

“LEARN THOU OF FAUSTUS MANLY FORTITUDE”:
MASCULINITY AND THE TEXTS
OF *DOCTOR FAUSTUS*

by

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ABSTRACT

This thesis is an examination of masculinity in *Doctor Faustus* that pays special attention to editorial theory and the complicated textual history of Christopher Marlowe's play, which exists in two substantially different forms—the A-text of 1604 and the B-text of 1616. After discussing the textual history of the play, this thesis examines some prescriptive literature from the period that argues that a true man should have restraint in his dealings with other men. By reading the two texts of Faustus against this prescriptive literature, I argue that the B-text Faustus constructs his masculinity with much less restraint than the A-text Faustus, as the B-text Faustus utterly humiliates and emasculates the men around him in a way that the A-text Faustus does not. In creating this reading of the distinction between the masculinity constructed by the two Faustuses, I argue that the two texts of *Doctor Faustus* should no longer be conflated by either critical or editorial practice in order to create more avenues for critical exploration.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my family. I would like to thank my parents, Walter and Melissa Bell, for instilling in me a love of literature and learning; my precocious younger brother, Drury, for inspiring me to work hard, if only to keep pace with you; my little sister, Bonnie, for reminding me to have fun and to pursue what I enjoy; and my loving grandmother, Walterine Bell, for being one of my biggest and most ardent fans. Most importantly, I want to thank my patient and loving wife, Mary, who put up with me as I wrote this paper and who makes every single day a joy. I love you all.

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“LEARN THOU OF FAUSTUS MANLY FORTITUDE”: MASCULINITY AND THE TEXTS
OF *DOCTOR FAUSTUS*

In one of the stranger scenes in Christopher Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus*, the demon Mephistopheles appears to begin convincing Faustus not to sell his soul to Lucifer by describing the pain and suffering that he experiences due to his own damnation. Faustus’s response is telling: “What, is great Mephistopheles so passionate / For being deprived of the joys of heaven? / Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude” (A.1.3.85-7).¹ Faustus’s boast to Mephistopheles is explicitly gendered, claiming that a man should not be passionate and emotional. Instead, a man should be more stoic, staying composed by means of one’s fortitude. In other words, a man should be like Faustus. However, how does Faustus actually believe a man should act? This essay will attempt to answer that question by utilizing recent discussions of masculinity as a lens through which we can examine Faustus’s actions in order to determine how he constructs and performs his masculinity. However, the fact that *Doctor Faustus* exists in two substantially different forms makes this an especially difficult and exciting task. In this essay, I will argue that the two Faustuses in the two texts of Marlowe’s famous play are actually significantly different characters who construct different forms of masculinity through their interactions with other men. I will compare their actions with those described in early modern English advice literature that details how a man should treat other men with a certain level of restraint. However, the

1. Unless otherwise specified, all quotations come from Christopher Marlowe, *Doctor Faustus: A- and B-texts (1604, 1616)*, edited by David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1993). All subsequent quotations from the play will be cited parenthetically including A or B to indicate the specific text.

advice literature is somewhat vague about what that restraint looks like. It recommends restraint, but it also seems to indicate that at some moments a man must inflict violence on others if one is truly to act like a man. The two texts of *Doctor Faustus* give us some actual examples that enter into that debate as the Faustus of the later, or B-text—as it has come to be known—fails to maintain the level of restraint advised by the prescriptive literature, while the Faustus of the earlier A-text is more restrained despite committing some acts of violence. Before discussing masculinity in the period and in *Doctor Faustus*, however, I must briefly examine the complicated textual history of Marlowe's play.

Textual and Editorial History

Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* lives in a perpetual state of limbo in the minds of literary scholars. We know that the play exists in two substantially different forms, but, for the most part, we tend to conflate these two texts—sometimes, I believe, unconsciously—and speak and write about *Doctor Faustus* as if it were a single, unified entity. This is largely due to the way critics have argued about the two texts of the play, claiming one is more authoritative or Marlovian than the other; however, if we put questions of authorship and authoritativeness aside and truly treat the two texts of *Doctor Faustus* as distinct plays that both merit critical attention, then lines of inquiry begin to open up that had been previously concealed due to the underlying belief that there really is one true *Doctor Faustus*, and a clever scholar could unearth it with enough hard work. In this paper, I will examine one of these lines of inquiry, examining how the two different Faustuses from the two texts construct their masculinities in a different manner.

Christopher Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus* has undoubtedly presented a particular challenge to the literary community. There is no extant manuscript of *Doctor Faustus*, and the text was first printed for Thomas Bushell in quarto under the title *The Tragicall History of D. Faustus* in 1604,

eleven years after Christopher Marlowe's death. Including Bushell's quarto of 1604 (A1), there are ten early printings of *Doctor Faustus* (although none bear that exact title)—the last one published in 1663 for William Gilbertson. A great deal of the critical controversy, however, focuses upon the fact that these ten printings contain two substantially different texts, referred to as the A-text and the B-text. The three earliest quartos present what has come to be known as the A-text, while the seven later quartos present what has come to be known as the B-text. The B-text, first printed in 1616 under the title *The Tragical History of the Life and Death of Doctor Faustus* (B1), not only adds material not found in the A-text in the amount of 676 lines, but it also omits 36 lines from the A-text and "introduces thousands of verbal changes."² To further complicate the textual history, in 1602, two years before *Doctor Faustus* was ever printed, Philip Henslowe paid William Birde and Samuel Rowley £4 to write additions to *Doctor Faustus*.³

Therefore, the most fundamental question that historically faced an editor of *Doctor Faustus* is which text they should use as copy text,⁴ and editors have continually vacillated

2. David Bevington and Eric Rasmussen, Introduction to *Doctor Faustus: A- and B-texts (1604, 1616)*, by Christopher Marlowe (Manchester: Manchester UP, 1993), 63. These numbers vary depending upon which scholar is producing them. I use Bevington and Rasmussen's numbers, but Michael Keefer states, "The B text is longer overall by 614 lines of print—but its first two acts, surprisingly, perhaps, are shorter than A's by some 70 lines" in A Note on the Text of *Doctor Faustus: A 1604-Version Edition*, 2nd ed. (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2007), 63. In short, the B-text introduces substantial additions to and omissions from the A-text.

3. See Bevington and Rasmussen, 62; Keefer, 63; and Roma Gill, Introduction to *Dr. Faustus* by Christopher Marlowe, 2nd ed. (New York: Norton, 1989), xiii.

4. Of course, the utility of using a copy text has recently been disputed by some editors, including Bevington and Rasmussen. See below for a more thorough discussion of Bevington and Rasmussen's treatment of *Doctor Faustus*. See Gabriel Egan, *The Struggle for Shakespeare's Text: Twentieth Century Editorial Theory and Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2010), 190-230, for a detailed examination of more contemporary editing practices that he labels "New Textualism," a term which he took from Margreta de Grazia and Peter Stallybrass, "The Materiality of Shakespeare's Text." *Shakespeare Quarterly*, 44, no. 3 (Autumn 1993): 276.

between the two texts for the last two centuries.⁵ This choice of copy text was usually based upon the idea that the text closest to Marlowe's original must be the most authoritative. Therefore, these editors played the part of the detective, searching for clues that would definitively prove the Marlovian nature of one of the texts. Additionally, they would continue this detective work to supplement their copy text with the truly Marlovian passages contained in the other text, leading to artifacts that they believed were as close as they could get to Marlowe's original work. This kind of detective work has led to many famous statements about the two texts, including Kirschbaum's assertion that the A-text is, "*more or less completely untrustworthy in regard to what Marlowe actually wrote,*"⁶ and Constance Brown Kuriyama's cutting remark that, "acceptance of the B text as 'original' or authoritative leaves us with a work that is, to put it plainly, an aesthetic monstrosity and a critical nightmare."⁷ While the arguments levied by Kirschbaum and Kuriyama are admirable for their attention to detail and self-assuredness, their bombastic rhetoric ultimately provides more insight into the tastes of these critics and what they believe Marlowe *should* have written than to what is actually more Marlovian.⁸

5. See Bevington and Rasmussen 63-4 for a detailed description of what editors preferred which text. The general progression is as follows: a preference for the B-text in the early nineteenth century, a preference for the A text for most of the nineteenth and the early twentieth century, a preference for the B text in the mid-twentieth century, and the re-emergence of the A-text in the late 20th century, which affects us today.

