IMAGINATION AND DEFORMATION: MONSTROUS MATERNAL PERVERSIONS OF NATURAL REPRODUCTION IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND

by

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ABSTRACT

IMAGINATION AND DEFORMATION: MONSTROUS MATERNAL PERVERSIONS OF NATURAL REPRODUCTION IN EARLY MODERN ENGLAND examines the creation in early modern English reproductive, teratological, wonder, and fictional literature of the "monstrous mother"—a female reproductive figure capable of generating both fetal and non-fetal forms of offspring through the power of her imagination. While earlier critics have identified monstrous mothers in early modern English literature—figures who produce grotesque and/or excessive offspring, deny or obstruct nurture, commit infanticide, and sometimes exhibit their own physical deformities—such mothers require offspring to expose their monstrosity. That is, deformed, numerous, starving, sickly, or slain bodies testify to their mothers' monstrous desires, reproductive natures, and parenting practices. In contrast, I argue that monstrous maternity develops independently of the birth of offspring, and specifically, manifests during conception and pregnancy, before women deliver issue that exposes their monstrous maternal inclinations. While monstrous maternal power primarily develops from women's desires, it also remains embodied within conceiving and pregnant women, and thus permits women to generate not only deformed offspring and power, but also new, monstrous forms of generation.

While monstrous mothers exercise powerful imaginative force that permits them to produce numerous types of "monstrous births," they also face antagonistic attempts to suppress their monstrous tendencies. Yet the authors of regulatory imagination texts, particularly sixteenth- and seventeenth-century obstetrical manuals, are repeatedly confounded by the monstrous mother's ability to innovate her imaginative influence

when confronted with attempts to limit it. Thus, antagonism actually augments monstrous maternal power. Early modern fictional literature depicts the growth and innovation of monstrous maternity even as practitioners, husbands, and communities attempt to suppress it. Fictional works therefore re-theorize regulatory imagination theory, as they persistently underscore the uncontrollable nature of monstrous mothers and monstrous maternal reproduction.

INTRODUCTION:
THE VARIETIES OF MONSTROUS MATERNAL REPRODUCTION IN IMAGINATION LITERATURE

In early modern England, the imagination of conceiving and pregnant women was regarded as a mighty formative reproductive force, capable of imprinting the images of objects, people, creatures, and ideas that enticed it on the bodies of developing fetuses. Although authors of midwifery manuals, wonder books, and teratological texts classify the maternal imagination with other primary causes of monstrous births, including the especially-feared wrath of God, the faculty often seems mightier even than the almighty, because women's imaginations prompt, collaborate with, and even generate other causes to emerge as the fundamental instigator of infant monstrosity.[1] Women are already implicated in monstrous birth stories in which God punishes parents' perverse sexual conduct by causing them to produce deformed offspring, because lustful women and their partners provoke God's anger. Moreover, condemnable sex acts problematize the process of pinpointing whether divine or maternal causes ultimately lead to the production of monsters. Authors who address the causes of monstrous births buttress their attributions of unsightly offspring to an angry God with scriptural condemnation of this filthy behavior. Yet because early modern theorists of teratogenesis do not treat individual causes in isolation, but instead address divine, maternal, seminal, uterine, astrological, demonic, and other causes alongside one another, they poise readers to recognize the tendency of causes to collaborate and converge during the creation of

monstrous births. For example, since engaging in intercourse during menstruation—a Levitically-forbidden sexual offense[2] that in monstrous birth literature invariably infuriates God—may result in children deformed by skin diseases,[3] it is difficult to identify the predominant cause of deformation. At play in stories of the generation of menstrual monsters is a maternal imagination reputed to imprint what women see upon the bodies of their gestating offspring. God and His Word may insufficiently explain why a baby emerges from the womb plagued by a disfiguring skin disease, because a menstrual woman, who bespots her bed, partner, and own body with blood during intercourse, conceivably introduces the primary cause of her child's monstrosity when she beholds the stains of her own menstrual fluid and imprints them as the marks of disease on her offspring.[4] Forbidden sex may incense God so much that he punishes fornicating parents with monstrous births, as early modern authors claim. Yet in the presence of unholy matter that women may imaginatively absorb, it seems possible that mothers beat God to the deforming punch.

In such circumstances, the usurpation of God's omnipotent control of monstrous creation by the maternal imagination represents a deeply vexed interpretive problem for authors who address the faculty's influence on reproduction: the imagination troubles writers who attempt to incorporate it into a cohesive theory of teratogenesis, because it operates without limitation, either to the varieties of monsters it generates or to its methods for producing monstrousness. A reputedly impressionable faculty, the imagination may absorb the image of any object, and therefore may generate any shape of monster. Though obstetrical authors issue warnings to "discreet women, and such as

desire to haue children… [to] not giue eare vnto lamentable and fearefull tales or storyes, nor cast their eyes vpon pictures or persons which are vglie or deformed, least the imagination imprint on the child the similitude of the said person or picture," the imagination continues to act as a bewildering formative force because it frustrates professional attempts to predict what "lamentable and fearefull" things may stimulate it (Guillemeau, *Child-birth* 26). Thus, these authors cannot suppress women's capricious imaginations because they cannot dictate precisely how women inclined to bear children must behave.

In its methods, the imagination behaves subversively as it undermines and surpasses the power of other reproductive influences. The imagination of the menstrual woman, for example, possesses supernatural ability, as it overwhelms the divine cause of her monstrous birth. Yet in monstrous birth literature, stronger anxieties revolve around the apparent parthenogenetic ability women exhibit when their imaginations exert exclusive formative power over developing offspring—a concern illustrated by repeated employment of stories about women who, during conception, imprint the images of the objects that decorate their rooms upon their newly-generated fetuses.[5] A female imagination that catalyzes teratogenesis also erases the formative ability of male semen, consequently revealing the seminal origins of early modern cuckolding anxieties, as well as the origins of the fears of female erotic, domestic, and political power that accompany them.[6] While stories of monstrous births conceived during women's menstrual periods usually hold both wicked parents responsible for inciting God's wrath, the possibility that a woman sees her spilled blood, imaginatively absorbs it, and imprints a version of its

marks on the offspring she conceives render her male partner powerless to exert formative influence on the monstrous birth—a usurpation that results in apparent imagination-borne parthenogenesis. Furthermore, stories of conceiving women who imprint upon their fetuses the images of the objects they desirously behold indicate that male semen never has a chance to exert its formative power, because female desire itself ultimately initiates monstrous reproduction. If we similarly read the blood shed during forbidden menstrual sex as a visible "object," this fluid bears witness specifically to women's sexually- and spiritually-depraved desire; aroused by the *sight* of prohibited sex, they seek a form of intercourse bound to endow them with exclusive formative power.

Historical Erotic and Gestational Restrictions of the Maternal Imagination

Usurping the formative power of God and men, the maternal imagination emerges as an aggressive, irresistible formative power. Yet functioning as a faculty that spends a considerable amount of energy helping to perpetuate illusions of female parthenogenesis, it conducts itself shockingly, but not unexpectedly. Rather, the imagination seems to mirror the behavior of sexually-depraved women driven by lust to the relentless pursuit of erotic satisfaction—a pervasive presence in early modern English literature. However, recent critical studies of the literary portrayals of the maternal imagination demonstrate that while a lustful imagination presents no surprises about women's nature, conceiving of this faculty as a whore *does* underscore its impact. Connecting the perverse formative influence of the maternal imagination to early modern women's inherent sexual

insatiability, scholars have enriched histories of both early modern monstrosity and misogyny. Monstrous births, which have long received critical attention for their role as religious and political prodigies,[7] do not incite horror all by themselves. Within early modern English literature, texts like *The Duchess of Malfi* portray women as the primary, visible "monsters" of unnatural reproduction; the duchess herself possesses an active maternal imagination that visibly reveals itself not on a monstrous birth, but in her voracious consumption of "apricocks" (2.1.76, passim). Moreover, as Lori Schroeder Haslem's study of the duchess's longings for apricocks in act 2 demonstrates, Webster's play reveals how the maternal imagination broadens the female reproductive targets of early modern misogyny. The duchess, chomping away at the apricocks without regard for their greenness or uncleanness (lines 143-45, 159), displays a "devouring mouth" of the longing pregnant woman that "becomes anxiously associated with the irrationally devouring womb, which in the medical discourse of the day was believed capable of scenting semen and moving down to suck it hungrily" (Haslem 443).

Yet by consuming her apricocks with wild abandon, the duchess conversely exhibits maternal vigilance. Authors of obstetrical and wonder literature warn that when pregnant women leave their alimentary longings unfulfilled, they miscarry or imprint upon their fetuses monstrous features resembling the unobtainable foods, since the imagination obsessively ponders the objects of unsatisfied desire.[8] But *men* should quake in the presence of such responsible pregnant women, Haslem suggests; while voracious women preserve their offspring, they transfer their deforming power to male victims, who they threaten to "consume" sexually. Men—especially their sexual organs—are targets

of the desiring imagination that drives women to uncontrolled consumption.[9] Specifically, a sexually-appetitive duchess threatens Antonio with erotic exhaustion, Haslem suggests. Noting the apricot's contemporary reputation as a female aphrodisiac, as well as Webster's "bawdy pun on the final syllable" of the word, Haslem argues that the fruit testifies to the intimate connection between voracious alimentary and erotic female appetites made by Webster's characters (455). Moreover, Antonio's reticence in the apricocks scene "suggests that he…is amazed by—and, of course, nervous about—the Duchess's hearty eating," Haslem argues (454). While she does not indicate precisely *what* concerns Antonio, her contention that the insatiable pregnant female appetite signals unharnessed female desire suggests that Antonio may doubt his ability to satisfy his wife sexually; furthermore, the voraciousness of the duchess—who eats "greedily" (*DM* 2.1.152) without first paring the apricocks (lines 140-42), or seemingly regarding their unripe state (159)—may be an alarming indicator of her future sexual behavior. If Antonio cannot satisfy her desires, the duchess may have to indulge in other apri-cocks.

Haslem's work underscores the aggressive nature and overwhelming power of the maternal imagination, by identifying not only infants, but also men as its victims. At the same time, Haslem's view of the imagination focuses on a generally *female* antagonist who does not differ dramatically from other early modern desiring women in their pursuit of sexual satisfaction at men's expense. Yet the unlimited forms of offspring and reproductive methods that the maternal imagination generates suggest that we can take Haslem's broadened idea of maternal imaginative aggression further. In early modern English literature, bad women sexually violate and dishonor men, but imagining pregnant

women are more than just bad women, because in the process of forming offspring through the power of their imaginations, they also claim non-infant and non-male bodies. Women's own natural reproductive bodies, and natural reproduction itself, fall victim to a maternal imagination that not only usurps the formative power of male seed, but also the influence of female parts essential to natural generation. This includes female semen, whose formative power the maternal imagination overwhelms and obscures during conception, but whose contribution to generating offspring furnishes the imagination with a fetal focus, located within the maternal body, for the deformative activity it conducts during pregnancy. In addition, the maternal imagination essentially hijacks the womb, which in its natural formative capacity swathes the fetus in nutritive, cultivating blood, but during monstrous reproduction merely houses the child once the imagination usurps its formative responsibilities.

This broad transformative influence underscores my contention that the victims of monstrous mothers come in non-infant and non-male forms, because these and other parts, bodies, processes, and institutions all represent the deformed "monstrous births" the maternal imagination can generate. The faculty's sweeping violence confounds attempts to characterize it, because at different times it is supernaturally powerful, feminine in the worst early modern sense of the word, whorish, lascivious, anti-maternal, maternal, masochistic, and voracious. However, the interplay between the imagination and the female reproductive body eases the process of lexical, if not conceptual pinpointing, by indicating that a specifically maternal figure embodies women's deforming imaginations. Throughout this project, I refer to women who form offspring

using the power of their imaginations as "monstrous mothers." This term describes the monstrous mother's major function of imaginatively misshaping offspring, which in turn transforms reproduction into a monstrous process. It also refers to identity, because the imagination derives part of its formative power from a fluid and organ that signal women's biological maternity. Moreover, unlike monstrous women, who unnaturally dominate men in sexual, domestic, and political spheres, monstrous mothers are characteristically maternal because they do not simply *destroy,* but rather destructively *create* by producing deformity. The term "monstrous mother" also serves to expand women's reproductive power beyond the acts of monstrous formation and usurpatory generative behaviors to redefine how reproductive bodies, most notably those of monstrous mothers themselves, work. The literature I address in chapters 2, 3, and 4 demonstrates that through their imaginations, women generate non-infant forms of "offspring," including domestic, erotic, and political expressions of power. Furthermore, they direct the course of reproduction by determining which bodies participate in generation.

By focusing on maternal capabilities, I follow historians of early modern English monsters and monstrousness, who in the last fifteen years have increasingly turned their attention to the maternal causes of monstrous births and the ways mothers themselves express their own monstrous characteristics. In particular, the work of Marie-Hélène Huet and Julie Crawford has revealed that the focus on female intent by the authors of texts that address monstrous births and their maternal causes represents the maternal imagination as a faculty linked to threatening purpose. Huet demonstrates that these

works place responsibility for infant deformation on mothers, who cultivate transgressive desires that imprint themselves on developing fetuses.[10] Elsewhere, Crawford argues that in early modern literature, "[i]t is *women* whose acts and behaviors produce monsters" (14). Crawford describes maternal imaginations at work in religious and political literature, and widely-circulated texts such as broadside ballads; by focusing on the mental complicity of unfaithful, obstinate, recusant, or otherwise badly-behaved women, she problematizes sympathetic early modern portrayals of the mothers of monstrous births as victims of imaginative enthrallment. While reports abound in early modern texts of women who witness disturbing events or encounter dreadful sights during their pregnancies, and consequently deliver offspring marked by their deeply-affected imaginations, Crawford shows that images do not just shock vulnerable female imaginations into deforming developing offspring. Instead, women cultivate sexually-, politically- and religiously-rebellious fantasies and behaviors that upset both natural reproductive processes and social order.

The imaginative complicity of women in monstrous creation that Crawford and Huet both reveal in early modern literature about the imagination influences my understanding of the female imagination as a faculty driven by women's desires. Like Crawford, who contends that "a woman's illegitimate or inappropriate desires leave their traces on the body of her child" (19), and Huet, who argues that "the power of the imagination is first of all the power invested in the very force of desire" (16), I present desire as the provocateur of the imagination's transgressions. Malformations always betray the content of maternal desires. Yet I also argue that desire generates not only

monstrous births, but also non-infant monsters, erotic, domestic, and political power, and women's own *separate* monstrous maternal identities. What excites the maternal imagination gives rise to potentially limitless monstrous maternal power.

Monstrous Mothers and the Antagonistic Provocations of Limitless Power

The monstrous mother I describe is the collective creation of authors of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century obstetrical and gynecological manuals, teratology texts, wonder books, poetry, drama, and broadside ballads. She is a menacing generative figure who prompts the formation of an early modern reproductive belief system constantly destabilized by the unpredictable, uncontrollable activities of her imagination. Because these works centralize the imaginative generative activity of monstrous mothers during conception and pregnancy, and thus position them, rather than their deformed offspring, as the primary monstrous figures of unnatural reproduction, I refer to them collectively as "imagination literature." While the various texts of imagination literature also construct the monstrous mother as a destructively creative figure, they do not do so cohesively, because monstrous mothers resist unified description. The unlimited methods of generation and forms of offspring they create invite varied, and at times, contrary interpretations by obstetrical, teratological, wonder, and fictional imagination authors. These writers articulate two major attitudes toward monstrous mothers: while some consider these women to possess such dangerous generative power that they must be suppressed, others consider them irrepressible; moreover, the writings of the latter expose the futility of attempting to regulate the monstrous mother's generative power.

Discussions of the monstrous maternal imagination in teratology and wonder literature tend to represent both positions; for example, the horrific details in reports of pregnant women who long to cannibalize men, a common feature of early modern English wonder books, simultaneously demonstrate the need to control monstrous mothers *and* testify to their overwhelming power.

The first attitude, however, receives regular and primary articulation in obstetrical and gynecological texts. These works, to which I also refer as regulatory literature or regulatory imagination literature, present the monstrous mother as a figure who requires supervision, because she endangers natural reproduction by usurping or circumventing the generative contributions of naturally-reproducing male and female bodies. Obstetrical authors attempt to incorporate monstrous mothers into a regulatory theory of the maternal imagination that recognizes women's imaginative reproductive power, identifies this power as a form of reproductive violence, and posits that professional intervention can prevent the imagination from exerting its deformative influence. As part of their efforts to control their patients, obstetrical authors propose methods for (1) preventing women from entertaining monstrous fantasies and (2) limiting the effects of women's desires, and thus, preventing teratogenesis.

But creative forms, represented in this project by *The Winter's Tale, Macbeth, Bartholomew Fair,* and *The Faerie Queene*, reveals the futility of these professional attempts at regulation. Obstetrical authors represent a medical presence in early modern England aligned against monstrous mothers. They counter the aggressiveness of the monstrous maternal imagination with restrictive proposals for the behavioral, dietary, and

sexual reform of reproductive women—methods that target the functions of the female bodies the imagination inhabits. But Shakespeare, Jonson, and Spenser reveal that early modern antagonism toward monstrous mothers extends beyond obstetrical circles, by portraying a *culture* aligned against reproductive women generally—a culture whose hostility is rooted in suspicion that maternal desires may not only produce unlimited varieties of monsters and monstrousness, but may also transform all reproductive women into monstrous mothers.

The notion that monstrous maternity perpetually and pervasively reproduces itself, an issue the latter fear suggests, demonstrates how the narratives of Shakespeare, Jonson, and Spenser re-theorize the imagination theory of regulatory authors. Concluding that the assumption of women's imaginative procreativity, a belief central to imagination theory, implies that reproductive women may imaginatively generate limitless forms of monstrous births, dramatic and poetic authors extend the reproductive capabilities of the monstrous maternal imagination beyond the production of monstrous births and the usurpation of the functions of naturally-reproducing male and female bodies. They demonstrate the additional procreative ability of the monstrous maternal imagination to generate domestic, political and erotic forms of power. Through Hermione, Shakespeare makes pregnant bellies signify the maternal cultivation not only of fetuses, but also of women's sexual desire, and thus positions mothers, rather than developing offspring, as the primary monstrous bodies of unnatural reproduction. With Lady Macbeth, Shakespeare creates a monstrous mother who redefines reproduction as a method for generating monstrous selfhood and political power from both the imagination

and nurturing female organs. Win Littlewit in *Bartholomew Fair* and Britomart in *The Faerie Queene* transform the significance of female erotic desire from a destructive force that targets men to a creative means for obtaining female reproductive independence. While Win's erotic desire represents a force of resistance to paternalistic efforts to control monstrous maternity, Britomart's own illicit sexual desires catalyze the transformation of Artegall into an acceptable natural reproductive mate. These manifestations of monstrous maternal power transform imagination theory by placing at its center a monstrous mother persistently resistant to attempts to anticipate, and therefore control, her imaginative procreative activities. Imagination *literature* by fictional authors thus ensures that the imagination *theory* posited by professional authors remains incomplete and continuously subjected to destabilization by monstrous mothers; by insisting on the uncontrollable nature of monstrous mothers, Shakespeare, Jonson, and Spenser construct a figure obstetrical professionals can neither theoretically fathom nor medically cure.

To illustrate the profundity of monstrous maternal reproductive influence, and demonstrate that fears of unharnessed, unlimited monstrous maternal power are warranted, I construct two types of chapters. The first category, represented exclusively by chapter 1, establishes the anatomical and physiological bases for monstrous mothers. My contention that monstrous mothers generate unnatural forms of generation by usurping and circumventing the formative roles of naturally-reproducing male and female bodies, and by producing infant and non-infant forms of offspring within an embodied imagination necessitates this work. I describe early modern Galenic models of

reproductive anatomy and physiology in order to establish which bodies the imagination transforms and in which bodies it develops. In the series of chapters that follow, I address the ways monstrous mothers overcome attempts to regulate their imagination-borne reproductive methods. In each successive chapter, monstrous mothers innovate, and thus progressively escalate, the power generated by their imaginations. This does not, however, occur in a seamless, upward trajectory, because the augmentation of monstrous maternal reproductive power depends on its antagonistic treatment. That is, an easy defeat of professional attempts to control monstrous maternity would limit the reproductive methods monstrous mothers generate, because the imagination would not be compelled to produce new forms of subversive power in order to resist professional regulation. But the ever-generative monstrous mother exhibits precisely this kind of innovative ability when she imagines ways to resist means for controlling her reproductive power.

The anatomical and physiological models I describe in chapter 1 do the double, paradoxical duties of (1) locating monstrous mothers within an early modern reproductive theory in which naturally-generating male and female bodies each make their respective, and thus limited, contributions to reproduction, and (2) encouraging the development of monstrous maternity. These models fulfill this complex role because the generative abilities they ascribe to women surpass those of men, and thus position women as biologically-powerful figures. Women's greater influence on fetal development, due both to their contribution of seed during conception (a role they share with men), and their independent participation in gestation, represents a foundational element of a theory

of reproduction that acknowledges the primacy of female influence in generation.[11] Moreover, pregnancy represents a natural parallel to monstrous female reproduction, which appears to require no male contributions.

These models, articulated in sections on reproductive anatomy in sixteenth- and seventeenth medical, surgical, anatomical, and obstetrical treatises, represent the dominant beliefs about generative anatomy and physiology in early modern England. However, their complexity has remained only partially acknowledged by historians of reproduction, who favor models that confine women to a binary relationship with men in which they represent their reproductive equals, or more often, their inferiors. Alternatively, I reread these models as evidence of belief in the reproductive differences between men and women—differences that underscore superior female reproductive influence. While I characterize the anatomy and physiology of these works as Galenic, I challenge the one-sex Galenic model of reproductive anatomy made famous by Thomas Laqueur in *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud* (1990). Specifically, I dispute the homological interpretation of reproductive anatomy advanced by Laqueur, which portrays female organs as inverted, inferior versions of men's parts. By rereading the anatomical descriptions of male and female reproductive organs in early modern works alongside Galen's reproductive anatomy, I reveal that a "three-sex," rather than a one-sex theory of reproduction permeates early modern reproductive texts. Not only do men and women exhibit anatomical and physiological differences, but conceiving and pregnant women also display physical and functional variations from one another, thus giving rise in the works of both Galen and early modern Galenic authors to a ternary

model of sexual difference that includes men, non-pregnant women, and pregnant women.[12] These differences become particularly important in light of Galen's explanation that the anatomical distinctions of men and women enable their vastly different physiological functioning. Most significantly, the pregnant uterus, a nurturing organ that not only lacks a male anatomical and physiological analogue, but also differs dramatically in both form and function from the characteristic organs[13] of non-pregnant women, endows gestating women with a specifically pregnant identity.

The notion of a female reproductive identity comprised of two anatomically- and physiologically-separate bodies facilitates the introduction in chapter 2 of two significant factors that underscore the threatening nature of monstrous maternal identity: (1) the pervasiveness of the monstrous maternal presence in the professional obstetrical, domestic, and political spheres of early modern English culture, and (2) the independence of monstrous mothers from offspring. Distinguishing pregnant and non-pregnant female bodies helps underscore the difference between conception and pregnancy—itself a difference that suggests monstrous maternity may affect women's reproductive ability during both processes. Furthermore, this association of monstrous maternity with conception and pregnancy emphasizes that reproductive monstrosity is a characteristic attributable to women that does not depend on the *birth* of monsters.

Chapter 2 solidifies the status of monstrous maternity as a feature of women independent of the delivery of offspring through its examination of an important premise of obstetrical imagination literature: monstrous mothers visibly reveal themselves to those who behold them during conception and gestation. Visible maternal monstrousness

shifts the balance of power between monstrous mothers and regulatory voices because it conceivably advances professional knowledge: one of the most frustrating characteristics of the monstrous maternal imagination for regulatory authors is the opacity of its unpredictable nature; unable to anticipate which objects or ideas might excite reproductive women's imaginations, and consequently transform them into monstrous mothers, these writers cannot solidify restrictive behavioral regimens that might prevent or limit the development of monstrous maternity. However, writers who can subject reproductive women to constant, invasive scrutiny may discover sources of maternal monstrosity and subsequently generate methods of regulation. Professional surveillance efforts emerge primarily in monstrous birth stories where women commit imaginative adultery by beholding objects during conception whose images later reappear on their monstrous births. Notably, regulatory writers indicate that monstrous maternity materializes in these scenes, rather than in lying-in rooms, by suggesting that they actually watch watching women monstrously conceive.

