criticism is futile since language is unstable, and as Pilkington points out "there no longer is anything that is distinctively and essentially literary to have a theory about" (39).

The problem with structuralist accounts of what generates aesthetic effects in readers is well known: any theory of aesthetic effect is difficult to formulate, if not impossible, since the experience is subjective. Also, as just noted, post-structuralists argue based on the instability of language that there is no possibility for developing a literary theory. However, Pilkington argues, as Sperber and Wilson do, that "literary style and communication are potentially open to theoretical treatment in the context of contemporary linguistic and pragmatic theory" (40), and this is the possibility I will now discuss.

Pilkington suggests that "just as Jakobson thought that a study of literariness should form part of linguistics, so the newly conceived theoretical study of literariness should form a part of cognitive pragmatics"(47). In this way, Pilkington supports Paul Kiparsky who argued that "Jakobson's programme for a theoretical account of literariness could still be valid within the context of contemporary linguistic and pragmatic theory," in particular, relevance

theory. Pilkington like Kiparsky asserts that the relevance theory could replace the "code model of communication that Jakobson espoused" (52). Relevance theory can provide the missing link not provided for by the structuralists' analysis of patterning, or by the intuitions of the phenomenologists who attempted to describe the aesthetic experience without being able to prove how they came to their conclusions.

Through this pragmatic and psychological approach, Pilkington sees literary competence as stored in a place in the mind where it is accessible when we process literature. Jerry Fodor's work in *The Modularity of the Mind* argues that there are structures in the mind or "modules" that are evolutionarily developed areas of competence. Using this model, Pilkington sees our ability to understand literary communication as involving a specific area of "competence knowledge" stored in our minds and accessed when we engage in literature. "In cognitive terms we might simply say that we have certain information about literature collected together and stored at a certain place or address in our minds. We are likely to use this information when we think about 'literature'; we are not likely to use it on-line and all the time we read literary texts" (27).

Literary communication, in the narrow sense of written literature, is different from general communication in that the speaker is communicating through text and the hearer is interpreting the speaker's utterance through the text. We remember that Sperber and Wilson's notion of *mutual manifestness* states that

> the cognitive environment is a set of facts that are manifest to an individual and a fact is manifest only if he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting the representation as true or probably true, and the same facts and assumptions may be manifest in the cognitive environments of two different people.

In general communication the hearer does not need to have all the facts in her cognitive environment; she can interpret communication from the contextual assumptions made "on the basis of what he can perceive in his immediate physical environment, or on the basis of assumptions already stored in the memory" (Pilkington 62). However, in terms of literary communication, "this detailed attention to the needs of a particular addressee does not apply. The text is carefully shaped by the author with a view to the effects it will have upon a reader the contextual assumptions needed for interpretation need to be calculable through the text itself" (62). Therefore, the communicator, in this case writer, is "responsible to judge what contextual assumptions are manifest to the addressee" (63). The responsibility of the writer then is to provide easily retrievable contextual assumptions because "[t]he reader has to supply readily accessible contextual assumptions (made available via concepts linked to lexical items in the text.) that allow the kind of interpretation that may have been intended" (63). Pilkington refers to the reader as the implied reader—a term used in reader response theory to refer to a hypothetical reader for whom the writing is intended, and for whom the "contextual assumptions that are needed for interpretation" (62) are supplied. However, I want to emphasize here that much of the literature I am examining are Shakespeare plays, which were written to be performed and heard rather than read.

Style and repetition:

The style of a speaker indicates the assumptions the speaker has of her audience's cognitive capabilities; she assumes a degree of mutuality and aims to enlarge the mutual cognitive environment through her style: "In aiming at relevance, the speaker must make some assumptions about the hearer's cognitive abilities, and contextual resources, which will necessarily be reflected in the way she communicates, and in particular what she chooses to make explicit and what she chooses to leave out" (218). The choices of what are "left out," of course, are communicated through the implicatures and arise, for the hearer, in the pursuit of relevance. As mentioned before, Sperber and Wilson call these stylistic choices that communicate through implicatures, *poetic effects*. As an example they show examples of epizeuxis, or repetition, and compare the stylistic differences between the following:
(81) My childhood days are gone, gone.
(82) My childhood days are gone.
In (81) the repetition of "gone" generates a poetic effect due to the extra implicature. That is, the repetition invites the added implicature, suggesting to the hearer that there are "more contextual assumptions and implications which receive some backing from the speaker" (222). The hearer must calculate the implicature in (82), and the further widen the context of the implicature when it is repeated in (81). For instance, in realizing that the speaker is meaning that his childhood days are gone, in a perhaps nostalgic sense, he is then prompted, by the repetition, to consider the implication even further, to assume that there are more premises and conclusions expected of him by the speaker. The second implicature could not only reinforce the feeling of nostalgia about the childhood days being gone, but suggest a depression about it. Sadness is but one example that the repetition might generate for the reader.

There are many stylistic choices besides epizeuxis that generate poetic effects. Sperber and Wilson go on to discuss the poetic effects of parallelism, metaphor, echoic utterances, irony, and speech acts. I will discuss a relevance approach to one such example to show the way metaphor works, and then discuss a poetic effect that is not identified by either Sperber and Wilson or Pilkington and that I will call *incidentals.*

Literal and figurative language and metaphor:

Utterances may be either literal or figurative, and what determines whether or not an utterance is literal or figurative depends, according to Sperber and Wilson, on the relationship between "the propositional form of an utterance and the thought this utterance is used to represent" (231). In a literal utterance, the propositional form and the thought this utterance is used to represent are identical, whereas in figurative utterances this relationship is one of "resemblance." In other words, a literal utterance is one in which the main explicature is the same as its propositional form and a figurative utterance is one in which the main explicature only resembles the propositional thought. For instance, a person giving driving directions and who says "turn the car left" to the driver literally means for the driver to turn the car left; the propositional form of his utterance is the same as his mental representation. In the case of figurative utterances, the main explicature of the utterance is not identical to the mental representation but instead resembles it. Consider the cliché, "you eat like a bird," originally a very powerful metaphor before it was hardened into cliché. The literal meaning of the explicature would suggest a person who eats like a bird, pecks at his food, or only eats seeds, or roots around for worms, etc. The utterance only resembles a mental representation that is only meant to suggest that someone doesn't eat very much.

Within the framework of relevance, Sperber and Wilson claim that most utterances fall under the general range of figurative rather than literal language for the reason that it is often more efficient to use a particular figurative utterance than to be precise and literal. That is, speaking literally to express oneself is often more laborious than it is worth for both the speaker and the hearer. This is why it is common for speakers to use loose and approximate language; for example, though not quite figurative language, it is, according to Sperber and Wilson, on the same continuum due to the imprecise relationship between "the propositional form of an utterance and the thought this utterance is used to represent." They use an example someone being asked how much they earned per month. The speaker could respond with the actual amount, let's say $4,925.09 a month, but in the pursuit of being economical and less complicated for the hearer, the speaker says he earns $5,000 a month. The speaker, for the purposes of optimal relevance chooses to share the less complicated, albeit untruthful, rounded number to communicate his earnings as well as makes the assumption that his hearer will understand and accept the reasons for why the speaker isn't giving a precise amount.

Sperber and Wilson explain the processing of figurative language for relevance in this way:

> If the speaker has done her job correctly, all the hearer has to do is start computing, in order of accessibility, those implications which might be relevant to him, and continue to add them to the overall interpretation of the utterance until it is relevant enough to be consistent with the principle of relevance. At this point, the sorting will have been accomplished as a by-product of the search for relevance, and will require no specific effort of its own. 234

There are many examples of the kind of "loose talk" demonstrated in the rounded monthly income. In everyday communication loose talk is normal. In communicating implicatures, "the speaker encourages the hearer to look for a range of further contextual implications not shared…and assumes that within this range are some she intends to implicate" (235). To use another more obvious use of loose talk, take for example how hyperbole works in casual conversation: "This is the happiest day ever" when used in the context of, say, finding a parking spot after the third time of going around the block, is clearly expressing the relief and happiness of the speaker, but is not intended for the hearer to take literally. The hearer is trusted not to take the literal meaning. The speaker uses hyperbole to encourage "the hearer to look for a range of further contextual implications and assumes that within this range there are some she intends to implicate" (235) such as the degree of frustration she was feeling in not finding a space immediately, the great satisfaction she feels at finally haven gotten a space, the excitement at finally arriving at their destination, etc. "The wider range of possible conclusions, the weaker the implicatures, and the more the hearer must share responsibility for deriving them" (235). The hyperbole suggests the speaker's attitude as well as invites the hearer to imagine his own idea of the speaker's attitude and concludes that his imagined idea of the speaker's attitude matches the attitude of the speaker.

So far, I have discussed loose talk as commonly used in everyday communication, but on the other end of the spectrum where the range of weak implicatures in a given poetic device is much more oblique, such as in literature, we find the communication of poetic effects where the processing is the same as the examples already explored, but the array of implicatures are much weaker leaving more work on the part of the hearer. Sperber and Wilson argue that in

> …metaphor, and a variety of related tropes (e.g. hyperbole, metonymy, synecdoche) are simply creative exploitations of a perfectly general dimension of language use. The search for optimal relevance leads the speaker to adopt, on different occasions, a more or less faithful interpretation of her thoughts. The result in some cases is literalness, in others metaphor. Metaphor thus requires no special interpretive abilities or procedures: it is a natural outcome of some very general abilities and procedures used in verbal communication. 237

Therefore, metaphor and other "related tropes" are processed for relevance, just the same as any other kind of utterance, and this is important to underscore for two reasons: to show that the relevance theory explained so far is equally applicable to the poetic as it is to the literal, and—now that I have laid a foundation for the theory of relevance—to begin to focus now on the main point of my project, which is the communication of poetic impressions.

Metaphor and impressions:

Impressions, as discussed earlier are that "peculiar effect," caused by a "noticeable change in one's cognitive environment, a change resulting from relatively small alterations in the manifestness of many assumptions, rather than from the fact that a single impression or a few assumptions have all of a sudden become very manifest." In this section I will show how impressions are communicated through metaphor. To demonstrate this, let's consider a metaphor from *Macbeth*, in a speech by Lady Macbeth:

> Come, you spirits
> That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
> And fill me to the crown to the toe topfull
> Of direst cruelty! Make thick my blood,
> Stop up th' access and passage to remorse,
> That no compunctious visitings of nature
> Shake my fell purpose, nor keep peace between
> Th' effect and it! Come to my woman's breasts,
> And take my milk for gall, you murth'ring ministers,
> Wherever in your sightless substances
> You wait on nature's mischief! Come, thick night,
> And pall thee in the dunnest smoke of hell,
> That my keen knife see not the wound it makes,
> Nor heaven peep through the blanket of the dark
> To cry, "Hold, hold!" (Riverside 1.5.50-54)

I want to focus on "That my keen knife see not the wound it makes" which we can see cannot be taken literally in this context: there is no literal knife in hand, and of course knives don't have senses, so it's not necessary to occlude their perceptions, and clearly night and heaven are being used here to personify the knife's cognition. The phrase does not have a main implicature but instead carries with it a whole array of weak implicatures. By "not having a

main implicature" I mean that there isn't one implicature that easily settles the meaning of the utterance, but that there are several implicatures that arise from which to form an interpretation. That is, Lady Macbeth's summoning of spirits to prevent her keen knife and heaven from seeing the wound the knife makes generates many possibilities. The visual aspect of the knife adds extra implicatures to her "keen knife." Is the knife alive? Is it an extension of herself? Of her perception? Is the knife a representation of the moment of dissociation, of a splitting? If so, what the are many possibilities of who or what is being wounded: her femininity, Macbeth's masculinity, her relationship to heaven, and, of course, Duncan? Is the knife representative of her ambitious agency? Is Macbeth then made to be an extension of this knife by fulfilling her ambition? Are the eyes of the knife those of her conscience and consciousness that she tries to shield from the murder from the impending wounding? The more we search for relevance, the more weak implicatures seem to arise in this remarkable metaphor. It resists an easy interpretation as "the wider range of possible conclusions, the weaker the implicatures, and the more the hearer must share responsibility for deriving them." The reader's task is then to consider this wide array of implicatures to construct feasible interpretations of the metaphor.

My interests lie in the peculiar effect made in readers through poetic effects. My aim is to use this model of relevance to discuss how poetic language generates aesthetic and affective experiences in readers. As we recall, "…poetic effects create common impressions rather than common knowledge. Utterances with poetic effects can be used precisely to create the sense of apparently affective rather than cognitive mutuality." From this platform I begin a discussion of affective responses in readers of literature based on the theory of relevance, based on affective mutuality through impressions. The knife metaphor, I argue, creates a peculiar effect that generates affect in the reader.

In chapter two I will compare impressions and affective mutuality with early modern notions of impressions and humoral theory as a way to show the similarities between the two.

Pilkington, poetic effects and emotion in poetry:

Pilkington takes the work of Sperber and Wilson's pragmatic account of *poetic effects* and further explores the notion of how emotions are experienced through poetic effects. Earlier I pointed out an example of epizeuxis which Sperber and Wilson used to show how poetic effects evoke emotion or feeling: "my childhood days are gone, gone." They show how the repetition generates a wide array of weak implicatures that, according to Pilkington, suggests a feeling of sadness, for example. Pilkington proposes a way that emotions can be more thoroughly addressed by first examining what emotions are. I will first discuss Pilkington's definition of "literariness," his view of literary experience from a pragmatic stance, two ways that he diverges from Sperber and Wilson's claim about poetic effects, and his proposal to include the philosophical idea of "emotional qualia" with the relevance theory idea of poetic effects to build a stronger theory for literary aesthetic experience than a cognitive model alone can support.

Pilkington poses the questions: what is literariness, how should it be defined, and what gives literature its aesthetic value? He argues, "theoretically, literariness should be defined in terms of cognitive events triggered in mind/brains by linguistic stimuli" (189) and uses examples of poetic metaphor, poetic epizeuxis, metrical variation and sound patterning to demonstrate a cognitive explanation of literariness and its aesthetic effects. In essence, he accounts for literariness and literary aesthetic value as resulting from poetic effects—he bases his argument

on Sperber and Wilson's theory of style (earlier touched on)—and he argues for an account of literariness that results from the communication of a wide array of weak implicatures. He asserts that literariness is "a way of discussing distinctively literary properties, not as properties of the text, but as cognitive properties, resulting from the effects upon readers" (189). Pilkington, like Sperber and Wilson, argues for a cognitive/psychological account of aesthetic effects rather than a formal and structural account.

One key way that Pilkington diverges from Sperber and Wilson's account of poetic effects has to do with the role of the *encyclopaedic entry* (a component of memory) in processing poetic effects. Sperber and Wilson describe the role of memory in the inferential process as containing contextual assumptions needed for the processing of new information: "A concept in memory is assumed to collect together information in different formats, with different entries, at the same 'address.'" There are three different assumed entries in the memory:

> The *lexical entry* 'contains information about the natural-language counterpart of the concept: the word or phrase of natural language which expresses it'; the *Logical entry* 'consists of a set of deductive rules which apply to logical forms of which that concept is a constituent'; the *encyclopaedic entry* 'contains information about the extension and/or denotation of the concept: that is, about the objects, events and/or properties which instantiate it. Sperber and Wilson 1995:86 [check citation]

For Sperber and Wilson, the audience is left to imagine, for himself, the correct assumptions from the encyclopedic entry in the processing of metaphor (Sperber and Wilson (1995:222), but Pilkington argues that the limited context of the literary work directs the reader to choose certain assumptions from the encyclopedic entry, and is guided, in this way, to having a particular cognitive experience. Pilkington asserts that the value of the metaphor, or the rhetorical device, depends on its success to direct the reader: "The success of a poetic metaphor depends on not only (if at all) its originality, but the creation of a context which encourages and guides the exploration of the encyclopaedic entries of the concept involved" (103).

Among other poetic devices, Pilkington uses an epizeuxis to demonstrate how the context of a poem encourages and guides the exploration of encyclopedic entries of the concept drawing from Robert Frost's "Stopping by the Woods on a Snowy Evening":

Whose woods these are I think I know.
His house is in the village though;
He will not see me stopping here
To watch his woods fill up with snow.

My little horse must think it queer
To stop without a farmhouse near
Between the woods and frozen lake
The darkest evening of the year.

He gives his harness bells a shake
To ask if there is some mistake.
The only other sound's the sweep

Of easy wind and downy flake.

The woods are lovely, dark and deep.
But I have promises to keep,
And miles to go before I sleep,
And miles to go before I sleep.

In the analysis of the final couplet he states:

> The repetition encourages greater activation of the assumptions stored in the encyclopaedic entries of the concepts in the sentence repeated. In this case the only concept that can be fruitfully explored is the concept attached to "sleep'. Although there is no categorical 'falsity', no clear flouting of the maxim of quality, in Grice's sense, those assumptions about sleep which also apply to death are ones made most salient. (130).

Pilkington is making a point about how a reader would come to a certain conclusion about the repetition's meaning based on shared cultural assumptions about the word "sleep" which is made salient through the device of epizeuxis. According to Pilkington, sleep also becomes salient because of a cultural assumption he identifies about sleep being like death in that you are still, unresponsive, your eyes are closed, etc. So when we read the word "sleep" in this poem, it calls attention to itself by repetition, and that repetition makes a reader sit with the word, allowing the idea, the cultural assumption of sleep being like death, to become manifest. This is why assumptions about sleep are more salient than ones about, say, "miles." He ends his analysis saying that this "sleep = death equation" is further activated "because of the contexts made accessible by the rest of the poem ('the darkest evening of the year,'etc.)" which speaks more to the complexity of how such a conclusion may be arrived at. We remember his assertion about metaphor, that "The success of a poetic metaphor depends on not only (if at all) its originality, but the creation of a context which encourages and guides the exploration of the encyclopaedic entries of the concept involved," and I argue a similar notion for epizeuxis: that the sleep=death conclusion is not just further activated by the context but is activated *because* of the context. That is, the success of the repetition to achieve the result of sleep=death equation depends on the context which guides the reader to explore certain encyclopedic entries that would likely lead her to such a conclusion. I will soon, in the next section, discuss *incidentals*—a description used by Stephen Booth--and I will use Pilkington's notion that readers are guided to arrive at certain conclusions based on contexts provided, but I will be careful not to suggest what any poem is about based on poetic effects. Pilkington also sees the danger of such readings: "According to this reading the real theme of the poem is the strong attraction of death which the poem's narrator finally resists. This reading may be too rigid; it may fall into the common trap of treating poems as puzzle to solve" (131). Instead, I will track and point out contextual material that "encourages and guides the exploration of the encyclopaedic entries" not necessarily of the concept involved, but of concepts incidental to the concept involved. Take for instance Shakespeare's Sonnet 30:

When to the sessions of sweet silent thought
I summon up remembrance of things past,

I sigh the lack of many a thing I sought,
And with old woes new wail my dear time's waste:
Then can I drown an eye, unus'd to flow,
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night,
And weep afresh love's long since cancell'd woe,
And moan th' **expense** of many a vanish'd sight;
Then can I grieve at grievances foregone,
And heavily from woe to woe tell o'er
The sad **account** of fore-bemoaned moan,
Which I new **pay** as if not **paid** before.
But if the while I think on thee, dear friend,
All **losses** are restor'd, and sorrows end.

In this Sonnet about loss and grief, Shakespeare uses words associated with accounting which is an incidental idea to the meaning of the poem. The use of "expense," "account," "pay," "paid," and "losses" all generate a concept different from the concept of loss, grief, etc.

Pilkington also diverges from Sperber and Wilson's account of poetic effects in terms of their explanation of the affective element of poetic effects. They argue that *poetic effects* describe "the peculiar effect of an utterance which achieves most of its relevance through a wide array of weak implicatures," and that the "peculiar effect" of poetic communication accounts for affective communication in poetic language: "Utterances with poetic effects can be used precisely to create the sense of apparently affective rather than cognitive mutuality." However, Pilkington argues that affect generated by poetic effects cannot be reduced to a series of minute cognitive effects. Instead, he proposes that in order to achieve affective effects, these cognitive effects must be in conjunction with the evocation of an emotional "qualitative state," or an emotional qualia, as defined by Georges Rey (1980).

A qualia is a philosophical term defined as an individual's subjective and conscious experience. For example, "a qualia" is the way a flower smells or how a kitten's fur feels, and "emotional qualia" can be the way a poem makes one feel. The concept of qualia is more complex than I will go into and its use by particular philosophers is much debated, but I will not be discussing these issues here. Instead I will focus on Pilkington's use of the term: "Rey (1980) characterizes emotions as complex states possessing cognitive, physiological, behavioural and qualitative properties." The *cognitive properties* are defined as sets of beliefs and desires, and are therefore "characterized…in terms of their intentionality: *emotions* are about something, they refer to states of affairs and events in the world" (143). The *physiological properties* of emotion have to do with the physiological effects that arise from external phenomena such the fight or flight response. The *behavioral properties* "include bodily movement and gesture." Qualitative properties are the subjective way one *feels*, such as sadness, happiness, anger and so on. Pilkington argues that "literariness can be characterized in terms of the attempt to express these relatively ineffable 'quality feels'" (144). Of the four properties, qualitative properties are the most subjective and therefore the most difficult to analyze and theorize about.

Rey asserts that

> …a specific cognition or constellation of cognitions, might be linked nomologically to specific qualitative and physiological states, and so forth; a given emotion might be regarded as some commonly occurring segment of such a

> sequence. A crude but not impossible instance might be, say, depression over the collapse of one's career: This might be identified as the sequence beginning with the belief that one's career has indeed collapsed, the quite strong preference that it hadn't, a consequent depletion of norepinephrine, the effects of that depletion upon the nervous system, consequent further changes in cognition (e.g., the belief that nothing any longer is worth while, decreased preferences for doing anything at all), followed by still further depletions of norepinephrine, and further effects of this still greater depletion , various portions of this sequence being accompanied, perhaps, by that unmistakable qualitative feel… Rey 1980: 188

Based on the casual relationship of the qualitative properties to cognitive and physiological parts of emotional states, Pilkington suggests that "properties of emotions are really properties of physiological states, that when we talk of such qualitative properties we are really talking about conscious awareness in relation to such physiological states, just as we talk about the sensation of an itch or a headache." In this way, Pilkington speculates that all emotions, then, "are complex physiological states triggering different types of conscious awareness. Some physiological states trigger conscious awareness in the form of 'thoughts', and some in the form of 'feelings' (145).