6. Leo Kirschbaum, "Textual Notes," in *The Plays of Christopher Marlowe*, (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1962), 461, 462 emphasis Kirschbaum's.

7. Constance Brown Kuriyama, "Dr. Greg and *Doctor Faustus*: The supposed Originality of the 1616 Text," *English Literary Renaissance*, 5, no. 2, (Spring 1975): 177.

8. In addition to this detective work I mentioned, Kuriyama also provides linguistic analysis to link sections of the B-text with Samuel Rowley.

Instead of attempting to sift through the texts in order to find the truly Marlovian bits of the two texts, Michael J. Warren emphasized the futility of this kind of editorial detective work, claiming, “The nature of the original *Doctor Faustus* will probably always be beyond our reach.”⁹ Warren reaches the conclusion that instead of attempting to create a single, unified version of *Doctor Faustus*, literary scholars and editors should pay attention to both of the texts because both of them are distant relatives of the original. Bevington and Rasmussen’s admirable 1993 Revels dual-text critical edition of *Doctor Faustus* is a step in that direction. Although they do maintain that the A-text is more Marlovian in their Introduction, they also claim, “Editors and critics alike need to be wary of claims based on a conflated text. Both texts of *Doctor Faustus* continue to deserve our divided attention.”¹⁰ Andrew Duxfield also agrees with Warren, Bevington, and Rasmussen, stating, “the case...for the study of the two texts as separate entities is convincing, to say the least.”¹¹ He provocatively ends his article with the assertion that, “*Doctor Faustus* is becoming two plays again.”¹²

While the two texts of *Doctor Faustus* may indeed be on the path to becoming two distinct plays, the scholarly community continues to—perhaps unconsciously—conflate the two texts into one, and the reception of Leah Marcus’s brilliant reading of the different locations found in the two texts and how they relate to theological differences between the two texts

9. Michael J. Warren, “*Doctor Faustus*: The Old Man and the Text,” *English Literary Renaissance*, 11, no.2, (Spring 1981): 146.

10. Bevington and Rasmussen, 77.

11. Andrew Duxfield, “Modern Problems of Editing: The Two Texts of Marlowe’s *Doctor Faustus*,” *Literature Compass*, 2, (2005): 11.

12. *Ibid.*, 12

highlights the fact that the plays are still not entirely separate.¹³ Her entire argument hinges upon the fact that the A-text is set in Wertenberg, while the B-text is set in Wittenberg; however, as she notes, most editors assume that the A-text Wertenberg is “a corruption” of Wittenberg.¹⁴ Even after reading Marcus’s compelling case for keeping the location of the A-text Wertenberg, Bevington and Rasmussen emend it to “Wittenberg” (A.1.1.13) throughout their A-text.¹⁵ Editors, however, are not the only ones that are keeping the A and B texts together as a somewhat unified whole. The most recent article published in *Renaissance Drama* about *Doctor Faustus* acknowledges the existence of two texts and explains why all quotations will be from the A-text, bringing up B-text readings “when relevant.”¹⁶ While the article is an excellent piece of scholarship that explores how theories of parody should inform our reading of death in *Doctor Faustus*, it only quotes from the B-text in the body of the essay once because that quotation is useful for the overall argument about Faustus’s ability to actually achieve grace.¹⁷ This kind of argument that uses both texts to make an argument about *Doctor Faustus* as a whole also works to conflate the two texts.

13. See Leah Marcus, *Unediting the Renaissance: Shakespeare, Marlowe and Milton*, (London: Routledge, 1996), 38-67.

14. *Ibid.*, 44.

15. In a footnote, they mention Marcus’s article “Textual Indeterminacy and Ideological Difference: The case of *Doctor Faustus*,” *Renaissance Drama*, 20 (1989): 1-29, which she incorporated into the book I cite throughout the paper. In that note, they fairly discuss the implications of her article, but for those who do not read all of the footnotes, this crucial difference between A and B is erased completely from the text.

16. Maggie Vintner, “*Doctor Faustus* and the Art of Dying Badly,” *Renaissance Drama* 45, no.1 (Spring 2017): footnote 1.

17. Vintner quotes Mephistopheles’s line “When thou took’st the book / To view the Scriptures, then I turned the leaves / And led thine eye.” (B.5.2.99-101) to stress that “it is less clear that there are alternatives to parody” in *Doctor Faustus* than there are in *Enough is as Good as a Feast*, the play she reads *Doctor Faustus* against (Vintner, 13).

The conflation of the two texts is entirely understandable as almost every critical edition of the play ever created argues for the authority of one text over another, which implies that there was at some point the *true* version of *Doctor Faustus* and that parts of that version are probably found in both texts. Conflating the two texts, however, tends to conceal some of the most nuanced differences between the two. If we truly treat the two texts as distinct plays, then we can begin to question some basic assumptions that are necessarily attached to *Doctor Faustus* when viewed as a semi-single entity. Faustus himself is a fundamentally different character in the two plays because he constructs different versions of masculinity in the A-text and the B-text. In the A-text, Faustus displays much more restraint in his interactions with other men—an attribute that prescriptive literature of the time seems to value—while the B-text Faustus constructs a much darker version of masculinity as he revels in publically humiliating and emasculating others.

Although *Doctor Faustus* is “Marlowe’s most often performed and critically debated play,”¹⁸ relatively few critics have examined gender in *Doctor Faustus*, probably due to the paucity of female characters in either text of the play. However, there have been a few feminist scholars who have found *Doctor Faustus* worthy of consideration. Using the B-text, Alison Findlay argues that female audience members are likely to identify with Faustus because they too would like a way to fight back against a patriarchal society that denied them knowledge and power.¹⁹ Barbara Baines, however, takes a much different approach in her article “Sexual Polarity in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe.” Also examining the B-text, Baines argues that Faustus “cannot reconcile the masculine-feminine polarity within himself, just as he cannot

18. Sara Munson Deats, Introduction to *Doctor Faustus: A Critical Guide*, edited by Sara Munson Deats, (London: Continuum, 2010), 4.

19. Alison Findlay, *A Feminist Perspective on Renaissance Drama*, (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999), 24-5.

comprehend its existence in the nature of God.”²⁰ Therefore, he is damned due to his rejection of the feminine side, not only of himself, but also of God. Although Sara Munson Deats uses the A-text, different pieces of evidence, and a slightly different masculine-feminine binary, she comes to a conclusion that is similar to Baines, in that she believes *Doctor Faustus* ultimately “dramatizes the total ascendancy of the masculine, with the haunting absence of the feminine.”²¹ More recently, in his 2009 book *Magic and Masculinity in Early Modern English Drama*, Ian McAdam takes a psychoanalytic approach to explore how Faustus constructs a particularly Puritan form of masculinity.²² I believe that the gender criticism of *Doctor Faustus* could profit by incorporating the idea that *Doctor Faustus* is no longer a single, unified play. The feminist scholars mentioned above chose to examine their ideas in only one of the extant texts, and, while Ian McAdam does examine a few of the differences between the A and B texts, he still makes an argument about *Doctor Faustus* as a whole. Therefore, my project will build upon the work of these scholars while treating the A-text and the B-text as two entirely different plays that display two different types of masculinity.