The ability of professional voyeurs to see monstrous maternity manifesting during moments of imaginative adultery indicates advancement in comprehending this state, because accounts of peeping practitioners position lust as the specific stimulant of the maternal imagination. In *The Winter's Tale*, Shakespeare indicates that this attitude also enables non-professional beholders of pregnant women to identify them as monstrous mothers who require discipline. Hermione inhabits a culture that indiscriminately subjects pregnant women to scrutiny, due to its suspicion that all reproductive women harbor monstrous desires. The pregnant belly signals the cultivation not only of fetuses,

but also of women's erotic desires. Thus, even women like Hermione, considered imaginatively innocent by many characters in *The Winter's Tale*, appear to embody maternal monstrousness simply by displaying reproductive capacity. But notably, pregnant bellies simultaneously reveal that a scrutinizing culture underestimates the power of monstrous maternity. Visible maternal monstrousness, rather than exposing lust as women's primary imaginative stimulant, and thus suggesting that imaginative imprinting is dependent on female sexual desire, augments the deforming power of the women who exhibit it, by endowing them with the ability to destabilize the identities of those who witness and interpret their monstrousness—a process Shakespeare illustrates in his portrayal of jealous, unhinged Leontes.

The Winter's Tale demonstrates that belief in the ability of conceiving and pregnant female bodies to expose the lascivious limitations of women's imaginative reproductive methods ultimately subjects its proponents to the deforming influence of monstrous maternity. Yet monstrous mothers do not emerge victorious over regulatory figures. Rather, chapter 2 underscores the perpetual tension between monstrous mothers and their antagonists, since Hermione suffers at Leontes' hands, at the same time she unintentionally tortures him. In contrast, I show in chapter 3 that Shakespeare negatively relieves this tension in *Macbeth*, by revealing the futility of attempts to control the monstrous maternal imagination. Lady Macbeth possesses a characteristically destructive yet creative monstrous maternal imagination that yields regicide, emasculation, the deformation of Macbeth's non-maternal imagination, and the dissolution of professional authority over monstrous mothers. She initiates these forms of monstrous reproduction

by first recognizing her maternal body as a necessary perpetrator of her ambitious desires. However, Lady Macbeth complicates the embodiment of her imagination by identifying her maternal breasts, rather than her womb, as her imagination's primary cohort. This permits her to generate non-infant forms of monstrous offspring. She fantasizes a relationship between her external nourishing breasts and her desire for violence against bodies she does not enwomb—a fantasy that reinforces her monstrous maternal identity as it associates her monstrous nurturing capacity with glands that, unlike the womb, can sustain offspring indefinitely. Her fantasy contrasts markedly with narratives in which the wombs and imaginations of pregnant monstrous mothers collaborate to deform monstrous births and reproductive physiology. Lady Macbeth instead nourishes a monstrous self as she seeks the assistance from "Spirits" (*Mac.* 1.5.40) to "fill [her], from the crown to the toe, top-full / Of direst cruelty" (lines 42-43)—a complex image that suggests she impregnates her own imagination with evil spirits, who subsequently impregnate her with the "direst cruelty" required to fulfill her political desires. By inviting the spirits to suckle at her "woman's breasts" (47), Lady Macbeth imaginatively positions these parts as sources of nourishment for the spirits, and by association, for her imagination.

The cruelty bred by Lady Macbeth's imagination and breasts redefines reproduction, by launching a perpetual monstrous generative cycle in *Macbeth.* She "issues" a regicidal, monstrous Macbeth, an act of imaginative production that endows him with monstrous authority, and de-forms Lady Macbeth into the monstrous dominating source of his violence. The imaginative torment she suffers before her suicide

further illustrates the perpetuation of monstrous maternal reproduction, because the creation of monstrous births does not deliver women of their own maternal monstrousness. In her chamber, Lady Macbeth continues to dwell obsessively on her political ambitions, even as she expresses guilt about Duncan's murder.[14] Her retention of regicidal desire confounds her physician's attempts to treat her, because Macbeth has already committed the murder, and Lady Macbeth thus cultivates a monstrous fantasy she cannot hope to fulfill. Her doctor may therefore offer nothing to relieve her. But his helplessness does not signal the demise of monstrous maternity, because it helps demonstrate how monstrous maternal power spreads beyond the imaginations of individual women, to eventually signal the inevitable failure of professional attempts to restrain monstrous maternity more generally.

In *Macbeth,* natural reproduction completely disintegrates as Lady Macbeth's imagination generates a monstrous maternal self, a figurative monstrous birth in the form of Macbeth's regicidal manhood, and consequently, a variety of reproduction incomprehensible to practitioners. While the texts I examine in the final chapter, *Bartholomew Fair* and *The Faerie Queene,* explore different methods of professional and paternalistic control of monstrous mothers, they too present monstrous maternity as a confounding force. Ultimately, Jonson and Spenser underscore the overwhelming power of monstrous maternity by indicating that *women* must reform their own imaginations. In *Bartholomew Fair,* John Littlewit indicates that he may conquer seemingly unconquerable monstrous maternity. Littlewit replicates the practice, common in stories about pregnant cannibals, of eroticizing the alimentary longings women experience

during pregnancy in order to undermine their monstrous potential. This eroticization of longings undermines the power of monstrous mothers, because lascivious women represent a lesser threat to early modern English social structures than monstrous mothers do, since this society has in place effective ways for controlling sexually-insatiable women, but designs only imperfect measures for controlling monstrous mothers. Littlewit specifically attempts to stop his wife Win's monstrous alimentary longings before they start by instead cultivating her erotic passions for *him.* However, Littlewit's fantasy that he may shape and consequently control Win's fantasies ultimately fails, because her explosive eroticism, which materializes when she becomes a prostitute, suggests instead that husbands cannot restrict monstrous maternal tendencies by trying to fulfill their wives sexually. Instead, Littlewit's techniques strengthen monstrous maternal power, because the erotic delights he offers appear to incite desires in Win that *equal* the power of alimentary longings to provoke monstrous behaviors in women.

While Jonson eventually foils his ambitious but little-witted reproductive reformer, Spenser positions monstrous maternity as the impetus for natural reproduction, when he suggests that the reform of the monstrous maternal imagination may not only be achieved, but also maintained, by women who possess monstrously erotic imaginations. Spenser examines this idea throughout Britomart's quest to rescue Artegall in Book 5 of *The Faerie Queene*. Here, the Knight of Chastitie's acceptance of her role as the maternal source of a dynasty replaces her desire for monstrous sex with a Crocodile that materializes in her dream at Isis Church. Significantly, Spenser does not portray this dream as an immature expression of Britomart's monstrous maternity that precedes her

recognition of Artegall's political authority, and consequently, her duty to carry out his dynastic will inside her womb. Spenser instead locates the moment of her imaginative reform within the dream, when she subdues the Crocodilian Artegall, the once-sadistic beast of her desires. Britomart here suggests that women can imaginatively form their mates. In his interpretation of the dream, the Isis priest explains that "that same Crocodile doth represent / The righteous Knight, that is thy faithfull louer" (5.7.22); therefore, he describes the rehabilitated, rather than the vicious Crocodile, and thus confirms that Britomart has reformed her sexual desire.

Significantly, Britomart's monstrous maternal tendencies continue to shape her reproductive agency. In *The anatomy of melancholy*, Robert Burton points out that one may cultivate monstrous fantasies during sleep—an idea that suggests Britomart continues to rely on her imagination to determine the course of her reproductive affairs.[15] The importance of her imagination for shaping her generative destiny therefore does not eliminate, but instead perpetuates the tension between monstrous maternity and attempts to control it. While Britomart eventually chooses to reproduce naturally with a natural male body, her imagination continues to monstrously dominate procreation.

The Monstrous Maternal Legacy

In *Bartholomew Fair* and *The Faerie Queene*, Jonson and Spenser suggest that the monstrous maternal imagination is a controllable faculty, but they simultaneously acknowledge its explosive energy—energy that manifests in physical transformations and political and domestic upheavals in *The Winter's Tale* and *Macbeth*. As late sixteenth-

and early seventeenth-century works, all four collectively articulate anxieties about monstrous maternity in contemporary and earlier imagination texts.[16] However, they also furnish ways for understanding how regulatory imagination literature continues to augment monstrous maternal reproductive influence in the later decades of the seventeenth century. Portraying both volatile and incompletely-contained monstrous maternity, later texts suggest that monstrous maternity confounds efforts to understand it as anything *but* a force that constantly threatens to exert destructive influence. Consequently, professional imagination literature proposes no reliable way for preventing or "curing" monstrous maternity. This state perpetuates the tension between monstrous maternal and professional authority throughout the seventeenth century, therefore suggesting that the persistent presence of maternal monstrousness in reproduction hamstrings professional efforts to develop knowledge about the maternal imagination.

Significantly, this tension extends well into professional imagination literature of the 1700s. Even after reproductive theorists seriously challenge the ability of the maternal imagination to imprint its contents on developing fetuses in the 1710s and 1720s, other medical writers seem unable to resist depicting the imagination's ability to generate monstrous maternity.[17] A 1775 case study of "an Extraordinary Acephalous Birth" published in *Philosophical Transactions* illustrates how little imagination literature changes over the course of the eighteenth century. The author of the study contends that "this injurious doctrine [of imaginative imprinting] is pregnant with continual mischief to society. It frequently makes women very unhappy. And the fear of mutilating or marking their infants often affects them so much, that they at last miscarry"

(Cooper 319). Here, women are fearful, rather than unnaturally desirous, and they miscarry, rather than issue monstrous births. But these differences do not mask the dangerous presence of the maternal imagination in this passage; obsessively dwelling on destructive images, women still create reproductive devastation.

CHAPTER 1:

GALEN, GALENISTS, AND THREE SEXES: THE BIOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS OF MONSTROUS MATERNAL BODIES

In this chapter I describe the female reproductive bodies inside of which monstrous maternity develops, in order to establish a biological foundation for the women who in chapters 2, 3, and 4 wreak monstrous reproductive havoc. I posit that the authors of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century medical and obstetrical literature present anatomical and physiological reproductive models conducive to the development of a monstrous mother capable not only of deforming fetal bodies, but also of usurping "natural" reproductive functions usually fulfilled by "natural" reproductive men and women. Central to early modern reproductive anatomy and physiology is a three-sex model of sexual difference, in which pregnant women, non-pregnant women, and men represent ontologically-distinct figures. By differentiating between pregnant and non-pregnant women, early modern obstetrical authors portray pregnancy as a process in which women alone participate; conception, on the other hand, requires the mutual involvement of both men and non-pregnant women. Reproductively-independent pregnant women exhibit formative abilities that parallel moments during conception and gestation when women, using the power of their monstrously-disposed maternal imaginations, autonomously deform offspring. While monstrous reproduction initiated by the imagination suggests a complex relationship between embodiment and disembodiment, this monstrous maternal imagination, as I will show in later chapters,

actually relies on pregnant and non-pregnant female anatomy, fluids, and physiological functions for its reproductive power.

Identifying an ontologically-distinct pregnant woman within early modern English reproductive texts is problematized by the tendency of historians of early modern medicine to argue for a one-sex model of generative anatomy, in which male genital organs represent "standard" anatomy and women's organs exist only as inverted, underdeveloped versions of men's; a two-sex model that insists on the anatomical differences between men and women; or the simultaneous influence of both one- and two-sex models on early modern reproductive theory. Yet each of these historical traditions fails to account for the descriptions in early modern English medical and obstetrical texts of pronounced variations in women's generative anatomy before and during pregnancy. In these works, the differences between non-pregnant and pregnant female bodies are not simply a result of fertilization-induced anatomical transformations; that is, "pregnant" and "non-pregnant" do not signal two ways to characterize the same female body, but instead represent distinct ontological categories. Reproductive authors underscore this distinction by emphasizing the significance of different parts to conceiving non-pregnant and gestating pregnant women: the former is characterized by her ovaries and vagina and the latter by her womb. The functions of these identifying parts, furthermore, solidify the ontological separateness of non-pregnant and pregnant women. Non-pregnant women possess a cooperative physiology; fitting together in "proportional" vaginal-penile harmony with men, and contributing formative semen that unites with men's own seed during conception, these women collaborate with men in

order to complete their major generative function. In contrast, pregnant women gestate in isolation. Their own formative contribution to fetal development therefore occurs independently of the physiological functions of other bodies.

One- and two-sex models continue to dominate early modern medical histories however, and critics have generated complex studies of the role each plays in early modern reproductive theory since the publication in 1990 of Thomas Laqueur's *Making Sex: Body and Gender from the Greeks to Freud.* Laqueur's contention, that Galen's homological model of sexual anatomy dominated Western reproductive theories "from classical antiquity to the end of the seventeenth century" (25), has simultaneously shaped histories of early modern medicine and prompted numerous counter-critical responses that argue against Galen's consistent influence during these centuries. While Laqueur holds that Galenic thought utilizes a homology that considers women genitally-inverted, inferior versions of men, his strongest critics maintain that some early modern authors adopted models of sexual difference, leading them to conclude that men and women were separate sexes.[18] Among these critics, Janet Adelman successfully complicates Laqueur by rereading early modern medical texts that, as Laqueur argues, articulate an engulfing Galenic homological sex model. In doing so, Adelman reveals specific refutations of Galen's homological theory. Her example from Helkiah Crooke's *Mikrokosmographia: a description of the body of man* (1615) illustrates an early modern author's outright skepticism of Galenic theory. Crooke writes, ""[t]hese things which *Galen* urgeth concerning the similitude, or parts of generation differing onely in scite and position, many men do esteeme very absurd"" (qtd. in Adelman 38). Here, Adelman illustrates

that diverse reproductive models actually coexist in early modern texts; while Crooke classifies Galenic homology among the "absurd" aspects of reproductive theory, he does not relegate Galen to obsolescence; rather, he acknowledges that "many," but not *all* "men do esteeme" a one-sex model of reproductive anatomy "very absurd."[19] Laqueur, however, argues that an attitude vastly different from Crooke's dominated early modern reproductive theory. For Laqueur, Galen's own declaration of homology in *On the Usefulness of the Parts of the Body*, that "[a]ll the parts…that men have, women have too, the difference between them lying in only one thing…that in women the parts are within [the body], whereas in men they are outside" (631), along with its early modern Galenic rearticulations, testify to the continued predominance of Galen's theory in early modern reproductive writings.[20]

These critical differences do not suggest that Adelman simply conducts more thorough research than Laqueur to uncover information he inexplicably misses. Instead, her argument, "that Galen's one-sex model had not driven out other ways of thinking medically about sexual difference in…England" during the early modern period ("Making Defect Perfection" 30), reveals how Laqueur's model invites skepticism at the same time it continues to influence its critics' interpretation of Galen's writings. That is, it is not Laqueur's identification of Galen as a homological theorist, but his contention that Galenic homology was the undisputed model of reproductive anatomy and corresponding physiology throughout the early modern period that raises objections from other analysts. Thus, Adelman argues that different sex models existed alongside Galenic theory, but she does not set out to prove that Laqueur errs when he demonstrates that

Galen himself explicitly articulates a homological relationship between male and female genitals at some points in his reproductive writings, or that early modern Galenic authors attribute this model to him. But Galen's own writings also identify distinctions between male and female bodies. Thus, the Laqueurian model of Galenic homology is perpetuated by critical failures to address Galen's own complications to his reproductive model. Galen acknowledges not only physical differences between male and female organs, but also significantly different physiological functions that these anatomical distinctions facilitate. Furthermore, early modern authors articulate the complexity of Galenic theory in treatises that explicitly portray Galen as a homological theorist *and* adopt models of sexual difference based on his writings.

The complicated nature of early modern Galenism in reproductive writings materializes throughout early modern writings on anatomy and physiology. In the late seventeenth-century midwifery manual, *The Midwives Book or The whole art of midwifery discovered* (1671), Jane Sharp emphasizes Galen's self-advertisement as a homological theorist, noting that "*Galen* saith that women have all the parts of Generation that Men have, but Mens are outwardly, womens inwardly" (37). But Sharp also derives her description of the differences between men's and women's "stones" from Galen. She cites distinguishing anatomical characteristics of women and men, remarking, for example, that "[w]omens Stones are not so thick, nor great, nor round, nor smooth, nor hard as mens are; but they are small and uneven, and broad and flat both before and behind" (53). Her Galenism in this passage, however, is vividly apparent, when we compare it to Galen's own declaration in *Usefulness of the Parts* that "the

female must have smaller, less perfect testes" (631). Moreover, she underscores the full significance of these differences in her explanation of the physiological reasons underlying them. In doing so, Sharp reveals the importance of sexual distinction to Galen's reproductive theory. Women are decidedly *not* anatomically-inverted versions of men when Sharp explains that their "Stones are…colder and moister, and so is their Seed" (Sharp 52), or that women's seed "is more watry" than men's, which is "full of vital spirits, more condensed, thick and glutinous"—seminal differences that allow the seeds to become "perfectly mingled together" at conception (53). The convergence of the seeds for the sake of conception represent a major aspect of early modern reproductive theory, and Galen's influence can be traced to passages in both *Usefulness of the Parts* and *On semen.* In the former, he explains that the anatomical difference between men's and women's "testes" results from an insufficient quantity of heat in women: "the female must have smaller, less perfect testes, and the semen generated in them must be scantier, colder, and wetter (for these things too follow of necessity from the deficient heat)" (Galen, *Usefulness* 631). In this passage, Galen clarifies that men and women's different humoral composition results in two different kinds of generative fluid. In doing so, he establishes a physiological, as well as an anatomical foundation for the separation of the sexes. Men's larger testes, a result of their greater heat, allow them to produce semen that has "received the peak of concoction," and "becomes the efficient principle of the animal" (632)—a statement Sharp echoes in her description of thick male semen. In *On semen,* Galen elaborates on the benefit of two different types of semen (and by association, the testes that generate them). Since male semen has limited mobility, it

cannot fertilize the entire uterus on its own.[21] Female semen must assist it by acting as "a kind of congenial nutriment for the male semen"; "being moister and colder," it can perform this function (Galen, *On semen* 175, 177). For Sharp, the male formative and female nurturing seeds that mutually facilitate conception become semens "perfectly mingled."

The case of semen in *The Midwives Book* repositions Galen as a more complex reproductive theorist than contemporary historians of early modern medicine have traditionally acknowledged. Sharp specifically locates Galen's complexity in the physiological aspects of his theory. This contrasts with Laqueur's argument that the seminal contributions of men and women to conception illustrate their homological and hierarchical relationship to one another: "For Galen…each parent contributes something that shapes and vivifies matter, but he insists that the female parent's seed is less powerful, less "informing," that the male parent's because of the very nature of the female" (40). Women contribute less powerful semen for the same reason they have "less perfect testes" (40)—they lack sufficient heat to make them reproductively perfect; i.e., male.[22]

Yet Galen's portrayal of female semen as a necessary assistant to hot, thick, sluggish male semen problematizes Laqueur's argument for a hierarchical sex model, since female seed performs a function male seed cannot, that in turn allows male semen to fulfill its generative role. Even Galen's description of female semen in *Usefulness of the Parts*, although notably less "congenial" than that found in *On semen* (Galen, *On semen* 175), complicates arguments for a hierarchical classification of women and men.

Noting that "[t]he [female semen]…clearly stands absolutely in need of the male" (*Usefulness* 633), Galen transfers seminal dependence to women's seed that in *On semen* belongs to the male seed that requires the female "congenial nutriment" to deposit it throughout the womb (175). Undoubtedly, Galen's emphasis in *Usefulness of the Parts* on female semen's "need" for male seed in order to achieve conception—something it is too cold to do on its own—is meant to keep women in their place. However, Galen does not intend to portray women and their semen as reproductive underlings, or make female imperfection the primary focus of his discussion; rather, he emphasizes female seminal reliance on male semen in order to extend to men generative equality. That is, his explanation of the uses of the semens in *Usefulness of the Parts* aids him in arguing against the possibility of female parthenogenesis. Female seed needs male seed because without it, women cannot conceive; if men did not produce hot, thick semen, possessing a formative generative force, readers would be left asking, if female semen "does not need to be mixed, what prevents the female alone from emitting semen into herself and thus bringing the fetus to perfection?" (633). But female parthenogenesis is impossible, Galen argues, the dependence of women's seed on men's demonstrates why.[23]

Yet although Galen ultimately argues against female parthenogenesis, his theory of sexual difference does accommodate a remarkably independent female body. Difference goes beyond the dimorphism that the distinctive functions of male and female seed suggest. Instead, a ternary model of sexual difference emerges in *Usefulness of the Parts*, which features a female body that differs significantly from the one who furnishes a seminal complement to men. In the following section, I reread Galen's reproductive

writings as evidence of his promotion not simply of a binary, but of this ternary model of sexual difference. While the issuance of seed at conception marks a moment of male and female differentiation in Galen's theory, the formative influence the uterus independently exerts on the fetus establishes the presence of a third sex—a distinctive type of female whose expanding womb distinguishes her anatomically from both men and non-pregnant women, and whose isolated formative activities exclude her from comparisons with other reproductive bodies. In the early modern period, medical and obstetrical authors adopt this third ontology, and consequently establish a capable, highly-influential formative reproductive woman—a figure who resurfaces in imagination literature as a monstrous mother.

The Usefulness in Galen's Parts: The Three Bodies of His Reproductive Theory

Although historical examinations of Galen's influence on early modern medicine have failed to recognize the centrality of sexual difference to his reproductive theory, Galen has not been treated elsewhere as an exclusively homological theorist. In the history of medieval medicine, Joan Cadden has shown that by attributing active reproductive functions to the uterus, including the ability to help determine sex difference, Galen "undermine[s] his argument that male and female are essentially similar in structure and function" (35).[24] When he discusses how men and women contribute to sex determination, Galen emphasizes the similar functions of the male testes and the uterus. While conception marks a moment when male and female testes exhibit

formative similarities, during pregnancy, men's testes have more in common with the womb. Cadden summarizes Galen's position:

> If the semen from the male's left testis is stronger, it will contribute to the production of a female; if from the right, to the production of a male. But the uterine environment is critical, for it may either augment or override the influence of the father's semen. Hence a fetus which rests to the right will be influenced by greater heat in the course of its development: it will be more fully perfected; it will be male. (35)[25]

Cadden here suggests the problem of sustaining the argument that Galen was an exclusively homological theorist, because the female testes, analogous to the male testes in his male projection/female inversion anatomical model, appear nowhere in this passage; similarly, the uterus's anatomical analogue, the scrotum, is missing.[26] Furthermore, Cadden introduces a more complex view of the female body than Galen's declaration of anatomical homology promises, by demonstrating the considerable generative power of the uterus.

In arguing against the primacy of homology in Galen's theory, Cadden does not ignore Galen's big, ugly claim that "[f]emales are less perfect than males" (Cadden 33). But her analysis introduces the possibility of identifying him as something other than a hierarchical sex theorist. In contrast to Laqueur, who unwaveringly maintains that until "the end of the seventeenth century," "the boundaries between male and female are of degree and not of kind" (*Making Sex* 25) (and that the Galenic hot man represents the superior, standard body), Cadden suggests that Galen portrays certain organs directing

certain reproductive processes; in her example of sex determination, the uterus often takes the lead. Notably, Cadden does not simply reverse Laqueur's position by attempting to prove the supremacy of a female organ during the process of sex determination; rather, she problematizes Laqueur's insistence on the hierarchical relationship of the Galenic male and female reproductive organs, which require correspondence between men's and women's testes and the womb and scrotum.[27] Generative hierarchies collapse when the male testes behave not like their female counterpart, but like the womb. Moreover, Cadden hints that a different kind of female than the inverted type Laqueurians and post-Laqueurians have described may be lurking in the shadows of Galen's theory; this woman has a uterus that resists comparisons to other organs, because it acts nothing like the scrotum, its extruded anatomical counterpart, and at times, it overwhelms the formative power of male semen. In the absence of male semen, no male presence remains to which readers can compare the uterus.