Though Pilkington makes the argument that Sperber and Wilson's theory of the affective dimension of poetic effects is inadequate in terms of explaining how the affective experience is achieved and proposes that Rey's account of emotional qualia could add the missing link, he ultimately admits that the idea of qualia is still only speculative. However, he ends with the possibility of developing a theory of literary aesthetic effect on based on Rey's qualitative states and relevance theory. I do not attempt to develop a theory of literary aesthetic effect based on emotional qualia in combination with the relevance theory, but I do want to use a more general notion that emotions are both cognitive and physiological as a way to suggest, as Pilkington does, that emotions are "complex physiological states triggering different types of conscious awareness." Rey's notion of emotional states points to a more general notion that is currently debated called the mind-body problem which explores the relationship between the mind and body and questions whether or not to treat the mind and body as dualistic or whole. Currently our biomedical paradigm is built on the notion that there is a mind-body dualism, but research in neural science is suggesting that there may be no separation between the mind and the body. In the next chapter I will discuss the intersections of the mind-body connection in the early modern medical paradigm and the recent resurgence of that notion in neural and cognitive science, as well as the intersection of the early modern notion of poetry as having humoral properties that affect reader both physiologically and mentally simultaneously as well as this notion of the holistic mind-body effect of poetic effects that Rey and ultimately Pilkington are now suggesting.

My aim is to think of poetic effects from the paradigm of the early modern humoral model and from a current cognitive science paradigm, and to suggest that the early moderns thought of the effects of poetry as impacting readers both physiologically as well as psychologically. In the cognitive model I am working from, relevance theory, I focus on Sperber and Wilson's claim that "utterances with poetic effects can be used precisely to create the sense of apparently affective rather than cognitive mutuality," and that they achieve this effect through a wide array of weak implicatures. In juxtaposing these two paradigms I want to show how the current paradigm moves closer to developing an explanation for the phenomenon that the early

moderns observed: that poetry could affect one physiologically. I argue that ancient Greek as well as early modern hunches that poetry is a material substance that could enter the body and disturb it can be compatible with Sperber and Wilson's thoughts about how processing poetic effects alter one's cognitive environment through the communications of impressions. In chapter 2 I will discuss some humoral theories of the effects of poetry on the reader, but before I do this, I want to close out this chapter with an explanation of an aspect of poetry that neither Sperber and Wilson nor Pilkington recognize as a poetic device, but which I argue works like one. This aspect, common in poetry, and pointed out by Stephen Booth, consists of incidental material in poems that communicate something different from the plot of the poem. I will call them incidentals.

Poetic Effects and Incidentals:

Sperber and Wilson discuss poetic effects in terms of epizeuxis, parallelisms, metaphor, echoic utterances and irony, while Pilkington focuses on poetic effects in terms of metaphor and epizeuxis, metrical variation and sound patterning. Pilkington analyzes well-established poetic devices used for poetic effects, but I want to point to a stylistic choice in poetry—perhaps used in other forms of writing as well—that works to create poetic effects not discussed by either Sperber and Wilson or Pilkington, what I am calling a poetic device derived from Stephen Booth's idea of incidental poetic material in early modern poetry. I call this poetic device incidentals and define it as an unrelenting abundance of poetic impressions, incidental from the propositional content of the utterance. Incidentals hint at a different idea from the plot of the lines. Because they are made of weak implicatures and poetic impressions, they are not recognized or retained by the hearer; instead, they are discarded as not part of the plot, and yet they are felt. Incidentals work like a formal device, or a literary convention in that they create an extra organization and are quite widespread in early modern poetry.

Though, to my knowledge, Booth never formally wrote that incidentals could be considered a poetic device, evidence of the nascence of this idea occurs widely in his scholarship. For example, in *Precious Nonsense*, he explicates *Twelfth Night* in terms of incidental patterns: "I have so far dwelt principally on the syntactic illogic of scene and with the way syntactic gestures…make the speech sound logically coherent when its coherence actually derives from substantively 'incidental' patterning factors" (144). Many of Booth's close readings hinge on "incidental patterning factors" in relation to "syntactic logic" as a way to demonstrate how Shakespeare readers can think that they understand what they are reading because of the ease with which harmonies such as phonic patterns, meter, etc. move them swiftly forward; but when slowed down and close read, the more dense lines that at first were easily read with confidence, now show their difficulty. I imagine that since Booth was interested in the experience of poems and not the interpretation or the theorizing of them, that he would not have theorized this idea of incidentals. This is, however, what I endeavor to do, and I am indebted to Booth for pointing out and naming this phenomenon.

Together with Booth, I have observed use of incidentals in works of several early modern poets that have never been isolated and defined as a poetic device, but which I am claiming act like one and therefore can be defined as one. What these poets do, I argue, is generate a poetic effect in readers through what I call incidentals, defined above as an unrelenting abundance of poetic impressions made up of manifold formal extra organizations of incidental content, incidental from the propositional content of the utterance. By manifold formal extra

organizations I mean that these incidental organizations can be made up of more than one formal feature. For example, an incidental organization may be comprised of metaphor, epizeuxis, meter, parallelism, etc. However, although incidentals may be made up of other formal devices, they are not in themselves any of these formal devices—they use them to communicate affect or feeling. What connects them is an idea of their incidental content. For instance, we may read a poem that is about death, but impressions about elementary school education may be communicated. We can therefore read a poem about death that simultaneously communicates impressions about childhood education. I do not want to take the leap that Pilkington does and suggest a reading that uses the calculation of implicatures to determine what a poem is "really" about to the exclusion of its manifest propositional content. What I want to do is keep what I earlier called the "plot" and "context" separate from the communication of the impressions, which are not communicated thoughts but felt, non-deducible communication, and to argue that the "peculiar effect" or "ineffable feel" when reading poetically rich literature is the impressions that generate sensation through a wide array of weak implicatures in the experience of the reading. I suggest that these impressions are felt because they are communicated through impressions and are not presented as knowledge but as feelings or affect.

The incidental works like a formal device, or a literary convention in that it creates an extra organization. I am using the term "extra organization" to discuss incidentals, but any formal device can be seen as an extra organization. Meter for example can be defined as an extra organization from the plot: It has a form and structure that has nothing to do with plot. Things like meter, rhyme, epizeuxis, and so on, have been generally seen as merely ornamental and not necessary to plot. Plot is defined as the material dealt with in a literary work as distinct from its form or style. However, I am suggesting that literary devices are crucial to literary works in that they don't just embellish literature, but they communicate impressions, which is a large part of how literature communicates.

In addition, I argue that form and style in the examples I put forth are communicating content incidental to the material dealt with in the literary work. In this way, these devices and structures are not merely ornamental, but they add extra content to a literary piece that isn't a part of the plot of the piece. I will show many examples of incidentals to clarify what they are and how they produce a poetic effect or "the peculiar effect of an utterance which achieves most of its relevance through a wide array of weak implicatures." The poetic effect, as defined by Sperber and Wilson, is generated through the communication of common impressions, and I argue that incidentals create a poetic effect.

In the short example below, I will tease out one incidental from *Othello* to demonstrate what I mean, but before I do that, I want to demonstrate how a formal device creates an extra organization. Iago alarms Brabantio about Desdemona's betrothal to Othello:

Iago: Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul;
Even now, now, very now, an old black ram
Is tupping your white ewe. (1.1.87-89)

We know that the plot, or narrative of these lines is simply that Iago is alarming Brabantio of Desdemona's betrothal to Othello. Iago uses powerful hyperbole, metaphor and repetition in expressing the betrothal of Desdemona and Othello and the consummation of their marriage. The formal devices of metaphor, hyperbole and repetition add an extra organization that intensifies the message by generating impressions of horror: In "Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul;" he uses hyperbole and metaphor to communicate alarm and tragedy for Brabantio, and in "Even now, now, very now, an old black ram, / is tupping your white ewe," impressions of racist

and shocking sexual imagery communicate a terrifying image of the innocent and virtuous Desdemona being mounted by an old black ram.

Where in the examples above, metaphor, hyperbole, and repetition are used to generate extra organizations that add intensity to the plot of the lines, an incidental is the incidental material in poems that generates an extra organization which communicates something different from the plot of the lines. For example, in the first line, "Your heart is burst, you have lost half your soul;" the Your/you/your pattern creates a balance in the line, an extra organization of harmony. The beginning of the line starts with "your," the center of the line has "you" and the near end of the line is "your." By punctuating "your" in this line in terms of its placement, Iago emphasizes Brabantio's possession: *his* heart is burst and *he's* lost half his soul, and in referring to Desdemona as half his soul, it links her to his possession, his property. I bring this up to refer to the your/you/your pattern again, and to suggest that though that pattern is seemingly without significance, the connection of Desdemona as the possession that Brabantio has lost, and that this loss is half his soul, sets us up for what follows: "Even now, now, very now, an old black ram / Is tupping your white ewe." Following this metaphoric logic, the old black ram has stolen Brabantio's possession, half his soul and is "tupping" it. Of course, this sounds weird, and the extra organization generates a deepening impression of weirdness when we think of the your/you/your pattern for the following line: "Is tupping **your** white **ewe**." I underline the possessive "your"and the "ewe" to underscore the homophone that makes the impression "an old black ram is tupping your white YOU." The incidental material of the your/you/your pattern makes an extra meaning different than that of the narrative or plot of the lines, and this is what I mean by the *incidental.* It is an extra meaning that formal devices of any kind–and in this case the repetition of the your/you pattern–make. I argue that the accumulation of incidentals can be seen as a stylistic choice of its own that creates a poetic effect, that it can and should be recognized as a literary device.

Chapter 2: Sexual Incidentals

In this chapter I will show how what I am calling *incidentals* (which I define as material in poetry made up of incidental meanings that hint at a different idea from the plot of the lines) are a poetic effect that communicates impressions. Though there are many things an incidental can communicate through impressions, in this chapter I focus on the communication of sexual incidentals for two reasons: one, to demonstrate how an incidental with a sexual suggestion covertly communicates a sexual meaning in readers when there shouldn't be one; and two, to examine the reasons how and why the authors Shakespeare and Spenser might have chosen covert sexual communication versus overt. First, however, it will be important to discuss language and poetic impressions from the perspective of humoral theory.

The humoral body and dangerous impressions:

According to Galenic writers of the humoral theory, words have a materiality and power to enter the "pourous" body of the undisciplined reader or listener and make impressions upon their "sensitive soule." As Gail Kern Paster says about the early modern way of thinking, "we fail to recognize how the pourous and volatile humoral body, with its faulty borders and penetrable stuff, interacts differently with the world rather than 'the static, solid' modern body container" (*Humoring the Body* 23). According to this early modern way of thinking, highly wrought and passionate language like poetry or rhetoric has a liveliness that can stir the passions. Many early modern moralists and writers cautioned against ornate and impassioned language for its potentially immoral effects on its audience.

For early modern English, imagination or fancy, was seen as the breeding ground for sin. Robin Briggs, in "By the Strength of Fancie" states, "The primary meaning [of imagination] is of course the formation of mental images independently of direct input from the senses. In the early modern period this was usually seen as a dangerous source of illusion and error" (260). Similarly, concerns about the effects of highly wrought poetry as dangerous stemmed from these beliefs. Words were powerful because they were thought to have humoral bodies that could enter the human body and influence it.

Craik writes that, "[l]iterary styles have their own tempers, humors and complexions which are, like the authors, hot, or cold 'according to the metal of their minds' (Craik 38). She also explains the anxiety around "the particular dangers posed to emotional and bodily equilibrium by what [Thomas] Wright called 'light and wanton Poets'" (21). Wanton poets wrote poems "designed to incite blasphemy and godlessness" (Craik 21 note 41).

Early modern writers and ancient philosophers spoke of poems in bodily terms from Aristotle to Sidney. Poems were anatomized and were said to have a life force—*enargia*—that was transmitted from the poet during his composition of the poem. Craik points out that Puttenham "describes a vigorous, energetic and powerfully creative exchange between the substance of poetry and the minds and bodies of those who encounter it" (41). It is easy to imagine this when we consider the easily penetrable humoral body. Humoralism, as Paster and others discuss, did not separate physiology from psychology. Each internal organ produced affect: "the blood making liver, the hungry heart, the angry gall bladder, and the melancholy spleen" (Paster 22), so the matter (internal organ) and emotion were inseparable.

Michael Shoenfeldt in his book, *Bodies and Selves in Early Modern England* describes a self-portrait by Albrect Dürer in which he points to his spleen, "the organ responsible for the production of melancholy" as a way "to express inwardness materially." In this way, Shoenfeldt argues that certain early modern poets also "point to various regions of their bodies to articulate what we would call a psychological state" (1), as a way to "to express inwardness materially." He writes that

> Plato in the *Timaeus* was among the first to locate what we would call emotions in bodily organs. He lists what he terms 'pathemata' by name, ascribing the rational part of the soul to the head, the soul's faculty of courage and anger to the part of the body near the heart…and desire to the lower part of the body. (8-9)

Craik argues how impressions made from words were thought of as material or substance that could literally imprint ideas and images on the imaginations of the reader or listener. As cited before, Thomas Wright in his treatise *The Passions of the Minde in Generall*, Craik explains that:

> Impressions from the senses press upon the soul like a seal in soft wax, or else make a permanent and indelible mark 'as the sparrows attached to birdlime, or the flies sticke in honnie.' It is these subtle movements of the sensitive soul which are the driving force behind emotional experience, and which give rise in turn to passions or perturbations.

Craik writes that in "both *An Apology* [Sidney] and *The Arte* [Puttenham]…reading involves an exchange between material language and the material bodies of readers" (36), and Gail Kern Paster writes, "formed out of breath, the human voice communicates not just meaning, but matter" (Paster 50). This idea of words as matter that can alter the matter of the humoral body is central to the early modern understanding of poetry and fear of its effects.

Sexual Incidentals and Impressions

Thinking about the materiality of poetry as possibly dangerous to the unsuspecting and non-discerning reader according to the early modern moralists, I want to now talk about sexual incidentals in Shakespeare and Spenser and what they might reveal about how sexual content is being communicated in their poetry and what that says about them as authors writing in a time when this kind of subject matter was considered immoral.

Incidentals generate impressions extraneous to the plot of the work and to the information of the sentence, and poetic effects communicate impressions whose content is different from the communication of the plot. In chapter 1, I show how Adrian Pilkington uses relevance theory to analyze well-established poetic devices and how they are used for poetic effects, but I want to point to a stylistic choice in poetry that works to create poetic effects not discussed by either Sperber and Wilson or Pilkington, a stylistic choice I refer to as incidentals. In several early modern poets, I have observed clusters of incidental material that together do what formal devices do, which is to create an extra organization, and therefore themselves act like a formal device. These clusters of incidental material, that I am calling incidentals, are not typically isolated and defined as such, but I am claiming they act like a formal device and therefore can be defined as one. What these poets do, I argue, is generate a poetic effect in readers through an unrelenting abundance of poetic impressions made up of manifold formal extra organizations of incidental content, incidental from the content of the plot. As I mention in the introduction, by

manifold formal extra organizations I mean that these incidental organizations can be made up of more than one formal feature. For example, an incidental organization may include metaphor, epizeuxis, meter, parallelism, etc. What connects them is an idea of their incidental content. I keep the content of plot separate from the communication of the incidentals to argue that the "peculiar effect" or "ineffable feel" when reading poetically rich literature is caused by the incidentals that generate sensation through a wide array of weak implicatures in the experience of the reading. As Sperber and Wilson explain, impressions are felt because they are communicated through implicatures and do not register as knowledge but as feelings.

The incidental works like a formal device, or a literary convention in that it creates an extra organization and is quite widespread in early modern poetry. I am using the term "extra organization" to discuss incidentals in particular, but any formal device can be seen as an extra organization. Meter for example can be defined as an extra organization from the plot: It has a form and structure that has nothing to do with plot. Literary devices like meter, rhyme, epizeuxis, and so on, have been generally seen as merely ornamental and not necessary to plot: plot is defined as the material dealt with in a literary work as distinct from its form or style. However, I am suggesting that literary devices are crucial to literary works in that they don't just embellish literature, but they communicate impressions, which are a large part of how literature communicates.

In this essay I will be looking at verses in the poetry of Spenser and Shakespeare whose apparent content has nothing to do with erotics, and yet generate a strong sexually charged energy not easily accounted for in a casual reading. I want to suggest that as a reader travels through these verses, a sexual charge is sparked in a minefield of irrelevant incidentals, and that these incidentals develop into an extra organization that do something akin to what meter, alliteration, and other types of formal devices can do: produce a coloration of meaning not talked about in the stuff of the content. I argue that what makes certain moments in poetry erotic, when the content is not, is the experience of an erotic charge as an undertone of sensual incidentals one is not quite aware of, but is experiencing nonetheless. I will differentiate between overtly sexual poetry and the kind of erotic poetry I will be focusing on—poetry that I suggest carries an erotic charge that can be felt through the subtlety of incidentals—as a way to think about what makes poetry erotic versus simply bawdy. Both overt and covert sexuality can generate an arousing experience, but the more covert sexuality, I assert, is erotic instead of merely pornographic. That is, erotic poetry of the kind I will be examining isn't just sexual but is a complex blending of the erotic with the unerotic, and that the experience may not only be felt as arousing, but erotic in the Platonic sense in which Eros in art is the bringing into agreement two disparate elements—in this case, the sexual with the nonsexual. I will focus on the more covertly erotic verses as a way to account for what makes some poetry erotic.

To delineate the difference between bawdy and erotic in poetry I want to look at a section of Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis* that demonstrates both the bawdy and the erotic:

229 "Fondling," she saith, "since I have hemm'd thee here
230 Within the circuit of this ivory pale,
231 I'll be a park, and thou shalt be my deer:
232 Feed where thou wilt, on mountain, or in dale;
233 Graze on my lips, and if those hills be dry,
234 Stray lower, where the pleasant fountains lie.

235 "Within this limit is relief enough,
236 Sweet bottom grass and high delightful plain,
237 Round rising hillocks, brakes obscure and rough,
238 To shelter thee from tempest and from rain;
239 Then be my deer, since I am such a park,
240 No dog shall rouse thee, though a thousand bark."

Through analogies the content of lines 229-240 is overtly sexual: Venus' park in which Adonis, as a deer confined to the limits of her body, is encouraged to "Feed where thou wilt, on mountain, or in dale; / Graze on my lips, and if those hills be dry, / Stray lower, where the pleasant fountains lie." Geographically, it is not difficult to imagine what analogous fountains lay south of the lips, and the Renaissance reader would have been familiar with the representation of feminine sexual desire and the vaginal references to fountains. Take for example Herrick's,

To Dianeme.
Shew me thy feet; shew my thy legs, thy thighs;
Shew me Those Fleshie Principalities;
Shew me that Hill (where smiling Love doth sit)
Having a living Fountain under it.
Shew my thy waste; Then let me there withal,
By the Assention of the Lawn, see All.

This overtly sexual poem in which the poet moves quickly from the feet of the beloved, up the legs, thighs and then settles in the vaginal area in which a "living Fountain" lies, helps to demonstrate the commonplace of the trope of fountain as vaginal. Venus' "Pleasant fountains" would indeed be an obvious sexual reference and that the content of the verse is made overtly sexual. In addition, the line "Sweet bottom grass and high delightful plain" would have also registered as sexual to the Renaissance reader[4]. However, Bottom, the character, is an ass, and there is evidence that reinforces "ass" as a slang term for buttocks in the last scene of *Love's Labour's Lost*. The gentles are torturing Holofernes who is attempting to present Judas Machabeus in the pageant of the worthies:

621 <Hol.> You have put me out of countenance.
622 <Ber.> False, we have given thee faces.
623 <Hol.> But you have out-fac'd them all.
624 <Ber.> And thou wert a lion, we would do so.
625 <Boyet.> Therefore as he is, an ass, let him go.
626 And so adieu, sweet Jude! Nay, why dost thou stay?
627 <Dum.> For the latter end of his name.
628 <Ber.> For the ass to the Jude; give it him. Jud-as,
away!
629 <Hol.> This is not generous, not gentle, not humble.

[4] Criticisms to the contrary oppose the reading of the name "Bottom" from *A Midsummer Night's Dream* as a slang term for buttocks on the basis that such a definition does not exist in the OED.

Since Bottom is an ass, we have evidence here that "ass" and "bottom" were both slang for "buttocks." "Sweet bottom" then, given the region of the body the poem explores, along with the clear slang meaning of "bottom" pretty much ensures the overt sexuality of Venus' analogy when we come to: "Stray lower, where the pleasant fountains lie./ Within this limit is relief enough, / Sweet bottom grass and high delightful plain."

In the stanzas following, the erotic meaning becomes less obvious to the reader and communicated more through incidentals:

241 At this Adonis smiles as in disdain,
242 That in each cheek appears a pretty dimple;
243 Love made those hollows, if himself were slain,
244 He might be buried in a tomb so simple,
245 Foreknowing well, if there he came to lie,
246 Why, there love liv'd and there he could not die.

247 These lovely caves, these round enchanting pits,
248 Open'd their mouths to swallow Venus' liking.
249 Being mad before, how doth she now for wits?
250 Struck dead at first, what needs a second striking?
251 Poor queen of love, in thine own law forlorn,
252 to love a cheek that smiles at thee in scorn!

Venus' sexual forwardness is self-evident in her attempts to get Adonis to make love to her, but let's contrast these lines with lines 241-252, quoted above, in which the reluctant Adonis rejects her sexual requests. The content of lines 247-251 is about dimples which has been established for us in the previous lines, 241-246, "in each cheek appears a pretty dimple…those hollows" and now in the last verse as "these lovely caves, these round enchanting pits." Unlike the obvious sexual content of Venus' fountains in contrast to Venus declaring "I'll be a park, and thou shalt be my deer," in which the substance of the lines is an obscene joke, Adonis' dimples are a substantive description of his face: "At this Adonis smiles as in disdain, / That in each cheek appears a pretty dimple." The substance of lines 229-240 is about Venus making a bawdy joke in order to seduce Adonis, and the content in the next two stanzas has to do with Adonis' response to her: smiling in disdain and the resulting dimples in his cheeks. This, I argue, is not sexual in content, but has extra sexual meaning that momentarily registers in the mind as sexual. So the experience is erotic but it's not pushy in the way it is in the park analogy.