Masculinity, Restraint, and Honor

When discussing masculinity in the two texts of *Doctor Faustus*, however, one inevitably runs into problems of definition. As Sara Munson Deats points out in the prologue of *Sex, Gender, and Desire in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe*, the terms “masculine” and “feminine” are problematic because “individuals seldom conform to the rigid paradigms devised by society,”

20. Barbara Baines, “Sexual Polarity in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe,” *Ball State University Forum*, 23, no. 3, (1982): 4.

21. Sara Munson Deats, *Sex, Gender, and Desire in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe*, (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 1997), 223.

22. Ian McAdam, *Magic and Masculinity in Early Modern English Drama*, (Pittsburgh: Duquesne UP, 2009), 49-96.

such as assigned gender roles.²³ Therefore, to avoid the temptation of forcing her own definitions of “masculine” and “feminine” anachronistically onto the works of Marlowe, Deats makes a point to say that every time she uses either of those terms, they should be considered under erasure.²⁴ While erasure is useful to keep from forcing one’s own anachronistic definitions onto a text, it still leaves definitions blurry and hard to understand. I will attempt to avoid anachronistic definitions of masculinity by relying heavily upon the work of the historian Alexandra Shepard who argues that in early modern England, manhood “was neither equally shared, nor, as a consequence, uniformly defined by all men.”²⁵ As Shepard demonstrates throughout her monograph, men asserted their male identities in many differing ways based on their age, social status, and householding status.²⁶ Shepard’s demonstration that different men asserted their masculinities in different manners will allow me to examine the two Faustuses’ actions as possible manifestations of their masculine identities.

In addition to Shepard’s work, I will be examining some prescriptive literature to ground my discussion of masculinity in the period. I will begin by examining the advice of fathers to sons, which is one of the best genres of advice literature in which to examine how men were being told how to perform masculinity. In 1611, Joseph Hunt printed *The Counsell of a Father to his Sonne, in ten seuerall Precepts*, which has been attributed to William Cecil. As the title

23. Sara Munson Deats, *Sex, Gender, and Desire in the Plays of Christopher Marlowe*, 14.

24. See Deats’ footnote number 4 in her prologue for a more thorough discussion of this practice she borrows from Derrida to ameliorate the inaccuracy of language while using terms that are necessary for communication.

25. Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England*, (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2003), 246.

26. Ibid. 246. Page 246 begins to sum up this idea that Shepard developed throughout her entire monograph.

suggests, it contains ten suggestions for how Cecil's son should live his life once he comes "to man[']s estate."²⁷ Especially noteworthy for my discussion of masculine performance is Cecil's

eighth precept, which details how his son should treat men of different social standings:

"TOwards [sic] thy superiours be humble yet generous, with thy equals familiar, yet respectiue, towards inferiors shew much humility and some familiarity, as to bow thy body, stretch forth thy hand, uncover thy head, and such like popular complements." The overarching message of this precept is to treat all men with humility and respect; however, Cecil is not endorsing humility and respect for their own sakes. He seems, instead, to believe that these traits are the means to gain power. Cecil continues that treating one's superiors with humility "prepares a way to aduancement," treating one's equals with respect will "make thee knowne for a man well bred," and showing humility and familiarity to one's inferiors, "gaines a good report, which once gained may easily be kept, for high humilities take such roote in the minds of the multitude, as they are easilier wonn by unprofitable curtesies, then by churlish benefits." In other words, humility and respect will gain a wise man both powerful friends and a good reputation amongst his equals and inferiors. Whether Cecil's advice about humility worked in a man's day-to-day life, and whether Cecil followed his own advice is up for debate; however, Cecil is not alone in giving this kind of advice. The sixth precept of John Norden's *The Fathers Legacie With precepts Morall, and prayers Diuine* reads, "With thy superior in degree shew thy selfe neither too awfull nor familiar, with thy equall bee both courteous and familiar, with thy inferior though

27. William Cecil, *The Counsell of a Father to his Sonne, in ten seuerall Precepts* (London: Joseph Hunt, 1611). I am not providing page signatures, for this document is a single folio leaf, printed in a similar fashion to broadside ballads. I am not providing line numbers as it is written in prose. Additionally, this printed format seems to indicate that William Cecil is not actually the true author of this piece. However, the piece is attributed to him in *Early English Books Online*, where I accessed the source. Therefore, to help my readers locate the piece, I refer to the author of the piece as Cecil throughout this essay.

courteous yet not too familiar.”²⁸ Although Norden is not as forthcoming about *why* men should treat others with courtesy and humility as Cecil, this advice, nevertheless, boils down to a semi-benign—if cynical—way of consolidating political power through restraint.²⁹

While humility can be a ploy for the consolidation of power, it is a much better alternative to the outright violence that men frequently encountered in early modern England. Indeed, a physical reminder that violence was a common aspect of a man’s world is Joseph Swetnam’s 198 page-long *The Schoole of the Noble and Worthy Science of Defence*, in which Swetnam gives detailed instructions about how to use various weapons such as the staff, sword, dagger, and rapier. However, Swetnam’s treatise also indicates that a true man should display humility to others and refuse to fight at times. Although he admits that there are times when “a mans reputation may be so neerly touched” that “it can not stand with a mans credite, to keepe his weapon in his sheathe,”³⁰ Swetnam advises young men to restrain themselves from fighting if at all possible. In fact, Swetnam argues that the men who do not show restraint lose the valor of manhood, and those who do not fight will often gain a better report:

but if he make a common occupation of fighting, hee will then bee accounted for a common quarreller, and his friends will refuse his company many times for doubt of his quarrelling, and yet hee shall neuer be accounted, more than a man againe. Hee which is quarrelsome shall oftentimes meete with his match; but if a tried fellow doe at sometimes forbear when hee is wronged or challenged, the wiser sort will neuer account the worse manhood in him.³¹

28. John Norden, *The Fathers Legacie With precepts Morall, and prayers Diuine* (London: M. Flesher, 1625), sig. A4v.

29. Shepard, 35-6 also examines Cecil and Norden’s advice to their sons, and she comes to a similar conclusion. My conclusion, however, is put into the larger argument about restraint, while hers focuses more on maintaining social differences between the classes.

30. Joseph Swetnam, *The Schoole of the Noble and Worthy Science of Defence* (London: Nicholas Okes, 1617), sig. H3v.

31. *Ibid.*, sig. I4r-v.

In other words, a man can display power over another by fighting him, but he sometimes shows a greater amount of control and manliness if he overlooks the slight that another has given to him. Forbearance displays a stock of confidence in one's own manhood that, as Swetnam points out, "the wiser sort" will not question. Instead of being a raging brawler, a gentleman controls his temper and exerts an even greater power over others by keeping the peace.