A unique pregnant female body represents the natural predecessor of unnatural monstrous mothers, who also occupy bodies that at times render gender hierarchies obsolete; by obscuring male and non-pregnant female contributions to generation, and thus completely appropriating all formative influences involved in procreation, these women exert reproductive power that resists comparisons to bodies whose own generative contributions they usurp. While Cadden reveals in Galen's discussion of sex determination a natural biological parallel to this reproductively-omnipotent monstrous mother, a reading of Galen's model of generation in *Usefulness of the Parts* solidifies the

pregnant female body's status in early modern reproductive theory as a figure resistant to hierarchical comparisons; moreover, the female body this work describes represents a precursor of monstrous mothers, who in imagination literature appear to engage in female parthenogenetic monstrous reproduction. Strikingly, these natural anatomical and physiological foundations emerge in a passage on anatomy that Laqueur identifies as evidence of the hierarchical relationship of the male and female sex organs. But Galen is generally less fettered by concerns about how genital positions express hierarchical relationships than Laqueur indicates. In fact, Galen ignores rank when he tells readers that whether they imagine women's organs as inverted, or men's as projecting, does not really matter, because either exercise demonstrates their similarity, and yields the same results. Galen emphasizes his commitment to sameness when he equivocates about which process to explain first—inversion or projection. While Galen suggests first that we think of "turn[ing] outward the woman's [organs]" (628), he quickly changes his mind, and instead proceeds to imagine men's genitals inverting to form female anatomical structures. To him, imagining projection or inversion first is of no consequence; readers should

> Consider first whichever ones you please, turn outward the woman's, turn inward, so to speak, and fold double the man's, and you will find them the same in both in every respect. Then think first, please, of the man's turned in and extending inward between the rectum and the bladder. If this should happen, the scrotum would necessarily take the place of the uteri, with the testes lying outside, next to it on either side; the penis of the male would become the neck of the cavity that

> had been formed; and the skin at the end of the penis, now called the prepuce, would become the female pudendum [the vagina] itself. Think too, please of the converse, the uterus turned outward and projecting. Would not the testes [the ovaries] then necessarily be inside it? Would it not contain them like a scrotum? Would not the neck [the cervix], hitherto concealed inside the perineum but now pendent, be made into the male member? And would not the female pudendum, being a skinlike growth upon this neck, be changed into the part called the prepuce? …In fact, you could not find a single male part left over that had not simply changed its position; for the parts that are inside in a woman are outside in man. (*Usefulness* 628- 629)

For Laqueur, these ideas demonstrate female imperfection.[28] He does not exactly misread Galen, who emphasizes throughout his reproductive theory in *Usefulness of the Parts* that "the woman is less perfect than the man in respect to the generative parts. For the parts were formed within her when she was still a fetus, but could not because of the defect in the heat emerge and project on the outside" (630). But Laqueur's analysis precludes the possibility that hierarchical relations of the sex organs may not form the indisputable core of Galen's reproductive theory. Galen's suspension of the rhetoric of perfection and imperfection in this passage alternately suggests that in addition to understanding a hierarchical relationship between male and female parts, he also finds purely homological, *non*-hierarchical terminology representative of his reproductive theory.

Galen's momentary retreat from hierarchical rhetoric does not completely transform his theory from one informed by an understanding of unequal gendered anatomical relations to one based on male and female reproductive equality. However, it does invite reinterpretation of the significance of stratified sex organs to his theory. The characterization of male organs as perfect and female organs as imperfect, when considered alongside Galen's articulation of pure homology, introduces the possibility that equal, but distinctive reproductive contributions may be linked to male and female differences. But establishing this non-Laqueurian view poses interpretive problems, since Galen continually refers to hierarchical humoralism that causes "perfect" male projection in adequately-heated men and "imperfect" female inversion in comparatively cold women, whose lack of innate heat makes it impossible for them to project their reproductive organs outside of their bodies. Sophia M. Connell's examination of Galen's most anti-feminist language illuminates these problems, as she challenges arguments that position Galen as a "feminist" theorist of reproduction—arguments that are themselves based on Galen's two-seed conception model (Connell 405).[29] Connell objects to the notion that a two-seed theory necessarily makes men and women reproductive equals, because "Galen…by continually mapping the female body—physiologically, anatomically and sexually—onto a male body, [leaves] no scope for the view that male and female play different but equally valuable roles in reproduction" (423). Moreover, for Connell, Galen's characterization of women as not merely "imperfect," but "mutilated," solidifies women's inferior status.[30]

Yet Galen's reference to "mutilated" females is not a straightforward example of condemnable theoretical misogyny. Rather, by locating it within a broader discussion of the purposes of female reproductive bodies, Galen introduces the concept of female mutilation as a symbol of necessary female difference. The vexed coexistence of necessity and mutilation emerges when Galen argues that

> …making the [female] animal itself that was being formed less perfect than one that is complete in all respects, provided no small advantage (*χρεία*) for the race; for there needs must be a female. Indeed, you ought not to think that our Creator would purposely make half the whole race imperfect and, as it were, mutilated, unless there was to be some great advantage in such a mutilation. (Galen, *Usefulness* 630)

Margaret M. Toscano notes that in Galen's original Greek text, this passage emphasizes female necessity over deformity.[31] Galen suggests this by arguing that female "mutilation" holds "some great advantage" (*Usefulness* 630)—an attitude that reflects the emphasis by ancient Greek medical writers for nature's purpose, rather than its deficiencies.[32] Furthermore, Toscano's translation underscores the significance of analogy in the Greek text, a rhetorical device that problematizes the idea that Galen portrays women's parts as "failed male organs" (Connell 419). *Οἷον,* which Toscano translates as "even as it were," immediately precedes *ἀνάπηρον* ("mutilated") in the Greek text, a combination that corresponds with the phrase in Margaret Tallmadge May's English translation, "as it were, mutilated" (Galen, *Usefulness* 630). Toscano suggests that both the Greek text and its English translations compare women to a mutilation,

rather than identify them as essentially mutilated. Her translation does not negate the vexed nature of Galen's analogy; he does not intend to pay women a compliment by calling them mutilated, she notes,[33] and I do not mean to suggest that we should be relieved to hear that women are *not* mutilations, but only *like* mutilations. But Toscano does importantly underscore the distinction between readings that interpret mutilation as a marker of female difference and those that understand it as representative of a female anatomical failing: while the latter portrays the Galenic woman as reproductively incapable, the former suggests that women's anatomical distinctiveness positions them to contribute to generation in a necessary, non-male way.

Galen underscores the usefulness of female difference in his discussion of the physiology of pregnancy—a period that not only "provide[s] no small advantage (*χρεία*) for the race" (Galen, *Usefulness* 630), but also requires a body that fulfills functions male bodies cannot. Pregnant women's non-pregnant female counterparts contribute a distinctive, necessary variety of cold, less-concocted semen to conception—"a kind of congenial nutriment" that gives formative male semen its get-up-and-go (*On semen* 175). In contrast, during pregnancy, women's relative coldness initiates a period not only of female usefulness, but also of anatomical and physiological incomparability. Galen explains that women's cooler bodies allow them to retain nurturing blood that nourishes the fetus during gestation.[34] He adds that

> …This is the reason (χϱεία) why the female was made cold, and the immediate consequence of this is the imperfection of the parts, which cannot emerge on the outside on account of the defect of heat, another very great advantage for the

> continuance of the race. For, remaining within, that which would have become the scrotum if it had emerged on the outside was made into the substance of the uteri, an instrument fitted to receive and retain the semen and to nourish and perfect the fetus. (*Usefulness* 631).

Here, Galen cites uterus-scrotum correspondence in order to emphasize the benefit of sexual difference; it is a "very great advantage for the continuance of the race" that the uterus remains cool and does not become the extruded scrotum. Yet even as Galen employs anatomical analogy to illustrate women's necessary reproductive differences, he also excises the scrotum from the female body. While his description of men and women's anatomical sameness[35] permits comparisons between the uterus-scrotum of non-pregnant women and men, Galen's remarks on the pregnant female body confound uterine-scrotal comparisons, because the material "which would have become the scrotum…was made into the substance of the uteri" (631). In other words, the organ that "nourish[es] and perfect[s] the fetus" never *was* a scrotum (631). The introduction of the fetus underscores the anatomical uniqueness of the pregnant female body. Even in an early stage of gestation when the uterus is small, it contains a fetus—a decidedly non-scrotal inhabitant.

The incomparability of the pregnant female to the male body also emphasizes distinctions between pregnant and non-pregnant women; because the latter makes generative contributions that parallel, but differ from men's, the distinctive physiology of pregnant women necessarily varies from that of their non-pregnant counterparts. Although pregnant women can function uniquely because they, like non-pregnant

women, are cold, their formative relationship to the fetus renders humoral comparison irrelevant to understanding the physiology of pregnancy. "[N]ourish[ing] and perfect[ing]" in isolation (631), Galen's pregnant woman represents a biological parallel to the monstrous mothers whose unassisted reproductive formative endeavors I discuss in chapters 2, 3, and 4. In the next section of this chapter, I address how early modern Galenists describe this unique anatomy and physiology, and thus contribute to the development of a pregnant woman capable of dominating *all* reproductive processes, even those normally attributed to non-pregnant women and men.

The Galenic Pregnant Woman of Early Modern English Reproductive Literature

Galen's complex employment of anatomical homology and sexual difference emerges in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century medical and obstetrical treatises primarily through two major topics: proportionality and pregnancy. Proportionality refers to the union of anatomically parallel male and female organs that during conception, fit together as "a pipe, and the case for it," as Sharp puts it in *The Midwives Book* (37). Early modern authors who describe the proportional relationship of male and female sex organs reproduce the complex relationship between homology and difference in Galen's generative theory, by portraying male and female bodies whose anatomical similarities facilitate their harmonious union during conception, but whose physiological differences enable generation. The emphasis early modern authors place on the perfect, "proportional" fit of male and female genital organs shifts the focus on establishing individualized forms and uses of male and female reproductive bodies that we see in

Galen's writings to the act of conception itself. From this shift, reproductive theorists develop comprehensive discussions of pregnancy—a focus that makes gestating women physiologically unique, anatomically isolated, and reproductively powerful, and thus, ideally suited to act as a biological model for monstrous mothers. In early modern texts, conception launches a generative trajectory that ends in pregnancy—a Galenic period involving an anatomically and physiologically unique female body. Like male and female genital organs that signify through their proportionality that they are made to conceive, the pregnant women of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century works possess distinctive anatomies that emphasize their gestational function. Moreover, reproductive theorists solidify the ontological difference of these women by considering how pregnancy radically transforms their bodies generally.

The distinct capabilities of all Galenic generative bodies in early modern reproductive literature materialize in part through the intense authorial interest in how reproductive processes lead to procreation. Regarding conception, writers emphasize the importance of completing this process, and thus describe two bodies intent on fulfilling their generative duties. In *Guidos questions,* a 1579 English text based on Guy de Chauliac's fourteenth-century treatise on surgery, *Chirurgia magna*, male and non-pregnant female reproductive organs are portrayed as anatomically destined to conceive. And while they do so collaboratively, "the neck of the matrice" (the vagina) is primarily responsible for the facilitation of this event. Thus, this neck does not act exactly like "a mannes yarde" (33_{r}). Drawing on Galen's anatomy, Chauliac explains that

> [T]he matrice…is the shape of the instrument of the generation of men, for it is proporcionly made to the yarde and coddes of mans genitours, except that it is reuersed, and is hollow within for to receiue mannes yard, in the time of copulation, for the neck of the matrice is lyke a mannes yarde, and the matrice within is lyke coddes or purse of the gentialls of men. (33_r)[36]

While the "reuersed" female organs in this passage echo Galen's own statement of reproductive homology in *Usefulness of the Parts*,[37] Chauliac's attention to why "the matrice" (a term he uses to signify women's reproductive organs collectively; here, it represents the vagina)[38] "is proporcionly made to the yarde and coddes of mans genitours" emphasizes the organ's physiological import rather than its anatomical relativity. The "hollow[ness]" of "the neck of the matrice" not only demonstrates Chauliac's adoption of a homological anatomical model, but also reveals the model's implicit importance for understanding how the generative organs are, in the context of conception, made for each other (33_r).

The importance of both male and non-pregnant female bodies to conception emerges in Chauliac's shift from the inversion/projection model of reproductive anatomy articulated in *Usefulness of the Parts*, to the centralization of physiological function—a move that also reflects Galen's emphasis on female purpose, and thus discourages hierarchical comparisons of male and female sex organs. While the "shape of the instrument of generation of men" functions as a point of reference for understanding female anatomy, the proportional "neck of the matrice" represents not an inferior, inverted female part, but one necessarily "reuersed" so that it may effectively collaborate

with the yard to initiate generation. The neck's "rece[ptive]" nature conceivably complicates its role as an actively cooperating organ, by threatening to position it as passively waiting to "receiue mannes yard"—a notion that echoes not Galen, but Aristotle's idea that men contribute actively and women passively to generation (33_r).[39] However, Chauliac's subsequent attribution to the neck of the ability to make itself proportional for the sake of conception solidifies the importance of an active non-pregnant, conceiving female body to his theory. Chauliac contends that "the neck of the matrice ought for to be naturally of x.or.xi. fingers brode, and after as the woman hath to meddle with the man fleshly little or much, it waxeth long or shorteneth. And also it waxeth longe or short after as the man that medleth with hir hath his yeard, short or long" (34_v). The neck, with its shapely self-reformations (maneuvers that ensure proportionality, and thus, facilitate conception) resembles vigorously active womb reputed by early modern reproductive writers to unflaggingly facilitate conception. Other authors characterize the womb as "greedy and desirous" to conceive (Rüff 50). While some critics have observed that the hungry womb invites misogynistic fears of overwhelming female sexuality,[40] it also suggests a way for understanding female generative ability as purposeful and natural. While the neck of the womb Chauliac describes does not equal the womb in its voraciousness, its practice of "wax[ing] longe or short" underscores its own desire to initiate generation.

The proportional pairing of the conception-friendly "neck of the matrice" and "yard" during intercourse transforms the generative significance of the non-pregnant female body from a primarily physiological concern for Galen to one both physiological

and anatomical for Chauliac (33_r). This shift reinforces the complexity of Galen's suggestion that significant differences between male and female bodies exist even when they are presented in homological relation to one another. Chauliac also employs anatomical description to underscore the unique reproductive identity of pregnant women, whose parts resist comparisons to the organs of both non-pregnant women and men. Instead, Chauliac notes that "[The] colliguance [of the womb proper] principally is with breasts, by the veines of milke, and menstrualis" (34_v). He here underscores the belief, commonplace in early modern English medical and obstetrical literature, that uterine blood nourishes the fetus during gestation, and then makes its arterial ascent to the breasts, where converted into milk, it furnishes nourishment for the delivered infant.[41] Equating the nurturing properties of the womb and breasts, Chauliac emphasizes the ability of pregnant women to perform a generative function that non-pregnant women and men cannot.

Chauliac again echoes Galen on this point, who, in *Usefulness of the Parts*, solidifies the identity of the pregnant uterus as a female organ when he explains its correspondence to women's breasts. In doing so, Galen introduces another female part to his reproductive anatomy that also lacks a male analogue. Galen explains that the uterus and breasts are united by vessels that allow nourishment to concentrate in the place best suited to nurture human offspring.[42] During pregnancy, these vessels transmit to the fetus the excess nourishing blood (the "nutriment" the woman's cooler body cannot completely concoct) that a non-pregnant woman expels during her menstrual cycle. After delivery, women's purposeful coolness ensures that this extra nutriment stays within their bodies;

instead of passing out in the form of restored menstrual flow, it travels through the connective vessels to the breasts, where it is transformed into the milk that feeds the child. The breasts act as reproductive organs because in their nourishing capacity, they function in a way comparable to the uterus. Moreover, the presence of the connective vessels makes this identification possible: as anatomical conduits, they make the uterus and breasts mutual appendages of one another.

The anatomical remarkableness Chauliac grants both pregnant and non-pregnant female bodies in *Guidos questions* is elaborated by early modern obstetrical texts. In these works, the presentation of a detailed reproductive theory that considers the multiple relationships and configurations of male and female bodies further underscores the distinct roles of the three Galenic reproductive figures. Specifically, capable, autonomous wombs emerge in Thomas Raynalde's *The byrth of mankynde* (1545). For Raynalde, the generative ability of the womb is even more extraordinary than it is for either Galen or Chauliac, since it appears to influence reproduction even before gestation officially begins. For example, the womb emerges in Raynalde's description of the "womb passage" (the vagina), where he explains that the latter part

> …is estemed of the length of x.xi.xii.or.xiii fingers bredth, sum more sum lesse: And this we maye say that nature hath so prouided that it is of sufficient length to receaue the priuy part of man in the tyme of generation dyrectynge the same towards the womb porte, through the which the sede is naturally sent from the man into the womb or mother, therto helpyng an attractyfe power, whiche is inset

> and geuen to the wombe to attracte and drawe towardes it selfe the seede partyd from the man… . (fol.10_r)[43]

Raynalde gives a nod to proportionality as he argues that the womb passage must be “of sufficient length to receaue the priuy part of man in the tyme of generation.” But after this, the womb passage in *The byrth of mankynde* surpasses the anatomically-adaptable neck of the matrice of *Guidos questions* in its physiological ability. Raynalde alternately indicates that the womb passage not only fits itself to the less-flexible “priuy part of man,” but also “dyrect[s]” the male genital organ to the “womb or mother,” where it expels men’s semen. But the womb itself also appears to have some involvement in this process. While non-pregnant female and male organs here perform their own functions, Raynalde suggests that in order to do so, they require the assistance of a womb which by nature “attracte[s] and drawe[s] towardes it self the seede partyd from the man” (fol.10_r).

The obliging uterine interference that Raynalde portrays complicates the Galenic model of sexual difference, as conception and gestation seem briefly to merge. But differences remain important to Raynalde, whose work emphasizes the womb’s capabilities. To reinforce the differences between pregnant and non-pregnant female bodies, Raynalde introduces the notion that the womb desires impregnation. His employment of desire differs from Chauliac’s, whose text attributes to the neck of the matrice a longing to facilitate conception; in contrast, Raynalde distinguishes the pregnant from the non-pregnant female body by describing a womb that permits conception to occur only when it desires fertilization. During intercourse, the cervix

remains shut, Raynalde explains, "except that it be at suche tyme that the matrix beynge apt and disposed thereto, and other condicions requisite, this womb porte do naturally open it selfe, attractynge, drawing, and suckyng into the wombe the seede by a vehement and naturall desyre" (fol.14_{r}). Raynalde's centralization of two matrices and womb portes (cervixes) that possess different levels of desire only remotely recalls Galen's division of non-pregnant and pregnant females, which itself depends on understanding anatomical structure as well as physiological function (in Raynalde's case, the uterine and cervical ability to desirously "draw" and "suck"). Alternatively, Raynalde's overall discussion of intercourse furnishes such an anatomical reference through its employment of genital proportionality. And for Raynalde, genital complement applies not only to men and potentially pregnant women, but also to men and women who are not (and not inclined to become) pregnant. He thus explains that "at such tyme that the man companyeth with the woman the pryuy passage is dylatud and openyd to the quantite of the mans pryuy part, yet notwithstandyng, the mouthe or the clyft of the womb porte is not mouyd therby, ne dilatyd" (fol.14_{r}). From here, Raynalde proceeds to explain that the matrix must be "disposed" to fertilization. This inclination grants the womb and its porte autonomy—a characteristic that ensures the process of "dylat[ion]" will distinguish between bodies that desire pregnancy and those that do not. Raynalde thus pairs proportionally-matched male and non-pregnant female organs, but through the physiological independence of the latter, renders them sexually distinct. At the same time, he depicts an altered proportionality, as the womb preparing for pregnancy "dylat[es] and open[s]" (fol.14_{r}).

In *The byrth of mankynde*, the unique reproductive function of the pregnant female body emerges in a context of collaboration between all the Galenic reproductive bodies. Raynalde's treatise thus gives pregnant women a starring role on the generative stage, while simultaneously emphasizing the intimate relationship of conception and gestation, and therefore, connections between the three Galenic bodies. An even firmer separation of pregnant, non-pregnant and male anatomy and physiology arises elsewhere in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century reproductive literature, a rhetorical device that also emphasizes the isolated nature of gestation and the independence of the pregnant body. A significant example of this occurs in *The most excelent worckes of chirurgery* (1550), an English translation of Giovanni da Vigo's *Practica in arte chirurgica copiosa*. Vigo establishes three reproductive ontologies even more solidly than either Chauliac or Raynalde, by suggesting that after conception occurs, the womb so completely resists anatomical and physiological comparisons to men's organs that even Vigo himself finds it difficult to create genitally-based analogies. Outside his statement that the "necke of the Matrice…is to the woman as the yarde is to the man" (fol. xi$_v$), his anatomy of the womb and its adjacent parts helps create a figure of woman not characterized by her likeness to man. While she exhibits the propensity for pregnancy that we see in Chauliac and Raynalde, the woman in *The most excelent worckes of chirurgery* does not invariably exist in a pregnant or potentially pregnant state because Vigo omits the concept of proportionality that insists on women's necessary anatomical and physiological relationship to men. He instead favors a limited comparison of male and female anatomy through the necke of the matrice and the yard that does not depict female organs as the

inverted, proportional version of men's. Moreover, by eschewing Galen's rhetoric of female inversion and male projection (women specifically have uterine necks while men have yards) Vigo presents a purer version of generative complement than we see even in Raynalde's presentation of proportionality, where the female organs hold more generative power than the male.

Vigo's discussion of neck-yard correspondence completes his comparisons of male and female bodies. He next proceeds to anatomize the "mouthe" (the cervix), an organ "strayte and harde in maydens, hauynge fyue little veynes, whych brake whan a maiden is defloured" (fol. xi$_{v-r}$). A male analogue to the "mouthe" appears irrelevant as Vigo focuses on how this part changes after "a maiden is defloured." With the "brak[ing] of the "veynes," a dynamic, changing female body that is unlike any male "standard" begins to materialize. In fact, the "brak[ing] of the "veynes" permits no comparisons to men's anatomy, since men do not have a comparable part that bleeds during defloration (fol. xi$_{v-r}$). Similarly, Vigo converts the ability of the self-shaping vagina that Chauliac and Raynalde portray into a representation not of women's relationship with, but their incomparability to men. In his assertion, "whan the tyme of deliueraūce is come, or whan an aborcemēt chaunceth, the necke of the matrice so stretcheth out that the chylde may pass throughe" (fol.xi.$_r$), Vigo portrays a vagina that "stretcheth out" for the fetus, rather than the penis—an image that complicates female reproductive identity by positioning the vagina as an essential, if temporary, part of pregnant female generative anatomy (fol.xi.$_r$).

The female body in *The most excelent worckes of chirurgery* continues both to change and to resist comparison as Vigo makes additional transitions from the non-pregnant female body—characterized by its mouthe and necke—to the pregnant body—recognizable through its possession of a womb. Whereas "maiden[s]" in the *Worckes* have open (or, at any rate, penetrable) parts, "[t]he matrice of a woman ŵ child is so closed, that the point of a nedle can not entre in" (fol. xi$_r$).[44] This movement from maiden to pregnant woman signals an increasingly inviolable female presence, and thus, the continued irrelevancy of male comparisons for comprehending female anatomy; not only can "the point of a nedle…not entre in[to]" the pregnant womb, but apparently, the rhetoric of male-female resemblance cannot "entre in[to]" Vigo's discussion (fol. xi$_r$).

The impossibility of conceptualizing reproductive female identity through male anatomy further materializes in seventeenth-century midwifery manuals, where writers, focused on obstetrical issues, insist on the distinct anatomy and physiology of pregnant women. Authors build on work like Vigo's, which relies little on comparisons of women to men, by turning to non-reproductive images that seem better to represent female shapes and functions than corresponding male organs do. For example, in *A directory for midwives* (1651), Nicholas Culpeper uses the reproductive relationship of men and women to introduce his book's anatomy: "[t]he Instruments of Generation are two sorts, *Male,* and *Female*, their use is the Procreation of Man-kind" (Culpeper 2). Culpeper also articulates Galenist influences through the notion of proportionality, by emphasizing the necessary anatomical complement of reversible male and female organs; for him, the womb must be "directly opposed to the Yard," so "the Seed [can] be directly cast into it"

(32).[45] But when Culpeper moves from the pre-conceiving to the pregnant womb, the proportional organs that characterize early modern medical writings on pregnancy disappear. In the *Directory,* male analogues in particular vanish, because "[t]he womb it self in Figure is almost perfectly round, in Virgins it exceedeth not the bigness of a Walnut,[46] yet when a Woman is conceived it dilates it self to that Capacity that is able to contain the Child" (33). Here, a non-pregnant analogue ensures that Culpeper's readers identify women's organs as distinctly female. To fully understand the anatomy of the womb, he suggests, one must consider its capacity for growth, which only female organs properly illustrate.