The way the sexual experience is generated is through a string of incidentals that make an extra meaning of sexuality over the substantive matter of Adonis' disdain. We know that "these lovely caves, these round enchanting pits" refer to the dimples as established in lines 241-242. The following line that these pits or dimples "Open'd their mouths to swallow Venus' liking" is again referring to the dimples, but there is an added dimension to the dimples that is difficult to figure substantively. The dimples do not literally open like mouths. We are again in the territory of metaphor: Adonis' dimples deepen and open as he smiles providing a pleasure for Venus, to swallow Venus' liking. In the following line, "Being mad before, how doth she now for wits?" literally says that having been crazy in love before, now that she sees his dimples, what will she do now for wits (as in mental faculties). That "the lovely caves, these round enchanting pits, / Open'd their mouths to swallow Venus' liking" is evocative of more than the

deepening of dimples. “Open’d their mouths” shifts away from the idea of dimples to evoke the idea of opening mouths. “To swallow Venus’ liking” generates the image of mouths that now open to swallow, but when we come to “liking” it’s a bit jarring. Having been momentarily taken off track about what is being talked about, dimples, we are expecting that it is an object that will be swallowed and not an abstraction. The mind has to adjust itself, remembering that this is a metaphor for how pleasing the dimples are to Venus, but the experience being so different from the material of the content, the line may read as uncomfortably confusing. I say this because we have been momentarily led astray by the incidental, and a less careful reader may start to believe that what is being addressed now are mouths and not dimples.

In any case, assuming readers will rein in the tendency to go with the incidental and remember that the subject is dimples, we move on to the next line: “Being mad before, how doth she now for wits?” As I said before, this line can be easily glossed as: having been crazy in love before, now that she sees his dimples, what will she do now for wits (mental faculties). However, the other meaning for “wits” in Renaissance England is a slang term for genitals and thus provides a convenient incidental. In Booth’s *Shakespeare’s Sonnets*, in the analysis for Sonnet 26, he writes, “Wit, as Ellis clearly demonstrates (pp.103-10), was commonly used in punning contexts…to mean ‘penis’ (and ‘vulva’) as well” (Booth 177). That is, having had the lingering experience of mouths opening up to swallow something belonging to Venus, her “liking,” we may, as I mentioned before, anticipate an object, but get an abstraction. “Wits” is complicated by its slang meaning which would provide the object we were expecting in the previous line. In this way, the expectation of the object that would go into the opening mouths would be completed with the incidental meaning of “genital.” In addition, “how doth she now for wits?” is reminiscent of the Renaissance riddle taken from the common greeting of salespeople to their customers: “What do you lack?” It translates into something like, “may I help you” or “what is it that you need that I can help you find?” As with the shopkeeper Mrs. Openwork in *The Roaring Girl:*

Mrs. Openwork.
Gentleman, what is’t you lack, what is’t you buy/
See fine bands and ruffs, fine lawns, fine cambrics. What is’t
You lack, gentlemen, what is’t you buy? 2.1.1-3

The phrase adopted a slang meaning which when one was asked implied not so much a question of what lacks, but a statement that what one lacks is a penis, a joke referenced on several occasions, for example in Herbert’s “Love III”:

1 Love bade me welcome; yet my soul drew back,
2 Guilty of dust and sin.
3 But quick-eyed Love, observing me grow slack
4 From my first entrance in,
5 Drew nearer to me, sweetly questioning,
6 If I lacked anything.

Along these lines, going back to the “Venus’ liking” as a kind of failure to produce an anticipated object, “how doth she now for wits?” speaks to that expectation with an idea of an object by way of one that is missing. The incidental meaning of “how doth she now for wits?” (as a variation of the “what do you lack” riddle, and another variation: “what do maid’s lack,” which all have the same answer of “penis,” both in reference to the riddle and reinforced by the

slang term "wits") provides the missing object by way of thinking about what the missing object on Venus is: a penis. "These lovely caves, these round enchanting pits" which at first seems somehow sexual has, by the time one gets to "wits," had its sexual resonance reinforced through the string of incidentals that accumulate and peak at "wits." Not only is the sexual resonance made substantial, but a particular meaning of that resonance is put into relief: that the dimples/lovely caves heavily suggest vaginal orifices made more palpable by the liking/penis formulation, and that this idea mimics what would be Venus' masculine sexual aggressiveness towards the more feminized and reluctant Adonis. It's worth noting that the bawdy and pornographic language of the Venus lines primes us for the bizarre sexual incidentals of the Adonis lines. Referring back to relevance, since we have read the overtly sexual Venus lines, it makes sense that we continue to search for sexual suggestiveness. Therefore the Adonis lines, though more sexually opaque, still register as sexual, yet we don't know why.

In Spenser's *The Faerie Queene*, Book I*,* the sexual dalliance of Red Crosse Knight and Duessa is similarly covert, hinted at only through incidental pieces that amount to an erotic overlay on the substantive events of stanzas two-seven:

VII.

2
Who when returning from the drery Night,
She fownd not in that perilous house of Pryde,
Where she had left, the noble Redcrosse knight,
Her hoped pray, she would no lenger bide,
But forth she went, to seeke him far and wide.
Ere long she fownd, whereas he wearie sate,
To rest him selfe, foreby a fountaine side,
Disarmed all of yron-coted Plate,
And by his side his steed the grassy forage ate.

3
He feedes vpon the cooling shade, and bayes
His sweatie forehead in the breathing wind,
Which through the trembling leaues full gently playes
Wherein the cherefull birds of sundry kind
Do chaunt sweet musick, to delight his mind:
The Witch approching gan him fairely greet,
And with reproch of carelesnesse vnkind
Vpbrayd, for leauing her in place vnmeet,
With fowle words tempring faire, soure gall with hony sweet.

4
Vnkindnesse past, they gan of solace treat,
And bathe in pleasaunce of the ioyous shade,
Which shielded them against the boyling heat,
And with greene boughes decking a gloomy glade,
About the fountaine like a girlond made;
Whose bubbling waue did euer freshly well,
Ne euer would through feruent sommer fade:

The sacred Nymph, which therein wont to dwell,
Was out of Dianes fauour, as it then befell.
5
The cause was this: one day when Phoebe fayre
With all her band was following the chace,
This Nymph, quite tyr'd with heat of scorching ayre,
Sat downe to rest in middest of the race:
The goddesse wroth gan fowly her disgrace,
And bad the waters, which from her did flow,
Be such as she her selfe was then in place.
Thenceforth her waters waxed dull and slow,
And all that drunke thereof, did faint and feeble grow.
6
Hereof this gentle knight vnweeting was,
And lying downe vpon the sandie graile,
Drunke of the streame, as cleare as cristall glas;
Eftsoones his manly forces gan to faile,
And mightie strong was turnd to feeble fraile.
His chaunged powres at first them selues not felt,
Till crudled cold his corage gan assaile,
And chearefull bloud in faintnesse chill did melt,
Which like a feuer fit through all his body swelt.
7
Yet goodly court he made still to his Dame,
Pourd out in loosnesse on the grassy grownd,
Both carelesse of his health, and of his fame:
Till at the last he heard a dreadfull sownd,
Which through the wood loud bellowing, did rebownd,
That all the earth for terrour seemd to shake,
And trees did tremble. Th'Elfe therewith astownd,
Vpstarted lightly from his looser make,
And his vnready weapons gan in hand to take.

Hot and tired, the Nymph "sat downe to rest in middest of the race." Similarly, Red Crosse is found resting in the beginning of Canto 7, which is the middle of Book I and the middle of his quest. In a way, readers are also asked to slow down as well because reading these stanzas has the effect of slogging through dense verse. If, for instance, readers get through, "And chearefull bloud in faintnesse chill did melt," without stopping to question how a "chill" can "melt," then readers may think they're understanding something they don't. The intellectual difficulty is registering in the mind, but readers, reading at a normal clip will likely feel the experience of the difficulty rather than understand it. Experiences of grasping intellectual difficulty are deeply satisfying. I don't mean to suggest that readers, especially trained ones, would not notice these difficulties in a reading. What I mean is that readers, during say, a first reading, will not likely slow down enough to analyze this closely for the basic reason that what one usually pays most attention to in such readings is substance, and in addition to this, rhythm moves readers along

rather than slowing down, let alone stopping, unless, of course, the poet intentionally uses rhythm towards these ends.

For these stanzas I want to bring attention to the incidental complexities that account for the experience that, though there's no evidence for this in the content of the stanzas, amounts to a sexual one. In stanza 2, "Ere long she fownd, whereas he wearie sate,/ To rest him selfe, foreby a fountaine side,/ Disarmed all of yron-coted Plate,/ And by his side his steed the grassy forage ate" already enters probable erotic territory by way of the fountain metaphor discussed earlier. Also, "and by his side his steed" introduces the horse, which at this moment is nothing special but in stanza 3: "He feedes vpon the cooling shade, and bayes/ His sweatie forehead in the breathing wind" except that the "he" here refers to red Crosse and not the horse. Since the subject of the last sentence in the previous stanza is the steed, and the first word in stanza 3 is the noun "he," the confusion of subject doesn't occur until line 5 when we realize that "to delight his mind" can only refer to Red Crosse and not the horse. However, the subject ambiguity collapses the animal that is symbolic of lust and Red Crosse Knight. Indeed, without considering that "delight his mind" could only be referring to Red Crosse, since the steed in not a character whose thoughts we're privy to, it's easy to not notice the slippage at all, and we may continue to think we are reading about the steed. It's easy to overlook the confusion, and the experience of it will likely register as a passage we think we understand; yet there's something uncomfortable about the experience. Unless we stop to closely analyze this sentence, we are likely to misread it, or "fall into error." In any case, the ambiguity makes us believe that we're reading about the steed when we're reading about Red Crosse and assigns an incidental meaning of lust to Red Crosse that is compounded by the fact that he's resting by a "fountain."

Solace in stanza 4 "Vnkindnesse past, they gan of solace treat," has an incidental meaning of pleasure (OED 2.), and "pleasure" had sexual implications as well: pleasure as sensuous enjoyment. That meaning is echoed again in "pleasaunce," line 2. "Bathe" in line 2 echoes "bayes" (bathes) in Stanza 3 line 1, and the idea of "bathes" is symmetrical to each other. Consider their placements in their respective stanzas:

3.1-2:
He feedes vpon the cooling shade, **and bayes**
His sweatie forehead in the breathing wind,
4.1-2:
Vnkindnesse past, they gan of solace treat,
And bathe in pleasaunce of the ioyous shade,

In 3.1 "and bayes" occurs at the end of line 2, while in 4.2, "And Bathe" begins in line 2 making a nice symmetry and repetition between the two stanzas. This symmetry and repetition are barely noticeable, but I argue it that registers in the reader as a faint experience of something sexual. I suggest sexual because when we line up the little incidental offshoots that I have been pointing out, they begin to add up to something like a sexual nuance: Red Crosse is disarmed (perhaps naked, or almost naked) near a fountain (with all of its implications), he is momentarily indistinguishable from the horse insinuating lustiness, and there's a repetition of "bathing" (with Duessa in the second instance) and all these little suggestions account for the feel of sexual pleasure in these stanzas.

The sexual incidentals continue to gain momentum through the rest of the stanzas. 4.4-6 bring back the idea of the fountain, this time, "and with greene boughes decking a gloomy

glade,/ About the fountaine like a girlond made;/Whose bubbling waue did euer freshly well." The vaginal reference seems obvious, but to reinforce the reading, consider the description of the Mound of Venus in Book III:

Right in the middest of that Paradise,
There stood a stately Mount, on whose round top
A gloomy groue of mirtle trees did rise,
Whose shady boughs sharp steele did neuer lop,
Nor wicked beastes their tender buds did crop,
But like a girlond compassed the hight,
And from their fruitfull sydes sweet gum did drop,
That all the ground with pretious deaw bedight,
Threw forth most dainty odours, and most sweet delight. III.vi.43

Not only is the "girlond" around the fountain repeated in Venus' mound, but "middest" occurs again, this time in reference to the Garden of Adonis that has at its middle point the mound of Venus. In addition, this "middest" occurs also in the middle of Book III, suggesting the idea that what lies at the center of both books is a vaginal space. In 5.8 "waters waxed dull and slow," together with other vaginal incidentals, echoes the vaginal waters in II.vi in which Pyrrhochles tormented by lustful passion: "I burne, I burne, then lowd he cried,/ Oh how I burne with implacable fyre,/ Yet nought can quench mine inly flaming side,/ Nor sea of licour cold, nor lake of mire" (II.vi.44.1-4). The lake of mire is resonant of the Idle Lake, Phaedria's watery domain. Knowing that death is the only escape from the burning, he throws himself into the lake hoping to drown, but: "the waues therof so slow and sluggish were,/ Engrost with mud, which did them fowle agrise,/ That euery weighty thing they did vpbear,/ Ne ought mote euer sink downe to the bottom there" (II.vi.46.6-9). The "so slow and sluggish" waters mimics the curse upon the nymph in Book I whose waters were "waxed dull and slow/ And all that drunke thereof, did faint and feeble grow (I.vii.5.8-9). At the point that we read about Red Crosse by the fountain, we do not yet know about the slow waters of Idle Lake, nor do we know about the mound of Venus gum/dew drops. I am pointing out these patterns only to reinforce a sexualized reading for these watery spaces in Spenser, and to suggest that the enervating force of the fountain seems to be due to a straightforward tale of a nymph who was turned into a fountain by Diana who cursed the water making the drinker slow and tired. However, the incidentals are suggesting a more complicated sexual meaning, and the other resonant passages I have pointed out add to the deepening of that meaning, not to mention the echo of Ovid's Hermaphroditus and Salmacis.

This is all to say that the enervating effects of the fountain on Red Crosse feel more complex and sexual than is accountable by the nymph story. As I mentioned earlier, readers are asked to slow down because reading these stanzas has the effect of slogging through dense verse as in this next stanza:

6
Hereof this gentle knight vnweeting was,
And lying downe vpon the sandie graile,
Drunke of the streame, as cleare as cristall glas;
Eftsoones his manly forces gan to faile,

And mightie strong was turnd to feeble fraile.
His chaunged powres at first them selues not felt,
Till crudled cold his corage gan assaile,
And chearefull bloud in faintnesse chill did melt,
Which like a feuer fit through all his body swelt.

After drinking from the fountain, Red Crosse Knight's, "manly forces gan to faile," "And mightie strong was turnd to feeble fraile" makes sense in terms of the cursed fountain, but "Till crudled cold his corage gan assaile," adds a sexual dimension to those previous lines. "Corage," which the editor, A.C. Hamilton and others gloss as "vital powers," has another meaning to that definition in the OED as sexual vigor (3 e). When we think of this incidental meaning in juxtaposition of "crudled" meaning congealed, then a very faint echo of ejaculation can be heard and is reinforced soon after when the giant Orgoglio who makes the earth shake and trees tremble is described as a "Monstrous mass of earthly slime" (7.9.8). Then the verse gets denser, weirder: "And chearefull bloud in faintnesse chill did melt." I take the plot of this line to mean that the "crudled cold" began to attack his courage (vigor), and his youthful life force withered, melted in a chill. That doesn't make sense, but as I said before, the intellectual difficulty is registering in the mind, but readers, reading at a normal pace will likely feel the experience of the difficulty rather than understand it, and therein lies the error Spenser cautions us about. A better reading might be: "chearefull" blood in faintness chill did melt, as in vanished or disappeared (OED 2 d.); his vigor vanished which makes more sense to the mind, but Spenser makes the trap of saying the confusing, "chill did melt," which we may not question, not because we think of the "vanish" meaning, but because we feel the difficulty and mistake that for understanding it. "Melt" also adds to the ejaculation feel of the previous line as it was a common euphemism for orgasm, and the bodies response to it, "Which like a feuer fit through all his body swelt," seems an apt description. And yet the plot of the lines is not that he is having sex with Duessa; it is that he is having an enervating reaction to the cursed fountain. Another reading of the phrase, "chill did melt" in which "chill" is a displaced object of "melt" carries the meaning that the chill itself melted.

Stanza 7, lines 1-3 repeat a similar kind of conflation with Red Crosse and Duessa, as there is with Red Crosse and the horse:

Yet goodly court he still made to his Dame,
Pourd out in looseness on the grassy grownd,
Both careless of his health, and of his fame.

The ambiguity of who is poured out in looseness generates a few sexual incidentals. "Pourd out in looseness" hints back to the idea of ejaculation and enervation for Red Crosse, but since we don't know the subject of the line, "pourd out in looseness" is also appropriate for Duessa, as the implication of "looseness" for women of her sort at the time would be obvious. The confusion about the ambiguity of subject also generates an incidental of two bodies merged into one as in sexual union. In the next line, the ambiguity continues: "Both careless of his health and his fame" suggests that either Red Crosse is careless about *both* his health and his fame, or that Red Crosse and Duessa are *both* careless of his health and his fame, but it could also be true that both ideas are true. The ambiguity again flirts with the idea that the two are one. Only when we read line 4: "Till at last he heard a dreadful sound," do we understand that the referent in lines 2 and 3

is indeed Red Crosse Knight, but the momentary confusions generate a sexual feel due to the incidentals.

I argue that for Shakespeare, the aim in his sexual incidentals is aesthetic. His sexual incidentals are not moralistic, but rather about having an aesthetic experience. The use of incidentals deepens the pleasure felt in reading the poem. I do want to point out that while Venus' bawdy language is overt and crass and shows a disregard for what the moralists might think about it, the "enchanting pits" part, which is the narrator's description of Adonis' dimples, is much more difficult and obscure. The "wide array of weak implicatures," barely make an impression, but they make one nonetheless. This begs the question why are these lines so difficult to parse? Going back to my claim that he doesn't have a moral objective, he has an aesthetic objective, he is more interested in us having an experience of Venus with a penis penetrating Adonis' two enchanting pits. This language gets so weird that it is very hard to pin down, so all we are left with is the aesthetic experience.

Thus, we find Shakespeare is using impressions as a further and more sophisticated means of sensuously imagined pleasure, in contrast to Spenser's technique, which is just as sophisticated but much more worried about the sensuous potential of impressions. Spenser by contrast is using sexual incidentals to trick the reader, and to show them how easy it is to err when we are not discerning. Spenser's motive is moralistic: even though his sexual incidentals are very juicy, he is cautioning the reader to read carefully and to be wary of sexually "slippery syllables." The impressions generate an erotic feel between RedCrosse Knight and Duessa, hinting at the suggestion that they are having sex, without the narrative (or narrator) quite realizing that they are. Having a naive narrator as well as weakly communicating the sex act through, as Sperber and Wilson say, "a wide array of weak implicatures," make it difficult for readers to place blame on the writer. In this way, Spenser gets to distance himself from any sexual impressions that might be felt.

Chapter 3: Wit and Witchcraft in *Othello*

In *Othello* there is talk of witchcraft, but no apparent witches, but I argue that there is a kind of witchcraft at work that manifests through the mediums of "dangerous conceits," weather and the handkerchief. I will use humoral theory to discuss how suggestions of witchcraft undergird the play, and I will use relevance theory and the idea of *incidentals* to discuss how language is used to conjure spells.

The Humoral Body and Dangerous Conceits:

In this section I am looking at Iago's impassioned rhetoric in the same way impassioned poetry would have been viewed by early modern moralists, as supporting the common idea that it could incite the hearer to act immorally. In his plot to incite jealousy in Othello, Iago reflects,

The Moor already changes with my poison:
Dangerous conceits are in their natures poisons,
Which at the first are scarce found to distaste,
But with a little act upon the blood
Burn like mines of sulphur. (3.3.325-329)

Iago's "dangerous conceits," like dangerous poetry, act as a substance that *impress*, alter and incite Othello to dishonorable actions in the way that early modern moralists like Crosse and others warned against. Iago's morally corrupt rhetoric is made especially insidious because Iago is seen as good and honest; his power to affect others through verbal cunning is made more powerful because no one questions his "honest" reputation until it's too late.

When Iago's suggestive words about Desdemona's infidelity are impressed on Othello's imagination so relentlessly that they become real in his mind without any real proof, they produce inseparable psychological and physical effects: jealousy and anger manifest bodily as a headache, epilepsy and foaming at the mouth. The headache he complains to Desdemona about when he says, "I have a pain upon my forehead, here," (3.3.284) produces simultaneously psychological and physical effect: anger/jealousy and physical pain, which brings to mind Michael Shoenfeldt's description of Albrect Dürer pointing to his spleen mentioned in Chapter 1. Similarly, in this moment Othello is doing the kind of pointing that Schoenfeldt suggests: the location of the forehead is pointed to as the area of both physical (headache) and emotional (jealousy) pain, or as Shoenfedt puts it, a way to "to express inwardness materially." Othello points to his forehead, "the rational part of the soul" as the result of the "poisoning" of his reason by Iago. When he says to Desdemona, "Your napkin is too little" (3.3.287), he reincorporates the headache into the symbolic register as the sprouting of cuckold's horns, despite Desdemona's expectation that it's big enough to wrap around his head—he imagines his brow to be expanding. Recalling Craik and Paster's arguments that the body is porous and that words can press into the imagination and alter the humoral body, we can conceive of Iago's words impressing onto Othello's imagination that Desdemona is unfaithful, and the felt and symbolic representation of that is Othello's pain from sprouting cuckhold's horns.

This idea of words as matter that can alter the matter of the humoral body is integral to Othello's fall. Iago degrades Othello's standards of proof over repeated suggestions, dismissing ocular proof and getting Othello to settle for the misconstruing of circumstantial evidence.