While the advice literature examined above is necessarily selective and cannot possibly represent early modern England as a whole, the works of Cecil, Norden, and Swetnam are undoubtedly useful to help contemporary readers navigate the complex webs of masculine performance in early modern England because they do produce a noticeable trend. These tracts all suggest that a true man should always be able to control himself. Thus, Norden and Cecil suggest showing humility towards a man's inferiors, not because a man is obligated to do so, but because it demonstrates that he is in control, which will, as Cecil points out, earn a man a good reputation. While Swetnam does not explicitly tell his readers to be humble, the restraint that he passionately implores from his readers requires humility and control. The man who loses control, according to these authors, is definitely not a wise man, and—perhaps—he even begins to lose some of his particularly masculine honor. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that Cecil, Norden, and Swetnam are creating a fiction of manhood, as the existence of their advice indicates that men were not living in the manner they prescribed. They attempt to create an early modern "Ur-man," that delegitimizes those men who do not display restraint and self-control. Cecil, Norden, and Swetnam, however, are not precise about what constitutes restraint and self-control. As Swetnam points out, a man may have to fight in order to protect his honor. So where is the line between violence and restraint truly found? Although the prescriptive literature is not clear, the two different versions of Faustus provide excellent examples of how a man in almost

the same situation can cross the line of acceptability while constructing his own masculinity. The B-text Faustus becomes a physical example of the lack of restraint that Cecil, Norden, and Swetnam wrote against, as he chooses to act in an unrestrained manner in order to humiliate and destroy others' masculinity while enhancing his own. The A-text Faustus, however, while displaying some violent tendencies, is much more restrained and humble, especially to his inferiors. He seems to come much closer to that line of restraint prescribed by Cecil, Norden, and Swetnam and act as they argue a man should.

Mephistopheles as Masculine Enhancement

Before exploring how the two different Faustuses treat others in the two plays, it is necessary to examine exactly how Faustus links the powers that he desires from Mephistopheles and Lucifer with masculinity in both texts. In a striking scene that is nearly identical in both the A-text and the B-text, Mephistopheles claims that he is always "tormented with ten thousand hells," because he has been "deprived of everlasting bliss" (A.1.3.81, 82; B.1.3.78, 79). Mephistopheles ends this speech with an impassioned plea: "O Faustus, leave these frivolous demands, / Which strike a terror to my fainting soul!" (A.1.3.83-4; B.1.3.80-81).³² Faustus, however, exhibits no fear at the picture Mephistopheles paints of damnation. Instead of heeding the plea and terror of Mephistopheles, Faustus begins to boast, telling Mephistopheles, "Learn thou of Faustus manly fortitude, / And scorn those joys thou never shalt possess," (A.1.3.87-8, B.1.3.84-5). This boast is extraordinarily strange and infused with Faustus's own insecurity in his manhood. Faustus flouts the sufferings of an eternal being, telling him to learn how to be a man. In that sense he is claiming superiority over Mephistopheles: Faustus is manly, while Mephistopheles is not. However, there is another aspect to this masculine superiority that

32. Line 81 in the B-text reads "strikes" instead of "strike."

Faustus feels he has over Mephistopheles. When Mephistopheles first appears, Faustus tells him to return in the shape of an “old Franciscan friar” (A.1.3.26; B.1.3.26). After Mephistopheles obeys his command, Faustus revels in the power he has over the demon, exclaiming, “How pliant is this Mephistopheles, / Full of obedience and humility! / Such is the force of magic and my spells” (A.1.3.30-2; B.1.3.30-2). Faustus is attempting to enhance his own masculinity by claiming that he is more powerful than Mephistopheles, able to make the demon his servant, whether or not that claim is accurate.³³

Nevertheless, Faustus acknowledges that Mephistopheles possesses powers that he lacks. His boast of masculinity, therefore, rings extraordinarily hollow when it is immediately followed by Faustus’s list of demands for Lucifer:

Say he [Faustus] surrenders up to him his soul,
So he will spare him four-and-twenty years,
Letting him live in all voluptuousness,
Having thee ever to attend on me,
To give me whatsoever I shall ask,
To tell me whatsoever I demand,
To slay mine enemies and aid my friends,
And always be obedient to my will. (A.1.3.92-9; B.1.3.89-96)

Faustus is willing to give up his eternal soul as long as Lucifer confirms and bolsters his masculine ego. Not only does Faustus want Mephistopheles to become officially subservient to him, but he also wants the ability to live like only the richest and most powerful of men could—in voluptuousness. Additionally, and perhaps more disturbingly, he craves the power to inflict violence upon his enemies. Shepard argues, “Violence was one of the main props of patriarchy in

33. See Paul Kocher, “The Witchcraft Basis in Marlowe’s *Faustus*,” *Modern Philology* 38, no. 1 (1940): 9-36 for an argument that Faustus is a witch. See also McAdam, 53-5 for a discussion of the power dynamics usually associated with the terms “witch” and “magician.” McAdam argues that a witch is not in control of the demons, while a magician is. In this case, Faustus obviously believes that he is in control, but several sections of the play indicate that he is not.

early modern England, and as such was central to the regulation of social relations between men as well as between men and women.”³⁴ Faustus’s request for the power for violence, therefore, indicates the kind of “anxious masculinity” that Mark Breitenberg describes.³⁵ Faustus is displaying anxiety about his inability to control others by means of violence, and he hopes that Lucifer and Mephistopheles will enhance his ability to act like a man. Shepard is, of course, talking about lower forms of violence than Faustus—the daily violence that occurred in early modern England to uphold the social order. Faustus, however, speaks of violence in the highest order—killing—and his specific word choice, “slay mine enemies,” seems to indicate acts of war rather than petty, everyday disputes. Jim Casey’s examination of manhood in Shakespeare has demonstrated that masculinity could be constructed through acts of war;³⁶ however, he directly states that the most masculine warriors in Shakespeare’s works like Talbot and King Henry V prove their manhood by, “brav[ing] injury and death for the sake of honor.”³⁷ Therefore, Faustus is requesting the ability to drive away his enemies like Talbot and Henry V do, but he wants to erase any possible risk. To the world, he will be a mighty warrior if Mephistopheles and Lucifer agree to give him power. Despite his wish to slay enemies, neither the Faustus of the A-text, nor the Faustus of the B-text wield this extraordinary power of terminal violence against another person. Both Faustuses, however, will wield their newfound powers to inflict violence upon

34. Shepard, 128.

35. Mark Breitenberg, *Anxious Masculinity in Early Modern England*, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1996), 1-7.

36. Jim Casey, “Manhood Fresh Bleeding: Shakespeare’s Men and the Construction of Masculine Identity,” *Gender Forum: An Internet Journal for Gender Studies* 49 (2014): 3-17.

37. *Ibid*, 12.

those around them. Admittedly, the B-text Faustus goes much further, crossing the line of acceptability that the prescriptive writers vaguely describe.

Here Be Dragons

Although act 1, scene 3, indicates that Faustus plans to use the power of Mephistopheles to enhance his masculinity in both texts of *Doctor Faustus*, there is one difference in this scene involving a dragon that begins to demonstrate the way in which the B-text Faustus relies more heavily upon total humiliation to construct his masculinity. When Faustus first conjures Mephistopheles, he unsurprisingly speaks in Latin for the duration of his incantation. There are minor differences in the spelling, punctuation, and lineation of the Latin conjuration in the two texts, but, for the most part, they are the same, excepting one word—“dragon.” The pertinent section of the incantation in the A-text reads, “...*surgat Mephastophilis, quod tumeraris, per Iehouam,*” while the same part in the B-text reads, “...*surgat Mephostophilis **Dragon**, quod tumeraris; per Iehouam.*”³⁸ That single word has sparked quite a lot of critical controversy about what actually happens on the stage in this moment in the B-text. Many agree that the word “dragon” is a stage direction that was placed in the midst of this conjuration by mistake;³⁹ however, they disagree as to how a dragon would have actually appeared on the stage. In his 1932 edition of the play, Boas argues that a dragon appears momentarily above Faustus with

38. These quotations come from W.W. Greg, ed. *Marlowe's 'Doctor Faustus' 1604-1616: Parallel Texts*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1950), A, 263-4; B, 245-6, emphasis mine. I use Greg's parallel text edition here because Bevington and Rasmussen erase this addition of “Dragon” in the text of Faustus's conjuration by using the word as part of a stage direction as will be discussed below.