Culpeper's establishment of three ontologically-distinct generative figures through genitally- and non-genitally-based comparisons reveals a way in which early modern reproductive authors expand on Galenic anatomical and physiological models to create foundations for powerful female generative bodies. In early modern obstetrical literature, non-pregnant and pregnant women continue to function in separate ways, but the former becomes distinct from male bodies by more consistently emerging as a physiological equal to man, unfettered by the qualification of imperfection that Galen makes. This modification takes two major forms. In the first, authors stress female purpose over imperfection in order to emphasize the significance of women's generative contributions. In the second, they create further separations between male and female bodies than we find in classical sources so that they may stress the centrality of the pregnant body to early modern reproductive theory. *The byrth of mankynde* testifies to the first practice in its discussion of male and female seed. Raynalde adopts a Galenic two-

seed theory in his work. He echoes Galen when he portrays women and men contributing sperm to conception to different ends:[47]

> On each side of the matrix lyeth a stone: whiche both be callyd the womans stones, wherin is engendryd the seede and sparme that cūmeth from the woman not so stronge, ferme and myghty in operation as the seede of man: but rather weke, fluy, cold and moyst, and of no great fyrmite: howbeit as cōuenient, & propre for the pourpose for the whiche it was ordeynid, as the seede of man for his pourpose. (fol. 15_{v-r})

In contrast with Galen, who in *Usefulness of the Parts* clarifies that male seed contributes "the principle of motion" (634), Raynalde fails to describe its specific purpose. This omission in turn allows him to grant women a more significant role in generation than Galen gives them. In *On semen*, the female seed acts like "a kind of congenial nutriment for the male semen, being moister and colder" (Galen, *On semen* 177). But Raynalde also omits this information. In doing so, he deflects his readers' attention from any awareness they may have of Galen's declaration that women have purposeful, but nonetheless, less perfect sperm than men, to its "ordeynid…pourpose" (Raynalde fol. 15_r). Raynalde thus presents two purposeful seeds, but does not suggest that their different consistencies may indicate their superior and inferior roles.[48] Raynalde's revision emphasizes the necessity of both male and female seed to conception that Galen also acknowledges. But it also presents an attitude about the import of women's sperm that is untainted by Galenic rhetoric about male perfection and female imperfection.[49]

The second way of modifying ancient sources—constructing greater divisions between male and female bodies than the Greek authorities argue for—materializes in seventeenth-century obstetrical works. Here, authors become increasingly interested in furnishing both male and female anatomical information for the sake of augmenting the knowledge of obstetrical practitioners.[50] This is a complicated endeavor for authors concerned with distinguishing pregnant women as reproductively significant figures, because the introduction of more precise information about male bodies sometimes vexes the obstetrical enterprise of celebrating the pregnant female body.[51] This occurs particularly when authors recognize—but unlike Raynalde, do not emphasize their discomfort with—Galen's hierarchical humoralism, by reproducing his rhetoric of perfection and imperfection. In *The Midwives Book* Sharp demonstrates how her reliance on Galen to describe female anatomy problematizes the construction of a theory of reproduction that emphasizes, rather than diminishes, the usefulness of women's parts. At first, Sharp presents women's "parts of Generation" as organs with few feminine distinctions. Relying on Galen to support her own anatomical claims, she depicts women's generative organs as not only looking like men's, but also being exactly like men's, with the exception of their internal location:

> The womb is like to a mans Cod, turned the inside outward, and thrust inward between the bladder and the right Gut, for then the stones which were in the Cod, will stick on the outsides of it, so that what was a Cod before will be a Matrix, so the neck of the womb which is the passage for the Yard to enter, resembleth a

> Yard turned inwards, for they are both one length, onely they differ like a pipe, and the case of it… . (37)

Sharp here recalls the correspondence between womb and scrotum to which Galen refers in *Usefulness of the Parts.*[52] And as she continues, she clarifies the reason for men's and women's differently-positioned genitals. Turning to Galen's humoral theory, Sharp associates her homological anatomy with male superiority and female inferiority:

> …when the woman conceives, the same members are made in both sexes, but the Child proves to be a Boy or a Girle as the Seed is in temper; and the parts are either thrust forth by heat, or kept in for want of heat; so a woman is not so perfect as a Man, because her heat is weaker, but the Man can do nothing without the woman to beget Children… . (37)

In her final statement, Sharp argues for women's generative purpose; for non-pregnant women, this includes the contribution of "colder and moister" seed that facilitates conception by "perfectly mingl[ing]" with male semen (52-53). At the same time, Sharp's promotion of humorally-provoked position changes of the genitals makes it difficult for readers to extract an impregnable uterus from her text, since this organ continues to correspond to the scrotum, the male organ that holds testes, not fetuses.

Yet Sharp's devotion to Galen also means that she eventually arrives at a description of the womb that underscores sexual difference. For her, as for Galen, the process of woman-making is complex one, and while the Galenic rhetorical maneuver of upholding men as analogical standards helps describe women's anatomy, it furnishes only an incomplete understanding of female reproductive parts and their functions, which

include pregnancy. To explain this, Sharp, like Culpeper,[53] turns to non-human analogies to create a distinctively pregnant body, a move which dramatically separates it not only from male, but also from non-pregnant female figures. In *The midwives book*, she compares the womb to "a Bottle or Bladder blown when the Infant is in it, and it [the infant] lieth in the lower belly, and in the last place amongst the entrails by the water course,[54] because this is easily enlarged as the child grows in the Womb" (54). Sharp's bottle/bladder analogy facilitates her introduction of the pregnant female body as a third ontological category that resists comparisons to other human reproductive figures; unlike the scrotum or the corresponding non-pregnant uterus, the pregnant womb changes as its fetal inhabitant grows. Sharp's employment of non-genital analogues exposes the limits of her ancient sources for explaining her own views. Strikingly, Sharp further reinforces the incomparability of pregnant, male and non-pregnant female bodies because she turns to what Gail Kern Paster has called "the analogously constructed universe" of the early modern world to explain the nature of the womb ("Melancholy Cats" 116). In this "universe," inanimate objects may help us make sense of the functions of human bodies. In Sharp's case, bottles and bladders furnish such a reference, because unlike scrotums and unfertilized wombs, they "[blow]" up, and therefore share with the pregnant uterus an expandable nature.

Sharp's reliance on the bottle/bladder analogy to suggest that the pregnant body not only functions differently from male and non-pregnant female bodies, but also visually expresses these differences as its womb expands with the growing fetus, allows pregnant women to take a central place in her texts. Moreover, this example underscores

the belief of medical and obstetrical authors in a distinct pregnant female identity. At the same time, Sharp's work also reinforces the connection between natural female reproductive bodies and monstrous mothers. The "blown"-up womb emphasizes the isolated nature of pregnant women during reproduction; unlike non-pregnant women and men, whose bodies do not change significantly in the shared moment of conception, pregnant women transform as their own wombs form fetuses. While monstrous mothers do not necessarily increase physically, they do change during the formative processes they dominate. Their emergence as the primary, even sole reproducing bodies of monstrous generation thus has significant symbolic roots in the expansive pregnant belly, which itself illustrates the ability of pregnant women to form offspring without assistance.

CHAPTER 2:

HERMIONE GAINED A DANGEROUS AMOUNT OF WEIGHT WITH PERDITA, OR, THE MATERIALIZATION OF MONSTROUS MATERNITY ON REPRODUCTIVE FEMALE BODIES

In *The Midwives Book*, Jane Sharp attributes the incomparable anatomy and physiology of pregnant women to the presence of the fetus. Puffing up their mothers' bellies like a "Bladder blown up" (Sharp 54), fetuses create visual evidence of pregnant women's formative and nourishing reproductive roles. But following delivery, the bodies of offspring do not so readily testify to pregnant women's distinct generative identities. In their treatments of monstrous births, early modern English obstetrical, teratological, and wonder treatises instead suggest that deformed infants, when they result from the formative influence of the maternal imagination, signal the dissolution of separate pregnant and non-pregnant female identities. These texts emphasize that the imagination may exercise its formative power during both conception and pregnancy; therefore, it acts cooperatively with the major reproductive functions of both non-pregnant and pregnant women. As the imagination dominates reproductive events by overwhelming the seminal material of non-pregnant, conceiving women, the formative power of the pregnant woman's womb,[55] or both, pregnant identity seems to absorb non-pregnant identity. Since deformation could occur both at conception and during pregnancy, early modern imagination theorists suggest that the offspring was present during both of these phases, effectively making the conceiving body a gestating one as well.

Yet significantly, imaginative activity does not merely simplify the Galenic reproductive theory based on ternary sexual difference by merging non-pregnant and pregnant reproductive identities into a single, gestating female. Instead, because the imagination transforms reproduction from a natural to a monstrous process, an altered reproductive female identity, but one that is still embodied by reproductive women, emerges to facilitate monstrous reproduction. In regard to reproductive matters, early modern uses of the term "natural" refer to expected formations and events: (1) the natural delivery of a child head first (2) the natural position of the womb in the lower belly to facilitate delivery, and (3) the natural number of children women may carry at once are all circumstances that demonstrate how reproductive anatomy and physiology conform with Nature. The major processes of natural reproduction require ontologically-distinct women; while non-pregnant women participate in natural conception with male partners, pregnant women "perfect" the child during gestation, as opposed to creating it imperfectly during monstrous generation.[56] Dysfunctional female reproductive processes unrelated to the maternal imagination were also considered monstrous. In the third book of Ambroise Paré's *Workes* (1634), for example, where Paré considers the delivery of more than two children at once "somewhat monstrous, because nature hath made no provision of nourishment for them" (129), a specific view emerges of the female body as naturally configured with two breasts designed to provide "nourishment" for offspring. Notably, the notion that an excessive number of suckling infants is "somewhat monstrous" casts not only the circumstance of multiple births, but also the maternal body

as monstrous, since it is this body that produces and cultivates, but ultimately cannot feed its offspring (129).

But imagination-borne monstrous reproduction complicates the embodiment Paré describes, because it involves the violation of the fetal body by the maternal mind, and thus, links destruction to a seemingly disembodied source. Bodies seem to disappear rapidly when imaginative deformation displaces seminal and uterine formation, and consequently transforms adult sexual identities. Male reproductive identity frequently becomes obsolete, when the imagination usurps the formative power of male semen. At the same time, the seemingly parthenogenetic conception that occurs as a consequence of usurpatory imaginative activity augments the distinctive female generative power that Galen and early modern Galenists establish in their theories of sexual differentiation. As women's capabilities become deformative rather than formative in nature—and at times, parthenogenetic—their own generative identities also transform. Women become monstrous generators by usurping or circumventing natural reproductive processes, thus also transforming their own pregnant and non-pregnant identities.

But the development of a "maternal," rather than a specifically "pregnant" or "non-pregnant" female identity takes shape during monstrous reproduction because during both conception and pregnancy, women physically enwomb offspring they can potentially deform. Consequently, the imagination remains connected to women's bodies. Imaginations compel women to usurp via their maternal bodies not only male, but also pregnant and non-pregnant female generative roles. The containment of formative power within a female body reveals a close parallel between monstrous

maternity and pregnancy. Yet even during monstrous reproduction, pregnant female identity does not completely absorb its non-pregnant counterpart, because the maternal imagination requires both bodies in order to execute its deforming functions. That is, while the imagination usurps the formative power of female semen during conception, it requires the non-pregnant body—though now a body deprived of its ability to conceive—to furnish the seminal materials the imagination will deform. Similarly, the replacement of imaginative for uterine formative influence during gestation occurs within the womb, the characteristic organ of pregnant women. That the imagination converts these female bodies to specifically *maternal* monsters—and not simply monsters—is emphasized further by how these generative transformations differ from men's. Monstrous mothers do not conduct their deforming activities within male bodies, so they are not hermaphroditic generators. Their exclusive association with maternity occurs because although male semen exerts primary formative power during conception, its viscous nature prevents it from distributing itself over the surface of the uterus, a dispersal that facilitates conception.[57] Female semen effectively reforms male semen; by acting as its "congenial nutriment" (Galen, *On semen* 175), it shapes male seed so that conception may occur. Thus, while unified seeds lose the sexual designations they receive from male and non-pregnant female bodies when they combine to form the fetus,[58] their union is aided by distinctly non-pregnant female formative functioning.

I argue throughout this chapter that embodiment is crucial for establishing monstrous maternal identity in early modern English imagination literature. I posit that regulatory imagination authors introduce the idea that the signs of monstrous maternal

imaginative activity physically materialize upon and within both pregnant and non-pregnant female bodies. Following an overview of how monstrous maternal identity develops in imagination literature, I argue that the authors of these works establish the visibility of monstrous maternal desire. While this visible desire frequently is suggested by non-maternal objects or figures, such as portraits of men that conceiving women look at in order to cultivate their voyeuristic lust, it also reveals itself physically on conceiving women, who expose their desire by maintaining close proximity to the objects of their desire. I develop this idea with an analysis of *The Winter's Tale,* in which I argue that Shakespeare imputes to the pregnant female body not only the power to display, but also to intensify the effects of monstrous maternity. The presence of Hermione's body plagues Leontes, because he interprets it as a sign of her adulterous desire. The king does not share the reader's knowledge of her physical and imaginative innocence—a misconception that threatens to attribute to all women monstrous maternal reproductive desire and generative power.

The idea that one may behold the monstrous mother illustrates the indebtedness of monstrous reproduction to Galenic ideas. The anatomizing of female generative parts in writings on natural reproduction produces the bodies that imaginative authors examine for signs of maternal monstrosity. However, the visibility of monstrous maternity also signals a radical theoretical shift, due to the different roles the fetus plays in monstrous and natural generation. As I note above, the fetus helps solidify the anatomical uniqueness of pregnant women by drastically transforming their bodies; furthermore, this physical change signals the physiological incomparability of pregnant women to other

generative figures. Another way to say this is, fetuses help make pregnant women pregnant, by compelling the uterus to fulfill the formative role for which it is intended. But during monstrous reproduction, monstrous births do not make monstrous mothers monstrous. While a monstrous birth memorializes its mother's imaginative transgressions, maternal monstrosity develops independently of the physical monstrousness of fetuses. This conclusion contrasts with other examinations of early modern reproductive monstrousness. In separate studies of reproductive monstrousness in early modern Europe, Marie-Hélène Huet and Julie Crawford portray maternal monstrosity as a product of the delivery of the monstrous birth. For Huet, monstrous births expose their mothers' monstrosity, since, "[m]any troubling secrets are made public by women the day they give birth, when the monster reveals what has remained hidden since conception" (19). Huet's assessment features a shared agency between mother and child, through which women publicize their troubling secrets, but monstrous births actually physically expose the contents of their mothers' imaginations. While Huet consequently endows mothers with monstrous ability, she also indicates that without monstrous births, monstrous maternity remains invisible, and its threat unclear. Crawford complicates this dependence, by demonstrating that women may reveal the monstrous contents of their imaginations during pregnancy in froward speeches and behaviors. She consequently suggests that maternal monstrosity visibly and audibly materializes prior to the delivery of a monstrous birth. But because her examples consistently portray or allude to these deliveries, Crawford presents monstrous births as necessary confirmation of their mothers' own monstrosity. Without monstrous births, monstrous mothers are just

wicked, sassy women—a monstrous, but not necessarily maternal manifestation of early modern femaleness.

Yet reports of visibly-desiring non-pregnant women by professional imagination authors, along with fictional narratives of pregnant women who exhibit their desire upon their expansive bellies, suggest that women develop their monstrous attributes long before they deliver monstrous births. The emphasis imagination authors place on the maternal imagination's ability to transform not only fetal, but also adult reproductive bodies, helps demonstrate these manifestations of monstrous maternity outside the lying-in room, as monstrous mothers provoke unnatural transformations in pregnant, non-pregnant, and male generative bodies, and in reproductive processes themselves. A description of the natural bodies and processes the imagination transforms appears in Sharp's midwifery manual. Sharp explains that

> True Conception is then, when the seed of both sexes is good, and duly prepared and cast into the womb as into fruitful ground, and is there so fitly and equally mingled, the Man's seed with the womans, that a perfect Child is by degrees framed; for the first small threads as it were of the solid and substantial parts are formed out, and the womans blood flowes to them, to make the bowels and to supply all the parts of the infant with food and nourishment. (75)

In this passage, the physiology of all three reproductive bodies conforms to Nature's laws, when male and female seed cooperatively "[frame] the fetus—work which "the womans blood" perpetuates as it forms "a perfect Child" over the course of pregnancy. The pregnant body's independent significance during gestation materializes as it

"make[s] the bowels" and ensures the development of "the parts of the infant" by providing a constant supply of "food and nourishment" (75).

But during the formation of imperfect children, seed and blood fail to perform their natural functions. John Sadler's 1636 gynecological treatise, *The sicke vvomans private looking-glasse*, demonstrates how "the imaginative power" (138) usurps the physiological contributions of natural reproductive bodies. Sadler's classification of the imagination among other causes of monstrous births attributable to "the seed or…the wombe" (137) demonstrates how imagination theorists conceive of the faculty as an embodied force that also transforms other bodies. Sadler specifically portrays "the imaginative power" exerting itself "at the time of conception" with "such force that it stamps the character of the thing imagined upon the child" (138). Here, the imagination operates within a conceiving body that it endows with gestational, deformative power. In addition to "stamp[ing]" deformity upon the fetus and converting the mother into a hybrid figure who simultaneously conceives and gestates, the imagination that Sadler describes also transforms its female owner into an apparently parthenogenetic agent (138). In doing so, the imagination further denaturalizes reproduction by completely obscuring male contributions to generation. Sadler's examples, of "adultresse[s]" who imagine their husbands while engaging "in the act of coition" with their lovers, so their children will appear to have legitimate origins (138); of "a woman, who at the time of conception beholding the picture of a Blacke more, conceived and brought forth an *Ætheopian*" (138); and of a woman who correctly predicted "that her childe would have some blemish on the face" because during her pregnancy, "a drop of blood [from an

animal carcass] sprung on her face" (139-40), render male partners obsolete. Adulteresses replace the formative seminal power of their lovers with the conjured images of their husbands, while the woman who beholds "the picture of a Blacke more" substitutes his image for the legitimate father's (138).[59] In the final example, women do not even have to engage in "coition" to produce monsters. A man is present in the bloody story, but he's not the mother's sexual partner, but the butcher who carves the carcass.

In these stories, the absence of the male partner—or the presence of non-reproductive "partners"—suggests that men's semen isn't necessary for shaping the fetus, because the imagination usurps its power to create resemblances. Importantly, the issuance of semen that exerts no formative power essentially eliminates men from reproduction, since adding powerful formative fluid to generation is men's primary reproductive role. Huet documents this drastic erasure, as she argues that early modern anxieties about the imagination tend to focus on the obscuring of paternal, rather than maternal contributions to generation.[60] But the connection Sadler establishes between imaginative formation and conception with the female body makes male *and* female physiological identities equally unstable. Moreover, the gestating body "stamp[ed]" onto the conceiving female partner transforms the capabilities of the pregnant female body; by recreating conception as a gestational process, during which offspring are deformed, male formative power is rendered obsolete, and the formative influence of the non-pregnant female body expanded, Sadler attributes to women parthenogenetic capabilities that mark them as monstrous mothers.

The desire of the women Sadler describes also underscores their monstrous nature on a non-biological level, as they imaginatively cultivate sexually-transgressive fantasies.[61] For example, the adulteresses he addresses use their imaginations as threatening tools as they embrace cuckoldry in order to so deeply undermine the male reproductive role that *any* paternal contribution becomes uncertain.[62] Consequently, these women offend against both nature and culture. By completely dominating fetal formation, they form a reproductive "monstrous regiment": while early modern obstetrical literature widely acknowledges that through seed, blood, and constant contact with the fetus, women contribute more to generation than men do, the complete obscuration of paternity grants them total reproductive control.[63] Like the female rulers John Knox condemns in *The first blast of the trumpet against the monstrous regiment of women* (1558), they engage in an activity "repugnant to nature" (Knox 13_v)—both in the sense that they transform the course of reproduction and overpower their husbands through the power of their desire. Furthermore, the imaginative concealment of cuckoldry helps solidify the monstrous nature of reproductive women, as well as the independence of maternal and fetal monstrousness. Early modern imagination narratives about adulteresses notably feature mothers who do not bear obviously monstrous children; rather, these women deliver "perfect" infants with unquestionably human, purportedly legitimate features. In such cases, reproductive monstrosity exists as an internal characteristic, attributable only to women; the "monstrous" birth itself signifies nothing unnatural.

The depiction of internalized maternal monstrousness by Sadler and other imagination writers parallels the classification in early modern England of wicked, as well as physically deformed persons, as monsters, a trend whose development Kathryn M. Brammall traces to the late sixteenth century.[64] But while Brammall documents the efforts of writers to identify "the real source of deviancy" as "inward thought, manifested not in appearance but rather in behavior and words" (21), the imagination literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries positions women's physical bodies *and* their actions as key markers of maternal monstrousness. The monstrous birth stories of Sadler's treatise, for example, suggest that women expose their maternal monstrousness to theorists and practitioners. In *The sicke vvomans private looking-glasse*, Sadler appears to have privileged knowledge of maternal thoughts. In the story of the "*Ætheopian*," he cites Aristotle as the source of this story, yet he indicates that obstetrical practitioners and theorists can know—*without seeing a monstrous child*—the nature of its mother's desires. The exhibitive nature normally attributed to the body of the monster also belongs to the mother, who displays her desire in a viewable act—in this case, erotically "beholding" an image during an intimate sexual moment (Sadler 138). Her eyes, presumably fixed on the inanimate object of her lust, thus reveal her hidden desire.

Imagination theorists widely repeat this story of the black child born to white parents,[65] but its well-known outcome does not make any less striking the notion that *someone—somehow*—obtains deeply personal knowledge about the mother's sexual desires prior to the birth of her monstrous child. While upon its birth, a dark-skinned child may suggest that its light-skinned mother harbored fantasies about a dark-skinned

man during pregnancy, Sadler, via Aristotle, knows far more than this. Sadler contends that the imagination may imprint images during both conception and pregnancy, so presumably, the mother may have encountered the image of a "Black more" during either of these processes, and still produced an "*Ætheopian*" child. But Sadler very specifically indicates that she looks during conception—a point that eroticizes both her gaze and his knowledge—and grants this knowledge a gaze of its own.[66]

By revealing the moment of imaginative imprinting, Sadler characterizes maternal monstrosity as a visible attribute of generative women that enables him to detect women's imaginative transgressions without first seeing their monstrous offspring. Julie Crawford characterizes this professional knowledge of the female imagination as "a fantasy of disciplinary access to women's secret longings" (J. Crawford 19). She proposes that obstetrical authors consider the imagination a powerful, "largely unpoliceable force" (19), but one which they nevertheless attempt to exercise some control over, by admonishing women to avoid stimulating images, stories, and situations. Over the course of the seventeenth century, when the maternal imagination became a regular feature of English obstetrical literature, the apparent ability of midwifery authors to assess the contents of the maternal imagination increased. Professional imagination theorists depict the monstrous maternal imagination as dangerous, perverse, and at times, uncontrollable, but their introduction of monstrous mothers who physically expose themselves simultaneously reveals a professional "fantasy" that they could direct generation from a monstrous to a natural course (J. Crawford 19). Reports like Sadler's, for example, which indicate that practitioners see women "beholding" inappropriate

objects (Sadler 138), suggest monstrous reproduction may be prevented by removing orgasm-inducing objects and images from women's sight. In *Child-birth or, The happy deliuerie of vvomen* (1612), Jacques Guillemeau explicitly articulates this idea. He advises "discreet women, and such as desire to haue children… [to] not giue eare vnto lamentable and fearefull tales or storyes, nor cast their eyes vpon pictures or persons which are vglie or deformed, least the imagination imprint on the child the similitude of the said person or picture" (26).

While Guillemeau envisions female self-regulation in this passage, Nicholas Culpeper suggests that not only women, practitioners, and theorists, but virtually *anyone* may witness, and consequently regulate, the desire of monstrous mothers.[67] In *A directory for midvvives*, Culpeper introduces the notion of visual access to the monstrous mother when he describes a female fantasy that features pedophilic tendencies, a perversion exacerbated by the fact that the object of the woman's desire is itself a monstrous birth. In Culpeper's story, "a woman this day living, that in the time of her Conception fixing her Eyes and Mind much upon a Boy with two Thumbs on each Hand, sitting at dinner by her, brought forth a Boy with as many her self" (140). The correspondence of the second four-thumbed boy's deformities and the content of his mother's desires echoes the notion, articulated in Sadler's text, that the imagination makes faithful, revealing impressions of women's thoughts on fetal bodies. Culpeper, however, makes maternal monstrosity more visible than his predecessor does. While Sadler's "Aristotle" does not require the body of the monstrous birth to reveal its mother's secret, untoward sexual desires, he does indicate that only reproductive theorists

and practitioners have access to women's monstrous displays of desire. In contrast, Culpeper suggests that maternal desire may reveal itself publicly. In the story of the four-thumbed boy, Culpeper's failure to specify the order in which the monstrous events transpire effectively produces a hedonistic scene of concurrent consumption, voyeurism, and impregnation; "the time of [the woman's] Conception" seems to coincide with the moment she "fix[es] her Eyes and Mind upon a Boy with two Thumbs on each hand, sitting at dinner by her" (140). Presumably, conception follows dinner, which would mean the woman did not literally "fi[x] her Eyes" on the monster during intercourse. But even if the woman conceived privately, Culpeper's employment of chronological confusion suggests that her secret, orgasmic thoughts reveal themselves at the dinner table. Not only the practitioner Culpeper, but also the other dinner guests, can see the monstrous desire for the four-thumbed boy that the woman exhibits.