Iago's repetitive imagistic suggestions of Desdemona's infidelity make lively perceptions that Othello eventually entertains as facts. Joel Altman, in his work, *The Improbability of Othello*, explains how repetition of similar perceptions can eventually evolve into a universal conception for an individual:

> If we examine the notion of experience in an early-seventeenth century context, we find it is the middle term in a cognitive process that, in its classic formulation in Aristotle's *Posterior Analytics,* progresses from particular percept to universal concept. The process originates in a discrete perception that lingers in the individual as a phantasmatic memory. When similar (not identical) perceptions occur, an *empeira*, or experience, is formed in the mind, which is a first-level generalization that renders perceptions A, B, and C analogues of one another. These experiences are retained and collated, and when there are enough of them, they are intuited in their aggregate as universal. (10)

Seen in this way, Iago's repetitive suggestions plant "discrete perception[s] that linger," in Othello, "as a phantasmatic memory" that accumulate to the point where Othello "intuits…their aggregate as universal," or sees the piece of Iago's suggestion that Desdemona is unfaithful as an absolute truth without real proof. Along similar lines Puttenham, in *The Arte*, writes about how the repetition of words—we can also say suggestions—have the power make powerful impressions in individuals:

> Like as one or two drops of water perce not the flint stone, but many and often droppings doo: so cannot a few words (be they neuer so pithie and sententious) in all cases and to all manner of minds, make so deepe an impression, as a more multitude of words to the purpose discreetely, and without superfluitie vttered: the minde being no less vanquished with large loade of speech, than the limes are with heauie burden. (Craik 41, see note 22)

Similarly, Iago does not merely state that Desdemona is having an affair with Cassio once or twice, but assaults Othello relentlessly with suggestions and impressions of Desdemona's infidelity by way of "dangerous conceits." He vanquishes Othello's mind "with large loade of speech" that eventually "pierce" and convince him. In act 1 Brabantio protests as glib the Duke's hollow rhetoric: "To mourn a mischief that is past and gone/ Is the next way to draw a new mischief on" (1.3.205-206), words meant to hasten Brabantio's grief so that Othello can leave and fight the Turks. Where Iago's "large loade of speech" had the power to incite Brabantio's passions to excess, the Duke's flimsy argument could not convince nor placate him. Brabantio's response, "But words are words, I never yet did hear / That the bruis'd heart was pierced through the [ear]" (1.3.218-219), does not recognize that Iago's obscene and relentless words did pierce his bruised heart through the ear.

In addition, Brabantio claims that Othello's words could "change" Desdemona through the words of "foul charms," or "by spells and medicines bought of mountebanks." Brabantio indicates that the spells and words of witches can change a person, can and did change Desdemona, and in this way he identifies "spells" as words that can pierce the heart through the ear. Keeping in mind humoral theory, the idea of "the pourous body," also explicitly equates the

power of magic words with the power of substances that work on the body's emotional chemistry.

I want to link the idea of spells having the power to change people with how Iago's words also have the power to change others by making deep impressions on the hearer that "the minde being no less vanquished with large loade of speech, than the limes are with heauie burden." Just as Brabantio accuses Othello of using his words to bewitch Desdemona (Brabantio is also heavily swayed by these stories), so does Iago use words to perform a kind of witchcraft.

Iago uses "pestilence" and "poison" to describe the substance of his words: "I'll pour this pestilence into his ear—" (2.3.356) he says, describing the lie he will tell Othello about Desdemona and Cassio. He uses words to transmit the fatal disease of jealousy from himself to Othello, the way a witch would be accused of using poisons, which I will explain later. How literal Shakespeare might have intended for this idea to be—that words can actually embody a pestilence to the early modern sensibility—is arguable. Paster states that we could imagine it that way: "as Katherine Maus argues that 'Renaissance speech habits can make it difficult to know when…a bodily analogy is really an analogy; when we are dealing with metaphor and when with a bare statement of fact'" (23-24). I argue that in the case of this play, highly wrought words contain, like the humoral body, both material and affect and are transmitted from person to person, and that this is a version of what early modern moralists cautioned readers against. As Craik asserts, in "*An Apology* and *The Arte*…reading involves an exchange between material language and the material bodies of readers." In the case of *Othello*, the stories told are not written, but the effect is the same because highly wrought words both spoken and written were considered material.

In *Hamlet*, the ghost of King Hamlet describes a literal version of pouring poison in the ear, which is a very similar description to the poison metaphor used in *Othello*:

Upon my secure hour thy uncle stole,
With juice of cursed hebona in a vial,
And in the porches of my ears did pour
The leprous distilment, whose effect
Holds such an enmity with blood of man
That swift as quicksilver it courses through
The natural gates and alleys of the body,
And with a sudden vigor, it doth [posset]
And curd. Like eager droppings into milk,
The thin and wholesome blood. (Hamlet 1.5.61-68)

Similarly, Iago describes his words as a pernicious substance that he pours into Othello's ear:

I'll pour this pestilence in his ear—
That she repeals him for her body's lust[.] (2.3.356-357)

The pestilence, like the poison poured into King Hamlet's ear, has the ability to influence the victim's health or equilibrium. In King Hamlet's case, the substance kills him; in the case of Othello, he is made ill both mentally and physically. These two ideas—the literal poisoning of King Hamlet and the psychological poisoning of Othello—are yoked together by the same

process of pouring substance into the ear as a way to cause harm. The key difference between the two kinds of poisoning is that one substance is liquid (in King Hamlet's case) while the other (in the case of Othello) is speech. We are reminded of Maus's argument that 'Renaissance speech habits can make it difficult to know when…a bodily analogy is really an analogy; when we are dealing with metaphor and when with a bare statement of fact." It's arguable that pouring dangerous conceits into Othello's ear could be understood as a literal poisoning and not metaphorical, as dangerous conceits were understood to poison the humoral body. In fact, in *Hamlet*, the ear is indicated as a direct path to the bloodstream. Iago himself conflates poison with dangerous conceits:

The Moor already changes with my poison:
Dangerous conceits are in their natures poisons. (3.3.325-326)

Brabantio also combines dangerous conceits and poison in his accusation of Othello of using witchcraft on Desdemona:

That thou hast practic'd on her foul charms,
Abus'd her delicate youth with drugs or minerals
That weakens the motions. (1.2.73-74)

As discussed earlier, words in the form of dangerous conceits are like poisons, and in a sense, dangerous conceits and foul charms *are* forms of poison.

The word poison comes from the Latin *potio* which means potion, a medicinal drink and later meant "a potion prepared with a deadly or deleterious drug or ingredient," as in a magic potion (OED, "Poison, 1b"). Iago's poison echoes Brabantio's accusation that Othello "Abus'd [Desdemona's] delicate youth with drugs or minerals." In other words, "poison," by this definition echoes Brabantio's accusation that Othello used a magic potion, a combination of foul charms and drugs or minerals. In this way we can say that Iago's poison also acts as a magic potion, which, I will later argue later, implicates him as using a kind of witchcraft.

Dangerous conceits and foul charms are poisons, as I have discussed, and it is also worth revisiting Iago's word, "pestilence":

I'll pour this pestilence in his ear—
That she repeals him for her body's lust[.]

More along the lines of early modern moralists and the writers who were concerned about the reading practices of young gentlemen, pestilence also denoted something that was morally corrupt. Craik sites from Plutarch's Moralia:

> The straunge fables and Theatricall fictions therein, by reason of exceeding pleasure and singular that they yeeld in reading them, do spread and swell unmeasurably, readie to enter forcibly into our conceit so farre as to imprint therein some corrupt opinions: then let us beware, put foorth our hands before us, keepe them back and staie their course. (Craik 1-2)

Plutarch, like others, saw these strange fables and theatrical fictions as having an agency of their own that could "enter forcibly into our conceit so farre as to imprint therein some corrupt opinions." These fables and fictions caught readers off guard because their exceeding pleasure overrode their reason. Brabantio's alarmist claim, "To fall in love with what she feared to look on" (1.3.98) is in response to the strange and fascinating stories Othello told her. Though these stories were true, according to Othello, they had a theatrical quality that was questionably seductive. As Othello describes, Desdemona would "come again, and with a greedy ear/Devour up my discourse" (1.3.149-150); she loved what morally she should have been repelled by. We can say the same about Brabantio when Othello says:

"Her father lov'd me, oft invited me;
Still question'd me the story of my life[.] (1.3.128-130)

Othello's life stories were as captivating as strange fables or theatrical fictions that "bewitched" both Desdemona and Brabantio. Similarly, Iago's strange fables and theatrical fictions in the form of the pestilence he pours into Othello's ears imprint corrupt opinions about Desdemona. Dangerous conceits are like poisons, drugs and diseases that are transferred from the humoral body of the conceit to the humoral body of the victim. The dangerous conceit has a body and a *life* of its own. It has agency. In the case of Othello, it is literally the life of Jealousy. Iago is infected by the thought of Othello sleeping with Emilia, calling it a "poisonous mineral," which again echoes back to the idea of a witchcraft of drugs and minerals:
For that I do suspect the lusty Moor
Hath leap'd into my seat; the thought whereof
Doth (like a poisonous mineral) gnaw at my inwards [.] (2.1.295-97)

Jealousy is a monster that is spontaneously generated, as Emilia explains,

[The jealous] are not ever jealious for the cause,
But jealious for that they're jealious. It is a monster
Begot upon itself, born on itself. (3.4.160-162)

In *Antony and Cleopatra*, snakes and crocodiles are described as spontaneously generating from the mud of the Nile. Spontaneous generation was thought to be created out of an interaction between the sun and some inanimate, usually decomposing, matter. Another way spontaneously generated organisms occurred, according to this model, was off a host body, like worms in an animal. In the case of Jealousy, it seems to be of the variety of spontaneous generation that is a parasite that grows from the host body of its victim. It proliferates in Iago, Othello and to a lesser extent, Bianca. However, in the case of Bianca, there is no one transferring jealousy through dangerous conceits, and this is where the material of the handkerchief is itself an agent of jealousy. Bianca feels the transmission upon seeing the handkerchief:

O Cassio, whence came this?
This is some token from some newer friend;
To the felt absence now I feel the cause [.] (3.4.180-182]

Bianca identifies the cause: the handkerchief. Where words were the agents of jealousy, it is now embodied in the handkerchief—which according to Othello has words in it, in the form of a

spell. Cassio's infidelity is made evident to Bianca when she sees the handkerchief. She quickly deduces that, since Cassio has been less available to her, the handkerchief is ostensible proof that he's in love with another woman. Similarly, Othello concludes that the handkerchief in Cassio's possession corroborates Iago's lie that Desdemona is having an affair with him. If Emila's explanation of jealousy is true, that "[The jealous] are not ever jealious for the cause, / But jealious for that they're jealious," then Bianca and Othello already have jealousy in them. However, in the last section I will emphasize the view that jealousy "is a monster" that is manifested from within by a jealous agent from without, in this case the handkerchief. In other words, the handkerchief must embody jealousy if we are to accept early modern claims that humoral bodies in the environment influence the humoral bodies of unsuspecting victims. Much like the story Othello tells Desdemona about the spell cast upon it by the Egyptian charmer, the handkerchief plausibly embodies jealousy.

"There's magic in the web of it": wit and witchcraft:

The magic and witchcraft in *Othello* are talked about but never shown. Brabantio's accusations of Othello's witchcraft are speculations; it is never proven, and Othello's story of the charmed handkerchief seems merely to be another of his theatrical fictions or strange fables. The play rejects the role of actual magic and witchcraft as if to show that it is not a real factor in the events that unfold. Witchcraft is discredited while reason and wit are highly regarded. Brabantio's accusation that Othello has used witchcraft on Desdemona is dismissed by the Duke who argues that Othello is needed to fight the Turks. Othello dismisses Brabantio's accusations of witchcraft saying that his stories were the only witchcraft that he used—there is no magic in the "web" of his tales. In these ways and others, *Othello*, unlike *Macbeth*, makes evident that there are no witches in this play.

Brabantio believes that words in the form of "foul charms" can influence Desdemona, but his response to the Duke's rationalization that Brabantio should not "mourn a mischief that is past and gone," shows that he is not duped by mere rhetoric. That is, words that have the ability to corrupt the unsuspecting victim, as in the case of Desdemona, are blamed as witchcraft, whereas rhetoric like the Duke's is clever, but the words have no power to pierce. Again, as Brabantio says:

"But words are words, I never yet did hear / That the bruis'd heart was pierced through the [ear]."

He asserts that the Duke's rhetoric cannot make a bruised heart feel better. So what is the difference then between the rhetoric of Othello's stories and the Duke's rhetoric that Brabantio so keenly differentiates? Why does one have the ability to pierce the heart through the ear, while the other does not? Brabantio's "pierce" echoes Puttenham, who states that words can pierce if they are subtle and constant, but that "so cannot a few words (be they neuer so pithie and sententious) in all cases and to all manner of minds, make so deepe an impression." Brabantio argues that the Duke's words, his attempt at pacifying Brabantio, cannot impress or pierce him. The Duke's rhetoric lacks the subtlety to convince and console Brabantio. Foul charms or witchcraft can pierce the heart through the ear, but not the Duke's words of mere wit. However, Othello's stories are indeed piercing. When Othello tells Desdemona, "Tis true; There's magic in the web of it" (3.4.69), in describing the magic of the handkerchief, he is performing a kind of magic: in the very theatrics and strangeness of the crafting (or weaving) of the story, he casts a

spell over Desdemona much like the foul charms Brabantio accuses Othello of. There is magic in the weaving of the tale.

Textile weaving has a connection to textual weaving. Dympna Callaghan, in her article, "Looking Well to Linens: Women and Cultural Production in *Othello* and Shakespeare's England," makes the connection between the cultural production of women's needle work to men's pen work (writing):

> The historically feminine activities related to fabric production are culturally contiguous with male-defined literary practice: the needle, for example, is both the analog and the antithesis of the pen as weaving and is the anthesis and analog of writing. Textiles constitute the feminine mirror photo negative of the male. (54)

Callaghan, describes the relationship between women's needle production and men's pen production on the one hand as "contiguous," and on the other hand as opposite. She states that "[t]extiles constitute the feminine mirror photo negative of the male," suggesting the relationship between the two products where the male production is valued and feminine production is devalued. In making feminine production of textiles as less-than and yet contiguous with men's literary production, she is making the point that though they are different, they are linked. Shakespeare, according to Callaghan, uses the handkerchief as the locus of the interconnectedness between textiles and text:

> The culturally proximate nature of the textual and textile becomes visible in Othello in that the handkerchief serves as a visual text which is treated like a printed book—and as we have seen is repeatedly described with the scribal term "copy," which renders needlework especially analogous to writing as the physical activity produces a manuscript. (72).

To add to her notion as the handkerchief as a visual text, we can add the overlay of Othello's story as a verbal text on the handkerchief.

Othello's stories are not that different from Iago's dangerous conceits, in terms of early modern anxiety about ornamental language. Craik asserts that Thomas Wright warned early modern writers against using ornamental language: "he objected…to books about guileful stagecraft ('Machiuellian policies') and the supernatural ('the Art of Coniuring'), as well as…excessively decorative writings" (Craik 16-17). Like many moralists of his time, Wright advocated for clear and honest writing, rejecting decorative writing for its ability to obscure and distract readers from perceiving any pernicious content that might be hidden. His list includes a warning against books about the supernatural, lumping together books like the "Art of Coniuring" with guileful stagecraft and decorative writing, and in this way suggesting the relationship between guile, decoration and magic, or put another way for my purposes, the relationship between ornate language (as in Othello'stories) and witchcraft. Othello's stories are seductive and have the power to greatly influence. His stories like dangerous conceits, or a spell, is poured into the ear and acts as a drug or poisonous mineral. As Brabantio says, Desdemona is influenced "By spells and medicines" (1.3.60-61).

As stated earlier, the play is invested in understating the role of magic while demonstrating the powers and superiority of reason and wit. This, no doubt, reflects the

patriarchal anxiety and suppression of witchcraft that is linked to the fear of feminine power and intuitive intelligence. This anxiety plays out in *Macbeth*, as Macbeth struggles to understand the witches' otherworldly and powerful intelligence. In *Othello*, this particularly white patriarchal anxiety is clear when Othello marries Desdemona, is accused of using witchcraft and is feminized. Iago makes it clear to Roderigo that he uses reason to influence and not witchcraft, as Othello has been accused: "Thou know'st we work by wit, and not by witchcraft." However, the use of his wit shares similarities with the use of witchcraft (which I will soon explain) as Brabantio defines it: "to weaken the motion through foul charms and drugs." Iago uses words in the same way Brabantio accuses Othello of using his stories: as witchcraft.

Shakespeare integrates ideas about "piercing" rhetoric and witchcraft to suggest that, in this play, they are undifferentiated, and perhaps one and the same. Though Iago differentiates wit from witchcraft, when he says, "we work by wit, and not by witchcraft," the repetition of "wit" in "witchcraft" immediately reintegrates them. It is as if to show that the two seeming opposites refuse to be separated. Despite Iago's insistence that the two are distinct from each other, and that he works by one and not the other, the incidental in the word "witchcraft," shows that wit is in witchcraft: there is "reason" in witchcraft. The explicit information of the wit/witchcraft line is simply saying that Iago is clarifying that he uses wit and not witchcraft in his scheming. However, the play on words adds an extra meaning that suggests that Iago works by a witchcraft that contains both wit and witchcraft: he uses wit as a craft, or in crafty ways.

As I said earlier, Shakespeare conflates wit with witchcraft and that generates an incidental suggestion that Iago, though he does not want to claim it, is practicing a kind of witchcraft through the use of his wit. This male anxiety around witchcraft is not unlike the anxiety that Brabantio feels about Othello enchanting Desdemona with his stories, nor is it very different from early modern anxieties about ornamental poetry's ability to influence impressionable readers. This is to say that what poetry, wit and witchcraft—witchcraft in the context of foul charms—have in common is the possibility of the much feared corrupt ideas hidden in, what Henry Crosse the "slippery syllables" of poetry.

Relevance, rhetoric and not witchcraft:

Of course, we cannot really call Iago's wit the same as witchcraft, though I argue that Shakespeare wants us to make that connection through the wit/witchcraft pattern to suggest that it acts in the same way. His "dangerous conceits," act like a drug or mineral—as I mentioned earlier—in that they are "poured into the ear," like a poison, and, like "foul charms," are used to cast spells. Charms, like poems (according to early modernists) were feared for having the power to negatively influence innocent victims and were often in the form of verse.

I have discussed how early modern moralists feared the corruption of young minds through corrupting ideas in, "slippery syllables," in poetry, and I have shown how incidental material in poetry (the wit/witchcraft pattern) can suggest ideas that readers may not be conscious of, that can say something very different from the intended literal meaning. Now I want to look at this idea of slippery syllables through the lens of the relevance theory to show how wit is like witchcraft in its ability to influence. The wit/witchcraft repetition is a small but loaded incidental. Iago relies heavily on the rhetorical device of repetition, in a sense to hypnotize and influence his victims. It is through this device that his words have a "magical effect." Relevance, a theory I explained thoroughly in Chapter One, argues that a reader or hearer will only be interested in and process an utterance if it holds some guarantee of relevance

for them. As a general example, Iago may differentiate wit from witchcraft to Roderigo to convince him that his plans are reasonable (even though they are not). Iago manipulates Roderigo by inciting his passions and then presenting a reasonable plan to for Roderigo to win Desdemona. Because winning Desdemona is of great relevance to Roderigo, Iago's "reasonable" plan is worth listening to (processing).

The guarantee of relevance for Roderigo depends on the degree of what Sperber and Wilson call contextual effects. Contextual effects are derived from the synthesis of old information and new information that enable the hearer to make new conclusions that could not be made by the old or new information alone. For example, in the following speech from Iago to Roderigo the repetition of "put money in thy purse," takes on more and more relevance for Roderigo as Iago's increasingly passionate explanation of Desdemona's inconstancy will make her available to Roderigo. The relevance of the promise that Desdemona will become available to Roderigo makes the idea of "put money in thy purse" more and more relevant and reasonable:

> Put money in thy purse; follow thou the wars; defeat thy favor with an usurp'd beard. I say put money in thy purse. It cannot be long that Desdemona should continue her love to the Moor—put money in thy purse—nor he his to her. It was a violent commencement in her, and thou shalt see an answerable sequestration—put but money in thy purse. These Moors are changeable in their wills—fill thy purse with money. The food that to him is as luscious as locusts, shall be to him shortly as [acerb] as [the] coloquintida. She must change for youth; when she is sated with his body, she will find the [error] of her choice. [She must have change, she must;] therefore put money in thy purse. (1.3.339-349)

Iago makes the argument that Roderigo should liquidate his estate in preparation of attaining her. His assertation that the marriage is doomed because both Othello and Desdemona are "changeable" is persuasive not because it is well reasoned—the argument has no evidence whatsoever to support the claims, but the argument to Roderigo is strengthened with a promise of relevance; that is, the promise that Desdemona will become free for him to pursue. Therefore, these assumptions are made easy for Roderigo to entertain as fact. According to the relevance theory, the processing of communication takes time and effort, and we only take the time to process if the effort is worth the work, that is, if the information is relevant, and therefore worth the effort. Sperber and Wilson, working from one of Paul Grice's maxims[5] that communication be relevant for the hearer, explain that not all assumptions that become manifest are facts. An individual is capable of representing mentally based on the evidence provided by the physical environment that will not necessarily be a fact, but could appear to be a fact: "from a cognitive point of view, mistaken assumptions can be indistinguishable from genuine factual knowledge, just as optical illusions can be indistinguishable from true sight…[Also], manifest assumptions which are more likely to be

[5] From Paul Grice's *William James Lecture* where he breaks down his Co-Operative Principle into nine maxims for effective communication, one being "Be relevant."

entertained are more manifest" (39). There are also varying degrees of *manifestness* depending on what phenomenon is most salient to an individual at any given time. In terms of Roderigo, what is most salient for this desperate lover is the possibility of having Desdemona, and Iago makes this assumption manifest through creating an urgency through the repetition of "put money in thy purse" interspersed, like a chant, between parts of the false defamatory story about Othello and Desdemona. Indeed, this seems to be Iago's alarmist tactic with Brabantio, Roderigo and Othello: to generate sexually obscene images in order to incite them into action. While Brabantio and Othello are disturbed by the obscene images Iago paints of Desdemona, and ultimately reject her based on those false assumptions, Roderigo doesn't seem to regard her any less for it. The tactic works in an opposite way for him because, as we learn in Iago's "garden" speech, Roderigo is ruled by passion and lust. For him, entertaining the idea of Desdemona as uncontrollably lustful only feeds his own passion for her. The passions that Iago stimulates in all his victims are what move them into motion towards his aims.