39. See Bevington and Rasmussen, footnote to B.1.3.23; Leo Kirschbaum, “Mephistophilis and the Lost Dragon,” *The Review of English Studies* 18, no. 71 (1942): 312-315; and R. K. Root, “Two Notes on Marlowe's *Doctor Faustus*,” *English Studies* XLII (1910-11): 144-9.

Lucifer and the four devils that appear only in the stage directions of the B-text.⁴⁰ Leo Kirschbaum, however, makes a convincing argument that Mephistopheles originally appears to Faustus in the form of a dragon.⁴¹ In addition to using Faustus’s line “Thou art too ugly to attend on me” (A.1.3.25; B.1.3.25) from the text of the play, Kirschbaum provocatively examines the woodcut that appeared on the title page of all early printed editions of the B-text to substantiate his claim. He notes, “No scene in the play fits this picture so well as the scene we have been discussing [1.3] At Faustus’s feet is a horrible dragon! And only half the monster appears.”⁴² Following this theory, then, a dragon actually appears in act 1, scene 3 of the B-text of Faustus. Indeed, Henslowe’s mention of “j dragon in fostes”⁴³ in his diary further substantiates the idea that Faustus dealt with a dragon on stage. Bevington and Rasmussen certainly find the argument that “dragon” is a misplaced stage direction convincing, and they borrow Kirschbaum’s theory that Mephistopheles is the dragon, for immediately after Faustus’s Latin incantation the stage direction in their edition reads, “*Enter a Devil [MEPHISTOPHELES, in the shape of a] dragon*” (s.d.B.1.3.23).

In order to consider how this dragon could change Faustus’s construction of masculinity in the B-text, we need to examine what Faustus says immediately after Mephistopheles appears:

I charge thee to return and change thy shape.
 Thou art too ugly to attend on me.
 Go, and return an old Franciscan friar;
 That holy shape becomes a devil best.
Exit Devil [MEPHISTOPHELES].

40. Kirschbaum, “Mephistophilis and the Lost Dragon,” 313.

41. Ibid. 313-4.

42. Ibid. 314.

43. Philip Henslowe, *Henslowe’s Diary*, 2nd ed. edited by R. A. Foakes, (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2002), 320.

I see there's virtue in my heavenly words.
Who would not be proficient in this art?
How pliant is this Mephistopheles,
Full of obedience and humility! (A.1.3.24-31; B.1.3.24-31)

As discussed above, Faustus exults in the power he has over the seemingly subservient Mephistopheles in both texts. This serves to enhance his own masculinity by destroying the perceived masculine power of Mephistopheles. The only difference between the two texts is how they indicate Mephistopheles would have physically appeared. The stage direction that appears before this speech in the A-text reads, "*Enter a Devil [MEPHISTOPHELES]*" (s.d. A.1.3.23), while, if we believe Kirschbaum's theory as Bevington and Rasmussen do, the stage direction in the B-text indicates that Mephistopheles appears as a dragon. In actual performance, of course, Mephistopheles could always have appeared as a dragon in this scene; however, barring the discovery of an eyewitness's long-lost journal discussing a performance, we will never have access to that knowledge. Therefore, we must examine the differences that readers can register in the texts, and that difference, comprised of a single word, could be extreme in this scene. The devil that we receive in the stage directions of the A-text could have many shapes, but the specificity of a devil dragon would make Mephistopheles's entrance not only a much more shocking and exciting entrance in performance, but also, a much darker picture of how the B-text Faustus begins emasculating his inferiors. Making a devil change its shape to a friar could simply require an already human looking character to put on monastic robes, but changing a dragon to a monk is a far greater display of power, which makes Faustus's boast of Mephistopheles' pliancy and humility more potent and, therefore, more threatening. It additionally makes Mephistopheles appear less powerful—whether or not that is truly the case here—for a dragon has much more masculine potential to defend itself and harm others than a monk. Therefore, the B-text Faustus

is creating a scenario in which he is the most manly and powerful in the room to the eye of the audience.

Act 1, scene 3, however, is not the only place that Faustus deals with dragons. In both texts, the beginning of act 3 mentions dragons; however, the B-text lingers upon the dragons in a way that further underscores Faustus's masculine power. In the A-text, Wagner⁴⁴ tells the audience that in an attempt to learn "the secrets of astronomy," Faustus goes to the top of Mount Olympus "Being seated in a chariot burning bright / Drawn by the strength of yoky dragons' necks" (A.3.Chorus.2, 5-6). After this brief description of the dragon-drawn chariot, Wagner reveals that Faustus is about to go to Rome to see the Pope. The dragon-drawn chariot is a stimulating image, but it never goes any further than that.

The B-text, however, lingers upon the dragons much more than the A-text. The beginning is nearly the same as the A-text. Faust goes to Olympus to learn about astronomy "sitting in a chariot burning bright / Drawn by the strength of yokèd dragons' necks" (B.3.Chorus.5-6). However, the Chorus continues the sentence to tell the audience that Faustus, "views the clouds, the planets, and the stars / The tropics, zones, and quarters of the sky" (B.3.Chorus.7-8) as well as the moon with the aid of the dragons. The Chorus then tells us that after helping Faustus see these astronomical bodies, "From east to west his [Faustus's] dragons swiftly glide / And in eight days did bring him home again" (B.3.Chorus 13-14). This greater specificity about what the dragons help him see and learn makes them even more instrumental to his growth and power. The image from the A-text is amplified as the dragons give Faustus the ability to see the planets, the stars, and the moon in a way that no mortal man could see them.

44. This is yet another interesting difference between the two texts. Wagner is given these lines in the A-text, while the Chorus is given the lines in the B-text. Bevington and Rasmussen argue that this indicates that Wagner and the Chorus double (f.n. s.d. 3.Chorus.0.1).

The B-text Faustus, however, is not finished interacting with dragons. The Chorus tells us that after his initial exploratory journey,

new exploits do hale [Faustus] out again,
And, mounted then *upon a dragon's back*,
That with his wings did part the subtle air,
He now is gone to prove cosmography

...
And, as I guess, will first arrive at Rome
To see the Pope and manner of his court
And take some part of holy Peter's feast,
The which this day is highly solemnized. (B.3.Chorus.17-20, 22-5 emphasis mine)

This is a much different and much more provocative image than the chariot drawn by dragons.

The chariot found in the A-text provides a barrier between the fierce monsters and Faustus.

Furthermore, the chariot serves to contain and control the dragons due to the actual restraints that must fasten them to the chariot. Seated upon the dragon's back, however, the B-text Faustus has no barrier, and any control he has over the dragons must come from his own person rather than some confining and controlling machinery. On the back of a dragon, he truly displays a frightening level of control and power.