Culpeper's intense focus on female desire in this story helps establish monstrous identities for both mothers and infants, by demonstrating that the imagination houses and cultivates women's unnatural desires. Furthermore, it reiterates the idea that women's monstrosity makes itself visible—even prior to the birth of the monster—to both professional and ordinary observers; as a dinner guest and obstetrical writer, Culpeper represents both. He is therefore in the unique position to both theoretically construct the cultural cues of maternal monstrosity (the role of the obstetrical theorist), and to identify them in practice (the role of the monstrous mother's companions). In his account of the mother of the four-thumbed boy, Culpeper does not explicitly indicate his intention to describe monstrous maternal visibility so that readers may recognize triggers of female

desire and remove them from women's sight. Yet by relaying these cues, he positions readers to take these measures themselves.

The birth of the second four-thumbed boy, along with the paucity of reports in professional imagination literature of the successful regulation of imagination-induced monstrous reproduction, however, suggest that knowledge of the imagination does not necessarily result in the ability to control it. The tendency of the imagination to confound regulatory authors constantly materializes in imagination literature, where Sadler, Culpeper, and others profess the ability to see monstrous maternity, but not to prevent it. Moreover, non-professional imagination literature suggests that the visibility of monstrous maternity actually signals its unpreventable nature. Broadside ballads, for example, explore the concept that monstrous maternity, by making itself visible, testifies to how deeply anxieties about overwhelming monstrous maternal power penetrate early modern English society. Monstrous maternity emerges as an uncontrollable force when balladeers and other authors position it as a state so pervasive it seems to materialize on the bodies of the most unlikely reproductive women.

One such woman appears in a late seventeenth-century ballad, *The wonder of wonders, or, the strange Birth in Hampshire* (1675?), which recounts the birth of a toad, a serpent, and a dead child, whose "face and head" the serpent has eaten, and whose body it has "injured" (13.1, 3). Notably, the offspring reportedly have no connection to their mother's experiences during pregnancy, and consequently, seem to originate from a divine cause (as the author claims), rather than from the horrifying fantasies of the maternal imagination. Yet when T.L., the author of the ballad, concludes that God causes

the woman to produce the monsters specifically to pass "judgement" on *her* (19.2), two related, deeply vexed issues about the transparency and pervasiveness of monstrous maternity arise. First, even the passing association of the woman with unidentified sin invites readers to recall the reputedly susceptible state of the imagination during conception and pregnancy, periods when women were likely to turn into monstrous mothers. That is, the mother's production of a toad, serpent, and dead, mutilated baby may automatically suggest to readers that she fantasized about these creatures prior to delivery, whether anyone detected it or not. This is not to return the burden of proof that monstrous reproduction has occurred to the body of the monstrous birth; rather, it suggests the second issue: reproductive women always harbor and cultivate illicit fantasies. By introducing the possibility that the mother of the monsters is secretly an imaginative pervert, the ballad facilitates the development of a misreading, condemnatory culture that assumes women invariably possess—and likely exercise—monstrous imaginative generative abilities. In other words, a balladeer may not have to proclaim a mother's imaginative guilt in order for readers to identify her transgressive fantasies.

The wonder of wonders illustrates conceiving and pregnant women's subjection to automatic presumptions of their imaginative transgressions by emphasizing the upstanding character of the mother of the toad, serpent, and dead baby, only to switch focus from the unexpected monsters to her responsibility for creating them. In other words, the mother goes from good to guilty. The sudden pronouncement of vague, condemnable behavior near the end of the ballad suggests that readers may see through the façade of maternal vigilance and devotion to unborn offspring described early in the

text. The birth of the toad and serpent initially suggests her innocence, since women in imagination literature regularly encounter animals that shock them so profoundly they later give birth to children that unmistakably resemble the offending creature.[68] The mother in *The wonder of wonders,* however, presumably avoids such troubles during her pregnancy; at least, the balladeer does not mention any surprising events.[69] Moreover, while the mother seems to demonstrate a clear awareness of the strength of the maternal imagination, she apparently uses it to cultivate positive consequences. The balladeer reports that she loves her husband (6.2), and that "[he] on her had a special care" (6.3). The nature of their relationship suggests that during pregnancy, she harbors no thoughts of toads, serpents, or deformed babies; moreover, her "love" (6.2) conceivably directs her thoughts chastely to her husband's face during conception. Similarly, the husband's "care" arguably protects his wife from monstrous pregnancy. By remarking on the husband's attentions, *The wonder of wonders* echoes a belief in community responsibility for effectively protecting the maternal imagination. "[T]hose which haue conceiued, ought to be preserued from all feare, sadnesse, and disquietnes of mind," Guillemeau asserts in *Child-birth* (26). While he also instructs women themselves to avoid contact with "lamentable and fearefull tales or storyes" and "pictures or persons which are vglie or deformed, least the imagination imprint on the child the similitude of the said person or picture" (26), Guillemeau clearly considers that others should also take "special care" (*Wonders* 6.3) that women's imaginations "be preserued" from danger (Guillemeau, *Child-birth* 26).

But any measures the parents of these monsters took to protect the maternal imagination were apparently ineffective. Despite the ultimate conclusion that the woman did something to warrant God's "judgement" (19.2), the balladeer even seems at times to question whether the imagination exclusively causes monstrous births, by proposing that another cause may have cooperated with divine providence. While throughout much of the ballad God remains the single identified cause of the monsters, when T.L. turns in the penultimate stanza to the issue of "judgement" of the mother, it seems possible that a maternal, although not specifically imaginative provocation, may have prompted God to "send" these monsters (3.1):

> This judgement which of late befell,
> Unto this woman in *Hampshire*,
> The like before did near appear. (19.2-3)

Although the sin for which the woman requires "judgement" remains unclear, T.L. clearly suggests that God did not "send" these monsters for the sole purpose of warning a community of sinners, as the earlier claim that God delivers monstrous births "to us" indicates (3.1). Rather, he also uses the creatures specifically to condemn the woman.

However, the imagination's reputedly transgressive nature reemerges when we consider that vague condemnation of the mother is anticipated by a more pointed identification of her imaginative transgressions. Her imagination, possibly so well protected in stanza 6, seems to bear direct responsibility for producing the monstrous births. In a stanza addressing her mental state after her monstrous labor, the author

finally demonstrates greater interest in a maternal cause of the monstrous births than in their religious significance:

> The poor weak woman and Midwife too,
> For to recover had much a do,
> The thoughts of this same terrible thing,
> Much grief and sickness did them bring. (18.1-4)

The ballad here emphasizes the mother's victimization by the monsters she bears: earlier, the serpent and toad destroy her ability to produce a perfect, living child, and following the birth, they torment her mind. She becomes like the women in other monstrous birth stories whose imaginations are dangerously disturbed by frightful figures. The trauma the midwife experiences underscores the mother's powerlessness to resist these imaginative effects; although the ballad identifies the midwife as a practitioner who possesses "chiefest art and skill," the difficulty of the birth overwhelms her abilities (8.2). At the same time, the portrayal in the third and fourth lines of this stanza of a mind deeply plagued by the memory of the "terrible" birth parallels the obsessive nature of the imaginations of monstrous mothers more generally. Reproductive women who imagine, Levinus Lemnius notes, possess minds disposed to "vehement and fixed cogitation" (11). While the offspring in *The wonder of wonders* no longer inhabit the womb, and therefore cannot receive the mother's "imprint," the ballad suggests their earlier exposure to this danger. Their mother, unable after delivery to shift her focus from her monstrous ordeal, apparently dwells in "vehement and fixed cogitation" on inappropriate objects. The idea

that strange images, including toads and serpents, afflicted and preoccupied her during pregnancy seems entirely possible.

Notably, a contemporary ballad recounting the same circumstances as *The wonder of wonders* more pronouncedly suggests that the maternal imagination determines the outcome of the mother's pregnancy. In *True wonders and strange news* (1675?), the balladeer, L.W., identifies the woman's imminent delivery as "[h]er Reckoning-day," an expression that underscores the possibility that she has sinned, and deserves condemnation. But strikingly, the mother seems specifically to be guilty of possessing a monstrous maternal imagination. The "thing" (16.2) attached to the child, which did "[t]he Babies life…beguile" (17.3), is "[l]ikened unto a Serpent, which / tempted a Woman first to sin" (16.3-4), and thus represents another incarnation of weak-willed Eve succumbing to a deeply—and deservedly—painful delivery:

> With shrieks and crys, poor woman, she
> in labouring travel groaned sore,
> Poor wretch indured misery,
> good women judge the cause therefore.

The traditional "cause" of such a horrific experience is Eve's condemnation for her disobedience.[70] Moreover, in obstetrical traditions, the delivery of monstrous births was considered "more painful and dangerous" than others (Sharp 130). But the ballad has additional biblical and obstetrical significance, not only in its invocation of Eve, but also in the parallel it draws between the serpent and animal causes of monstrous births. The phrase the "Serpent…tempted…Woman" underscores the importance of both female

desire and its object. "[T]empt[ing] a Woman," the "Serpent" augments its significance as it behaves like a monstrous creature that incites the desires of imagining reproductive women. The "sudden sights of Hares, Swine, or other Cattell" could frighten women and cause them to imaginatively-generate monsters, Jakob Rüff notes (154). But animals who suddenly appear to women do not necessarily produce "terrours" (154). In contrast to Rüff, Lemnius considers women, who, "seeing a Hare, bring forth a child with a Hare-lip" to represent those who "intentively behold any thing" and subsequently "produce something like that she beheld" (Lemnius 11). Here, Lemnius does not *exactly* say that women are sexually excited by hares and other creatures, but by indicating that they purposely look upon them, he does suggest that animals attract, and possibly "tempt" women. Moreover, in describing women engaged in the act of "seeing a Hare," rather than *seeking* one, Lemmius indicates that women may unexpectedly encounter imaginatively-stimulating animals, but not perceive them with fear.

Lemnius's belief in an "intentive" imagination thus problematizes the idea that seeing necessarily leads to damaging "terrours"—a connection that suggests imagining women succumb to the overwhelming power of their imaginations, and therefore bear no guilt in the production of monstrous births. The possibility of maternal imaginative innocence further disintegrates in *True Wonders*; by suggesting a link between women's animal encounters and Eve's experience with the serpent, L.W. positions *all* women who deform their offspring, regardless of the circumstances, as monstrous mothers. Characterizing the mother as an Eve figure who cannot resist the serpent's appeal to her desires, the balladeer, like Lemnius, transforms grotesque creatures that stimulate the

imagination from shocking, victimizing figures to objects of maternal desire. Consequently, *True Wonders* conveys the same attitude of regulatory imagination authors like Sadler and Culpeper, who pinpoint desire as the primary, threatening manifestation of the maternal imagination. Yet L.W. also differs from these writers, because, by equating the mother with tempted Eve, whose susceptible mind and reproductive curse is the legacy of *all* women, this author seeks not to restrict monstrous maternity, but to suggest the impossibility of restricting it.

A culture plagued by fears of this impossibility materializes in *The Winter's Tale*, where Shakespeare presents Hermione's belly as a part that exclusively signals monstrous maternal desire to her jealous husband. The idea that monstrous maternal identity develops and flourishes within reproductive female bodies transforms into the anxious belief that *all* such bodies automatically signal monstrous maternal reproductive ability. Leontes appears to forget or dismiss the idea that pregnant women may participate in natural reproduction; to him, Hermione's body exclusively betrays her participation in imagination-directed conception and gestation. Moreover, the signifying power Leontes grants the maternal body emphasizes the idea that the contents of the imaginations of pregnant women seem perpetually exposed upon female bodies to those who behold them. In act 2, scene 1 of the play, Shakespeare repeatedly emphasizes the shape of Hermione's pregnant body. The queen has "spread of late / Into a goodly bulk," one of her ladies reports (*WT* 2.1.20-21), while Leontes remarks that "she's big" (line 63). Significantly, that is the extent of Leontes' comment on his wife's form; he does *not* say Hermione is "big with child." He instead focuses on what he believes has made her

“big”: allegedly conceiving with Polixenes. While a remark about her pregnancy would highlight the unique reproductive state Hermione occupies, Leontes’ omission of a gestational reason for his wife’s “bulk” suggests that this uniqueness is monstrous rather than natural (21). The king’s remark catalyzes Hermione’s rapid alienation from the court, and more strikingly, from her son, who presumably once made his mother’s body signify natural pregnancy. Ordering a lord to remove Mamillius from his mother’s presence, Leontes leaves Hermione to “sport herself / With that she’s big with” (62-63). His direct accusation of infidelity follows, as he tells his wife what he thinks he knows: “’tis Polixenes / Has made thee swell thus” (63-64).

Simon Reynolds’s analysis of the role of the imagination in *The Winter’s Tale* transfers imaginative transgression to Leontes, whose mind teems with deformed images, and therefore acts like that of a mother who yields monstrous progeny.[71] Indeed, Shakespeare characterizes Leontes with the language of monstrous reproduction: a lord fears the king’s “purpose [to destroy Perdita] / …must / Lead on to some foul issue” (2.3.151-53), while Paulina declares that he cannot “produce more accusation / Than [his] own weak-hinged fancy” (118-19).[72] Hermione’s pregnant presence at first seems to affirm Reynolds’s assertion. The significance of the queen’s visibility for misshaping Leontes into a monstrous mother may be understood through Laura Levine’s analysis of the warnings by early modern anti-theatricalists that “Watching leads inevitably to…‘being’” (13). In *The Winter’s Tale*, Leontes “watch[es]” a belly he believes teems with desire, and, in Reynolds’s formulation, he becomes a monstrously desiring figure himself. However, redefining monstrous maternity in theatrical terms, as something one

first beholds and then embodies, also introduces the possibility that *anyone*—not just women with potentially impregnable wombs—can behold maternal desire and consequently become a monstrous mother. Reynolds and Levine suggest this may include men. But if men like Leontes may become monstrously maternal, do they, in wombless bodies bereft of nutritive, female seed, wield destructive generative power equal to that of enwombed monstrous mothers?

Consumed by jealousy and imaginatively breeding fantasies he covetously treasures, Leontes certainly resembles monstrous mothers who obsessively cultivate longings from which their deforming influence arises. Moreover, Leontes exhibits additional attributes of these mothers, since his coveted fantasies bring forth tragedy and discontent: the apparent deaths of Hermione and Perdita, the extended period of his heirlessness and wifelessness, his painful contrition, and perpetual chastisement by Paulina. It is more difficult to assess whether Leontes exerts generative power equal to a monstrous mother's, because this influence, as Sadler and other professional authors indicate, originates in female reproductive bodies; on the other hand, if monstrous maternity is transmitted by seeing, then the possession or lack of certain organs should not influence acquisition.

But understanding monstrous maternity as a visually-communicated state necessarily differentiates the kind of maternal monstrousness men and women may possess. Specifically, it solidifies the overwhelming usurpatory nature of monstrous reproduction that materializes within female bodies. Although Leontes may arguably become a monstrous mother if he beholds one (or at least someone who he identifies as a

monstrous mother), he cannot communicate monstrous maternity without a belly of his own. Accusing Hermione of adultery, subjecting her to trial, and ordering her execution arguably represent the deformed contents of a monstrous maternal mind, but issued by a man, they more accurately function as acts of un-gendered tyranny. Those who cannot develop their own pregnant bellies—which in *The Winter's Tale*, Shakespeare characterizes as the external sign of women's monstrous maternal desire—may come to resemble monstrous mothers; however, because they cannot breed monstrous maternal reproductive methods—the deformation that occurs within conceiving and gestating bodies—they are not mothers, and therefore, cannot be classified with these exceptionally powerful figures.

Excluding Leontes from the ranks of monstrous mothers does not negate the idea that he imagines monstrously. But it does reinforce women's position as the sole source of monstrous maternal generative power. Furthermore, in *The Winter's Tale*, the disqualification of men as functioning monstrous mothers subjects pregnant women to what may be unfounded suspicion as Shakespeare fully links reproductive female anatomy to monstrous generation. Leontes' own jealous focus on his wife's desire—attention that rhetorically expels the fetal body from the womb, and replaces it with female desire—further emphasizes Hermione's alleged role as a monstrous mother. When Leontes accuses his pregnant wife of physically exhibiting the desires she purportedly satisfied when she was a conceiving, non-pregnant woman, Shakespeare conflates pregnant and non-pregnant women, transforming them into a single monstrous maternal body. Desire is "a iust, great, and necessarye" reproductive attribute in both

men and women, Raynalde writes in *The byrth of mankynde,* because it drives them "lawfully to company with the other" (fol. 28_v). But Leontes' image suggests that when conception results from cuckoldry, desire becomes a reproductive threat that all women wield—one that exerts its influence outside of marriage and reproduction. For the king, a faithless wife endangers the stability of his realm.[73] While Hermione has already borne his heir, Leontes' doubts about the legitimacy of the child she carries also inflect his beliefs about Mamillius's paternity. He asks the child, "[a]rt though my boy?" (1.2.122), but Mamillius's "Ay" (line 123) fails to reassure him. Leontes muses that he has been told that Mamillius looks like him (124, 131-32), but the resemblance has apparently faded for the king. Thus, even before the death of Mamillius, Leontes' anxieties encompass the loss of his wife, heir, and as a consequence of the latter, his monarchical legacy.

These complex concerns reflect back to the object that motivates them, the female reproductive body and the instability of the identity it represents. Leontes' observations reveal how unsanctioned female desire fuses and transforms non-pregnant and pregnant female reproductive identities. In the king's formulation, Hermione's expansiveness does not represent her distinction as a nourishing, incomparable reproductive figure, but instead suggests that all women share a common reproductive characteristic—a treacherous desire that accompanies their major generative activities. Antigonus's insistence that "the Queen is spotless" (2.1.133) merely underscores Leontes' point:

> For every inch of woman in the world,
> Ay, every dram of woman's flesh is false

If she be. (lines 139-41, my emphasis)

Although Antigonus claims he cannot believe Leontes' accusations, by considering that one woman's possible sexual betrayal testifies to the reproductive behaviors of all women, he leaves open the possibility that Hermione's "flesh is false" (140). Moreover, his use of the present tense should not reassure Leontes; like her "big" form (2.1.63), it suggests the continued presence and practice of her alleged desire for Polixenes.

In part through Antigonus's suggestion that Hermione—like all reproductive women—embodies overwhelming, relentlessly destructive monstrous maternal power, Shakespeare demonstrates that Leontes' suspicion expresses the anxieties of a culture that is wary of pregnant women's desires, and hostile to pregnant women themselves. The pervasiveness of this distrust materializes in the intertextual relationship between the play and other forms of imagination literature. Shakespeare's introduction of both broadside ballads and obstetrical issues common to regulatory imagination literature indicates that Leontes' anxieties about his pregnant wife develop within the context of widespread cultural suspicion of reproductive women. Outside of the court, Autolycus's ballads about monstrous births emphasize the perverse and passionate nature of monstrous maternal desires. When he presents Mopsa with a ballad about "how a usurer's / wife was brought to bed of twenty money-bags at a burden, and / how she longed to eat adders' heads and toads carbonadoed" (4.4.253-55), Autolycus introduces a text that shatters all illusions that women remain sexually innocent when they exert imaginative formative power. Rather, the ballad's theme underscores Huet's point that "the power of the imagination is first of all the power invested in the very force of desire" (Huet 16);

women bear deformed offspring because they desire deforming agents and pursue the pleasures they bring. In addition to the phallic suggestiveness of "adders' heads" (*WT* 4.4.255)—which, as an object of the wife's longings, further indicates her appetite for fellatio—the delivery of "twenty money-bags at a burden" (line 254) expresses the "vehement and fixed" nature of monstrous maternal desires that Lemnius cites (11). The mother in Autolycus's ballad not only imprints the characteristic greed of her husband the usurer upon their offspring, but through them, exposes the greedy nature of her own imagination: delivering money-bags, she issues objects that signify greed, *and* reflect the womb-like inclination of the maternal imagination intentionally to covet images of the objects that entice it. Leontes believes he observes similar greed in Hermione, whom he believes continues to cultivate her desire for Polixenes. The king also believes he sees the contents of his wife's imagination materialize when Polixenes takes her hand—a gesture that suggests they have become "too hot" (*WT* 1.2.110). Here, Leontes describes the covetous nature of monstrous maternity, because he thinks he beholds the desire his wife allegedly felt when she conceived her current pregnancy still being nourished by her imagination, and still exhibited before him.

Leontes is of course mistaken about his wife, who truthfully protests that her "life" (a life allegedly dominated by reproductive imaginative lust) "stands in the level of [his] dreams" (3.2.79). But Shakespeare emphasizes that the suspicious, regulatory culture that Hermione inhabits prioritizes beliefs about the maternal imagination over its actual contents. Thus, perceptions and misperceptions exert enormous power: for Hermione, they drive Leontes to transform her "life" into one of isolation and

confinement; more broadly, they contribute to the creation of a monstrous mother who constantly generates and exerts imagination-borne destruction. Even in passages that appear to emphasize Hermione's reproductive innocence, her reputation as a desiring monstrous mother ensures that all her generative processes are perceived ambivalently, if not negatively. In act 1, for example, Leontes' claim that he cannot see the resemblance between himself and Mamillius, but must take the word of "[w]omen … / That will say anything" as proof of his blood relationship to his son (1.2.132-33), deeply vexes his subsequent admission that the boy "does bear some signs of" him (2.1.59). Here, he does not change his mind about Hermione's reproductive activities, at least not completely; rather, Leontes' charge that "[w]omen…will say anything" emphasizes their deceptive natures (1.2.132-33). Moreover, since women could reportedly imprint the features of anyone they fantasized about during conception upon their fetuses, Leontes cannot reasonably conclude that Perdita is his daughter because she "does bear some signs of" him (2.1.59); rather, he may assume that his wife temporarily suspended her "hot" thoughts of Polixenes (1.2.110)—although all the while conceiving with him—and replaced them with fantasies of Leontes in order to preserve the semblance of her innocence and Perdita's legitimacy. After all, as Lemnius notes, "neither the Law of Nature, nor the publick consent of Mankind will suffer a child to be laid to any may because it is like him" (12).

"Publick consent" (12) seals Hermione's fate, because it is not the contents of her imagination, but Leontes' beliefs about them that matter. His violent reaction to his wife's growing body and offending acts underscores the monstrous position early modern

pregnant women occupy. Whether their bodies and behaviors are correctly or erroneously read, Leontes' anxieties suggest that women exhibit monstrous reproductive potential. And as the king's obsession with Hermione's desire further indicates, maternal monstrousness exists independently of monstrous birth itself. Arguably, women even replace infants as obstetrical monstrous bodies, at least during gestation, since, like the Hermione of Leontes's fears, they may physically display their desire.

CHAPTER 3:

IMAGINING IMPREGNATION: TRANSFORMING, DELIVERING, AND INTERNALIZING MONSTROUS MATERNITY IN *MACBETH*

In *Macbeth*, Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff seem to embody two vastly different types of motherhood. Lady Macbeth is unequivocally monstrous—she imagines deforming power flowing from her "woman's breasts" (*Mac.* 1.5.47), and cultivates infanticidal fantasies in an attempt to convince Macbeth to commit regicide. Her profession,

> I have given suck, and know
> How tender 'tis to love the babe that milks me:
> I would, while it was smiling in my face,
> Have pluck'd my nipple from his boneless gums,
> And dash'd the brains out, had I so sworn
> As you have done to this. (1.7.54-59),

exposes both unnatural thoughts and their monstrous maternal purpose. She conjures an image not only of a murdered child, but also of murdered "tender[ness]"—the very sensation she must excise from Macbeth so that he may embrace regicide. The subsequent murder of Duncan indicates the success of Lady Macbeth's monstrous maternal formative endeavors, since the objects of her murderous imagination make a lasting impression on Macbeth.

In contrast, Lady Macduff seems to epitomize early modern ideas about natural motherhood through her tenderness and loyalty. She claims her husband "wants the natural touch" (4.2.8-9) because he abandons his family; in contrast, she constantly practices her natural parental inclinations. Shakespeare compares her devotion to preserving her offspring to Nature itself:

> …the poor wren,
> The most diminutive of birds, will fight,
> Her young ones in her nest, against the owl. (lines 9-11)

These words echo contemporary early modern analogies of human and animal maternity, in which animal behavior illustrates the proper depth of a mother's protective instinct. In *The nvrsing of children* (1612), Jacques Guillemeau similarly depicts breastfeeding as an endeavor tantamount to defending one's offspring, two things animals do naturally:

> There are no other Creatures, but giue sucke to their young ones, and if you do but onely make a shew, that you would take them from their dams, what a coyle and stir doe they make? If you carrie them away, they will run after you, and neuer leaue, till you haue let go your hold: desiring rather to loose their owne liues, than suffer their little ones to be carried away. (Kk)

Of course, Lady Macduff does not "make a…stir" over her offspring, only offering the murderers of her family brief verbal retaliation before they seize her son and stab him to death. Shakespeare suggests Lady Macduff does not have a chance to protest further; her bold son, angry that one of the murderers calls his father "traitor" (*Mac.* 4.2.81), declares that the "shag-hair'd villain" "liest" (line 82)—an accusation that prompts the murderer

instantly to dispatch him. Phyllis Rackin alternatively suggests that this moment is about more than Lady Macduff not having to "fight... / …the owl" (10-11); rather, her inaction "emphasizes [her] feminine helplessness" (Rackin 134). While Rackin here describes female weakness that contrasts with inextricably-linked maternal tenderness and protectiveness that Lady Macduff claims for herself, she simultaneously identifies in Lady Macduff a powerlessness that contrasts starkly with Lady Macbeth's imaginative creativity.