According to Sperber and Wilson, echoic utterances, "the speaker can express her own attitude to the thought echoed, and the relevance of her utterance might depend largely on this expression of attitude" (239). To show how a manifest assumption does not need to be fact, and how assumptions that are more likely to be entertained are more manifest, I want to look at Othello's downfall:

> Iago: Did Michael Cassio, when [you] woo'd my lady,
> Know of your love?
> Othello: He did, from first to last. Why dost thou ask?
> Iago: But for satisfaction of my thought,
> No further harm.
> Othello: Why of thy thought, Iago?
> Iago: I did not think he had been acquainted with her.
> Othello: O yes, and went between us very oft.
> Iago: Indeed!
> Othello: Indeed? ay, indeed. Discern'st thou aught in that?
> Is he not honest?
> Iago: Honest, my lord?
> Othello: Honest? ay, honest.
> Iago: My lord, for aught I know.
> Othello: What dost thou think?
> Iago: Think my lord?
> Othello: Think, my lord? [By heaven], thou echo'st me,
> As if there were some monster in thy thought
> Too hideous to be shown. Thou dost mean something. (3.3. 95-107)

Iago achieves relevance in this significant early manipulation of Othello when he questions him about Cassio's interactions with Desdemona. He starts by first by baiting Othello with a vague, "But for satisfaction of my thought," which of course makes Othello question "thought" and leads him to echo: "thy thought, Iago?" It is a way for Iago to engage Othello. Later, Iago baits him with another odd response to Othello's: "O yes, and [Cassio] went between us very oft." Iago's weird "Indeed!" response becomes relevant for Othello. He echoes, "Indeed? ay, indeed" where the first "indeed?" questions Iago's jarring exclamation, the second follows

with the statement "ay, indeed" as if to compose himself and gloss over the momentary confusion, while at the same time agreeing to something he's confused about. In Othello's question that follows, "Is he not honest?" Iago's echoing of "honest" in "Honest, my lord?" turns the echoing around: now Iago echoes Othello with "honest" and the again when Othello asks what Iago thinks: "What dost thou think?" Iago echoes "Think my lord?" Iago baits and taunts Othello to suspect Cassio of being dishonest without saying it; he merely makes manifest doubt in Othello through first having Othello echo him, then in echoing Othello. As Sperber and Wilson say, "the speaker can express her own attitude to the thought echoed," so Iago's attitude is to express some "monster in [his] thought," through the vague communication that has Othello echo Iago and then Iago echo Othello, as a way to confirm it. Iago shortly after echoes the "monster" idea when he says, "O, beware, my lord, of jealousy! /
It is the green-ey'd monster which doth mock / The meat it feeds on" (3.3.165-167). Here, Iago names the monster in his thought (jealousy) and is simultaneously the monster who mocks "the meat it feeds on." His manipulative and vague communication style impresses upon Othello ideas about Cassio and Desdemona that aren't real but that become real for Othello.

As I have argued Iago's verbal manipulation is spell-like, especially in terms of creating illusions for Othello and in terms of stirring his passions. Othello becomes changed in a way that Brabantio claims Desdemona to be changed, "by spells and medicines bought of mountebanks." We see Iago announcing the change when he says, "But I do see you are mov'd" (3.3.217) after Othello starts to entertain the illusion of the deception, and soon after Othello denies it Iago repeats the idea: "My lord, I see y' are moved" (3.3.224) to which Othello responds " I do not think but Desdemona's honest" (3.3.225), but clearly Othello is "moved" and proves it shortly after in his hostile interaction with Desdemona. The "change" or the stirring of his passions through Iago's "witchcraft"—Iago says, "Work on, / My medicine, [work]!" (4.1.44)—culminates in a completely changed Othello who falls into a trance. In the last scene Desdemona's comment, "Alas, why gnaw you so your nether lip? /Some bloody passion shakes your frame" speaks to the erotic passion mentioned earlier, but also just plainly about how changed Othello is from the effects of Iago's "medicine." Iago's medicine is one that unleashes lustful passion through the agent of jealousy.

After planting many false assumptions about Desdemona's infidelity with Cassio to Othello, Othello asks for ocular proof of this infidelity. Iago, to provide this ocular proof links the infidelity to the beloved handkerchief that Othello gave to her as a token of his love and claims to have seen Cassio with it. Iago then plants the handkerchief in Cassio's lodgings where he finds it later and orchestrates a moment in which Othello witnesses a conversation between Cassio and Bianca where he gives Bianca the handkerchief and asks her to duplicate it, which ensues in Bianca having a jealous fit. The evidence of the handkerchief is most salient due to the previous false assumptions Iago makes manifest for Othello that Desdemona gave the handkerchief to Cassio. It is through this crafty exploitation of making manifest false assumptions that Iago manipulates other characters as well.

Sperber and Wilson state that, "what is manifest to an individual [,] is clearly weaker than the notion of what is actually known or assumed… In a strong sense, to know some fact involves having a mental representation of it. In a weaker sense, to say an individual knows some fact is not necessarily to imply that he has ever entertained a mental representation of it." In the case of Othello, I argue, in part, that Iago's tactics involve the understanding and manipulation of weakly manifest facts and assumptions in Othello that he is then able to make into strong facts and assumptions that Othello is capable of mentally representing.

The weakly manifest facts and assumptions are what Iago rely on to perform his rhetorical "magic." He makes substance out of "dreams," and significance from insignificance. While planting ideas of Desdemona's infidelity into Othello's mind he says,

'Tis but a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream,
And this may help to thicken other proofs
That do demonstrate thinly (3.3.429-431).

Indeed, making visible and palpable material out of the stuff of doubts and dreams is a motif in the play. When Roderigo refuses to believe Iago that Desdemona has married Othello, Iago says, "If I ever did dream of such a matter, / abhor me"(1.1.5). Iago's insistence that the marriage is real and not a dream (he did not make it up) has interesting implications later when Brabantio, after hearing about the marriage, says that "This accident is not unlike my dream" (1.1.143). There is no other explanation of this dream except to suggest that Brabantio dreamt, or feared (doubted) the betrothal of Othello to Desdemona. Later when he tells Othello that "[Desdemona] has deceived her father, and may thee" (1.1.293), this becomes another dream that becomes manifest in Othello's imagination. This thought lodges itself firmly in Othello's mind, which later makes it believable to Othello that Desdemona is deceiving him.

Sperber and Wilson's idea of the cognitive environment explains how a doubt or dream can become manifest as a fact to an individual—how Othello could find it believable for Desdemona to betray him—and it has to do with assumptions that are suggested to him. They define the cognitive environment in these terms:

(39) A fact is *manifest* to an individual at a given time if and only if he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true.

(40) A *cognitive environment* of an individual is a set of facts that are manifest to him.

The assumption that Brabantio plants in Othello, that "She has deceived her father, and may [him]" later gets exacerbated by the assumptions Iago plants in him, especially when he echoes Brabantio's language: "She did deceive her father, marrying you" (3.3.206). Though Othello doesn't consciously believe it at first, he is finally convinced of it as fact. It is through the workings of the cognitive environment that, as I mentioned earlier, Sperber and Wilson claim, "mistaken assumptions can be indistinguishable from genuine factual knowledge, just as optical illusions can be indistinguishable from true sight…[Also], manifest assumptions which are more likely to be entertained are more manifest." Relevance for an individual makes it so that they find a particular utterance worth the effort of processing. Othello, though it seems he may not have given much attention to Brabantio's logic, that Desdemona is capable of deceiving him because she deceived her father, begins—as a result of Iago's repetition of her infidelity—to entertain the assumption and ultimately accept it as fact. I argue that because of Brabantio's assertion, Iago's lies about Desdemona are more readily entertained because the assumption, voiced by Brabantio, is already there. This implies that Othello must already believe in this assumption. That is, "manifest assumptions which are more likely to be entertained are more manifest." For the assumption to be entertained, Othello must already hold the assumption in his mind. It is similar to Emelia's belief that Othello is "jealious for that [he's] jealious." Othello can entertain the idea that Desdemona will deceive him because she deceived her father. I assert that the crux of Othello's insecurities goes deeper than Brabantio's accusation, to a belief—one that Iago makes manifest—that he is ill-suited for Desdemona,

Haply for I am black,

And have not those soft parts of conversation
That chamberers have, or for I am declin'd
Into the vale of years… (3.3.263-266)

How these assumptions are made manifest to Othello can be explained by returning to Sperber and Wilson's theory on of the cognitive environment. It states that "[a] fact is *manifest* to an individual at a given time if and only if he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true," and that the "*cognitive environment* of an individual is a set of facts that are manifest to him."

The assumptions that Iago makes, that Desdemona is unfaithful, and that she is an ill-suited match for him and will leave him for a better social match, is entertained by Othello because he must hold as fact that, as Iago says, Desdemona's "will, recoiling to her better judgement, / May fall to match you with her country forms, / And happily repent" (3.3.236-237): Othello is "capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true." Othello's cognitive environment is "the set of facts that are manifest to him," in this case, the facts, or the ideas he holds as facts, of Desdemona's inclination to cuckhold him in favor of a more socially appropriate suitor. Desdemona's frightful act "To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on!" (1.3.98) forced Brabantio, Iago and eventually Othello to entertain assumptions manifest in their cognitive environments: that she was charmed, and/or a deceiver, or sexually insatiable, and that she was bound to come to her senses at some point and leave Othello for a better match. What cannot be entertained, for long anyway, is the real truth, that Desdemona is deeply faithful to Othello and that she truly loves him. This love breaks conventions and Brabantio, Iago and Othello (ultimately) are not "capable…of representing [this love] mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true." Herein lies the power and force of Iago's rhetorical strategies.

Similar to Sperber and Wilson's definition that "[a] fact is *manifest* to an individual at a given time if and only if he is capable at that time of representing it mentally and accepting its representation as true or probably true," Altman argues that Othello comes to accept Iago's lies as fact based on the notion that they seem "probably true." He explains that

> Probability lay in the eyes of the beholder, though nearly always a generalized beholder. "The theory of rhetoric," Aristotle declares, "is not concerned with what seems probable to a given individual like Socrates or Hippias, but with what seems probable to men of a given type: (*Rhet.* 1356b). In this context, a probability is something a certain group collectively believes likely to be a true statement—hence the common synonym for the word *probabilism* in the Latin tradition: *verisimilis*, "like the truth."

Altman argues that Iago uses "probable" notions to manipulate Othello, creating lies that would appear as probably true to his "type," and that Desdemona's infidelity becomes probable to Othello

> who is invested in cognitive structures through which he…is situated in the world. Iago's exploitation of Othello's sense of self—as a black
> man, and a stranger in a white Venetian society—is only the most explicit demonstration of the mind's attraction to and its potentially fatal dependence on culturally inflected probabilities. (12-13)

Impressions:

I explained earlier about what I call incidentals, which I define as material extraneous to the plot of the work, and to the information of the sentence, and I see it as a poetic effect that communicates impressions. Earlier I used the example of Iago's line: "we work by wit, and not by witchcraft," and how the incidental meaning generated by repeating wit in witchcraft suggests that Iago does work by witchcraft. Of course that is not what the line is saying; also, nowhere in the play is Iago accused of using witchcraft, except perhaps in Act 5, when after realizing Iago's scheme, Othello refers to him as a, "demi-devil." There is no evidence in the plot of the play to suggest that Iago works by witchcraft, but I argue that the repetition of wit in witchcraft makes a suggestion of the extra meaning. Another way to think of the suggestion is as an impression. We remember Wright's explanation of impressions:

> Impressions from the senses press upon the soul like a seal in soft wax, or else make a permanent and indelible mark 'as the sparrows attached to birdlime, or the flies sticke in honnie.' It is these subtle movements of the sensitive soul which are the driving force behind emotional experience, and which give rise in turn to passions or perturbations.

When we slow down to unpack an incidental, then we can think about the extra meaning it makes, but as we are hearing or reading, "we work by wit, and not by witchcraft," we don't think the line is telling us the opposite of what Iago is actually saying; however, the poetic effect of the repetition does make an impression on us (I will speak more about impressions soon).

Another example of incidental material occurs in the opening of act 4. The scene's plot is about Iago and Othello continuing their discussion of Desdemona and Cassio in bed together, but Shakespeare frames the conversation in a way that adds an extra meaning to their discussion:

Enter Othello *and* Iago
Iago: Will you think so?
Oth: Think so, Iago?
Iago: What,
To kiss in private?
Oth: An unauthoriz'd kiss!
Iago: Or to be naked with her friend in bed
An hour, or more, not meaning any harm?
Oth: Naked in bed, Iago, and not mean any harm?

The scene starts in such a way that it generates an impression that Othello is asking Iago to kiss. However, as audience, we do not pause after the first two lines to consider this suggestion because in the following lines we quickly learn that they are talking about Desdemona and Cassio, but the incidental, the suggestion that Othello is asking Iago for a kiss, makes an impression. Of course it is not possible to prove that all readers or audience members will feel the impression, but I am only arguing that incidentals, like metaphor, meter, and other poetic devices, are capable of making impressions. Impressions are felt and not immediately processed cognitively, if ever. They are the reason readers may feel something when they read poetry, for instance. The reader may attribute the feeling to the theme of a

poem, but I argue that more than theme, what makes a reader feel are the poetic effects from literary devices like metaphor, meter, incidentals[6], and so on.

Wright attributes impressions as the "driving force behind emotional experience." Humoral theorists would explain impressions as a substance containing significance that could enter and alter the humoral body. As Paster describes, "The porous and volatile humoral body, with its faulty borders and penetrable stuff, interacts differently with the world rather than 'the static, solid' modern body container." The early modern body was considered porous and subject to being invaded by any outside force, including words. Impressions made by poetic effects and via slippery syllables were, as Wright says, the "driving force behind emotional experience." Plutarch states about poetry that the "exceeding pleasure and singular delight that they yield…do spread and swell unmearsuably, readie to enter forcibly into our conceit so farre as to imprint…corrupt opinions" (Craik 2). From Plutarch's perspective, impressions occur as a result of exceeding pleasure, and through this unmanaged, exceeding pleasure, corrupt opinions are imprinted on the mind. Poetic impressions were seen as the emotional force in poetry.

Similarly, as discussed earlier, Sperber and Wilson assert that poetic impressions account for the affective communication in poetry. We can say that Iago, uses poetic effects to generate certain insidious impressions, the sort that Plutarch and others fear in poetry. For example, when he describes Cassio groping him in his sleep, he is explaining the act of Cassio touching him and muttering lustfully about Desdemona. This story alone is scandalous enough, but it is the poetic effects of Iago's utterances that generate the dangerous impressions that would eventually lead Othello to murder Desdemona:

In sleep I heard him say, "Sweet Desdemona,
Let us be wary, let us hide our loves";
And then, sir, would he **gripe and wring my hand**;
Cry, "O sweet creature!" then **kiss me hard**,
As if he **pluck'd up kisses from the roots**
That grew upon my lips; [then] **laid his leg**
[Over] my thigh, and [sigh'd], and [kiss'd], and then
[Cried], "Cursed fate that gave thee to the Moor!"

I have put in bold letters the descriptions that generate intensely erotic impressions. In telling Othello about this dream of Cassio's, he communicates sexual impressions in the descriptions of "gripe and wring my hand," "kiss me hard," "pluck'd up kisses from the roots," on so on. Iago works his magic through communicating almost pornographic impressions to Othello—as well as Brabantio and Roderigo—that "marginally increase the manifestness of a great many weakly manifest assumptions" that Iago generates in Othello. Iago toys with Othello and preys upon his insecurities, insecurities that Iago himself helps to make manifest for Othello.

Even in perhaps his happiest moment with Desdemona, when they are reunited on Cypress, Othello's "content" is too much joy. Though it is a beautiful expression of his love of Desdemona, it also communicates ominous impressions:
I cannot speak enough of this content

[6] I argue in chapter one that incidentals should be recognized as a poetic device that is widely used in early modern literature.

> It stops me here; it is too much joy.
> And this, and this, the greatest discords be
> That e'er our hearts shall make! (2.1.196-198)

This is a poetic expression that says that "too much joy" is the worst that their love will ever generate, which is a wonderfully ecstatic declaration of Othello's love, and yet at the same time, his declaration makes portentous impressions. I say portentous because the impressions made by "too much joy" being "the greatest discords" their hearts will make, point to a dire truth: in terms of humoral theory, there is a real danger in too much of anything, including joy. That this excessive joy has already caused discord between Brabantio, Desdemona and Othello, as well as between Iago and Othello suggests that it doesn't only figuratively create discord, but also literally creates discord. The impressions are non-propositional and non-deductive. That is, they are not processed cognitively; they are felt.

My attempt is not to address what a given set of lines mean but what impression their implicatures generate. In chapter one I discuss Sperber and Wilson's relevance theory and how it lends itself to explaining how Iago's communication effectively manipulates Othello. I want to use some ideas about the relevance theory to argue that indeed Iago uses wit and not witchcraft.

Recalling Sperber and Wilson's *cognitive environment* (a set of facts that are manifest to an individual), the goal of the speaker is to make manifest in the listener a certain set of assumptions. Iago makes manifest a set of assumptions about Desdemona's infidelity in Othello's cognitive environment. His method of convincing Othello of the infidelity is not aimed at changing Othello's thoughts, per se, but of altering Othello's cognitive environment about Desdemona. Othello's set of assumptions about Desdemona's faithfulness alters because of Iago's informative intention, and the set of assumptions he makes manifest in Othello's cognitive environment. I will show that Iago's ability to alter Othello's cognitive environment comes about from the vaguer aspects of communication, from assumptions that are inferable. And I will show how these assumptions about Desdemona already exist in Othello, which make it possible for Iago to make manifest in Othello the assumption that Desdemona is unfaithful.

The witchy impressions:

I have discussed Iago's wit as a kind of witchcraft, and Othello's mesmerizing stories are, as Brabantio claims, bewitching, but now I want to turn to impressions that are not about the kind of witchcraft (as I have explained) that reason, wit and eloquence produce in this play. These impressions are not generated through any character, except perhaps Emilia, and they seem to have no agent. The witchy impressions, I argue, hint at magical influence without a visible agent. How the audience would be able to feel the magical influence is through the communication of witchy impressions in the play making them manifest in the audience. For impressions (from play to audience) to be successfully communicated, the speaker and hearer must share common impressions, and I argue that these impressions of real witchcraft would have been common impressions in the English early modern audience.

Though witchcraft panic in early modern England was ubiquitous, Shakespeare uses the subject seemingly as simply a literary device. Folklorist K.M. Briggs in her book, *Pale Hecate's Team*, argues that "at the beginning of James the First's reign witchcraft was treated seriously but still decoratively by Shakespeare, Jonson and Middleton" (221). I suggest that because of the seriousness of witchcraft, the references themselves, though "decorative," would have triggered

fears in the cognitive environment of the audience. Briggs adds that "witchcraft in literature…derived, directly or indirectly, from a true body of folk belief, deep rooted in the traditions of Europe" (221), and so impressions of this "true body of folk belief" would still be relevant in the cognitive environment of the early modern audience.

Impressions as defined by Sperber and Wilson do perhaps corrupt in the sense that they make the audience feel the workings of witchcraft in the play. In his piece, "Dream and Imagination in Shakespeare," Jerome Mandel argues that

> The Renaissance experienced a universe in which spirits both malign and benign occupied a real and significant position. If part of this universe was benign, another part was an "objective realm of evil…peopled and controlled by the malignant wills of intelligences—evil spirits, devils, demons, Satan—who had the ability to project their power into the workings of nature and to influence the human spirit."[7] (63)

With the very real fear of Satan and of malignant forces, the "decorative" use of witchcraft during this time may have been seductive to the audience, much like Brabantio's observation of Desdemona's shocking paradox: "To fall in love with what she fear'd to look on!" We could say that the play does not overtly adopt the attitudes of witch panic, but instead leaves audiences with impressions of it, impressions that, much like Othello's stories, have the audience tune in on a more primal dimension. Through moments such as the tempest in Cyprus, the echoes of witchcraft in Iago's verbal manipulations and the way that the handkerchief seems to embody a life of its own, I argue that these and other moments communicate impressions of witchcraft in a play that repeatedly makes the idea of witchcraft seem implausible.

Examining the tempest in Cyprus, the image of Othello in the "wind-shaked surge" of the tempest, I argue, is more than a foreshadow of the tragedy; it has the witchy implications of a spell or conjuring, the way early moderns would have likely entertained it. I see it as an incidental[8] about witchcraft practices. That witches could manipulate the weather was a common belief in early modern England. Shakespeare exemplifies this idea in *The Tempest* when Prospero uses magic to conjure a storm. In Mary Floyd-Wilson's article, *English Epicures and Scottish Witches*, she explains the early modern belief in Scotland that witches were capable of manipulating weather conditions. She states that "[w]itches purportedly directed winds and manipulated air for the very reasons that disturbed winds or infected air could, in turn, stir or dull the body's spirits." She also cites from King James *Daemonology* that witches "can raise storms and tempests in the air either upon sea or land, although not universally, but in such a particular place and prescribed bounds as God will permit them so to trouble" (143).

Many early modern occult writers, like Johann Weyer, Dutch physician, occultist and a "demonologist," argues that witches manipulated the weather using magic. In his work, *De praestigiis daemonum (On the tricks of Demons)*, he references Herdotus,

> … concerning the lieutenants of Xerxes—also attests that winds are thus calmed by magicians. He states that these lieutenants lost 400 ships in three days of

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[7] Mandel's footnote: Walter Clyde Curry, *Shakespeare's Philosophical Patterns*

[8] *Incidental*, a cluster of implicatures in small section of lines that generate an extra organization of meaning different from the plot of the lines.