This description of Faustus also brings to mind comparisons of how interactions with dragons are marked by violence in English lore and literature. For the most part, these literary figures fight the dragons to the death. For example, St. George and Spencer's Red Cross Knight slay their dragons, and Beowulf slays his but is also slain in the process. Shepard makes an illuminating assertion about violence in early modern England. She claims that violence served "simultaneously to confer authority on its perpetrators and to degrade its victims."⁴⁵ While Shepard is speaking about actual, historical men wielding violence against other actual, historical men, I believe the point still stands here. The violence that these literary figures perpetrated upon

45. Shepard, 140.

their dragons simultaneously brought these warriors to prominence because they were able to conquer these powerful, mythical creatures, but it also begins to call into question the actual greatness of the dragons. If they were so powerful, how could mere humans kill them? For these characters, the dragon is a foe to be conquered and a way to eternal glory, but for Faustus, the dragon is an entirely different animal—if you will excuse the pun. He is not attempting to become a heroic dragon slayer; he is more interested in how the dragon can be a tool to enhance his perceived masculinity and eliminate threats from others. Remember, the passage above tells us that Faustus arrives in Rome on the back of a dragon, making it much less likely that anyone would attempt to perpetrate violence against the B-text Faustus, thus stealing some of his masculine power and honor. Faustus is not only protected from the violence others might perpetrate on him, but the dragon also allows Faustus to act out against others with violence—and spectacular violence at that—which further increases his ability to perform the part of a brave, masculine conqueror. Therefore, Faustus's dragon in the B-text becomes a phallic image of his masculine potency, power, and ability to perpetrate violence against any and all that would question him.

Male Posturing in the Court of Charles V⁴⁶

Even after dismounting from his dragon, the B-text Faustus continues to ostentatiously display his masculine power even more in his interactions at Charles V's court. In the A-text, a nameless knight sets himself up as Faustus's antagonist from the beginning of act 4, scene 1. He

46. I am indebted to McAdam, 61-4 for the discussion of the differences between the two texts in the court of Charles V, but his primary concern is to examine how the play references the Actaeon myth and how that myth can contribute to an understanding of religious belief in the play. I, however, will be using some of the differences that he points out to explore the two Faustuses' construction of their masculinity.

continually speaks disparagingly of Faustus in asides until he finally articulates his doubt in Faustus's abilities to bring Alexander the Great and his paramour before them:

KNIGHT. I'faith, that's as true as Diana turned me to a stag.

FAUSTUS. No, sir, but when Actaeon died, he left the horns for

You. [*Aside to Mephistopheles*] Mephistopheles, begone!

KNIGHT. Nay, an you go to conjuring, I'll be gone.

Exit KNIGHT

FAUSTUS. [*Aside.*] I'll meet with you anon for interrupting me
so. (A.4.1.62-66)

Faustus bristles at the knight's open mockery because the knight could be an individual who has proven himself a man through martial feats.⁴⁷ Therefore, his mockery of Faustus not only questions the conjuror's powers, but also his manhood because he implies that Faustus can only speak rather than act like a man should. Faustus, therefore, quickly attempts to undermine the knight's authority by saying that Actaeon's horns are reserved for the knight. These horns are, of course, not only associated with the Actaeon myth, but also with cuckoldry, a common trope in Renaissance English drama. Therefore, Faustus is questioning the knight's masculinity as well, insinuating that the knight is not 'man enough' to keep a woman satisfied sexually. Instead, she must go elsewhere to satisfy her sexual needs.⁴⁸

Faustus obviously wins the war of words, but that might prove the knight's point; therefore, Faustus utilizes the demon's power to emasculate the knight publicly and physically. After bringing Alexander and his paramour before Charles V, Faustus asks the Emperor to call the knight back. The knight enters the stage with the pair of horns upon his head that Faustus had conjured there. When the Emperor sees the horns upon his knight's head, he merrily exclaims, "How now sir knight? Why, I had thought thou hadst / Been a bachelor, but now I see thou hast a

47. See above and Casey, 12.

48. See Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800*, (New Haven: Yale Up, 1995), 3-29 for a thorough discussion of cuckoldry and gender roles.

wife, that not / only gives thee horns but makes thee wear them” (A.4.1.77-9). As Charles V mocks his knight about women controlling him, the knight is not only publicly humiliated, but also publicly emasculated. As Faustus was the one to bring this humiliation to fruition, he looks even manlier in comparison to the knight.

In the A-text, the Emperor asks Faustus to remove the knight’s horns, and he does so, ending the conflict between him and the knight; however, the B-text presents a much darker, malicious version of the scene, in which Faustus uses much less restraint in emasculating the knight to gain a masculine power for himself. In doing so, the B-text Faustus begins to cross that line of acceptability vaguely mentioned in the prescriptive literature. The nameless knight of the A-text receives the name Benvolio in the B-text, and the story is similar: Benvolio irks Faustus when he voices his doubts about Faustus’s ability to conjure up Alexander and his paramour, and Faustus retaliates by planting horns on Benvolio’s head. However, Faustus is not content with the horns alone:

FAUSTUS. And therefore, my lord, so please your Majesty,
I’ll raise a kennel of hounds shall hunt him so
As all his footmanship shall scarce prevail
To keep his carcass from their bloody fangs.
Ho, Belimoth, Argiron, Ashtaroth!
BENVOLIO. Hold, hold! Zounds, he’ll raise up a kennel of
devils, I think, anon.—Good my lord, entreat for me.—
[*Benvolio is attacked by devils.*] ‘Sblood, I am never able to
endure these torments. (B.4.1.145-53)

In his rage at Benvolio for questioning his abilities, Faustus is not only content to mock him as a cuckold, but he also wants Benvolio to feel physical pain at the hands of the devils. This pain only serves to highlight Benvolio’s impotence. The proud knight who dared question Faustus now must beg his Emperor for his life, rendering him utterly emasculated. The Emperor then must “entreat” (B.4.1.155) Faustus to end Benvolio’s penance. This places Faustus directly at the

top of the chain of command, and the emperor exits the scene telling Faustus, “Thou shalt command the state of Germany / And live beloved of mighty Carolus” (B.4.1.172-3). Faustus violently establishes his masculinity by destroying Benvolio’s ability to act as the warrior he is. In doing so, Faustus gains political power and the favor of the Holy Roman Emperor. This is exactly the kind of violence that Shepard speaks of when she asserts that violence was used, “simultaneously to confer authority on its perpetrators and to degrade its victims.”⁴⁹ Faustus’s violence against Benvolio marks him as Benvolio’s superior, especially when Benvolio’s attempts at revenge are so impotent. Therefore, in this scenario, Faustus has proven to the entire court that he is a better man than Benvolio.

The masculine posturing between Faustus and Benvolio in the B-text, however, has only begun. In a semi-comic scene that does not appear in the A-text, Benvolio attempts to revenge himself upon Faustus with his sword, which Swetnam indicates is sometimes necessary in the life of a true man. Indeed, in the “Epistle to unto the Common Reader” which just precedes the main body of *The Schoole of the Noble and Worthy Science of Defence*, Joseph Swetnam defends his creation of a manual that teaches young men how to act violently by highlighting the fact that violence was expected of a man:

In reading our diuers Hystories I thereby vnderstanding the noble acts, and also noting the manly mind of these who liued many hundred yeeres agoe, whose fame shall neuer dye, whereas cowardly dastards which neuer bent their studies in marshall exploits, such I say at their death their fame dyeth with them, and so they are quickly raked vp in the ashes of forgetfulnesse, and buried in the valley of obliuion.⁵⁰ (Epistle Unto the Common Reader)

According to Swetnam’s treatise, men who cannot perpetuate violence upon others will not be remembered by history because they are “dastards.” According the OED, the noun “dastard” was

49. Shepard, 140.

50. Swetnam, sig. A2v

commonly used in from the fifteenth century to the nineteenth century as, “one who meanly or basely shrinks from danger; a mean, base, or despicable coward.”⁵¹ Therefore, this term that Swetnam uses immediately brings up considerations of social status. In his mind, gentlemen know how to fight, while “dastards,” or meaner, baser men do not, and history will only remember great men.