And yet with Lady Macduff, Shakespeare does not abandon the idea that all conceiving and pregnant women, when their imaginations act up, become monstrous. Rather, Lady Macduff's general behavior suggests she may have more in common with monstrously-fantasizing Lady Macbeth than Rackin indicates. In *Child-birth*, Guillemeau provides a sinister lens through which to view Lady Macduff's reproductive state. He warns that "a woman with child must be pleasant and merrie, shunning all melancholike and troublesome things that may vexe or molest her mind…least the imagination imprint on the child the similitude [of the shocking information]" (26). While women who are "pleasant and merrie" will reproduce naturally, those who fail to "[shun]…things that may vexe or molest [the] mind" encourage the development of their monstrous imaginations (26); consequently, they may initiate monstrous reproduction. Strikingly, Shakespeare suggests that Lady Macduff possesses an imagination that embraces "vex[ation] and molest[ation]" (26). Prior to her murder, she protests to Rosse that her husband's "flight…runs against all reason" (*Mac.* 4.2.13-14), but Rosse suggests that this impassioned response to her abandonment exhibits her own want of reason:

"school yourself," he admonishes her (line 15). Rosse's belief that Lady Macduff needs to control herself aligns her with unmanageable monstrous mothers who embrace, cultivate, and refuse to "school" their passions (15).

Yet notably, classifying Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff alongside the monstrous mothers I have so far discussed is problematic, because neither conceives nor apparently gestates in these passages. Their reproductive inactivity complicates their designation as "monstrous mothers," who do not generate exclusively through the power of their imaginations, but commandeer their reproductive anatomy, fluids, and functions in order to cultivate monstrous births. But in *Macbeth,* the absence of conceived and gestating offspring does not destabilize women's monstrous maternal identities, but instead indicates that Shakespeare presents an expanded vision of what constitutes monstrous maternal reproduction. I contend that this vision retains the notion that the imagination, while fulfilling the primary formative roles of monstrous reproduction, also remains maternally embodied. However, Shakespeare also imagines a more powerful expression of monstrous maternity than the form exhibited by women who transform the formative roles of female seed and uterine blood and the womb itself. The absence of children for both Lady Macbeth and Lady Macduff means that they direct their monstrous reproductive energies elsewhere. Specifically, Lady Macbeth, by imagining for her breasts the capacity to limitlessly nourish and shape her monstrous maternal reproductive power, generates a type of monstrous maternity that produces not fetal bodies, but a monstrous self, a deformed imagination in Macbeth, and the dissolution of professional authority over monstrous mothers. Lady Macbeth's recognition of the

limitless nurturing ability of maternal breasts—in contrast to the forty-week formative period the womb enjoys—launches the development of a monstrous reproductive landscape where monstrous maternal power is both boundless and uncontrollable. The overwhelming nature of Lady Macbeth's monstrous maternal nature, moreover, is represented by the death of Lady Macduff, whose monstrously-impassioned professions are cut short by the murderers. With the power of her imagination, Lady Macbeth shapes Macbeth into a murderer—the murderer who orders others to slay Macduff's family, including his wife—an "[un]school[ed]" woman in whom natural maternal identity is fading, but not yet completely obscured (4.2.15). By instructing his murderers to snuff out Lady Macduff, Macbeth initiates an event that illustrates how Lady Macbeth's monstrous maternal influence over *him* eventually robs Scotland of any trace of natural reproduction.

While Lady Macbeth's monstrous maternity produces this widespread brutality, her identity simultaneously develops within a broader context of unnatural reproduction in the play. Macduff's caesarean birth represents one of the most prominent examples of such unnaturalness. Early modern obstetrical literature typically categorizes caesarean deliveries as "unnatural events," although this designation signifies extraordinariness, rather than monstrousness. Guillemeau, for example, classifies "natural" deliveries as those not requiring the assistance of a surgeon (*Child-birth* 123). Like Macduff, who describes himself as "[u]timely ripp'd" "from his mother's womb" (*Mac.* 4.8.16, 15), Guillemeau explains that such deliveries are "called Caesarian…in imitation of *Caesar*, who was rip't out of his Mothers wombe, at the verie instant she died" (*Child-birth* 185).

Shakespeare's examination of the anxieties of both Macduff and Macbeth about the former's birth, however, reveals not only the unnatural, but also the monstrous nature of this delivery. Upon meeting Macduff, Macbeth echoes the language used in the promise of the witches that "none of woman born / Shall harm Macbeth" (*Mac.* 4.1.80-81). Macbeth, who warns Macduff he will "not yield / To one of woman born" (5.7.12-13), here repeats the witches' supernatural implication that when he does "yield," a figure alienated from natural human modes of reproduction will "harm" him. Macduff's explanation that he "was from his mother's womb / Untimely ripp'd" (5.7.15-16), on the other hand, destroys Macbeth's confidence, because it reestablishes his birth as an event simultaneously natural and unnatural. In contrast to the descriptions offered by the witches and Macbeth, Macduff understands his delivery through reference to a natural female reproductive body that contains a "womb"; he further emphasizes a biological relationship between woman and offspring by describing this womb as "his mother's." The violence Macduff associates with caesarean delivery, however, recalls the unnaturalness linked to surgical deliveries. Moreover, Macduff's brutal idea that he was not "born," but rather "ripp'd" from the womb further diminishes the natural aspects of his delivery, as it implies a contrast between a midwife who would manually "deliver" a birth and a surgeon who would use his tools to "rip" and cut at maternal and infant bodies.

But throughout his pre-battle exchange with Macbeth, Macduff increasingly characterizes his birth not only as simultaneously natural and unnatural, but also monstrous. Macduff "rip[s]" himself from the task of robbing Macbeth of his illusion

when he eschews use of a first-person pronoun, and rhetorically relies upon someone else to deliver the truth about his birth:

> …let the *Angel*, whom thou still hast serv'd,
> Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb
> Untimely ripp'd. (5.7.14-16, my emphasis)

When Macduff describes his delivery, he undergoes a transformation similar to one L.C. Knights observes in Malcolm, who, when he presents himself to Macduff as abysmally sinful, "has ceased to be a person. His lines repeat and magnify the evils that have already been attributed to Macbeth, acting as a mirror wherein the ills of Scotland are reflected" (Knights 43). Macduff's third-person employment of "Macduff" in line 15 further undermines his own personhood by separating him from the reproductive body of his mother. By exchanging a first-person pronoun for a third-person noun, Macduff rhetorically removes his infant body from its caesarean delivery; he is not a person because he identifies no personal self (which "I" would indicate) emerging from the maternal womb. Rejecting this self, Macduff supports the witches' notion that Macbeth's mortal enemy must have a non-natural identity; the Macduff who speaks rends himself of the humanity to which the relationship between infant and maternal bodies testifies, when he substitutes "Macduff" for "I."

Macbeth also helps perpetuate this notion of Macduff's lost self. When Macduff tells Macbeth, "let the Angel… / Tell thee, Macduff was from his mother's womb / Untimely ripp'd" (5.8.14-16), he prepares to refer to himself in the third person by rejecting his own voice and letting the "Angel" speak for him (line 14). In response,

Macbeth "[curses]…that tongue that tells" him (17), as if the witches—"the Angel" he "hast serv'd" (14)—have actually spoken these words. This exchange further complicates the division between the Macduff who speaks and the Macduff who was born unnaturally. It dehumanizes him, as he becomes an object. More specifically, this type of transformation positions Macduff as a monstrous birth. When Macbeth, temporarily daunted by the news of Macduff's unnatural delivery, refuses to "fight with" him (22), he receives an alternative proposal. Macduff will have him "yield" (23),

> And live to be the show and gaze o'th'time:
> We'll have thee, as our rarer monsters are,
> Painted upon a pole, and underwrite,
> 'Here may you see the tyrant.' (24-27)

Here, Macduff indicates display and exhibition can best be illustrated by considering the example of monstrous births. In the Arden edition of *Macbeth,* Kenneth Muir underscores the presence of monstrous birth stories in this passage, when he suggests that Macduff imagines making Macbeth into a broadside; Macbeth's likeness, like those of "rarer monsters," will be "painted" (*Mac.* 5.8.25-26) and inscribed "on a cloth or board suspended on a pole" (Muir 160). While the atrocities Macbeth has committed certainly warrant accusations of monstrosity, Macduff seems rather to neutralize "the tyrant" by imagining him as the subject of a ballad about monstrous births (5.8.27). Brammall's contention that in the late decades of the sixteenth century, monstrousness became an attribute increasingly linked to internal corruption rather than external malformation, suggests that Macduff's intention to display a monstrous "tyrant" in a manner reserved

for physically deformed monsters seems somewhat antiquated (line 27), and certainly too lenient for monstrous Macbeth.[74] Macbeth's monstrousness is "rare," but it differs from the monstrousness of the "rarer monsters" that populate broadsides (25). Those monsters functioned in part as entertainment and news for authors and readers who sang, talked, and read about them.[75] By referring to himself in the third person, Macduff constructs a voice similar to the appropriated voices of "rarer monsters" (25). His reference to monstrous birth stories thus applies more significantly to himself than to Macbeth; dividing his speaking persona from the infant born unnaturally, Macduff transforms his delivery into a remarkable, newsworthy event that is not only unnatural, but also monstrous.

While Macduff's emergence as both monster and hero in *Macbeth* underscores concerns about unnatural and monstrous reproduction, it simultaneously belies his assessment that monsters are "rare" things in Shakespeare's Scotland. "Unnatural" events become so common following the murder of Duncan that they create an "unnatural" order (*Mac.* 2.4.10). Early modern English monsters exist alongside unnatural events in the prodigy literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Lorraine J. Daston and Katharine Park have noted,[76] and Shakespeare similarly constructs a diverse prodigious landscape in *Macbeth*. For example, the Old Man observes to Rosse that he "[has] seen / Hours dreadful, and things strange, but this sore night / Hath trifled former knowings" (lines 2-4). Together, the Old Man and Rosse have seen darkness in daytime (6-7), a hawk killed by an owl (12-13), and Duncan's horses "eat each other" (18). Daston and Park further observe that periods of upheaval and unrest in early

modern Europe were accompanied by a rise in recorded prodigies;[77] in this historical context, the conversation between the Old Man and Rosse suggests the "unnatural…deed" of regicide (10-11) has issued forth an age in which "things strange" have lost their distinction as "rarities."

Yet another prodigy that Shakespeare includes in *Macbeth* suggests that these figures and events may not hearken only a politically uproarious time. The reproductive significance of the sow "that hath eaten / Her nine farrow" (4.1.64-65), a creature whose blood the witches deposit in their cauldron, also indicates that in *Macbeth*, generation is understood as a monstrous process. Specifically, the image of the cannibalistic sow signifies the defeat of natural by a monstrous maternal form of reproduction. By herself, the sow is monstrous because she commits cannibalistic infanticide—an act that signals overwhelming alimentary desire. Early modern wonder literature, however, demonstrates that female cannibalism has broader obstetrical import. In their narratives of pregnant cannibals, wonder authors demonstrate that maternal cannibalism occurs prior to birth. For example, Simon Goulart's account in *Admirable and memorable histories containing the wonders of our time* (1607) of a pregnant woman who viciously bites a piece of flesh from the leg of a bare-legged man illustrates the connection between longings that originate in the pregnant female imagination and the monstrous acts they incite.[78] Shakespeare exaggerates female reproductive monstrousness in the sow, however, by extending the creature's longings beyond gestation. While monstrous maternity functions as an attribute of conceiving and gestating women whose minds incline to perverse and violent thoughts, Shakespeare demonstrates through the sow that female

imaginative transgressions may indefinitely lengthen the period of imagination-induced monstrous motherhood.

Lady Macbeth protracts the period of monstrous maternal influence for herself, as she associates her monstrousness with post-natal maternal moments unrestricted by the temporariness of conception and gestation. The embodied monstrous maternal identity that Lady Macbeth imagines differs most dramatically from the monstrous maternal nature of women who commit imaginative adultery, such as those John Sadler discusses, in its production of un-enwombed "monstrous births." While both Lady Macbeth and imagining adulteresses create their own monstrous maternal selves by cultivating deforming fantasies, imagination literature typically portrays the latter eventually delivering infants. Lady Macbeth, on the other hand, alternately issues non-infant "monstrous births" in the forms of everlasting monstrous maternity and a regicidal Macbeth. Embodiment facilitates the development of this identity, as it does for other monstrous mothers, but Lady Macbeth's broad vision of what constitutes a female reproductive part indicates why her body is so amenable to the generation of non-fetal bodies. When she invokes the "Spirits / That tend on mortal thoughts" to "fill [her], from the crown to the toe, top-full / Of direst cruelty" (*Mac.* 1.5.40-43), Lady Macbeth invites them to feast at her breasts, so that they may gather the strength required to make her monstrous. Thus, her first "monstrous birth," her "remorse[less]," violent identity (line 44), is formed not by a womb, but by parts where offspring "are…bred and fashioned" following delivery (Guillemeau, *Nvrsing* "The Preface" n. pag.)—parts, notably, from which one may also feed without previously gestating in the nursing mother's womb.

Moreover, by relocating monstrous formation from the conceiving seed or gestating womb to the breasts, Lady Macbeth conceivably adopts a monstrous maternal nature that perpetually reproduces, because the nursing breasts, unlike the gestating womb, do not adhere to a finite period of "fashion[ing]."[79]

This idea, that maternal breasts form monstrous mothers whose reproductive influence extends beyond gestation, illuminates Lady Macbeth's reasons for imagining her own monstrous maternal power deriving from her breasts, rather than her womb, the traditional cohort of the monstrous maternal imagination. For example, her request to the "Spirits" (*Mac.* 1.5.40), "unsex me here" (line 41), rather than articulate a baffling denial of femininity, instead signifies her wish to develop a variety of maternal monstrousness free not only from bearing monstrous infants, but also from conceiving them in the first place. Thus, her formative breasts remain intact even after she makes her request:

> Come, you Spirits
>
> That tend on mortal thoughts, unsex me here,
>
> And fill me, from the crown to the toe, top-full
>
> 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!' (1.5.40-54)

The various critical interpretations of Lady Macbeth's closely-scrutinized wish include arguments that through it, she (1) exchanges female for male identity in order to facilitate the development of powerful, regicidal capacity[80] (2) rejects a form of femininity associated with "woman's milk[,]…remorse and compunction" for a vicious, but not necessarily male identity (Rackin 123), and (3) rejects a fixed gender identity.[81] However, Jenijoy La Belle's contention that Lady Macbeth is amenorrheic suggests that the unsexing occurs with too many female body parts intact to define it only in terms of masculinization or feminine or gender dissolution. La Belle's argument also emphasizes the importance of imagined physical changes as La Belle posits that Lady Macbeth transforms from a fertile to an infertile female figure by imagining the cessation of her menstrual cycle. The traditional victims of the usurpatory maternal imagination—the formative substances, physiology, and anatomy of natural reproductive bodies—also appear in Lady Macbeth's invocation, and consequently help reveal how unsexing functions as a monstrous maternal process. She imagines herself acquiring regicidal strength by performing both male and female generative roles. As a figure "fill[ed]" with "direst cruelty" (*Mac.* 1.5.42-43), Lady Macbeth seems to characterize herself as pregnant; as one who simultaneously "fill[s]" herself with images of "cruelty" (lines 42-

43), she resembles both male and female conceiving bodies who deposit their united seed in the womb. Yet Lady Macbeth invokes the suggestive image of filling only to repudiate it; with "[fill]ing commencing in "the crown," she reveals that her imagination, housed in her head, fills *itself* with the brutal imagery that shapes her monstrous self (42). She consequently indicates that a fertile imagination requires no "sex" in any of its Galenic forms—pregnant woman, non-pregnant woman, or man.

Imagination narratives traditionally indicate that the imagination's maternal identity emerges when it commandeers the womb and female semen in order to exert its formative influence on monstrous births. Therefore, by conjuring an imagination that functions *like* semen and *like* the womb, but that generates offspring completely within itself, Lady Macbeth problematizes the "unsex[ed]" maternal nature of her monstrousness (41). The dissolution of monstrous maternity would underscore the notion that she desires the power associated with imagination-borne monstrous maternity, but wishes to avoid the uterine obligations that traditionally accompany it. Indeed, Lady Macbeth indicates that she recognizes monstrous maternity as a source of absolute power prior to her invocation, when she worries that Macbeth's "nature / …is too full o'th'milk of human kindness" to allow him to murder Duncan (1.5.16-17). Here, she reveals a glimpse of the menacing nature that fully forms in the invocation. Lady Macbeth emerges as a woman "against nature," in the sense that she views Nature—and particularly, "natural" maternal inclinations and functions—as oppositional to her desires. Natural filial relations spout from the breasts of women, Guillemeau emphasizes in *The nvrsing of children*: women who avoid nursing their own children refuse to extend "*that*

naturall affection which should be betwixt the mother and the child by this meanes" (Ii2-Ii3). At one time, Lady Macbeth was a good mother, according to Guillemeau, because she "[gave] suck" (*Mac.* 1.7.54). But on the eve of regicide, she recasts this affection as weakness. She imagines Macbeth tainted by maternal milk—a complication of typical early modern writings on breastfeeding, which associate the corrupting effects of nursing with wet-nurses, not mothers.[82] Yet notably, Lady Macbeth does not deny that mothers pass good qualities, such as "human kindness," through their milk—only that such kindness is necessarily a boon.

"[D]irest cruelty," however, does benefit Lady Macbeth, and for her, breasts may contain cruelty as well as kindness (1.5.43). This multi-purpose function, along with the breasts' ability to form the non-fetal monstrousness she desires, establishes her role as a monstrous mother in spite of her dissociation from Galenic sexes. The breasts, rather than the womb, become the monstrous maternal imagination's primary physical collaborator. Lady Macbeth describes the cruel capacity of her breasts in the invocation, where she asks the "murth'ring ministers," "take my milk for gall" (line 48). While her request has prompted multiple critical readings,[83] it consistently represents for scholars a method of monstrous self-creation. Lady Macbeth may ask the "murth'ring ministers" to nurse her, and receive ("take") her milk as a bitter substance—an anti-nurturing fluid that will help them flourish, and subsequently help *her* cultivate her monstrous maternal identity.[84] Another explanation, documented by Muir, alternately reads "take" as "exchange," so that Lady Macbeth asks the ministers to take her milk and leave behind gall.[85] The latter idea further emphasizes the maternal nature of Lady Macbeth's

monstrous self-creation, as she imagines exchanging natural for unnatural maternal body fluid, and thus, creating a biological formative source for her monstrous "offspring."

By substituting her breasts for her womb or seed as her imagination's primary physical collaborator, and thus poising herself to generate not a fetus, but her unique variety of monstrous maternity and selfhood, Lady Macbeth illustrates the independence of maternal from infant monstrousness. Yet her production of non-fetal "monstrous births" does not end with her self-creation, but instead continues throughout the play, most notably in the form of Macbeth's monstrous identity. Joanna Levin examines the monstrous maternal-infant relationship between Lady Macbeth and her husband, arguing that Lady Macbeth performs the role of monstrous mother when she "adulterously directs her desire away from Macbeth and towards an image of his future glory…[p]roduced by Lady Macbeth's maternal imagination, the monstrous Macbeth becomes the offspring of a disorderly feminine imagination" (42). Aligning Lady Macbeth with adulteresses, Levin underscores the significance of her desire to monster-making, and specifically, the desire for power that motivates her self-transformation. While I agree that Lady Macbeth's impassioned ambition drives her imaginative formative activity in the invocation, where she imagines committing regicide, I would like to propose instead that she expresses political ambitions for *herself*, and views Macbeth as an instrument who will facilitate her ascent. Lady Macbeth suggests that she considers herself more powerful than her husband when she observes that "[t]he raven himself is hoarse, / That croaks the fatal entrance of Duncan / Under *my* battlements" (*Mac.* 1.5.38-40, my emphasis). But her object of desire is not the throne, exactly; like the witches, she

designates that for Macbeth, whom she greets as “Great Glamis! worthy Cawdor! Greater than both, by the all-hail hereafter!” (lines 54-55) when he returns to Inverness. She instead envisions a continuing, mighty reproductive role for herself, in which she forms not only Macbeth, but his reign more generally. She anticipates this as she urges Macbeth to put “[t]his night’s great business into *my* dispatch” (68, my emphasis); she will determine how regicide comes about. And in act 1, scene 7, when she urges Macbeth to murder, she also fashions his regicidal identity. Moreover, the fantasy of her “woman’s breasts” nourishing her monstrous maternal creative power suggests that she considers herself exerting perpetual influence over Macbeth: again, without the formative limitations of the womb, the breasts can shape indefinitely.

Lady Macbeth reveals both her own ambition and the necessity of reforming Macbeth in order to help her fulfill her desire for power in the remainder of her good mother speech in act 1, scene 7. Lady Macbeth may “have given suck,” and “know[n] / How tender ’tis to love the babe that milks [her]” (lines 54-55), but in the infanticidal fantasy that follows, she indicates that regicidal tendencies may have earlier lurked beneath her maternal instincts. Had she had the opportunity to take the throne, nothing—certainly not her “tender[ness]” for her “babe”—would have stopped her (55):

> I would, while it was smiling in my face,
> Have pluck’d my nipple from his boneless gums,
> And dash’d the brains out, had I so sworn
> As you have done to this. (56-59)

Here, Lady Macbeth indicates that her desire for power exceeded her maternal affections even before Macbeth reported the prophecy of his ascension. She suggests that even as a nursing woman, she preferred power over offspring. Yet despite this partiality for power, she *equates* regicide and infanticide, by arguing that Macbeth can only become Duncan's murderer by summoning the same "cruelty" (1.5.43) that would have allowed her to move unhesitatingly from breastfeeding to infanticide. But the image of this brutal act also suggests that monstrous mothers are more powerful than regicides, since to murder the king, Macbeth must act like a monstrous mother who can purposely turn her imagination from "tender[ness]" to "cruelty," and ultimately, externalize her violent fantasy (1.7.55, 1.5.43).

Yet to be so unnaturally cruel is not Macbeth's instinct, and so Lady Macbeth must remake him in her own violent image. Prior to his monstrous rebirth, Macbeth contrasts markedly with his wife, who embraces a type of generative power that, through its reliance on gall-filled breasts rather than a womb, displaces the natural formation of children with the monstrous formation of power and violence. Macbeth, however, imagines his fate and Duncan's in peaceful terms—a conclusion articulated through a natural reproductive image. While tempted to fulfill the witches' prophecy that he "shalt be King" (1.3.50), Macbeth envisions himself extending "Pity" to Duncan—pity that he remarkably characterizes as "a naked new-born babe" (1.7.21) Macbeth here imagines the generative product Lady Macbeth specifically rejects in favor of non-fetal monster-making. To excise these fantasies of natural reproduction from Macbeth's mind in order to transform him into a regicide, Lady Macbeth first counters his natural tendencies in a

characteristically monstrous maternal fashion: she makes his manhood irrelevant. This begins as straightforward emasculation; Macbeth, resolved to "proceed no further in this business" against Duncan (1.7.31), asserts that regicidal action does not "become a man" (line 46), and a man "[w]ho dares do" it "is none" (47). But Lady Macbeth counters that *only* by committing regicide will Macbeth prove he is "a man" (49). While critics have often contended that their discussion refers to Macbeth's psychological manliness,[86] Lady Macbeth here seems to assert monstrous maternal power as she figures this new identity as a replacement for his ailing biological manliness. In other words, by attacking Macbeth as a sexed man, Lady Macbeth imitates a moment of monstrous conception, when the maternal imagination overpowers the biologically-male body. A new "man" issues from Lady Macbeth's imagination, monstrous in its regicidal capacity.