> stormy weather, until on the fourth day the magicians checked the storm by making incisions, by working enchantments with their poisons, and by sacrificing the wind to Thetis and the Nerieds; or perhaps the storm ceased for some other reason. So, too, the Epphesians were thought to emerge victorious in every dealing by using certain magical notations and words. (120)

Based on this idea of witches manipulating weather, I argue that the tempest that occurs off the shores of Cyprus, which ultimately destroys the Turkish fleet, hints at the influence of the supernatural as the image of the tempest conjures impressions of Othello. A gentleman reports to Montano:

A segregation of the Turkish fleet:
For do but stand upon a foaming shore,
The chidden billow seems to pelt the clouds,
The wind-shak'd surge, with high and monstrous mane[.] (2.1.10-13)

The suggestion of a magical manipulation of weather in *Othello* is echoed in the incidentals of, "The wind-shak'd surge with high and monstrous mane." Othello is described as "monstrous" throughout the play, and—though there is no clear meaning of "mane" in the context of these lines—the idea of a horse's mane hearkens back to Iago's warning to Brabantio: "you'll have your daughter cover'd with a Barbary horse." "The foaming shore" image will later echo when Othello falls into a trance after an epileptic fit and Iago mentions foaming at the mouth as a potential symptom. Cassio suggests to "Rub him about the temples" which links back to the moment Othello says, "I have a pain upon my forehead, here," and refuses to let Desdemona bind it with her handkerchief. Iago also understands something about the importance of not touching him there. He says to Cassio, "The lethargy must have its quiet course; / If not, he foams at the mouth, and by and by/ Breaks out to savage madness" (4.1.53-55). We are again reminded of the violent tempest with its "foaming shore" as an image linked to Iago's description of Othello foaming at the mouth and breaking into a savage madness.

Connecting the devasting power of the tempest to Othello's savage and murderous madness, with both Turks and Desdemona, we also see how evocative of orgasm the "savage" impressions are: "The chidden billow *pelting* the clouds, the wind-*shaked surge* and the *foaming* shore," and this connection is later strengthened in the marriage bed where Desdemona says, "… you're fatal when your eyes roll so", "why gnaw you so your nether lip?" and "Some bloody passion shakes your frame" (5.1.43-44). Here, the ideas of passion, orgasm and murder seem to mimic the tempest incidental imagery in conjuring of the image of a monstrous and savage Othello in the tempest, which, of course, at the end of the play materializes and culminates as the erotic and savage murder of Desdemona.

Another hint at the supernatural is when Brabantio realizes that Desdemona has married Othello and says, "This accident is not unlike my dream" (1.1.143). The dream is never explained, and it is never referred to again, but it is a suggestion of the supernatural: Brabantio, it seems, has a prophetic dream which then materializes. We can say that Iago does a similar thing, that he materializes events from a dream—in this case, a fiction—when he tells Othello the story of Cassio's lascivious dream of Desdemona: "'Tis but a shrewd doubt, though it be but a dream, /And this may help to thicken other proofs / That do demonstrate thinly" (3.3.429-431). He uses the questionable dream as one more impression "to thicken other proofs." Though both

Brabantio's and Iago's "dreams" materialize, the important difference is that while Iago's dream is "but a shrewd doubt," and fiction which he materializes through conscious manipulation, I argue that Brabantio's dream seems to be from an unknown intelligence.
This has interesting implications later when after hearing about the marriage, Brabantio says, "This accident is not unlike my dream, / Belief of it oppresses me already" (141-142). Dreams are interchangeable with imagination, and Brabantio's telling of the content of the dream or imagination begins the materialization it, and his "belief of it" makes the effect of the dream as if real before he has a chance to see if it's true. This idea that Brabantio dreamed of the marriage and then the marriage became real becomes an opposite statement to Iago's insistence that he did *not* dream up the betrothal in the beginning of Act1, Scene 1 when he says, "If ever I did dream of such a matter, / Abhor me" (1.1.5). By contrast, Brabantio *did* dream up or imagine the "accident." When Othello begins his explanation to the Duke of how he and Desdemona came to *equally* love each other, he implicates Brabantio by saying, "Her father lov'd me, oft invited me; / Still question me the story of my life." Later when he says to Othello that "[Desdemona] has deceived her father, and may thee" (1.1.293), this becomes another dream that becomes manifest in Othello's imagination. This later makes Desdemona's infidelity believable to Othello.

These ideas of witchcraft generate impressions about the characters. I have already touched on impressions of Iago as devil/witch and Othello as devil/witch, but I also assert that there are impressions generated of Desdemona as a witch. Devil references in *Othello* highlight a moral tension in the play between good and evil, which plays out as the tension between reason and witchcraft, or rather, wit and witchcraft; and as I mentioned earlier, though Iago insists on using wit and not witchcraft, we see the two blur together for him. I argue that the hysteria that causes the downfall of Othello and the murder of Desdemona has, in part, to do with witchcraft fears of early modern England.

Iago uses Othello's "blackness" to incite the fear of the devil in Brabantio when he says, "an old black ram / is tupping your white ewe" (1.1.88-89), and "…the devil will make a grandsire of you" (11.91). Though Iago makes this devil a ram rather than the typical pagan goat image of Satan, he nonetheless conjures nightmarish sexual images of a horned black devil "ramming" and impregnating Brabantio's virtuous, white daughter, leading him to imagine and believe that Othello has "practiced on her with foul charms / …[and] with drugs and minerals." The contrast of black ram with white ewe echoes an early modern Christian association of black as evil and white as good/virtuous. Iago plays on this contrast taking their skin color to stand in as symbols for their respective moral characters: Othello is a devil and Desdemona is an angel. This idea comes full circle at the end when Emilia says to Othello: "O, the more angel she, / And you the blacker devil" (5.2.130). Of course, Othello *becomes* like a "devil" in the end—thanks to the manipulations of Iago—but it's clear that he doesn't start that way: the Duke says to Brabantio, "Your son-in-law is more fair than black" (1.3.290), punning on the black/white idea to make the point that Othello is more virtuous than he is black-skinned. However, though the Duke and others see Othello as "more fair than black," Iago has tainted that image for Brabantio, conjuring an indelible image of Othello with ram horns to make manifest for Brabantio the bestial and monstrous sex act with Desdemona. Later, Iago makes manifest for Othello an opposite image of the oversexed ram with horns: with the laughable and emasculated husband with cuckhold horns: he uses the two opposing but damming images of horns on Othello to make him oversexed to Brabantio, and impotent to Othello.

The uneasiness about Desdemona marrying Othello in Iago and Brabantio, is of course rooted in racism and this uneasiness for Brabantio (and I argue the audience) is exacerbated by deep anxieties about devils and witches during a time of witch hysteria, witch trials and killings. Because of the many instances that Othello is called a devil, or accused of using charms, etc., I suggest that if these accusations have strong relevance in the cognitive environment of an early modern audience, then the impression of Desdemona as a witch would also be felt. I make this link due to a popular folk belief that witches copulated with the devil during witchcraft rituals: if Othello is seen as a devil, then Brabantio's assertion that Desdemona "…[fell] in love with what she fear'd to look on!" suggests that there is something horribly wrong with the "white" Desdemona.

These anxieties about Desdemona are expressed even in Othello: her image is sullied in describing how she fell in love with him for his story: "She wish'd she had not heard it, yet she wish'd / That heaven had made her such a man. / She thank'd me, / And bade me, if I had a friend that lov'd her, / I should but teach him how to tell my story, / And that would woo her" (1.3.162-166). She loved the story, which according to Brabantio was supposed to move her "to fear, not to delight!" (1.2.71), and she says, "She wish'd she had not heard it, yet she wish'd / That heaven had made her such a man" echoing this contradiction that she should not want something, and yet she wants it. She "loved the story" which according to Othello, seemed to draw her to him. Desdemona indirectly shows her interest in Othello, which is forward, saying, "if I had a friend that lov'd her, / I should but teach him how to tell my story, / And that would woo her" giving the subtle implication that *any* man who could tell such a story could woo her. Othello alludes to an insatiable appetite for these terrifying stories when he describes her as having a "greedy ear." Iago talks about her insatiability when he says to Roderigo: "Her eye must be fed; and what de- / light shall she have to look on the devil? When the / blood is made dull with the act of sport, there should / be, [again] to inflame it and to give satiety a fresh / appetite" (2.1.225-229). This idea that there is something wrong with Desdemona for loving that which she should fear instead of "[running] from her guardage to the sooty bosom" of Othello, impresses upon us a dark and overly sexual view of her, one that questions her moral character when Iago asks, "what delight shall she have to look on the devil?" I argue that these impressions play on the fears of witchcraft in the early modern audience and that for Desdemona, falling in love with Othello "the devil," suggests that she herself must be one—I use the terms witch, demon, devil, etc., loosely, interchangeably.

In early modern England, there was a common belief that witches were in consort with the devil, and since, according to Walter Stephens in *Demon Lovers: Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief,* "Witchcraft theory and the persecution of witches are Renaissance phenomena, and they lasted into the age of reason" (125), witches and demons would have been relevant to the early modern audience, and their relationship to one another widely accepted. Stephens and others assert that the power of witches came from demons (180). So, in this way, demons, devils, witches seemed to have been interdependent. In *Witchcraft in Europe 1100-1700* editors, Alan C. Kors and Edward Peters state that "The role and power of Satan is critical to the concept of witchcraft as it had evolved in Christian Europe, as is the concept of the pact between Devil and witch" (202), and "…something is due to the hidden ministry of the Demon, which does not appear but works in secret; and that unguent is merely the outward symbol of the wretched witch's complicity in the crime under the guidance and advice of the Demon" (245). Misogynist views were supported and spread as Christian notions of women as weaker, more impressionable than men and susceptible to demon influences largely because of their "sexual appetites."

Stephens argues that Heinrich Kramer's *Malleus maleficarum* (1486), the most popular treatise on witches, is a misogynistic writing "whose ideological purpose …is to justify hatred of women" (34). Stephens cites Kramer: "'women do all things because of carnal lust, which…is insatiably in them. Wherefore for the sake of fulfilling their lusts they consort…even with devils.' It identifies several kinds of witches…but claims that all of them 'practice carnal filthiness…with devils'" (34).

Even if the early modern audience did not believe that witches copulated with devils, the idea would certainly be enough to generate terrifying impressions about women's sexuality. Consider the misogyny in *Othello* alone: Desdemona is murdered *just* for the idea of sleeping with Cassio: Othello was pretty quick to believe in Iago's lies. Female sexuality poses a threat to the patriarchy that makes men even entertaining the idea deadly for women. Male anxiety over the "insatiable lust" of women is an anxiety that, as Robin Briggs puts it, "might appropriate male power" (265), and so the anxiety is one of women's sexuality overpowering men. The anxiety of patriarchal male fear of women's unleashed sexuality is manifested in the horror and painful sprouting of Othello's symbolic cuckhold horns mentioned earlier. This misogynistic trope in early modern English writing, *Othello* included, is an example of how easily even the most virtuous woman can be reduced to a "whore."

I have focused on this idea that *Othello* is a play, in part, about the presence of witchcraft with no witches. It is a play that dismisses witchcraft, as Iago does, and Othello does when he defends himself against Branbantio's accusation saying, "She lov'd me for the dangers I had pass'd, / And I lov'd her that she did pity them. / This only is the witchcraft I have us'd" (1.3.167-169); and just as there are several accusations towards Othello being a witch or a devil (due to his bewitching stories and his black skin), there is more evidence of "honest" white Iago as a devil if the early modern audience were willing to entertain it.

I have argued that Iago makes a contradiction when he says that he uses "wit and not witchcraft," because his "wit" is enmeshed in "witchcraft," and he uses his wit as a kind of witchcraft. Another of Iago's more obvious contradictions is that he is regarded as "honest Iago" when he is pathologically deceptive. Inherent in these contradictions is the good/bad pattern again: wit is good/ witchcraft is bad and honest is good/ deceptive is bad; and Iago uses this duality to manipulate how good characters can be seen as bad, and in how he covers his bad character with an unquestioned appearance of virtue. Even he admits to himself and to the audience: "When devils will the blackest sins put on, / They do suggest at first with heavenly shows, / As I do now" (2.3.351-353). In this admission of evil, Iago goes a step further to suggest that he is a devil. However, his self-admission, whether it's metaphorical or not, is strengthened when at the end Othello calls him a demi-devil and attacks him saying, "If thou be'st a devil, I cannot kill thee" (5.2.287) to which Iago replies, "I bleed sir, but not killed" (5.2.288). Again, even if this is only a metaphor, it could have registered in the cognitive environment of the audience as the workings of a real devil. That is, the play may be thought of as a play about Iago's wit, but it could be felt as a play about his witchcraft. I suggest that, through impressions and Iago's self-admission as a devil, Shakespeare invites the audience to entertain Iago as a witch or a devil, in a real sense.

Iago uses his wit as a poison, which was one of the main accusations of witches. Bever writes that during the witch trials, "Allegations of poison were, in fact, the most common accusation leading to these trials, and they also comprised a number of supporting denunciations registered once a trial had begun" (960). Bever states that "The effects of salves and poisons, like many other somatic disorders, probably involved a complex interplay between physiology,

psychology, and cultural expectation" (964). According to Bever, witchcraft poisons were more about the fears invoked rather than any real power of the poisons; or put another way, the real poison would have been the manipulations of the victim's humoral environment.

We can see Iago as a witch/devil in his deliberate manipulation of Othello's humors. Floyd-Wilson asserts that "Skeptical writers who dismissed the possibility of demonic possession still maintained that evil spirits could influence the behavior of those most vulnerable by manipulating the non-naturals, especially the passions" (Floyd-Wilson 144), and Weyer states, "By stirring the humors suitable for…illusion, these demons are able to imbue the optic or visual spirit with any image whatsoever" (124) and in this way, "the demon deludes the minds of men, so that they seem to see unreal objects as real" or in the case of Othello, seeing the handkerchief in Cassio's room as complete evidence for Desdemona's infidelity. Weyer goes on to say that "The purpose of this magical art is not to produce things actually, but to display, merely to the point of appearance" (123).

It is not Iago's lies alone that perform a kind of witchcraft, but the way the lies or poison influence Othello's humors. The image of Othello in the tempest conflates the outer climate (storm) with what becomes Othello's inner climate. Iago's lies work to craftily "stir" Othello's emotional equilibrium into a tempest to the extent that Othello is quickly visibly changed. As Othello becomes increasingly upset at the thought of Desdemona's infidelity, Iago, in his manipulative fashion says, "But I do see y' are moved. / I am to pray you not to strain my speech / To grosser issues nor to larger reach / Than to suspicion" (3.3.217-220). He points out to Othello that his inner change is visible, creating the opportunity to minimize the explosive load of implications to mere suspicion. Desdemona notices Othello's change and reports to Cassio: "My lord is not my lord; nor should I know him / Were he in favor as on humor alter'd" (3.4.124-125), and after the murder of Desdemona, Lodovigo laments, "Is this the nature / Whom passion could not shake?" to which Iago replies, "He is much chang'd." (4.1.265- 269). Indeed, much of the horror of the play is witnessing the noble Othello "break into savage madness," a madness or change brought about through not just the stirring but the shaking of his passion by Iago. This links back to the shaking of the tempest, described as a "wind-shaked surge". In essence, I want to connect this idea of Iago as a witch shaking and stirring Othello's humors to the point of savage madness with my observation that witches could be behind the manipulation of the weather during the tempest, which subtly links Iago with the witchy tempest.

Iago can successfully influence Othello's inner climate because Othello was already off-kilter in his rapturous love for Desdemona: "I cannot speak enough of this content, / It stops me here; it is too much joy. / And this, and this, the greatest discord be / That e'er our hearts shall make!" (2.1.196-199). We can say that a hint of tragedy already exists in Othello's mind, as *too* much joy in the realm of humoral thought is as dangerous as too much of any emotion for the mind and body. In addition, the "e'er" in "And this, and this, the greatest discord be / That e'er our hearts shall make!" can be heard as "error" in this context: "That *error* our hearts shall make!" I am not suggesting that Othello is predicting his horrible fate; he is merely using hyperbole to express his joy, which, even though this is a happy moment, does suggest—as it does in the "e'er" homophone—at error. Iago knows this and capitalizes on Othello's vulnerability saying in an aside "O you are well-tun'd now! /But I'll set down the pegs that make this music" (2.1.199-201) punning on the idea that Othello's discord is perfectly in tune with Iago's plan. We actually see evidence of Iago's plan before this when he says to Rodrigo, "Though that his joy be joy, / Yet throw such [changes] of vexation on't / As it may lose some color" (1.1.71-73). He plans from the beginning to use Othello's "too much joy" to influence his

humors, and we come back to Weyer's idea that "By stirring the humors suitable for…illusion, these demons can imbue the optic or visual spirit with any image whatsoever." Iago is obliquely linked to witchcraft again.

Like a spell, the handkerchief has magical properties of its own. In addition to Othello's story of the Egyptian witch who supposedly put a spell in the handkerchief, there is the idea of weaving a spell with words, like Iago does. These two acts of weaving similarly make a "spell." I want to suggest that undoing the weave is a way to undo the spell. In witchcraft, there is a practice of creating a spell while making knots in a rope and undoing that spell by untying the knots. Pierre Bayle writes about this in "Skepticism, Doubt, and Disbelief in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries": "If the witch undoes the knots of the rope he undoes the spell, and if that rope falls into the hands of anyone who can untie it, all the wizardry disappears (*Witchcraft in Europe 1100—1700,* 336). I want to make a link between the weaving of the tale and spell by Iago and the unweaving of the tale and undoing of the spell by Emilia, whose truth-telling can "untie" the spell. I've mentioned how the weave of the handkerchief embodies a spell. I also mentioned how Iago's web of lies creates a "spell." Using this notion in witchcraft that spells can be made through tying knots and the undoing of the spell accomplished through the untying of the knots, I claim that Emilia undoes the spell in the end by undoing the web of lies. When Emilia finds the handkerchief and says, "I'll have the work ta'en out, / And giv't to Iago" (3.3.296-297). To *take the work out* means to make a copy of the original, and another way to think of "copy" is to repeat or echo; and just as Iago repeats/echoes Othello to influence him or cast the "spell," Emilia echoes Othello in the end which, I suggest, undoes the spell.

As I said earlier, Iago relies heavily on the rhetorical device of repetition, in a sense, to hypnotize and influence his victims. I also suggest that his use of echoing accomplishes the same effect, and that echoing back Othello's words and phrases have an incantatory and magical effect that leads Othello to eventually fall into trance. When Iago begins to weave his web of lies to Othello and plants the seed of Cassio's involvement with Desdemona, he uses echoing to raise suspicion in Othello, and cause doubt. To demonstrate, I return to a part of a passage mentioned earlier:

Iago: Did Michael Cassio, when [you] woo'd my lady,
Know of your love?
Othello: He did, from first to last. Why dost thou ask?
Iago: But for satisfaction of my thought,
No further harm.
Othello: Why of thy thought, Iago?
Iago: I did not think he had been acquainted with her.
Othello: O yes, and went between us very oft.
Iago: Indeed!
Othello: Indeed? ay, indeed. Discern'st thou aught in that?
Is he not honest?
Iago: Honest, my lord?
Othello: Honest? ay, honest.
Iago: My lord, for aught I know.
Othello: What dost thou think?
Iago: Think my lord?
Othello: Think, my lord? [By heaven], thou eccho'st me,

As if there were some monster in thy thought
Too hideous to be shown. Thou dost mean something. (3.3. 95-107)

In his incantatory rhythm of echoing Othello, Iago creates a spell-like effect, and simultaneously generates doubt and begins the foundation of his web of lies. I liken this process to a witch creating a spell through the tying of knots. Next, I want to show that Emilia engages in a similar process of echoing Othello, but in her case, she is undoing the knots in this series of passages.

Emilia: Cassio, my lord, hath kill'd a young Venetian
Call'd Roderigo.
Othello: Roderigo kill'd?
And Cassio kill'd?
Emilia: No, Cassio is not kill'd.
Othello: Not Cassio kill'd? Then murther's out of tune.

In this first instance of repetition, we see Othello echoing Emilia, as if to confirm the plan and hope for Cassio's murder. [This dialogue recalls the echoing pattern of Iago and Othello above]

Shortly after, Emilia hears Desdemona's cry:

Emilia: [O Lord], what cry is that?
Othello: That? what?

In these two lines, Othello continues to echo Emilia, which recalls Iago echoing Othello earlier, except that Iago has a clear intention of planting a thought and Othello is merely trying to evade the reality that Desdemona is dying. In other words, we can see that Iago's repetition is an example of his mastery of manipulation, whereas Othello is just trying to deflect.

A little later, Desdemona finally dies:

Emilia: …I must needs report the truth.
Othello: She's like a liar gone to burning hell:
'Twas I that kill'd her.
Emilia: O, the more angel she,
And you the blacker devil!
Othello: She'd turned to folly, and she was a whore.
Emilia: Thou dost belie her, and thou art a devil.
Othello: She was false as water.
Emilia: Thou art rash as fire to say
That she was false. O, she was heavenly true!
Othello: Cassio did top her; ask thy husband else.
O, I were damn'd beneath all depth in hell
But that I did proceed upon just grounds
To this extremity. Thy husband knew it all.
Emilia: My husband?
Othello: Thy husband.

Emilia: That she was false to wedlock?
Othello: Ay, with Cassio. [Nay,] had she been true,
If heaven would make me such another world
Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
I'ld not have sold her for it.
Emilia: My husband?
Othello: Ay, 'twas he that told me on her first.
An honest man he is, and hates the slime
That sticks on filthy deeds.
Emilia: My husband?
Othello: What needs this iterance, woman? I say thy husband.
Emilia: O mistress, villainy hath made mocks with love!
My husband say she was false?
Othello: He, woman:
I say thy husband, dost understand the word?
My friend, thy husband, honest, honest Iago (5.2.111-153)

After Othello has murdered Desdemona, and still believes that she was unfaithful, Emilia disabuses him of his delusion through the unraveling of Iago's "knots." As Othello reiterates the web of lies, Emilia interrupts the narrative with the repetitive question "My husband?" This repetition is similar to Iago's incantatory echoing that I have already discussed, which begins the weaving of his spell. In the case of Emilia, I argue that as Othello explains the web of lies, she is simultaneously untying its knots as she realizes Iago's plot, while creating a kind of reverse spell herself. That is, by echoing Othello's, "Thy husband" with "My husband?" and interrupting with this repetition throughout his story, she breaks the spell by disrupting the flow of the web or story, creating space between the thoughts of the web that break the rhythm of the spell. By interrupting the rhythm, and thus Othello's ability to masterfully deliver a captivating tale, she breaks up the momentum and the power of the tale to the extent that the force of it, the spell-like quality of it, begins to disintegrate, which allows the truth to be seen through it. Emilia even says several times that she is going to tell the truth: "I will not charm my tongue; I am bound to / speak" (5.2.184), and later when Iago tries to silence her "I will speak as liberal as the North" (5.2.220). In this way, Emilia through her truth-seeking and truth-telling, unravels Iago's web of lies.