In the scene in question, Benvolio tries to prove himself a man history will remember by exclaiming,

O, may this eyelids never close again
Till with my sword I have that conjurer slain!
If you will aid me in this enterprise,
Then draw your weapons and be resolute.
If not, depart. Here will Benvolio die
But Faustus' death shall quit my infamy. (B.4.2.8-13)

Benvolio acknowledges the dangers, but he is determined to prove himself a man of “marshall exploits,” to borrow Swetnam’s phrase.⁵² Only an act of violence can wipe out the “infamy” that Faustus bestowed upon him by proving that he was not as powerful a man as the conjurer. After laying in wait for Faustus with some of his companions, Benvolio does, indeed, successfully cut off Faustus’s head and plans further revenge with the desecration of Faustus’s body:

BENVOLIO. First on his head, in quittance of my wrongs,
I'll nail huge forkéd horns and let them hang
Within the window where he yoked me first,
That all the world may see my just revenge. (B.4.2.55-8)

In response to his public humiliation, Benvolio is attempting to use violence to his own advantage by making Faustus bear cuckold’s horns permanently in death after he bested the

51. *Oxford English Dictionary Online*, noun and adj. “dastard,” accessed 16 December 2018.

52. Swetnam, sig. A2v.

conjurer in battle, thereby proving to the world that he is the truly legitimate man rather than Faustus. Unfortunately for Benvolio, Faustus once again turns the table on the wretched knight and his companions in arms. Faustus springs back to life and initially orders Mephistopheles and other demons to “pitch them headlong to the lowest hell” (B.4.2.81); however, he quickly changes his mind: “Yet stay. The world shall see their misery, / And hell shall after plague their treachery” (B.4.2.82-3). While Faustus’s initial thought of revenge is ironically torment in hell, which he has agreed to undergo after twenty-four years of enjoying power, he quickly shifts from the spiritual realm to the worldly. For Faustus, making Benvolio bear the perception of weakness or shame is a worse punishment for Benvolio than the torments of hell because that worldly perception is inherently tied to his manhood. Benvolio has already borne the humiliation of the cuckold’s horns in the court of Charles V, but in this scene, Faustus takes away his ability to fight effectively and does not even give him the courtesy of the honor he would gain through a noble death, fighting against all odds. Faustus wants the world to see and condemn Benvolio as weak man unable to perform his manly duties while it praises him for masculine strength, power, and courage. To that end, Faustus once again gives Benvolio the cuckold’s horns but never intends to remove them. Benvolio is branded as an inferior man for the rest of his life, and, in branding him, the B-text Faustus completely and utterly emasculates this Benvolio, leaving him no possible chance to reclaim a scrap of masculinity in the eyes of an early modern audience. The B-text Faustus has made it clear that he will use his magical powers in the same way Shepard claims men used violence in the period—to give himself a distinctly masculine authority while taking it away from others.⁵³ However, he takes it one step further, as he eliminates any possibility that Benvolio could regain any form of masculine honor in the future.

53. Shepard, 140.

Faustus and his Inferiors

The two Faustuses, however, are not content with dismantling the unnamed knight or Benvolio's masculinity as they turn their magic powers against those who are obviously their social inferiors. Beginning in the A-text, Faustus leaves Charles V's court and immediately encounters a horse-courser who buys his horse for forty dollars. Faustus is quick to add a dire warning at the purchase: "Ride him over hedge, or ditch, or where thou wilt, but not into the water" (A.4.1.128-9). Of course, the first thing the horse-courser does is ride the horse in the water, "thinking my horse had some rare quality that [Faustus] would not have had me known of" (A.4.1.150-1), and the horse turns into a worthless bottle of hay. When the horse-course attempts to get his money back, Faustus feigns a deep sleep, and when the horse-courser pulls on his leg to awaken him, the leg magically separates from Faustus's body, as Faustus yells in pain. The horse-courser promises to give Faustus "forty dollars more" if he does not tell the officers (A.4.1.180-1). After the horse-courser leaves, Faustus gloats to Mephistopheles, "What, is he gone? Farwell, he! Faustus has his leg again, and the Horse-courser, I take it, a bottle of hay for his labor. Well, this trick shall cost him forty dollars more" (A.4.1.186-9). Of course, Faustus is summoned to the Duke of Vanholt immediately after this; therefore, the horse-courser never has a chance to return with the additional forty dollars.

Faustus's interactions with the horse-courser stop there in the A-text. These interactions, however, damage the horse-courser's ability to fulfill his role as a man in early modern society. If the horse-courser is married, then after his interactions with Faustus, he has spent forty dollars for absolutely nothing, which could affect his ability to provide for his household, which Shepard claims, "was as important a tenet of patriarchal ideology as the expectation of chastity in

women.”⁵⁴ The A-text of *Doctor Faustus*, of course, does not make it clear whether the horse-courser is married; however, even if he were not married, Faustus has still damaged his ability to enact his manhood, for when the horse-courser realizes that he has been cheated, he exclaims, “But I’ll seek out my doctor and have my forty dollars again, or I’ll make it the dearest horse!” (A.4.1.155-6). This sentence implies that the horse-courser is planning to resort to physical violence to get his money or revenge. This fits Shepard’s claim that those men who did not have economic or social forms of patriarchal power, “sought alternative sources of male status in response to their subordination by patriarchal evaluative schemes.”⁵⁵ The horse-courser no longer has any form of patriarchal privilege in his interactions with Faustus; therefore, he resorts to violence, but Faustus strips even that away from him by means of fake dismemberment. The horse-courser then leaves the scene, completely impotent, while Faustus laughs with the horse-courser’s money and the knowledge that he has a uniquely masculine power over his fellow men.

The B-text takes this brief scene and expands it, which further develops Faustus’s lack of restraint when dealing with his inferiors like the horse-courser. In the B-text, Faustus encounters the horse-courser immediately after Benvolio and his comrades agree to live secluded from the world due to the horns Faustus has placed upon their heads. Just as in the A-text, the horse-courser buys a horse from Faustus for forty dollars, is flabbergasted when the horse becomes a bottle of hay, returns to get his money back, pulls off Faustus’s leg, and flees; however, the horse-courser makes yet another appearance in the B-text. Before Faustus is seen with the Duke and Duchess of Vanholt, the horse-courser meets up with Robin and Dick—the clowns that Mephistopheles turns into a dog and an ape respectively—and a carter in a tavern. The carter

54. Shepard, 186.

55. *Ibid.*, 206.

then shares the fact that Faustus's tricks upon the horse-courser were not an isolated incident as he describes how Faustus wronged him:

I'll tell you how he served me. As I was going to Wittenberg t'other day with a load of hay, he met me and asked me what he should give me for as much hay as he could eat. Now, sir, I thinking that a little would serve his turn, bade him take as much as he would for three farthings. So he presently gave me my money and fell to eating; and, as I am a cursen man, he never left eating till he had eat up all my load of hay. (B.4.6.24-31)

Just as he does with the horse-courser, Faustus damages the carter's financial prospects with his cheap trick, which, in turn, damages the carter's ability to enact his manhood. However, the horse-courser, Robin, Dick, and the carter decide to get revenge because they believe Faustus to be at a distinct disadvantage due to the horse-courser's boast that he ripped off Faustus's leg.