D.W. Harding's analysis of the emasculation and subsequent re-masculinizing of Macbeth further illuminates his monstrous role in advancing Lady Macbeth's political ambition. Harding frames her notions of mental manliness partly in terms of desire. He notes that "[m]anhood for her consists in ambition, resolute action, physical courage, and aggression in seeking one's own ends and overcoming opposition" (247). Harding emphasizes externalized expressions of manhood, but he simultaneously connects them to desires that originate *within* Macbeth: "action" springs from his "resolute[ness]," while "physical courage" and "aggression" express natural boldness and the desire to achieve "one's own ends" (247). Harding further underscores the psychological origins of Macbeth's manliness by observing that these qualities form in *Lady* Macbeth's mind.[87] In the context of her monstrous reproductive behavior, Harding's argument suggests that

she imagines what her husband must become. But importantly, she does not simply envision manly reform. Rather, in order to realize what Harding refers to as “her fantasy of manhood” (247), Lady Macbeth first fantasizes the destruction of Macbeth’s erotic masculine body, and then imaginatively reconstructs him as an unnatural figure. Specifically, Lady Macbeth conflates Macbeth’s weakened desire for power with his connubial love. While they debate the matter of regicide, she introduces the issue of Macbeth’s sexual desire into their conversation, and consequently obscures precisely what she finds lacking in her husband—his ambition or his sexual desire and ability. When Macbeth declares, “[w]e will proceed no further in this business” of regicide, Lady Macbeth inquires,

> Was the hope drunk,
> Wherein you dress’d yourself? Hath it slept since?
> And wakes it now, to look so green and pale
> At what it did so freely? From this time
> Such I account thy love. Art thou afeard
> To be the same in thine own act and valour,
> As thou art in desire? (1.7.35-41)

The reference to Macbeth’s “love” suggests that Lady Macbeth intends for “desire” to connote not only an ailing ambition for the throne, but also inadequate erotic feeling and sexual ability. Lady Macbeth imagines her husband’s “love,” like his “hope” for the throne, “now…look[s] so green and pale.” This characterization recalls early modern descriptions of green sickness, an affliction primarily associated with virgins who

developed a green hue when rendered ill by unfulfilled erotic longings. Marriage and its sexual privileges were considered the most effective cure, though apparently, sex cannot defeminize green Macbeth.[88]

By associating her husband's wavering ambition with a sickness of sexually unsatisfied young women, Lady Macbeth both questions and confuses his identity as "a man" (line 49). While this fortifies her own monstrous maternal power by obscuring his reproductive relevance, it does not advance her political ambitions. To ensure that he will embrace regicide, Lady Macbeth must make her husband "so much more the man" (51). This problematic statement suggests Macbeth already is a man, yet Lady Macbeth declares just two lines earlier that only by committing regicide will he become one. She further complicates the equivocal manliness she describes by portraying regicide as an act strongly motivated by a desire Macbeth must internalize. On one hand, the discussion of manliness suggests that this desire will restore his manhood, although it reemerges not in sexual, but in regicidal form. Macbeth is eager to murder Duncan by the conclusion of act 1, where he declares, "I am settled, and bend up / Each corporal agent to this terrible feat" (80-81). Here, Macbeth exhibits the mental impression his wife makes on him: these lines remarkably echo her earlier invocation, where she imagines cultivating her desire with her breasts, and Macbeth similarly "settle[s]" both his mind and "corporal" parts on regicide (80-81). Thinking like his wife thinks, Macbeth here reveals both the impact of her persuasive powers and the significance of what it means to "[b]e so much more the man" (51). He appears to believe regicide will restore his identity, which he can now describe in embodied terms. But significantly, his new "corporal" identity remains

"unsex[ed]" (81; 1.5.41); unlike Lady Macbeth, who specifically identifies her "woman's breasts" (1.5.47) as the source of her monstrous maternal power, Macbeth mentions no explicitly manly parts. Regicide, already established by Lady Macbeth as the desire of monstrous mothers, is not suddenly masculinized when Macbeth "settle[s]" upon it (1.7.80). Instead, it continues to reflect the deforming desire of monstrous mothers, who may unsex all reproductive bodies but their own.

Considering the genderless language of Macbeth's declaration that he will murder Duncan, to "[b]e so much more the man" consequently seems to represent an act of becoming that requires the repudiation of manhood in favor of a more powerful monstrous maternal identity (line 51). In *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes may behave like a monstrous mother, but not become one because he lacks the maternal body parts linked to the display and breeding of monstrous maternity. Yet in *Macbeth,* where Lady Macbeth breaks the rules of monstrous maternity as she anatomically augments her reproductive power, Shakespeare also seems to suggest that men like Macbeth may not only imitate, but also *be* monstrous mothers, though they lack female anatomy. While Macbeth seems to possess his wife's embodied desire when he "bend[s] up / …to this terrible feat" (80-81), Shakespeare physicalizes manly monstrous maternity through deeds rather than body parts (although arguably, Macbeth's "bend[ing] up" suggests he is erect and ready to kill. In that case, he has missed Lady Macbeth's point that male genitals are unnecessary for the monstrous generation of power). Macbeth displays monstrous maternal power when he resolves to murder Macduff's family. He refers to the impending slaughter as "[t]he very firstlings of my heart" (4.1.147)—a reproductive image that portrays his thought

simultaneously as monstrous desire and offspring, the usual products of the monstrous maternal imagination. He concludes that "The firstlings of my heart shall be / The firstlings of my hand" (4.1.147-48)—a promise of action that likens him to a monstrous mother who will not only conceive, but also deliver a monstrous birth.

Strikingly, Macbeth's vow to make these murders "[t]he firstlings of my hand" poises him to generate a form of monstrous maternal power that equals Lady Macbeth's in strength (line 148). Should he "deliver" his brutality, Macbeth would not only imagine, but also issue violence from his own body, an act that would reincorporate a physical function into monstrous reproduction—a function that Lady Macbeth has replaced with an image of perpetual nurturing monstrous identity. But ultimately, other murderers, not Macbeth, kill Lady Macduff and her children. Slaying Lady Macduff in particular with his own hands would arguably have solidified Macbeth's monstrous maternal identity: as a figure who imaginatively generates violence, Macbeth would have embodied the parthenogenetic female imagination that conquers natural reproduction, a quality fading, but still traceable to Lady Macduff. But the disconnection between the violence Macbeth imagines and its physical performance by the murderers destabilize his monstrous maternal identity. A similar detachment between monstrous thoughts and deeds occurs with Duncan's murder, since Macbeth executes not his own, but Lady Macbeth's fantasy. The notion that Shakespeare portrays cruel deeds as a source of the imagination's embodiment ultimately does not materialize, and monstrous maternal imaginative power thus remains firmly rooted in female reproductive parts.

But importantly, Lady Macbeth's eventual confinement to her chamber, where she laments "desire…got without content" (3.2.5), and ultimately, becomes a prisoner of guilt, once again underscores Shakespeare's idea that embodiment does not limit monstrous maternal power in *Macbeth.* In her invocation to the spirits, Shakespeare shows that female breasts may augment monstrous maternal power, and during Lady Macbeth's decline, he introduces a new part—notably, born of woman—that simultaneously embodies and creates with the imagination. This "body," Lady Macbeth's "damned spot," illustrates how her monstrousness escalates to the point where she imaginatively generates new parts to embody her fantasies. Tormented by the delusion of a "damned spot" that she believes exposes her complicity in Duncan's murder (5.1.33), Lady Macbeth seems to obsess over a loss that occurs when she leaves the murder to Macbeth. Before she confronts the immediate prospect of killing the king, Lady Macbeth indicates in her infanticidal fantasy that she is capable of regicide. But later, waiting for Macbeth to return from Duncan's chamber, she reflects on her inaction, "[h]ad he not resembled / My father as he slept, I had done't" (2.2.12-13). The sight of sleeping Duncan instigates a figurative miscarriage; the murderous self Lady Macbeth imaginatively conceived in her invocation dies when she beholds a face like her father's. Moreover, Duncan's murder at her own hands would have signified the formation of an unequivocal monstrous maternal identity for Lady Macbeth. If she "had done't," she would have borne the "monstrous birth" of murder gestating in her mind.

The evident skittishness Lady Macbeth feels during her filial reflection anticipates the aftermath of her miscarriage of murder: the consuming fantasy of the damned spot.

The exclamations that interrupt the dialogue of this passage reveal a Lady Macbeth thoroughly unnerved:

> *Lady M.* Alack! I am afraid they have awak'd,
>
> And 'tis not done:—th'attempt and not the deed
>
> Confounds us.—Hark!—I laid their daggers ready;
>
> He could not miss 'em.—Had he not resembled
>
> My father as he slept, I had done't.—My husband!
>
> *Enter* MACBETH.
>
> *Macb.* I have done the deed. (2.2.9-14)

While Lady Macbeth's edginess in part stems from anxiety she feels about Macbeth's inability to "[do] the deed," it also betrays a fragile reproductive state (line 14). Almost since her introduction in the play, Lady Macbeth has "fill[ed]" (1.5.42) her imagination with thoughts of murdering Duncan. Imagination literature emphasizes that pregnant women's obsessive thoughts, if left unsatisfied, result in the imprinting of images upon the fetal body; thus, an obstetrically-responsible Duchess of Malfi voraciously consumes her dirty apricocks. Lady Macbeth's anxious manner exposes both her consuming preoccupation with Duncan's murder and the delicate mind pregnant women purportedly possess—both of which testify to her own monstrous maternal tendencies. However, Macbeth's entrance and proclamation that he has "done the deed" puts an end to the possibility that Lady Macbeth's desires will be fulfilled; although Duncan is dead, *she* did not perform "the deed" (2.2.14). The "birth" she wished to deliver—her regicidal self and its victim—is usurped by Macbeth.

While Macbeth's usurpation of monstrous maternal power at this moment underscores Shakespeare's point that monstrous "births" take not only physical, but also figurative forms, the power that Lady Macbeth conceives eventually yields what she believes is a physical, miscarried, "body": the mark of her unfulfilled desire, the "damned spot" of blood on her hands (5.1.33). The spot resembles traditional infant monstrous births in two senses. First, as externalized evidence of the murderous contents of Lady Macbeth's mind, it reintroduces to the play the relationship between the bodies of mothers and offspring. Second, it creates a deformity: Lady Macbeth becomes the monstrous birth of her own imagination. But the physical form of this monstrous birth also signals that she produces even more "births" than she intended; although she earlier steers her imagination from biological production, now, like a monstrous birth, she bears a deformity of her own. Rather than directly produce the "direst cruelty" with which she wished to be "fill[ed]," she leaves only the noticeable imprint of her unfulfilled longing (1.5.42-43). Moreover, her identity as a monstrous birth appears to overwhelm her monstrous maternal identity; like the monstrous births Macduff earlier imagines, Lady Macbeth here exhibits a lack of agency characteristic of deformed infants, who are vulnerable to the formative power of their mothers. The Doctor of Physic and the Gentlewoman emphasize her objectified position, as they remark on the perceptible evidence of the state of her imagination. Lady Macbeth's somniloquence raises suspicions in her female attendant, who worries that "[s]he has spoke what she should not" (5.1.45), and who "would not have such a heart in [her] bosom" (line 51). To the

physician, Lady Macbeth becomes a medicalized monstrous birth, who has "amaz'd [his] sight" (75).

But the physician's other reactions to Lady Macbeth suggest that he not only considers her a patient to observe and contemplate, but also a reproductive figure who overwhelms *him.* He deems her "disease…beyond [his] practice" (55), and thus expresses a sentiment shared by some obstetrical writers who speculate on the causes of monstrous births, but often fail to discover satisfying conclusions.[89] Likewise, the Doctor confronts a monstrous mother who confounds imagination theorists, when he hears in Lady Macbeth's "sigh" a "heart…sorely charg'd" (50) but fails to discern that his patient's imagination, not her heart, generates the auditory exhibition of her monstrous self. The powerful, incomprehensible monstrous mother who develops in the sleepwalking scene demonstrates the persistence and perpetuity of the monstrous maternity Lady Macbeth earlier generated; while plagued by anxieties absent from her self-forming invocation, infanticidal fantasy, and the emasculating pep talk she gives Macbeth, another monstrous maternal—rather than infantile—identity seems to emerge. As Lady Macbeth obsessively rubs and curses her spot, her "cruelty" resurfaces:

> Out, damned spot! out, I say!—One; two:
> why, then 'tis times to do't.—Hell is murky.—Fie,
> my Lord, fie! a soldier, and afeared?—What need
> we fear who knows it, when none can call our power
> to accompt?—Yet who would have thought the old man
> to have had so much blood in him? (5.1.33-38)

Lady Macbeth does not exclusively obsess over the spot in this passage; rather, she appears to imaginatively generate anew, as she envisions an apparition of herself attempting to instill courage in Macbeth following Duncan's murder. Notably, she does not conjure precise memories, but instead imagines an altered past.

This fantasy equivocally reestablishes Lady Macbeth's monstrous maternal identity, because immediately after Duncan's death, she continues to humiliate Macbeth; she would "shame / To wear a heart so white" (2.2.63-64) she tells her easily-startled husband. In these lines, Shakespeare anticipates the sleepwalking scene, although Macbeth, who wonders whether "great Neptune's ocean will wash this blood / Clean from my hand" (59-60), now literally displays the "damned spot" (5.1.33). But in the continued aftermath of regicide, Lady Macbeth's own "spot" develops. When Banquo's ghost appears to Macbeth in act 3, the king continues to exhibit "the torture of the mind" that troubled him even before the murder (3.2.21). But now, Lady Macbeth also reveals her own anxieties. Her taunt that Macbeth's vision signifies nothing but "the very painting of [his] fear" (3.4.60) anticipates her line in the sleepwalking scene about an "afeared" Macbeth (5.1.35). However, the courage she claims in act 5, which stems from her imagined confidence that not even exposure can topple the power she and Macbeth have obtained, never actually materializes at the banquet. Lady Macbeth indicates that she greatly fears exposure when she warns Macbeth that his "noble friends do lack" him (83); multiple witnesses here behold Macbeth's guilty temporary insanity, and Lady Macbeth viciously urges him to stop divulging his murderous secrets to them. She no longer plays the role of the powerful monstrous mother who sought "direst cruelty"

(1.5.43), but instead betrays a fearful and guilty mind. The monstrous confidence she claims in the sleepwalking scene represents the product of her powerful imagination, but it is problematized by her anxieties about the irremovable spot.

And yet, this continued fantasy of achieving absolute monstrous maternity indicates that Lady Macbeth still possesses mighty monstrous maternal power. The fact that only *she* can see the imprint of her guilt demonstrates the extent of her monstrous maternal formative power and the strength of her imagination. While Macbeth issues the violence conceived by his brutal desires, Lady Macbeth delivers not a violent monstrous birth, but a perpetually tortured monstrous maternal self. This differs from the regicidal self she forms in her invocation, which Macbeth eventually appropriates. Her new self, in contrast, sinisterly and irreparably transforms her reproductive nature. By constantly producing not the monstrous offspring of her desire, but her own monstrous maternity, Lady Macbeth solidifies the idea that monstrous motherhood exists as a state independent of issue. Her obsession with a deformity generated both *by* and *in* the maternal imagination allows her monstrous maternity to perpetually regenerate, and consume all other aspects of her maternal identity.

CHAPTER 4:

THE RETURN OF THE HUSBAND: REFORMING THE IMAGINATION IN EARLY MODERN CANNIBAL NARRATIVES, *BARTHOLOMEW FAIR*, AND *THE FAERIE QUEENE*

To open, I would like to return momentarily to Lady Macbeth, whose self-reformation represents the central focus of this chapter: the ability of monstrous mothers to innovate their own power. Early in *Macbeth*, Lady Macbeth transforms monstrous maternal identity by replacing the womb with breasts as the imagination's primary physical cohort; by the sleepwalking scene, she imaginatively recreates herself once again. Instead of purposely cultivating the fantasies of power that generate her regicidal identity earlier in the play, she now automatically reproduces her monstrous self while occupying what her doctor perceives is an "infected" mental state (*Mac.* 5.1.69)—one in which she obsessively dwells upon her imaginative deformity, the "damned spot" (line 33), the symbol of both her monstrous formative power and her deformed self. However, although Lady Macbeth now lacks the purposeful imaginative power associated with monstrous maternal reproduction, she does not simply succumb to the mental "disease" from which she suffers (55). Rather, the escape of monstrous maternal power from her imaginative control reveals the far-reaching influence of her monstrousness, as it allows monstrous maternity to become a cultural force that can overpower even her, the quintessential monstrous mother. The ignorance concerning Lady Macbeth's supposed mental decline further underscores the impact of this unharnessed monstrous maternity.

As I noted in chapter 3, the doctor's recognition of her symptoms as a "disease…beyond my practice" (5.1.55) anticipates seventeenth-century professional uncertainty about the causes, and consequently the prevention of monstrous births—ignorance that further exposes the lack of control practitioners exercised over the monstrous maternal body. The Doctor of Physic suffers a similar vulnerability to monstrous motherhood, since he can offer no remedy for its perpetual manifestation in Lady Macbeth's imagination.

Shakespeare initially demonstrates the ability of monstrous maternity to manifest as a force in his portrayal of the witches. The witches do not have a private reproductive relationship with Macbeth in the sense that they do not mate with him while usurping his own formative power as a wife (although not his own) might; however, they do function for him as an overwhelming maternal force. The witches confront Macbeth outside of traditional reproductive spaces, such as the womb, marriage bed and lying-in room, but their maternal relationship to him grants the vast, dark outside spaces where they meet important reproductive meaning. In act 3, scene 5, Hecate identifies Macbeth as the "wayward son" (line 11) of the three witches and herself, a characterization that signals their formative influence on him. Hecate maternalizes herself and the witches within a speech that emphasizes that the "trade and traffic with Macbeth" (4) represents the practice of their "art" (10). While the gender ambiguity of the witches problematize their identification as monstrous mothers, Hecate's declaration that they intentionally target and shape Macbeth reveals that they indeed represent a force maternally monstrous in its formative ability.

Even more significant for demonstrating the continued impact of maternal monstrousness is Macbeth's psychological isolation from his wife, which Shakespeare portrays most explicitly after her death, when monstrous maternity no longer acts primarily as her defining characteristic, but also comes to represent a destructive force. Psychological isolation also signals reproductive ignorance in Macbeth, who exhibits total unawareness of the reproductive import of Lady Macbeth's decline and death. The "damned spot" (5.1.33), along with the male practitioner summoned to assist the female attendant of the patient, essentially converts Lady Macbeth's chamber into a monstrous lying-in room. However, Macbeth knows nothing about this, a lack of understanding that becomes clearest when he fails to recognize "the cry of women" that Seyton must identify for him (5.5.8). The "noise" (line 7), because it erupts from women attending a maternal patient, does not suggest death generally, but a delivery gone horribly wrong. In contrast with the physician, whose professional expertise is undermined by the escalating power of monstrous maternity, Macbeth exhibits an ignorance that makes him completely vulnerable to the destructive influence of this force. Although he is the "monstrous birth" of Lady Macbeth, Macbeth's delusions of invincibility lead him to disregard the threatening monstrousness she has produced. Shakespeare's selection of Macduff—the man linked to a reproductive riddle Macbeth cannot solve—as the king's assassin is therefore ironic, since it forces Macbeth to face the monstrous maternity he refuses to recognize as a threat. "None of woman born" (4.1.80), Macduff memorializes a sinisterly devastating form of maternal monstrousness dramatically different from the imaginative forms I have described—the pregnant body that destroys itself when it

cannot deliver its offspring. The Caesarean delivery of Macduff's mother physically parallels the imaginative self-destruction of Lady Macbeth. The legacy of physical maternal monstrosity, Macduff, continues to assert devastating power by destroying Macbeth. In this way, monstrous maternity also overwhelms Macduff, as he becomes a mere vehicle for communicating its destructive influence.

While Lady Macbeth's imaginative transformation in act 5 exposes the presence of a more virulent form of monstrous maternity than the one she generates earlier in the play, Shakespeare depends upon the ineffectiveness of Macbeth and the doctor to demonstrate that this uncontainable monstrousness exerts a catastrophic influence both in- and outside of obstetrical spaces, and consequently, on non-maternal and non-infant figures. Yet in the broader reproductive literary context of early seventeenth-century England, this inescapable form of monstrous maternity emerges around the same time some imaginative, obstetrical, and wonder texts are introducing an alternate fantasy of the weakness and tractability of monstrous maternal power. The means for curbing women's monstrousness is straightforward: help them fulfill their alimentary longings. Longing women crave edible foods, like fruits and meats, but they also desire inedible items such as chalk and human flesh—particularly the meat of men. Moreover, even women who experience longings for edible foods may eat like cannibals, who take their flesh raw; the longing mother of French humanist, theologian and wonder book author Simon Goulart (1543-1628), who heavily features pregnant cannibals in his own accounts of longing women, reportedly ate oysters "rawe and aliue" (Goulart 73). The objects of women's alimentary desires, along with the behaviors these desires provoke, consequently position

longings as a dangerous phenomenon requiring extremely delicate and decisive treatment. On one hand, obstetrical authors indicate that gastronomic satisfaction will relieve women's imaginative obsessions, and consequently suppress their monstrousness by preventing them from producing monstrous births. On the other, reproductive authors caution that women should not be permitted to satiate their voracious appetites too eagerly, since female feeding frenzies may end in physical violence.

The manifestation of monstrous maternal appetites as cannibalism and other forms of voracious consumption positions longings as a particularly vexed obstetrical issue, because uncontrolled eating represents the irresistible impact of cultural monstrous maternity that Lady Macbeth generates in her final confinement. Longing women may be driven to maim and murder men—shockingly outrageous acts that signal deep social disorder. But the overwhelming urges that compel pregnant women to eat specifically *male* flesh suggest that the broader cultural importance of monstrous maternal cannibalism is its role as a female-led assault on early modern gender relations. The rhetoric of pregnant cannibal narratives equates women's alimentary and sexual appetites by speaking of female "desire" for specific male body parts, suggesting that male nudity incites longings, as authors portray women touching *and* biting their victims. It thus establishes a predatory, heteroerotic sexuality for pregnant women—a characteristic that physicalizes the usurpatory power of the female imagination by conflating imaginative obsession and sexual contact. While the sexual suggestiveness of cannibalistic attacks equates eating with sex—consequently reestablishing the possibility that men may

exercise formative power over fetuses—the prominence of the desiring female imagination still threatens to obscure male contributions to generation.

Yet while the constant assertion of the maternal imagination in pregnant cannibal narratives reaffirms and augments women's overwhelming monstrous maternal power, the presence of men in these works complicates women's parthenogenetic tyranny over reproductive matters. Pregnant women often fixate on male objects of desire; for example, John the Baptist dressed in animal skins provokes women to bear hairy children in an oft-repeated longing narrative of the period.[90] But John's formative influence is clearly not spermatic, and unlike pregnant cannibals, the mothers in these stories have no physical contact with a man; while in some traditions, they give birth, the narrators include no account of the conception. The imaginations of these women therefore exercise full formative control over their offspring. Yet strikingly, cannibal narratives also make the presence of brutally victimized men *powerful*, when they allow them to limit the number of bites the cannibal takes. That is, in stories where the husbands of cannibals negotiate the amount of flesh the victim will sacrifice, men assert reproductive dominance over women. Both victims and husbands follow the advice of obstetrical authors, who urge audiences to help women control their longings. But as these longings become eroticized, the act of limiting consumption allies husbands with victims. Ensuring that pregnant cannibals receive incomplete fulfillment, both help to reestablish men's visible reproductive power. Pregnant cannibals give birth to multiples,[91] and since the resemblance of a monstrous birth (whether monstrous in its deformity or in its lack of resemblance to its purported father) to its mother's object of desire materializes only

when her longings remain unsatisfied, some offspring presumably emerge looking like their legitimate fathers. Perfect children in these texts correspond with the number of bites the woman takes. But significantly, denied bites do not produce infants who resemble the cannibal's victim, but in corresponding stillbirths. It is as if denying the act of biting imprints women's unsatisfied desire for violence—or, in these erotic narratives, their desire for aggressive sex—upon the fetus by killing it. In such stories, the imagination, and therefore the pregnant mother, remains murderously monstrous, but her monstrosity at least *appears* to be limited, because no living evidence of her usurpatory reproductive power remains.

In this chapter, I argue that constructing this fantasy of a reproductively-dominated monstrous mother requires early modern authors to eroticize pregnant women's longings, because sexually insatiable women are perceived as less dangerous than monstrous mothers. Both figures threaten to topple patriarchal constraints on women, particularly in the domestic realm, as the usurpatory formative imaginations of monstrous mothers and adulterous wives destabilize lines of inheritance and obscure or erase male reproductive power. Longing women may threaten men in shockingly violent and violating ways. However, the notion that a figure exists who is more dangerously voracious than the lustful woman is not a familiar one in early modern texts. Othello—already exhibiting signs of his own unhinged, jealous imagination—puts the issue aptly when he laments, "[t]hat we can call these delicate creatures ours / And not their appetites!" (*Oth.* 3.3.273-74). Moreover, the physical equation of female sexual aggression as feasting augments the threatening nature of the lascivious woman. The

open female mouth that talks, eats, or drinks too much, critics show us, corresponds with a gaping, hungry vaginal orifice.[92] Authors of the literature of longings themselves perpetuate the image of unbound female sexual desire when they eroticize not only men's flesh in cannibal narratives, but also other objects of alimentary desire.