I have talked about the different ways in which there is a kind of witchcraft in this play, even though there are no actual witches. I argued by using the theory of relevance that Iago employs his language in crafty ways that resemble a kind of witchcraft. I have also argued how he used his crafty language to manipulate Othello's humors in what looks like a magical way, and I have argued as well that the history of witchcraft supports how the witchy incidentals in this play might have made manifest in the audience the terror and fears of actual witchcraft. All these lines of argument support a notion that even though there are no witches, a kind of witchcraft or witch presence is felt in this play. Whether Shakespeare believed in witchcraft is irrelevant; what is important is that the audience experienced real fear evoked by horrifying notions of the witch hysteria, and that Shakespeare stirred the cognitive environments of his audience to perhaps show how "wit" or reason can be just as dangerous as witchcraft.

Chapter 4: Poetry As "the Mother of Lies" in *As You Like It*

Early modern moralists were concerned about the influence of highly skilled and ornate poetry on young men, claiming that corrupting ideas hidden in them could influence negatively. In this way, ornamental or complexly artful poetry was feared as immoral and corrupting. In the *Othello* chapter I discuss how Iago's artful wit is used in just the way that early modern moralists feared: as influencing and corrupting the unsuspecting. I argued that his wit—or for the purposes of the chapter, his art—is more akin to a malicious sense of witchcraft. I argue that Shakespeare's *As You Like It* pokes fun at the immoral implications of poems without high skill or art, having, at the center of the play, a series of badly written love poems. The play puts into question the early modern moral and philosophical idea that art should simply and plainly express love, morals, virtue and truth. Sir Phillip Sidney, in his *Defense of Poesy*, argues that aesthetics is vital for the effectiveness of moral and virtuous poetry. In this chapter, I argue that in *As You Like It* Shakespeare exposes the silliness of claims by moralists and philosophers that poetic richness is dangerous, that they are "lies" and make bad impressions upon the young and vulnerable. And I argue as well that Shakespeare shows that the *lack* of aesthetic skill can actually be more harmful, making bad and "wrong impressions." I explore the relationship of poetry as well to the Fall: art is the result of the Fall, and yet is the closest we can get to our prelapsarian state. So, in this way, artistic feigning, or artifice, is a paradoxical way to reach as natural a state as possible.

Poetry as lies:

Similar claims against poetry date back to Plato's accusation of poets as being liars who "produce [] a product that is far removed from the truth in the accomplishment of its task, and associates with the part in us that is remote from intelligence, and is its companion and friend for no sound and true purpose" (Republic X.603). Not only does Plato claim that there is no sound purpose for poetry, he also says that poets use "words with a hidden meaning, as poets will" (Plato's Republic I.332). The way poets and poetry "lie," according to him, is through its use of "imitation" or "mimesis," the imitation of real life in art. Imitation in poetry would include aesthetics and high artfulness, since it is through the technical skill of poetic devices that a poem's artifice can feel real to its audience. Early modern moralists feared the harmful influence of imitation in poetry, which is an idea rooted Plato's critique of poetry as corrupting. He argues, "We have not yet brought our chief accusation against [poetry]. Its power to corrupt, with rare exceptions, even the better sort is surely the chief cause for alarm" (Republic X.605). This corruption of, in particular, young men, lies in poetry's ability to incite passions. Socrates, as written by Plato, likens the power of mimesis in painting and art in general to the power of illusions:

> …the same things appear bent and straight to those who view them in water and out, or concave and convex, owing to similar errors of vision about colors, and there is obviously every confusion of this sort in our souls. And so scene painting in its exploration of this weakness of our nature falls nothing short of witchcraft…" (Republic X.602)

Thus, imitation is equated to witchcraft: the art of conjuring illusions in order to manipulate others, and by extension poetry preys on our weakness to fall into error. I discuss in the *Othello* chapter the various ways Iago's rhetoric is referred to a kind of witchcraft. Plato goes on to explain that the corrupting power of poetry is in its ability to incite the passions, condemning poetry for making us feel too moved. We "feel pleasure, and abandon ourselves and accompany the representation with sympathy and eagerness, and we praise as an excellent poet the one who most strongly affects us in this way" (Republic X.605). He insists that we wouldn't invite these strong emotions in real life: men strive to manage emotional equilibrium and poetry disturbs it and feminizes men, making them passionate and emotional. Plato's claims against poetry propagated a fear especially of ornamental poetry in early modern moralists, as the more ornamented and skilled the poetry, the livelier and more deceptive its imitation, not to mention its ability to provoke readers to "abandon" themselves to passions.

Where Plato distrusts the pleasures of imitation entirely, Aristotle advocates for it in *Poetics*, arguing that "from childhood it is instinctive for human beings to imitate," and that "man gets his first lessons by imitation, and by instinct also all human beings take pleasure in imitations" (1448b). According to Aristotle, imitation is instinctive, pleasurable and instructive and he explains that the "medium of imitation" in poetry is critical in learning from poetry. Through artistic imitation, the audience can learn from the mistakes of foolish men, as in comedy, or purge strong emotions, through the imitation of tragedy. The "lies" that Plato is concerned with are, according to Aristotle, critical to the experience of learning. For instance, Homer's heroes are made more effective if they are rendered better than they were because the artfulness makes the hero more convincing. Aristotle argues against a main criticism of poetry that it expresses "the Impossible" through its use of metaphor and ambiguity, among other things (1461a-1461b), and justifies that "a convincing impossibility is preferable to that which, though possible, is unconvincing" (1461b).

Aristotle states that stylistic choices like of metaphor, foreign words, and the like, are needed to enhance the audience's experience. He sees the importance of poetic devices to elevate language, and he stresses the moderate use of them, not for moral reasons, but for the sake of perspicuity. He claims that plot devices are the driving force in tragedy for arousing emotions (pity), and catharsis in audience members.

Sir Philip Sidney's *A Defense of Poesy* (1595) is heavily influenced by Aristotle's *Poetics*. It is a response to an attack on theaters from a Puritan minister, Stephen Gosson. In *The School of Abuse*, Gosson draws heavily from Plato calling theater poetry "the mother of lies." Sidney argues against this idea explaining how lies or "feigning" facilitates truth in poetry, and how this feigning enables poets to teach morals through poetry. Where Plato and the likes of Glosson warn against the high aesthetic influences of poetry, Sidney, like Aristotle, argues for the importance of aesthetics as a way to move audience members to good and moral ends.

Sidney's argument emphasizes poetry's ability to "teach and delight," through aesthetics—through the "ornamentation" of literary devices and their poetic effects on hearers—while he admonishes his critics: "…the philosophers, as they scorn to delight, so must they be content little to move" (Sidney 26). Sidney condemns philosophers for not caring to be delighted and moved and argues that morals and virtues are taught more effectively through imitation *because* it delights and moves. He explains that to "teach and delight" through art is to not just imitate a subject, but to enhance it through ornament and make it better: "wherein he painteth not Lucretia, whom he never saw, but painteth the outward beauty of such a virtue…[We] imitate both to delight and teach, and delight to move men to take that goodness in hand, which without delight they would

fly as from a stranger; and teach to make them know that goodness whereunto they are moved"(14-15). The spectator not only sees an image of the virtuous Lucretia, but they experience that virtue "goodness" through the aesthetic experience of the painting. The poet

> doth not only show the way, but gives so sweet a prospect into the way as will entice any man to enter into it. Nay, he doth, as if your journey should lie through a fair vineyard, at the very first give you a cluster of grapes, that full of that taste you may long to pass further. (25)

Sidney's argument for aesthetics seems to border dangerously on a sensuality that feels forbidden, but he conflates this enticement with teaching morals so that the "cluster of grapes" moves the audience to go deeper into the moral. It is a paradox that he proposes, an insistence that something bad (lies) can serve something good (truth, etc.). According to Sidney "that they [poets] should be the principal liars, I answer paradoxically, but truly, I think truly, that of all writers under the sun the poet is the least liar; and though he would, as a poet can scarcely be a liar." The poet, because he writes imaginatively, "nothing affirmeth, and therefore never lieth" (36). Shakespeare plays on this paradox in *As You Like It* when Touchstone says to Audrey, "the truest poetry is the most feigning" (3.3.19-20), and on the idea that poetry, the "mother of lies," is the most honest because it results in moving its audience to be good and honest (true).

Sidney uses the terms, imitation/mimesis, counterfeiting and feigning interchangeably to refer to the artist's ability to represent an ideal and realistic rendering of the subject. In *As You Like It* we see the words "feign" and "counterfeit" also appear in the contexts of "art" and its implications of the paradox of truth in lies. In Touchstone's rhetoric—a response to Audrey's question of whether poetry is "a true thing?"—he echoes Sidney:

No, truly; for the truest poetry is the
Most feigning, and lovers are given to poetry;
And what they swear in poetry may be said as lovers
They do feign. (3.3.16-22)

In response to Audrey's question, is poetry "a true thing?" Touchstone's figure of speech, "No, truly," makes an incidental echo of the truth/lie paradox: "no" in response to *is poetry a true thing*, suggests that poetry is *not* a true thing—it is a lie—paired with the "true" in "truly," generates the very paradox that Touchstone and Sidney claim about poetry, that "the truest poetry is the/Most feigning." Indeed, Touchstone is the best, most "feigning" poet, or rhetorician in the play. By the way, Plato, when he charged poets as liars, lumped rhetoricians in the same camp. Touchstone's formulation: "lovers are given to poetry; And what they swear in poetry may be said as lovers/They do feign" continues to play on the truth/lie paradox. Lovers swear (speak the truth, or "affirm") as they do "feign" (lie).

Rosalind and Orlando embody Touchstone's notion that "lovers are given to poetry;/And what they swear in poetry may be said as lovers. /They do feign," but where Rosalind's "feigning" is more in line with the counterfeiting and pretending of an artist with skill, one that teaches and delights, Orlando's feigning (his poetry) lacks skill and, I argue, poses more danger, comically so, than a poet who can "imitate" realistically and potentially corrupt. His untrained "feigning" results in a different kind of corruption, one caused by an unskilled artist who, though having good and moral intentions, gives bad and wrong impressions.

Impressions: rhymes speak:

Orlando's bad and wrong impressions are the consequence of his lack of skill. Rosalind as Ganymede asks Orlando, "But are you so much in love as your rhymes speak?" (3.3.395). The idea implied that through a poetic device like rhyme, a poet can communicate feeling, affect, mood, etc. (what Dan Sperber and Deirdre Wilson call *poetic effects*), is, I argue, at the heart of the moralists' insecurity of how poetry can move and incite the passions in hearers. It is the reason Plato criticizes poets for using "words with a hidden meaning." In my research, I look at how early modern poetry of the highest caliber, has the ability to make us feel. From the perspective of both early modern philosophy and the more current Relevance Theory, the "impressions" made on us by the poems are the reason we feel when we read poetry.

As discussed earlier, Sperber and Wilson theorize, in terms of the affective communication in poetry, that implicatures generate common impressions that make us feel, or "move us" in the experience of reading poetry. In the case of Rosalind's question, Orlando's rhymes communicate terribly. She questions the veracity of his love because the clumsiness of his unskilled rhymes do not "move" her, nor do they communicate the right impressions despite the intensity of love they directly (propositionally) profess.

In terms of early modern philosophy and the influence of impressions, I want to return yet again to Wright:

> Impressions from the senses press upon the soul like a seal in soft wax, or else make a permanent and indelible mark 'as the sparrows attached to birdlime, or the flies sticke in honnie.' It is these subtle movements of the sensitive soul which are the driving force behind emotional experience, and which give rise in turn to passions or perburtations. 41

In Wright's description, impressions press onto the soul and are the "driving force behind emotional experience." Katharine A. Craik in her book, *Reading Sensations in Early Modern England*, says that "[p]roperly pitched and appropriately measured out, poetry makes a tangible impression on those who hear it" (41). In her reading of Henry Crosse's *Vertues Commonwealth*, Craik explains that "Crosse deplores all poetry which presents misleading impressions to the heart, the organ of the sensitive soul" (24). Crosse, like other early modern moralists objected to misleading impressions or "lies" in poetry, not only for inciting passions to the detriment of reason but also to the detriment of expressing virtue. They valued a plain aesthetic to allow virtue's own beauty to shine through the art.

It was a common idea in early modern England that poems were humoral bodies and were often described as having anatomies. Craik writes "[l]iterary styles have their own tempers, humors and complexions which are, like the authors, hot, or cold 'according to the metal of their minds' (Craik 38). She also explains the anxiety around "the particular dangers posed to emotional and bodily equilibrium by what [Thomas] Wright called 'light and wanton Poets'" (21). These "dangers" were what early modern moralists cautioned against in the reading of poetry. Many of them argued that highly wrought and ornamental poetry was the most suspicious poetry of all as the verbal decorativeness and smoothness could seduce readers leaving them vulnerable to any corrupting ideas hidden in the poetic craftwork. Ornate poetry was feared as these dangers, these corrupting ideas in the humoral body of the poem, could pose emotional and bodily imbalance to the readers' humoral body. In fact, in the humoral model, poetry could "infect" and make a person

ill as a result of stirring the passions. I argue that Shakespeare takes the moralists' claim that highly aesthetic poetry corrupts, and instead suggests that it is a lack of aesthetic skill that is the danger. When Touchstone says to Rosalind about Orlando's poetry,

This is the very false gallop of verses; why do you
Infect yourself with them? (3.2.113-114)

Shakespeare suggests that it is the badly written poetry, "the false gallop of verses" that is the lie, "false" and that we should fear for its ability to corrupt and "infect the humoral body."

Along these lines, Sidney argues that the ornamentation of verse is clothing for the body of a poem: "poets have appareled their poetical inventions in that numberous kind of writing which is called verse" (15). He asserts that verse, as the "fittest rainment" for poems, dignifies rather than corrupts:

> Although indeed the senate of poets has chosen verse as their fittest raiment, meaning, as in matter they passed all in all, so in manner to go beyond them; not speaking, table-talk fashion, or like men in a dream, words as they chanceably fall from the mouth, but peizing [weighing—ed.] each syllable of each word by just proportion, according to the dignity of the subject. 15-16

To dress a poem in verse was, to Sidney, akin to properly dressing a noble and virtuous person. The verse should be well made and appropriately ornamented. The more dignified the subject, the more aesthetic skill and art in the "peizing" of each syllable is required to properly dress the subject. In this way Sidney is suggesting that clothing on the virtuous must be of painstaking and superior quality, which is tricky since moralists saw "properly adorned" poetry as likely to be "using words with a hidden meaning, as poets will." Orlando, as a virtuous man but unskilled poet, is a comical example of what happens when virtues cannot be experienced by hearers because the poet lacks the skill to weigh "each syllable of each word by just proportion, according to the dignity of the subject" or—put in terms of relevance theory—to generate the poetic effects needed to communicate the proper impressions.

When Rosalind as Ganymede asks Orlando: "But are you so much in love as your rhymes speak?", Shakespeare is not merely making a joke about his poor ability to express his love through poetry; he is also making the point that rhymes communicate affect and Orlando's poems fail to communicate the appropriate impressions. Similarly, Jaques' poetic moralizing fails to communicate impressions and affect in his hearers:

Duke S.
But what said Jaques?
Did he not moralize this spectacle?
I Lord:
O, yes, into a thousand similes. (2.1.43-45)

Jaques' melancholic similes have no impact to move his hearers to the plight of the slaughtered deer. His similes make no impressions and so his attempt at poetic moralizing is as self-indulgent and unpoetical as Orlando's love poems. Jaques calls Orlando, "Signior Love," and Orlando calls Jaques, "Monsieur Melancholy" each mocking the other's passionate poetics that lack "peizing"

of words and that ultimately render their "poetry" ridiculous. Though Sidney argued for high aesthetics, he does not mean art for art's sake:

> Which I speak to show that it is not riming and versing that maketh a poet—no more than a long gown maketh an advocate, who, though he pleaded in armor, should be an advocate and no soldier—but it is that feigning notable images of virtues, vices, or what else, with that delightful teaching, which must be the right describing note to know a poet by. (15)

Shakespeare is concerned with aesthetics and the consequences of using mere poetic devices without the skill it takes to generate poetic effects. In his terrible rhymes, Orlando praises Rosalind's virtues, and in his "thousand similes" Jaques moralizes, but neither succeeds at achieving the poetic effects needed to move their audience. Shakespeare surfaces the problem of the anti-aesthetic claims against poetry, that without the aesthetic skill it takes to achieve poetic effects, poems, morals, etc. ring hollow.

Virtuous poet who makes the wrong impressions:

Earlier I talked about Aristotle's idea that in comedy we learn from the mistakes of foolish men. Orlando is a fool who, despite all of his virtue, cannot write anything other than laughable but also corrupting poems. Ultimately, his foolishness originates from the tyrannical Oliver who prevents him from getting an education. Orlando explains to Adam: "My brother Jaques he keeps at/ school…/For my part, he keeps me rustically at home" (1.1.5-7). Orlando complains that Oliver's "horses are bred better" (1.1.11) than he is, and at the heart of Orlando's lament is the problem of the untrained poet who cannot express the virtue of his beloved because he cannot "imitate" her virtue convincingly and aesthetically. He confronts Oliver:

You have train'd me like a peasant.
Obscuring and hiding from me all gentleman-like
Qualities. (1.1.68-70)

Instead of training to become a gentleman and a first-rate poet, Orlando is kept ignorant and rustic, unable to develop anything except muscles and physical prowess. Herein lies his crisis.

Adam to Orlando:

Why are you virtuous? Why do people love you?
And wherefore are you gentle strong and valiant?...
Your virtues, gentle master are sanctified and holy traitors to you" ((2.3.5-13).

The dangers of bad poetry by virtuous people, like Orlando, are as bad for the humoral body as ornate poems by "light and wanton Poets." Orlando's virtue becomes his holy traitor: bad poetry is corrupting in its falseness, in its inability move readers to whatever moral or virtue it's trying to teach. In the case of Orlando, because of his lack of skill, not only do his poems fail to move, they make morally corrupting impressions! He writes:

Will I Rosalinda' write,
Teaching all that read to know
The quintessence of every sprite
Heaven would in little show.
Therefore heaven Nature charg'd

That one body should be fill'd
With all graces wide-enlarged.
Nature presently distill'd
Helen's cheek, but not [her] heart,
Cleopatra's majesty,
Atalanta's better part,
Sad Lucretia's modesty.
Thus Rosalind of many parts
By heavenly synod was devis'd,
Of many faces, eyes, and hearts,
To have the touches dearest priz'd.
Heaven that would she these gifts should have,
And I to live and die her slave." (3.2.136-154)

Orlando—who is after all is not educated—mangles his verse and the virtues espoused sound blasphemous. The lines, "Therefore heaven Nature charg'd / That one body should be fill'd / With all graces wide-enlarged," generate the image of her body made fat by all her graces. Similarly, the badly sung praises of her many virtuous aspects render her image as monstrous: "Thus Rosalind of many parts / By heavenly synod was devis'd, / Of many faces, eyes, and hearts." The very lack of skill and poetic effects, in metaphor, meter and rhyme, creates a different kind of corruption from the light and wanton poets; it defiles the very morals and virtues it is trying to put forth through its "false verses."

In his attempt to write about Rosalind's virtues, the lack of smoothness and the clumsy and erratic ornamentation in his poems communicates a lack of virtue, and a sense of wantonness: "Her worth, being mounted on the wind, / Through all the world bears Rosalind" (3.2.90-91). Here, the unintended suggestions of "her worth… (as in her virginity) mounted (as in sex)... through all the world," communicates bawdy humor more than virtue. Shakespeare's commentary on bad poetry suggests that poetry with no poetic effects, to the extent that it communicates vulgar insults, is at least an equal danger to that of skillful, ornate poetry with corrupt ideas hidden in them.

This play is not known for its high aesthetic quality which, I argue, is one of the reasons the title *As You Like It* carries with it an insult to any moralist who wanted less poetically rich plays. I argue that *As You Like It* in part is a commentary Shakespeare is making against anti-aesthetic arguments. Shakespeare writes about a virtuous character whose poems, in lacking the ability to "feign," expresses blasphemy instead of virtue. Also consider the character William who is the most rustic, ignorant and non-verbal character in the play. He is the ultimate example of the plain and simple man. Shakespeare, in naming him William, aligns himself with this sad and boring character, as if to make commentary on the pressure for poets to write plain poems.

Orlando, though "kept rustically at home," is raised among nobility and is a more interesting and livelier person than William but is a version of him nonetheless: he is completely artless. He is artless in the sense that he is innocent as well as in the sense that he is unpoetical. My reason for earlier labeling his lack of education as a crisis is meant to draw attention to the serious conflict poets must have suffered during this time. I see this crisis in Orlando, not in anything told by the plot of the play, but in certain incidentals. Sperber and Wilson describe poetic effects in terms of a wide array of implicatures that create common impressions. These implicatures are generated through the stylistic choices of the author by using such poetic devices as rhyme meter, metaphor, etc. I want to suggest that there is a type of literary phenomenon that is widely seen in

early modern writers such as Shakespeare and Spenser, where a charge is sparked in a minefield of unnoticeable and irrelevant implicatures, and that these implicatures clustered together in a group of lines develop into an extra organization that do something akin to what meter, alliteration, and other types of formal devices can do, even as they may employ these devices. In other words, incidentals are different from other formal devices, even though they may be made up of them: they produce impressions of extra meaning that communicate something different from the stuff of the plot. I argue that incidentals can be defined as a new literary device, hidden ideas that form impressions on readers that give the hint of a different idea from what the lines are literally talking about. For example, we cannot take Orlando seriously as a poet. However, his angst around not being "bred well" is directly linked to his angst of not receiving training as a poet and Shakespeare communicates these impressions in the following:

Oli: Now sir, what make you here?
Orl: Nothing. I am not taught to make anything.
Oli: What mar you then, sir?
Orl: Marry, sir, I am helping you to mar that
which God made, a poor unworthy brother of yours,
with idleness. (1.1.29-34)

The plot of these lines is about Oliver asking Orlando, what he is doing? Orlando replies sarcastically that he is doing nothing because he hasn't been educated to do anything. Then Oliver asks what then is Orlando marring (ruining)? Orlando responds with the idea that he is helping Oliver to ruin his own life by being idle (doing nothing).