Therefore, the foursome interrupts Faustus's audience with the Duke of Vanholt, demanding to see him. The Duke, of course, has the power to keep these four socially inferior characters out of his presence, but he allows them to enter when Faustus says, "I do beseech your Grace, let them come in. / They are good subject for a merriment" (B.4.6.54-5). The comic scene continues as the four characters continue to drink beer and ask Faustus questions about his leg, but when Faustus shows him that he does indeed have two legs of flesh, they recoil in horror, and in an exchange that deserves some attention, Faustus appears to grow tired of their increasingly angry questions:

CARTER. Do you remember, sir, how you cozened me and eat
up my load of— *Faustus charms him dumb*
DICK. Do you remember how you made me wear an ape's—
HORSE-COURSER. You whoreson conjuring scab, do you remember
how you cozened me with a ho—
ROBIN. Have you forgotten me? You think to carry it away with
your 'hey-pass' and 'repass'. Do you remember the
dog's fa— (B.4.6.110-7)

Although there are not explicit stage directions saying so,⁵⁶ it appears that Faustus charms every single one of these men dumb, right as they begin to confront him with the wrongs he has committed against them, and this action of silencing them becomes Faustus's final act of constructing his own masculinity at the cost of his inferiors. He has already taken money from these men, and he proved that violence against his person has no effect whatsoever by showing his unharmed leg to the crowd. The final way they could defend their own honor was to hurl insults at Faustus, and the horse-courser does the best job of this in the few words Faustus allows him to utter—"you whoreson conjuring scab." While examining gendered power structures of language, Jane Kamensky describes insults that debase the target of abuse as "a kind of verbal theft...that enriched their speaker by stealing the reputation of their target."⁵⁷ While Kamensky was describing this linguistic phenomenon in New England, I believe the same applies to early modern England, and the word "scab" definitely has a debasing element to it. The OED indicates that the word "scab" could mean, "a mean, low, 'scurvy' fellow; a rascal, scoundrel," citing Lyly's 1591 play *Endimion* as the first usage of the term in this manner. By calling Faustus a scab, the horse-courser is trying to question his manly virtues and his social status; however, Faustus does not even allow him that much. Silencing his inferiors becomes the ultimate expression of the B-text's Faustus's masculine performance, as he will allow nobody to question him, even when he is in the wrong. Rather than the humility suggested by the authors of the

56. Just to be clear, the stage direction in the previous quotation is there in the text. However, it does not repeat for every single character.

57. Jane Kamensky, "Talk Like a Man: Speech, Power, and Masculinity in Early New England" *Gender and History*, 8 (1996): 32. See also David Cressy, *Agnes Bowker's Cat: Travesties and Transgressions in Tudor and Stuart England* (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2000), 138-161 for a discussion about how word were used to undermine the clergy in Tudor and Stuart England. While he is focused on the clergy, some of the same aspects of the war of words apply to Faustus's situation.

prescriptive literature, Faustus doles out humiliation. Those who do question him will be publicly shamed and humiliated, losing any semblance of control or power that they possess. In short, these four become something less than men as they trudge away, defeated, impotent, and silent. However, while the B-text Faustus's victory over these lower class characters may have impressed the Duke, they certainly would not have impressed William Cecil, who states, "it is held a base conquest to triumph where there is small resistance"⁵⁸ in his sixth precept. Without a doubt, the B-text Faustus had little to no resistance with these characters due to his almost limitless power. Therefore, while Faustus completely emasculates these men, in the eyes of some, he may not be gaining any glory for himself in this scene.

Conclusion

While the A-text Faustus does construct his masculinity by undermining the masculinity of those around him, he does not go as far as the B-text Faustus. The A-text Faustus seems content to make sure everyone knows he is powerful. He proves that he has more than empty words and then moves on. His victims at least have the ability to regain their dignity and consolidate that particularly masculine authority that is derived from social posturing and violence because the A-text Faustus does not take away all of their potential avenues to reclaim that power on stage. The Faustus in the B-text, however, is not content with a mere demonstration of his power. He is more over-the-top, using that power to bolster his own patriarchal position by irreparably damaging the public perception of his inferiors. He takes away any possibility those men have of enacting their masculinity in front of Dukes and Emperors, which is a much darker, more humiliating way of dealing with others—especially the characters like the horse-courser, the carter, Dick, and Robin, who are without a doubt from a lower social

58. William Cecil.

circle, and who thus begin with much less masculine authority than their elite counterparts. This Faustus obviously lacks the restraint that Cecil, Norden, and Swetnam advise when dealing with inferiors, and this is particularly useful as an example of how restraint and masculinity work in the period. The A-text Faustus is more restrained and seems to come off with more honor, while the B-text Faustus revels in the chaos and violence he inflicts upon his inferiors. This makes the B-text Faustus a much more potent and threatening character than the A-text Faustus.

The two Faustuses' restraint—or lack thereof—is mirrored in the endings of the two texts. While both endings are chilling, the ending of the B-text is much more gruesome and unrestrained than the A-text. In the A-text, the devils enter and Faustus screams, “Adders and serpents, let me breathe a while! / Ugly hell, gape not. Come not, Lucifer! / I'll burn my books. Ah, Mephistopheles!” (A.5.2.121-3). A stage direction reads, “[*The Devils*] *exeunt with him*,” and the chorus comes to deliver the final speech (S.d. A.5.2.123). It seems as though Faustus has simply been dragged to Hell in the A-text. In the B-text, however, three scholars come after Faustus has paid his debt to Lucifer, and what they find is that Lucifer has demonstrated a lack of restraint with Faustus, as the second scholar exclaims, “O, help us, heaven! See, here are Faustus' limbs, / All torn asunder by the hand of death” (B.5.3.6-7). The B-text Faustus has been dismembered, reminding audiences what happens to those men who do not act with restraint.

These endings help us see how the two texts of *Doctor Faustus* enter into the debate about how a man should interact with the world around him in early modern England. As Swetnam, Shepard, and Casey remind us, violence is necessary to gain honor and play the part of a man, and denigrating another man is a legitimate tactic to bring more honor to oneself. However, Cecil, Norden, and Swetnam seem to argue that there is a limit to the violence one can perpetrate upon another man, and the two texts of *Doctor Faustus* serve as physical examples

that help readers of the prescriptive literature and audience members to clarify what that limit is. The B-text Faustus obviously exceeds that limit, displaying how his lack of restraint makes him little better than the demons who dismember him, literally taking any kind of strength or honor he ever had and scattering it over the floor of his study to make him nothing. The A-text, Faustus, however, retains some semblance of dignity in the eyes of the world. Nobody can find evidence of his violent end because he has, presumably, been taken to Hell in one piece. He has behaved in a more honorable way in his dealings with other men, even with his unbridled power, and his physical punishment is less severe, even if both suffer an eternity of spiritual punishment.

However, awareness of this gender distinction between the two Faustuses is only possible if we remove some of our preconceived notions about the texts of *Doctor Faustus*. If we believe that one of the texts is more authoritative and the other is only useful as a supplement to better understand the authoritative text, then we will undoubtedly conflate the two, and conflation will undoubtedly obscure readings of *Doctor Faustus* like the one I have provided about the two Faustuses. If there is one true text, then there is only one true Faustus; however, if—as I assert—Faustus himself is a substantially different character in the two texts, then there is much more room to explore the A-text and the B-text as entities unto themselves. In order to make the exploration of the two texts widely available, we, as a scholarly community, must use restraint in our editorial practice and critical analysis to keep from accidentally conflating the A and B-texts of Faustus. Otherwise, we may inadvertently place what we think *Doctor Faustus* should be into the text(s) of the play(s), which will lead to future scholars reading and interpreting *us* rather than the two texts of *Doctor Faustus*.

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