The repetition of the words, "make" leaves an impression that suggests an extra meaning, an incidental meaning. Orlando's response to Oliver's, "what make you here?" begins a play on words that generates an impression. Orlando's response, "Nothing. I am not taught to make anything" echoes the idea of "make" in a different way than Oliver intends it—Oliver is asking "what are you doing?" in his version of the word "make," and Orlando spins a different meaning, a complaint about Oliver's refusal to educate him: "I am not taught to make anything." This dialogue occurs in the first act and scene of the play, and we do not yet know Orlando as a poet, but it just so happens that the ancients regarded poets as makers of worlds, or "makers." Sidney writes, "both Roman and Greek gave divine names unto [poets], the one of "prophesying," the other of "making" (32). Thinking of "making" in this light, the words have yet another salient meaning: Orlando is "not taught to make" hints at his frustration, or crisis as I call it, at not being educated as a poet. Orlando is an example of the virtuous poet who has not been trained in art, in imitation. Without the training in "lies," his poetic impressions are dangerous in just the way moralists' feared: they have actual lies and corrupting ideas hidden in them.

When Orlando responds to Oliver, saying that because he has no education, he does nothing, Oliver responds: "What mar you then, sir?" as if to suggest that if Orlando's not making anything, then he must be ruining something. In the OED, "mar" is defined as "A hindrance, obstruction, impediment in speech." The last definition here is in line with the dumbstruck Orlando who wonders: "What passion hangs these weights upon my tongue?" (1.2.257). However, even though the earliest use of "mar" in this sense only dates back to1824 in the Mactaggart Gallovid Encyclopedia ("… to have a marr in the speech"), I suggest that this meaning can be obliquely connected to Orlando's mar in speech, due to being in love, and by extension, to his mar in writing: Jaques:

I pray you mar no more trees with writing
Love-songs in their barks. (3.2.259-260)
Here, Jaques makes the point that Orlando's words are literally marring the trees, but they are also marred speech/verses, and they mar hearers—they infect hearers as pointed out earlier. They themselves are marred bodies:
Rosalind:
O yes, I heard them all, and more too,
For some of them had in them more feet than the
Verses would bear.
Celia:
That's no matter; the feet might bear the verses.
Rosalind:
Ay, but the feet were lame, and could not
Bear themselves without the verse, and therefore stood
Lamely in the verse. (3.2.164-171)
The poems make a kind of deformed body with too many feet barely held together by the equally shaky verse: "the feet might bear the verses." Rosalind and Celia's critique of the monstrous-sounding poems mirror their monstrous expression of Rosalind:
Thus Rosalind of many parts
By heavenly synod was devis'd,
Of many faces, eyes, and hearts.

We remember that a humoral body of a poem can be corrupt poetically and be corrupting to its hearers and in this case to the trees as well.

Feigning and the fall:

Since one of the play's themes is The Fall and art and feigning seems to be the one true thing in this play, then this conflation of truth through feigning can be seen as a kind of corruption as a result of The Fall, a prolapsarian method for expressing truthfulness and naturalness, untruthfully and unnaturally in the fallen world. Art and feigning is perhaps then a result of the Fall. Feigning or unnaturalness because of the Fall expresses itself through the conventions of moralizing, manners, love and poetry. The play insists on the unlikeliness of returning to Eden—you can only go back to Arden—even though Duke Senior claims that there they "feel not the penalty of Adam." The fallen courtiers have a trained unnaturalness and *As You Like It* pokes fun at their attempt to reclaim their natural state through the unnatural means of conventions. In thinking of moralizing as a convention, one which sets out to declare opinions and beliefs as a way to argue the right and wrong of any given situation, Duke Senior loftily moralizes on the benefits of being in the natural world:

Duke S.:
Now, my co-mates and brothers in exile,
Hath not old custom made this life more sweet
Than that of painted pomp? Are not these woods
More free from peril than the envious court?

Here we feel not the penalty of Adam,
The seasons' difference, as the icy fang
And churlish chiding of the winter's wind,
Which when it bites and blows upon my body
Even till I shrink with cold, I smile and say,
"This is no flattery: these are counselors
that feelingly persuade me what I am."
And this our life, exempt from public haunt,
Finds tongues in trees. Books in running brooks,
Sermons in stones, and good in everything. (2.1.1-17)

The romanticization of the natural world is in itself feigning, and the means with which he sets out to move his hearers is wrought with convention: it is stylized poetic moralizing: "the painful churlish / chiding of the winter's wind, / Which when it bites and blows upon my body / Even till I shrink with cold, I smile." His message is far from natural in its lines ornamented in alliteration and hyperbole. When he says, "Here we feel not the penalty of Adam" he is not exactly saying that they can return to a natural state in the Forest of Arden, but it is implied since to not feel the consequences of Adam is to assume a prelapsarian state, or at least a prelapsarian state of mind, in which everything about the world is good (despite its change from prelapsarian reality). Duke Senior attempts to restore his naturalness through unnatural ways of being. This is of course ridiculous. The sentiment of "And this our life, exempt from public haunt, / Finds tongues in trees. Books in running brooks," is later mocked by Orlando's terrible poetry and moralizing:

Why should this [a] desert be?
For it is unpeopled? No!
Tongues I'll hang on every tree,
That shall civil sayings show:
Some, how brief the life of man
Runs his erring pilgrimage,
That the stretching of a span
Buckles in his sum of age;
Some, of violated vows
'Twixt the souls of friend and friend;
But upon the fairest boughs,
Or at every sentence end,
Will I 'Rosalinda' write,
Teaching all that read to know
The quintessence of every sprite
Heaven would in little show. (3.2.125-140)

Orlando's "Tongues I'll hang on every tree" comically echoes Duke Senior's "And this our life, exempt from public haunt, / Finds tongues in trees," as well as points out the falseness of the Duke's romantic metaphor: Orlando's literalization of that metaphor shines a light on the Duke's artifice of moralizing and poetic conventions.

Though Orlando's "tongues" corrupts trees and exposes his offensive and crude artlessness, there was and still is the idea that the most feigning art is the most truthful; and by

feigning I mean the most highly wrought artifice. Sidney and others wrote about the feigning aspect of poetry, how lies or "feigning" facilitates truth in poetry, and how this feigning enables poets to teach morals through poetry. Touchstone in his humorous version of this explains to Audrey:
I would the gods made thee poetical.
Audrey:

I do not know what "poetical" is. Is it
Honest in deed and word? Is it a true thing?
Touchstone:
No, truly; for the truest poetry is the
Most feigning, and lovers are given to poetry;
And what they swear in poetry may be said as lovers
They do feign.

Audrey's question about "poetical" and if it is "honest in deed and word?" poses two possibilities, the first one being that she wonders if Touchstone's wish that the gods had made her poetical meant that he wished that she were made honest, and the second being the idea that the truest poetry is the most feigning, and therefore Touchstone wishes she were more feigning, more artful. His syllogism folds in on itself since "lovers are given to poetry; / And what they swear in poetry may be said as lovers / They do feign." In other words, he wishes that Audrey was more poetical so she could be as feigning (unfaithful) as the most truthful poetry, as well as be a lover (as they feign). In this syllogism there is a feign/truth/feign pattern. Audrey wants simply to know if Touchstone wishes she was "true" as in faithful, and Touchstone twists the idea into a paradox: feigning is truthful, and "what lovers swear in poetry may be said as lovers / They do feign." Swearing in poetry is a feigning.

Touchstone's desire for Audrey to be poetical carries with it another implication: that he wishes Audrey were better trained in the conventions of love. The conventional courtship rituals were modeled after the Petrarchan sonnets. In general, the male lover tenaciously woos the beloved and suffers from constant rejection and unrequited love. The beloved blushes, rejects, is haughty and seen as cruel, all for not reciprocating the affection, or is seen as cruel in her effort to follow the conventions of acting like a virtuous and proper woman (of course the beloved is put in an impossible bind). Like the courtship convention in sonnet cycles, the early moderns acted out similar conventions in courtship rituals in which the beloved is supposed to resist, reject and be virtuous and haughty. The man as the Petrarchan Lover, was supposed to persevere in his wooing despite all rejection. These conventions were circumscribed roles that the lovers had to internalize and act out, as though natural, if they were to be socially appropriate. The courtship ritual is an act, and Shakespeare makes fun of the convention when Phebe falls in love with Rosalind. Shakespeare's comedic representation of Phebe as the Petrarchan Lover exposes the act and artificiality of the convention, and defamiliarizes it so that we as audience can see it only as convention. Phebe, like Orlando and Audrey, lacks the "poetical," so all of her attempts at courtly conventions are artless and silly.

Early modern moralists were informed by ancient thinkers like Wright who, in *The Passions of the Minde in Generall*, was concerned with vigilant monitoring and controlling of passions. As Craik explains: "If men cultivated good habits of passion-management in affect-laden encounters, including run-ins with certain books, their lives are enriched as Christians, Englishmen, Citizens, courtiers, fathers and husbands" (20). For Wright, in the late sixteenth

century, printed pamphlets also caused alarm, "many of which were "meere Poetical, or which tende in some respect (as either in matter or forme) to Poetry" (21). The dangers of the "mere Poetical" was a common anxiety for early modern thinkers whose ideal reading material was the Bible. The "mere Poetical" could incite too much passion of the wrong kind, the only right kind of passion being a Christian one: "Christians were transformed by reading the Bible, experiencing a kind of spiritual energaria as powerful and effective as the earnestness of their spiritual commitment" (28). The "mere Poetical" was a threat for the Christians: "Phillip Stubbes complained that readers were neglecting the Bible" (Craik 21). Other moralists strived to show the dangers of improper reading material in an effort to save young men from going astray. Sidney, by contrast, believed that making poetry lively and full of passion is a way to incite men to good actions.

Art as True:

In *As You Like It*, fractured impressions of the Fall generate the feeling of the spilt or fractured unnaturalness of mankind. Orlando addresses the aptly named Adam: "O good old man, how well in thee appears / The constant service of the antique world" (2.3.56-57), generating a fracture in the sense that Adam is the Adam of the fallen world: old, subservient and physically weak. He has lost all his beauty, vigor and power.

In another oblique reference to the Fall, the Forest of Arden echoes the Garden of Eden in name and place, as many scholars have suggested. Duke Senior says, "Here we feel not the penalty of Adam" (2.1.5), but just as the sound of the Forest of Arden sounds like a counterfeit of the Garden of Eden, the fallen cannot escape the penalty of Adam: it is a pretend return to Eden. The counterfeit Forest of Arden is a place where Duke Senior and others can pretend to come back to their natural state. Jaques desires to speak as liberally as Touchstone does, and does so through his self-indulgent moralizing of man's encroachment on the natural world, especially the insensitive slaughtering of deer, as well as by isolating himself in the Forest of Arden, an expression of his own desire to be free from courtly life.

Impressions of the Fall are also suggested in the splitting of characters. The naming of two characters with the same or similar names suggests a doubling or a splitting characteristic that occurs after the Fall where Adam and Eve become self-aware, self-conscious, and differentiated. As a result, they become two not one. The doubling of character names echoes this idea. There are two Jaques, two Oliver's (Oliver, Orlando's brother, and Sir Oliver Martext, the inadequate vicar), the similarities of the brothers' names, Oliver/Orlando, two Duke's (the bad Duke Frederick, and the good Duke Senior), and in a different way even Celia and Rosalind are rendered as not two but one and as inseparable as "Juno's swans."

As a result of the Fall, humans lost a naturalness or wholeness and life is played out in parts, as a series of roles due to this split. Jaques bemoans this idea:

All the world's a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts." (2.7.136-142)

Courtly early moderns were interested in learning "parts," how to act effortlessly clever and talented and how to perfectly act out their roles—as in the practices of sprezzatura so popular in courtly circles. Through the playing out of roles, characters in *As You Like It* seek to regain social stability in the forest, but we soon see the artifice of the roles in contrast with rustic life, especially

the artifice of love and poetic conventions through the Petrarchan tropes played out by Phebe, Orlando and others. This of course also gets played out in the wit battle between Touchstone and the shepherd. Because court people are fallen and perverse, i.e. not natural, artificial through manners and civilization, their "acting" is noticeably unnatural and corrupt. They corrupt nature with poems, moralizing, killing animals and sheep herding. Duke Senior's chiding at Orlando for not having manners seeks to reestablish the conventions of manners in the forest when Orlando uses his brutishness to get food for Adam:

Duke S.:
Art thou thus bolden'd, man, by thy distress?
Or else a rude despiser of good manners,
That in civility thou seem'st so empty? (2.7.91-93)

Duke Senior attempts to return to a natural state by returning to nature, yet he upholds the civility of manners and rejects the "rudeness" of Orlando who is without the civil artifice of manners, but who without them could be described as more natural. Duke Senior attempts to experience the forest as an Eden, without "the penalty of Adam," but his Eden is fallen, and only the artifice of manners and conventions can keep the illusion going, the illusion of naturalness through conventions. He tries to marry the natural and the artificial, which we can say is what art seeks to do. However, Shakespeare mocks his figurative "tongues in trees" by echoing them in Orlando's literal poems on trees. They are a mockery of Duke Senior's philosophy because he romanticizes nature. In other words, because he cannot imagine a truly natural word, he imagines the communication of nature as spoken in unnatural terms, words: "tongues" in trees, and written words: "books" in brooks. In a sense, it is the best humans can do—as fallen—to be "natural."

As I explained earlier, acts of love are modeled after the convention of Petrarchan sonnets. Orlando tries hard to emulate a Petrarchan lover by writing poems, and Touchstone's desire for Audrey to be poetical carries with it the implication that he wishes Audrey were better trained in the conventions of love. Rosalind is incapable of keeping the Petrarchan restraints of a virtuous woman, to the extent that she appears too forward with Orlando. Her passion usurps her ability to act coy. Playing the part of a man affords her some agency, but she is then met with other unmanageable emotions not afforded to men. When Rosalind as Ganymede thinks that Orlando might be harmed, she tries to cover up an emotional outburst that that threatens to surface her artifice:

Rosalind:
Ah, sirrah, a body
would think this was well counterfeited! I pray
you tell your brother how well I counterfeited.
Heigh-ho!
Oliver:
This was not counterfeit, there is too great
testimony in your complexion that it was a passion
of earnest.
Rosalind:
Counterfeit, I assure you.
Oliver: Well then, take good heart and counterfeit

to be a man.

Oliver sees through her artifice. Rosalind's counterfeit as a man has been unbelievable all along, but when she emotes "like a woman," her true part as a woman is more convincing than her counterfeit as a man. Oliver's declaration, "This was not counterfeit, there is too great / testimony in your complexion that it was a passion of earnest," threatens to expose her artifice as a man, and Oliver's request that she should "counterfeit to be a man" weirdly implies that she shouldn't just be a man, she should counterfeit being a man. In other words, it doesn't matter what gender she is, if it's counterfeited well, it's more truthful than the truth and that's what counts. For Rosalind, her way to avoid the part of the Petrarchan beloved, with all its restraints, is to play a woman playing a man, to have the gender fluidity to break out of the part when it's to her advantage, until the end when she has to shake off the role and leave behind her magical world to assume the role of wife.

Remember that Orlando, in his attempt to write a heartfelt blazon of Rosalind manages not to elevate her parts, but rather defiles them:

Nature presently distill'd
Helen's cheek, but not [her] heart,
Cleopatra's majesty,
Atalanta's better part,
Sad Lucretia's modesty.
Thus Rosalind of many parts
By heavenly synod was devis'd,
Of many faces, eyes, and hearts,
To have the touches dearest priz'd.
Heaven that would she these gifts should have,
And I to live and die her slave." (3.2.124-154)

"Thus, Rosalind of many parts" has the incidental meaning of many parts in terms of the splits and fractures because of the Fall and many parts in the sense of roles. All these parts, "Cleopatra's majesty," etc., render the choicest parts of famous women, and clumsily lumps them all together. Orlando cannot counterfeit love, which is to say, he cannot communicate it.

Rosalind points out to Orlando that he doesn't appear to be in love because he lacks the features of a love-sick Petrarchan type, such as a "lean cheek," a "blue eye and sunken," a "beard neglected," but she is seemingly satisfied that he is in love when he confesses to writing the poems. It's as if to say that he may not look love-sick, but writing love poems, even if they have more feet than the verse can hold, is proof enough. She asks: "But are you so much in love as your rhymes speak?" suggesting that the "act" of writing love poems alone is the sole proof of love. Of course, as I touched on earlier, there is sarcasm in her question because the rhymes speak horribly of her, so how could that be love? Also, "the act of writing love poems" which is an "act" in the sense of pretend, an imitation of the Petrarchan poet, is another echo of the artificiality, or role of the lover.

The pastoral life is an imitation Eden between the court and the natural world. Rosalind and Celia are between worlds, newly fallen, split. They are on the border, between acts, between innocence and experience and they live in a space that, just like their cottage, is in a border realm:
Orlando:
Where dwell you, pretty youth?

Rosalind:
With this shepherdess, my sister; here in
the skirts of the forest, like fringe upon a petticoat. (3.2.334-336)

While "skirts of the forest" means they live on the border of the forest, "like fringe upon a petticoat" suggests that not only do they live on the fringe, but they also live like "fringe." Oliver, comes into the forest trying to find Rosalind and asks, "…pray you (if you know) / Where in the purlieus of this forest stands / A sheep-cote fenc'd about with olive tree?" (4.3.75-77). Purlieus, a word that was a term of the old Forest law that meant the outskirts of the forest, repeats the motif of the border place where Rosalind and Celia live. Jaques de Boys describes Oliver's religious experience as occurring in this border place:
And to the skirts of this wild wood he came;
Where, meeting with an old religious man,
After some question with him, was converted. (5.4.159-161)
In this instance, nature and religion meet and engender a powerful, though implausible, religious conversion in Oliver. Rosalind and Celia live in this in-between place where the forest meets the court and make-believe, magic, and spiritual awakenings can happen easily.

In this border place between rustic life and courtly life and between innocence and experience, Rosalind and Celia can still revert to childish make-believe in the face of serious life events. Celia's insistence that Rosalind be "merry," encourages Rosalind to regress and "devise sport" instead of feeling the enormity of her banished state. Rosalind says to Celia, "From henceforth I will… / devise Sports. Let me see—what think you of falling in love? (1.2.24-25). She is going to play the part of falling in love, an interesting choice after having "fallen" for Orlando after his wrestling match. Also, the "fall" in "falling" echoes back to the Fall of Adam and Eve and their sexual awakening. After she meets Orlando, Rosalind changes her role with Celia from an innocent and homoerotically suggestive relationship to a brother and sister relationship. Celia's "part" as sister to Ganymede is a more socially acceptable role as they come of age, and it just so happens that that role suits Rosalind nicely, as her sexual awakening manifests as heterosexual. I might argue that Celia's part is less enthusiastically played, and her quick and neat betrothal to Oliver in the end is as mechanical as the arrival of Hymen. Their disguises and roles are used at a point where the two women can no longer live in their innocent world; they must play the appropriate "parts" for this stage of life. For the virtuous Rosalind—as Le Beau says, "…the people praise her for her virtues" (1.2.280)—she cannot simply betray her virtue. She is *supposed* to sublimate her sexual awakening through social conventions like the Petrarchan beloved who needs to act coy. Craik says that "that passion-management … involved monitoring how one felt, but also how one seemed to others to be feeling, and Wright thus counsels every reader not simply to know himself but also—crucially—to hide himself" (21). Rosalind cleverly avoids the social script of a woman by "playing" a man. She hides herself to an extreme. She feigns. For Sidney, "feigning" mimics the truth/lie paradox, and Rosalind embodies this idea. Feigning is so convincing, that it is communicated as true, as in Rosalind's tears in front of Oliver.

Rosalind's gender is a paradox. In the epilogue, she is a man and a woman, which draws attention to the paradox, the fact that she is a male actor, playing a woman, playing a man. In the epilogue, the actor's gender (male) pokes through for us while she, Rosalind, is still in character. It's a strange moment, one that makes us aware that we have been under an illusion, and this idea

hearkens back to Plato's criticism, that poetry is like witchcraft because of its power of illusion. She even pretends to be a magician. As Ganymede explains to Orlando that she can reunite him with Rosalind, she claims "…I can do strange things. / I have, since I was three-year-old, conversed with a magician, / most profound in his art" (5.2.59-61). Orlando asks her if she "speak[s] soberly," in response to her promise to bring him to Rosalind and she replies: "By my life I do, which I tender dearly, / though I say I am a magician" (5.2.70-71). She "tenders dearly" because she risks saying out loud that she is a magician, (a bad thing to be!) or she is being truthful (speaking soberly) even though she contradicts herself as honest when she says she's a magician. She appears in her role as magician with Hymen and concludes with the epilogue in which she *conjures* women and men "to like as much of / this play as please you" (5.4.13-14). The magic of the play continues in the epilogue hinting that the magic or illusion continues even after the conclusion of the pretending.

Sidney says, "…a feigned example has as much force to teach as a true example" (23). He is only interested in the force to teach. In Sperber and Wilson's theory of the cognitive environment, they assert that not all assumptions that become manifest are facts. An individual is capable of representing mentally based on the evidence provided by the physical environment that will not necessarily be a "fact, but could appear to be a fact: from a cognitive point of view, mistaken assumptions can be indistinguishable from genuine factual knowledge, just as optical illusions can be indistinguishable from true sight…[Also], manifest assumptions which are more likely to be entertained are more manifest" (39). Shakespeare, like Sidney, is more interested in the manifestness of assumptions and the depth of experience of art, not to prove that it's true or false, but to prove that it's authentic and can make the audience feel moved. Poetry is a product of the fallen world; it's a paradox, a truth, and a lie.

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