But Lisa Jardine's analysis of instances of female "strength" (69) in early modern English drama demonstrates that negative female characteristics, including sexual insatiability, are consistently subjected to male assertions of control. Her argument complicates early modern women's reputations as sexually ravenous, uncontrollable provocateurs of disorder. Dramatists position male characters to identify and punish "female" characteristics such as sexual insatiability. They thus confine women—in spite of their aggressive (and therefore seemingly unmanageable) natures—to a paternalistic disciplinary sphere.[93] But as we have seen, specifically maternalized sexuality resists masculine regulation. By eroticizing pregnant women's unpredictable, violent longings—and thus, subordinating maternal to erotic female threats—obstetrical and wonder authors create the illusion that monstrous female behaviors can be restricted or even prevented by husbands and other men socially authorized to monitor and control their wives.

In the first part of this chapter, I examine the equivocal success of husbands and communities in suppressing monstrous maternity in narratives featuring pregnant cannibals. These works maintain tension between patriarchal regulation of potentially monstrous pregnant wives and monstrous maternal power. Cannibalistic women's appetites may drive them to overpower and devour men, and "successfully" controlling

monstrous maternity may entail a husband establishing or reestablishing reproductive authority that his wife has usurped, rather than completely eradicating her monstrous maternal tendencies. *Bartholomew Fair* and *The Faerie Queene* help emphasize that the paternalistic power asserted in cannibal narratives is problematized by the continued presence of monstrous mothers. But these texts also demonstrate that monstrous mothers perpetually exert threatening reproductive power because reproductive theorists only *fantasize* their control of these women. In *Bartholomew Fair,* Jonson portrays women's sexual desires not as appetites inferior, but equal to alimentary longings. John Littlewit's position as his wife's reproductive regulator collapses because he mistakenly believes that her gustatory, but not her sexual desires, require dictatorial regulation. In the Radigund-Britomart episode of Book 5 of *The Faerie Queene*, Spenser further complicates the nature of women's erotic appetites, by eliminating male authority over the maternal imagination. Spenser deals solely with sexual desires in this section, and thus emphasizes the dangerous nature of erotic longings underestimated by reproductive theorists. Britomart's choice to engage in mutual, rather than imaginative reproduction signals the decline of her monstrous maternal power. Yet ultimately, she determines the type of co-generator she wants to conceive with—a decision that suggests monstrous maternal power still looms in her imagination, as she forms not only her offspring, but also an Artegall with a high mate-ability factor.

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Alimentary longings represent a rare area of certainty in seventeenth-century imagination theory, because as a manifestation of female desire, they help position

women as the subjects of misogynistic control, thus undermining their role as usurpatory generators.[94] By resituating monstrous mothers among women in general, rather than emphasizing their reproductive extraordinariness, imagination theorists weaken their dangerous power. However, because outrageous expressions of lust may themselves be monstrousness, longings "tamed" by erotic inflections underscore the necessity of professionally regulating maternal longings. This need arises even with the most ordinary longings, an idea provocatively illustrated by the physician Helkiah Crooke in his 1615 medical treatise, *Mikrokosmographia: a description of the body of man*. A narrative of a longing for fruit addresses the common anxiety about the usurpatory reproductive behaviors of monstrous mothers. The passage, in which Crooke cites "a Figge or a Mulbery" as examples of what mothers may yearn for, equates alimentary longings with lust as it describes "the mother with childe [who] doth ardently desire" these fruits (311).[95] With their passionate attachment to food, the women Crooke describes exhibit displaced, monstrous female desire; by focusing their ardency on food rather than on their husbands, they grant formative influence to the former that rightly belongs to the latter.

Interestingly, Crooke here deals with a typical manifestation of monstrous maternity, parthenogenetic fetal formation, but at the same time, he transforms the monstrosity in the passage from an exclusively maternal problem to a symptom of generalized female lust. His choice of the fig as an object of desire illustrates his purposeful eroticization of maternal longings. The fig, Gordon Williams shows us, has rich sexual meaning in early modern English literature, where it represents both male and

female genitals and reputedly provokes lust.[96] The presence of the fig in this passage may therefore suggest that pregnant women who long for this fruit may engage in genital-centric fantasies or feel generally plagued by sexual desire. The mulberry has naughty significance through its association with the fig, although it is not a traditional passion fruit. However, it still emphatically and perversely makes Crooke's point. While it lacks the fig's broad sexual significance,[97] the mulberry functions here as an erotic object that incites passion in women. While pregnant women who "ardently desire" figs long for a delicacy already laden with sexual significance—and thus, express thinly-veiled sexual passions—those who "ardently desire" mulberries do not crave genitalia barely-concealed by the fig (311). Crooke instead comically projects their ardency onto the fruit itself. "[A]rdently desir[ing]" mulberries, just as they "ardently desire" figs, women experience unbound, unnatural lust for the berries themselves, because unlike figs, the former fruit represents nothing symbolically sexual (311). Consequently, the mulberry acts not as a substitute but still-sexed formative power, but as a total replacement for a male mate. Moreover, Crooke here alludes to female perverseness of epic proportions, since throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, imagination authors frequently cite reports of children deformed by berry-shaped birthmarks.[98]

The mulberry's comically perverse role as a replacement for a male sexual partner further complicates maternal identity by eradicating the biological reproductive significance of female desire. Of course, longing pregnant women cannot reject their identities as reproducing bodies. But by rhetorically positioning mulberries as women's sexual partners, Crooke envisions a specifically non-reproductive form of female desire.

Belief in superfetation persists in the period's obstetrical literature, but nowhere does food supersede men as parents of separately-conceived twins. A lustful female identify consequently overtakes the monstrous maternal identity of the women Crooke discusses. On one hand, the tenet of imagination theory that women whose longings remain unfulfilled will deliver children marked with images of the denied objects continues to position longing pregnant women as potential monstrous mothers imaginatively capable of imprinting mulberries on their fetuses. On the other, the mulberry represents a non-formative object that pregnant women seek not for alimentary satisfaction related to their longings, but for erotic fulfillment. The fruit's promise of gustatory pleasure, moreover, underscores the non-reproductive character of women's lust, by substituting the mouth for the genitals as a primary erogenous zone.

The continued association of lustful women with monstrous mothers in *Mikrokosmographia* threatens to breed a monstrous femininity characterized by boundlessly desiring women perversely pursuing erotic aliment. Yet by undermining women's reproductive role, Crooke conversely suggests that the gustatory symptoms of monstrous maternity produce more controllable women. Longing pregnant women usurp male reproductive roles to become monstrous mothers, a point of imagination theory that Crooke reiterates when he observes,

> If…the formatiue faculty work at liberty it will alwayes generate children like the Parents; but if in the beginning of the conformation the formatiue faculty be hindred by another which is more powerfull and diuine then it selfe, such as is the

> Imagination, then will the impression follow not the weaker but the stronger, and so the Infant will become vnlike the Parents. (311)

While the active imagination inevitably determines the course of fetal formation, female lust does not exercise such extraordinary power. This difference receives additional articulation in early modern English literature that features husbands who limit lust in practice. In *Othello*, for example, the mere *idea* that Desdemona is unrestrainedly lustful drives Othello to murder. At the same time, Desdemona's death also illustrates the expectation that husbands would and should bridle their wives' sexual appetites. Ruth Vanita shows that the mutual inactivity of the play's male characters that occurs while Othello grows increasingly abusive toward Desdemona facilitates her death, because these men make "[t]he presumption that husband and wife, even when literally in a public space, metaphorically inhabit a private space wherein violence is somehow different from the violence of one man on another" (348). In that private space, one "of the most fundamental assumptions of Elizabethan society[,]…that an adulterous woman deserves death" becomes a dangerous possibility (350).

Subjecting female lust to a husband's punitive will does not produce murdered, conquered, or even completely silenced wives in longings narratives, because unlike Othello, husbands in these texts continue to confront monstrous maternity, even as they limit its effects. However, patriarchal domination continues to influence the consequences of monstrous maternal events in these works. The toleration in early modern English society of violence against lascivious wives that Vanita cites transforms in reproductive writings into an expectation that husbands will exercise their privilege of

control over their spouses in order to limit monstrous maternal behaviors. In Guillemeau's *Child-birth,* this tension between patriarchal privilege and monstrous maternal power materializes when the author concedes that sometimes, women "cannot forbeare" when they long, and in such cases, they should "haue their longings, for feare least it should proue worse with them" (21), by provoking either early labor or imaginative imprinting. Here, women continue not only to long, but also to eat; however, Guillemeau indicates that they must receive permission to "haue their longings" (21). In *Of domesticall duties* (1622), William Gouge outlines the responsibility of husbands in particular for limiting women's longings. A husband, Gouge writes, must provide "prouident care for his wife about her child-bearing," including "procuring…to the vttermost of their power and abilitie, such things as may saue their longing, in case they do long (as in all ages women in the time of breeding and bearing childe, haue been subject thereunto.)" (399). Gouge's insertion of the husband into a discussion of longings establishes an active male presence in early modern imagination theory. Women who lack the dutiful, "prouident care" of their husbands may fail to satisfy their longings, and consequently exert monstrous deforming power over their offspring (399). However, wives whose husbands "saue their longing" presumably will *not* exhibit monstrous maternal characteristics beyond their initial longings, since their satisfied appetites will leave nothing for the imagination to imprint upon their offspring (399). Notably, the husbands of fulfilled women retain their reproductive significance by ensuring that the maternal imagination will not obscure their contribution to reproduction.

The idea that husbands must meet their wives' longings with decisive action signals the confidence of writers such as Guillemeau and Gouge, who believe that means exist to successfully suppress monstrous maternity. Yet outside of their portrayals of domesticated longings, other texts maintain a palpable tension between husbandly husbandry and uncontrolled monstrous maternity. We see this in the ballads *The wonder of wonders* and *True Wonders and Strange News from Romsey in Hampshire*, in which vigilant husbands fail to impact the course of their wives' monstrous pregnancies.[99] Elsewhere, narratives that describe pregnant cannibals illustrate the potential of monstrous maternity not only to eradicate male reproductive relevance, but also to incite widespread social crises by upsetting marital hierarchy. These concerns fuse in Pierre Boaistuau's treatise on prodigies and their moral significance, *Theatrum mundi* (1566). In a generally dismal and misogynistic passage on generation, Boaistuau laments for "poore husbands [who] haue bene constrained to depart and absent thēselues" because their wives did "couet to eate humaine fleshe" (Ei_v)—a sentiment that envisions the collapse of a husband's authority over his wife and his inevitable reproductive irrelevance that arises paradoxically from his self-preservation.[100] The full extent of the maternal cannibalistic threat to men materializes in another cannibal narrative, Goulart's account of a woman who appears to have her wits about her—imaginatively-driven, but not mentally transformed, the woman is an unequivocally bad monstrous mother whose brutality is not restricted to her longing period:

> In a village not farre from *Andernac* a Towne seated vpon the *Rhine*, belonging to the Bishop of *Colleyn*, a Country woman being with Child and distasted, did long

> to eate of her husbands flesh. Her desire was so furious, as she killed him, eate halfe his body, and pouldred vp the rest: soone after the rage of her appetite being gon, she confessed the fact willingly vnto her husbands friends, that sought for him. (74)

Although forthcoming about devouring her husband and pulverizing his remains "*after* the rage of her appetite" passes (74; my italics), the woman also exhibits a similar presence of mind even while in the throes of "furious" "desire." She sinisterly treats cannibalistic destruction like a series of domestic tasks: identifying a desperate need for meat, she slaughters her husband, consumes him, and disposes of the waste. That she stops to "pouldre" up the remains transforms the significance of the murder and her cannibalistic consumption. While all three acts are framed rhetorically by her "furious" "desire" and the subsiding of her "rage of appetite," because she pauses to dispose of her husband, the woman does not appear entirely transported by her passions. She seems rather to attempt to maintain her cannibalistic identity, since "pouldr[ing]" may not indicate a destruction of the remains, but rather a preservation technique that yields flour she can later relish (74).

Yet while Goulart portrays this woman as a shockingly brutal, cruel monstrous mother, he paradoxically paints her as a dutiful *woman*. Her confession to her husbands' representatives and her longing for husband meat signal proper domestication: while the murder and consumption of the spouse seems to indicate an irreparable loss of husbandly authority over a wife, the appearance of his friends as the woman's confessors reinserts this authority into the text. Moreover, because Goulart's characterization of the women's

longings as “desire” conjures the conflation of orifices typical of pregnant cannibal narratives, her endogamous consumption, when considered for its erotic implications, suggests that she directs her desire faithfully and appropriately to her husband. The cannibal’s subjection to her husband’s proxies, along with her implied sexual self-regulation, complicates the female sexual domination suggested by the half-eaten body. Although domineering and destructive, she exhibits a domesticated sexuality akin to her self-harnessed monstrous maternity.

Goulart’s story emphasizes how the presence of husbandly authority—whether real or implied—limits women’s destructive influence. At the same time, it also characterizes cannibalistic expressions of female monstrousness as acts that require stronger resistance than husbands alone may provide. Consequently, some cannibal stories transfer regulatory power to the victims themselves. This contrasts remarkably with the unresponsiveness to domestic abuse in early modern English society that Vanita identifies in *Othello*. Unlike the abuse of wives, cannibalism by pregnant women does not represent a private set of isolated problems that perpetuates its own effects when outsiders decide to consider it none of their business. Rather, monstrous maternity becomes a major social and reproductive issue that its victims confront. The authors of longings literature characterize the men cannibals attack as victims of sexual assault; thus, when they submit to a limited number of bites, they become the allies of husbands, as they permit only an incomplete form of gustatory cuckolding.

Goulart includes two of these stories in his wonder book *Admirable and memorable histories*; in them, the partial nudity of the victims most readily illustrates the erotic desire of the cannibals:

> A Woman of *Nisues*, being with Child, and seeing a young man, a Fuller of cloth bare legged, shee came so neere him, as with her teeth she laies hold of one of his Legges and carries away a peece of it. He was content shee should vse him twise in this sort, but seeking to returne the third time, hee refused her and went his way. This poore woman a while after was brought in bedde of three children whereof two were aliue and lusty, and the third dead. (73)

The second example features a less compliant victim; however, he ultimately has no choice but to submit to the woman:

> At *Lymbourg* in *Silesia*, the Towne where I was borne, a man coming out of a Bathe bare Legged, with his pantofles, hee was followed by a woman with Child, who desirous to tast of such meate, gets hold of one of his thighs and with her teeth pulled of a peece of his heele, the man crying out murther, yet would she not leaue her hold vntill she had done. (74)

The erotic delight both cannibals take in male body parts recalls the pornographic suggestiveness of stories of mothers who produce black children or hairy monsters after they regard images of Ethiopians and hair-appareled saints hanging in their own bedrooms. Moreover, both types of desiring women exert usurpatory formative power when they adulterously fantasize during conception. For cannibals, however, this act of generative cuckolding becomes increasingly physicalized. Both the cannibals of Nisues

and Silesia resemble the idolatrous adulteresses in their extramarital desire; while unfaithful women exhibit theirs boldly in their marital chambers, cannibals reveal theirs publicly when they prey upon body parts that do not belong to their husbands. Goulart leaves readers in little doubt of the Silesian cannibal's lust for the bather: characterizing her as "desirous to tast" the man's "meate" (74), Goulart employs language that Michael Schoenfeldt has demonstrated expresses early modern sexual, as well as alimentary hunger.[101] Moreover, while the woman eventually eats from the man's heel, she also handles his thigh, and thus, brings her hand in close proximity to his "meate" (74).

The presence in these stories of men and their meat reintroduces the biological possibility of male-female mating that the monstrous maternal imagination masks. At the same time, because women attempt to satisfy their desires with men other than their husbands, female lust constantly threatens to restore the power of monstrous maternity. In the account of the cannibal of Nisues, for example, the woman's adulterous imaginative obsessiveness reveals her irresistible monstrous maternal imagination. Goulart notably never describes her chewing; instead, after "she laies hold of one of [the fuller's] Legges," she "carries away a peece of it" (73). "Carries" conveys an idea of hoarding more than it does eating—an act that resembles the imaginative covetousness that plagues women who long. Goulart consequently leaves readers contemplating the strength of her imagination, and possibly wondering whether the two children born "aliue and lusty" inherit the features of the fuller (73). However, the bite the fuller denies the woman continues to perpetuate the constant tension between monstrous maternal power and male efforts to control it. An explosion of monstrous maternity looms even more

menacingly in the Silesian cannibal's story, since her unwillingness to unhand her victim "vntill she had done" indicates her absolute power over him (74). Yet ironically, the act of physically overwhelming him may actually indicate vigilant regulation of her monstrousness by observers. The lack of response to the bather's cry of "murther" suggests that those who witness the scene ignore his cries in order to ensure that his voracious assailant does not become *more* monstrous (74). That is, if she was forced to "leaue her hold" before "she had done," she presumably would miscarry as the cannibal of Nisues does (74). Concern with, and evidence of attempts to prevent gestational catastrophe also appear in Lemnius's *The secret miracles of nature* (1658). Lemnius recounts the story of a man "who [that he?] might satisfie a womans longing, granted her leave to bite, least she might take any hurt" (16). "Hurt" *does* come to both mother and one of the twins she carries, however, because "the man would not endure her" after her initial bite; "she presently began to languish," and soon after delivers a stillborn twin (16). But with no such narrated miscarriages in the Silesian account, Goulart suggests the possibility that the woman delivers healthy offspring because observers look the other way when she forces her victim to submit.

Lemnius's explicit and Goulart's implicit insertion of the pregnant cannibal into a community of reproductive watchdogs extends the tensions in longings literature beyond the gendered battle between monstrous mothers and the paternalistic regulatory system represented by husbands and victims. These narratives also emphasize the necessity of subjecting monstrous mother/whore figures to professional supervision; by envisioning doom for unwitting victims of longings, they caution against treating pregnant women

permissively—a form of leniency obstetrical authors in particular shun in elaborately-detailed dietary guidelines for pregnant women.[102] Despite its unrestrained nature, the brutality of cannibals remarkably advances professional interests in controlling reproductive women, by revealing the intersection of efforts to regulate the maternal imagination with aspects of reproductive theory that underplay the catastrophic influence of maternal monstrosity. Specifically, the prodigious strength of the Silesian cannibal corresponds with descriptions in early modern medical literature of "fierce and mannish" women whose violent natures and ability to effectively execute violence become attributes understandable in terms of regular, rather than monstrous, reproductive knowledge (Crooke 309). Crooke's employment of Hippocratic seed theory, for example, demonstrates how a biological premise partially curbs unstoppable monstrous maternal reproduction. The Hippocratic argument complicates the Galenic two-seed model, because in it, both men and women produce strong and weak seed, "the one masculine hotter and stronger, the other feminine that is colder," positions male and female as formative equals (309).[103] Because the Hippocratic spermatic schema endows both men and women with "masculine" and "feminine" seeds, it accommodates a spectrum of masculine or feminine individuals—categories that depend both on the type of seed that "preuailes" during conception, and the parent from whom it issues (309). One combination in particular produces females who share similar violent tendencies with pregnant cannibals: "[i]f from the man proceede feminine seede and from the woman masculine, and the womans seede preuaile, women are begotten…that is [sic] fierce and mannish" (309). However, the threat of monstrous maternity does not loom in

fierceness and mannishness that originates in women's dominant masculine seed; rather, Crooke envisions this masculine woman as one of the three types that issue from regular generation (309).[104]

Aligning female reproductive violence with biology and estranging it from the monstrous imagination results in a multi-dimensional means for controlling women. While longings literature subjects women to patriarchal authority by eroticizing their appetites, the Silesian cannibal story demonstrates how medicalization can transform women into comprehensible and predictable reproductive subjects. But while a seminal explanation for female "fierce[ness]" and "mannishness" opens up the possibility of incorporating women into non-monstrous generative theory (309), it confounds itself by simultaneously encouraging the growth of monstrous maternity, and consequently exposing the fantasy of limiting its threat. Because the process of curbing monstrosity depends primarily on perceiving women's subjection to patriarchal and reproductive regulation, and not on changing the behaviors of individual women, pregnant cannibals like those in Lemnius's and Goulart's longings narratives remain free to cultivate their monstrous thoughts and behaviors. Strikingly, Lemnius instead introduces the idea of *male* self-discipline as a means of warding off the escalation of longings, while Goulart suggests that observers may watch not the cannibal, but the man, in order to ensure that he sacrifices his flesh for the sake of perfect generation. Perfection, moreover, indicates not only the production of non-monstrous births, but also proof, in a child's perfect face, that a husband contributed to generation.

The female imagination is a troubling force for men and practitioners, not only due to its traditional role as a source of non-erotic and non-medical forms of monstrosity, but also because it emerges as a faculty women themselves must make good. In other words, the fantasy of controlling monstrous maternity remains incompletely realized because authors may recast the maternal imagination as erotically- or medically-motivated, and thus subject to discipline, but they cannot change its inclination to cultivate desires for power. Lady Macbeth, fettered neither by a husband anxious about her sexuality nor a practitioner who harbors even a glimmer of hope of regulating her health, freely cultivates fantasies of power that generate catastrophic monstrous maternal force. Her example suggests that portraying harnessed monstrous maternity successfully starts by penetrating the longing woman. In the two texts I examine in the next section, *Bartholomew Fair* and *The Faerie Queene*, penetration becomes a literal means for controlling women, as Win Littlewit allows her husband to divert her imagination from monstrousness to obedience with intercourse while they peruse the temptations of Bartholomew Fair, and Britomart embraces the authority of male seed over her womb when she resolves to marry and mate with Artegall. But penetration also becomes a more complex endeavor in these works, where women are not always inclined to expose the contents of their imaginations in order to demonstrate how they internalize patriarchal and professional efforts to regulate their monstrous tendencies.

Jonson explores communal obstetrical reinforcement on a smaller scale in *Bartholomew Fair*, where John Littlewit directs the course of his wife Win's fake longings for pig, and the obstetrical and religious implications of satisfying Win send her

mother and Zeal-of-the-Land Busy into an uproar. Within the Littlewit home, Jonson more skillfully creates the illusion of regulated monstrous maternity that authors of reproductive tracts and cannibal literature only imperfectly achieve, by questioning whether monstrous maternity overwhelmingly permeates cultural and reproductive spaces. Here, Jonson tames maternal longings by transforming them into fake products of Littlewit's non-maternal mind. It is Littlewit's idea for Win to "long to eat of a pig…I' the heart o'the Fair, / not at Pie Corner" (1.5.136-27), so that they both may escape Win's oppressive Puritan mother and her pious suitor Busy. Domestic isolation and the falsification of longings allow Jonson to deliver a double blow to monstrous females, as he undermines both maternal and erotic forms of destructive power. First, the monstrous power of maternal imaginations that do not generate longings significantly declines, since pregnant women no longer have irresistible thoughts compelling them to behave badly. Moreover, under the close supervision of Dame Purecraft and Busy, Win appears to be in little danger of generating a sincere longing. Gluttonous Busy appears to ensure that Win receives little exposure to alimentary enticements, since he gobbles the family's food; Littlewit claims that when he goes to fetch Busy in order to ascertain his views on Win's longings, he "[finds] him, fast by the teeth i' the cold turkey pie i' the cupboard, with a great white loaf on his left hand, and a glass of malmsey on his right" (1.6.31-33). Although Dame Purecraft calls Littlewit's report "slander" (36), she belies the strength of the Puritan's appetite, who later "scents after it [pig] like a hound" at the fair (3.2.73). Win also seems unlikely to encounter sexual temptation in her home, which is overrun with her mother's other suitors, men whose taste "tends to fruit of a later [and

wealthier] kind" (1.2.18-19). But surrounded by pigs and pimps at Bartholomew Fair, Win confronts both gustatory and erotic temptations. Her sexual appetite heightens when Littlewit leaves her alone in Ursula's booth of roasting pigs—a transformation that seems simultaneously to underscore his belief that all maternal longings are essentially erotic, and to undermine his attempts to control them. While he takes pains to satisfy his wife's desires before he leaves, Win nonetheless reveals an imagination inclined to monstrousness.

Littlewit operates under the naïve assumption that he fully controls Win's reproductive mind because he generates and directs her longings. He has an advantage over other husbands in suppressing monstrous maternity, because Jonson equivocates on the matter of whether Win is pregnant at all; if she is not, the chance that she might engage in longings-induced monstrous maternal behaviors decreases dramatically. On one hand, Dame Purecraft appears unsurprised by Win's longings, a reaction that indicates she receives news of her daughter's desires with the previous understanding that she is pregnant. Littlewit's witticism, that he is "but half a" fool and Win "t'other half," and as "man and wife [they] make one fool" (1.1.25-26) may suggest that together they have conceived a creature of littler wit than themselves. On the other hand, Win's belly does not protrude, at least not enough to warrant "cut[ting]" her "lace" (1.5.139), which Littlewit wants her to do to make her seem pregnant; consequently, she displays no unequivocal sign of pregnancy. Critics generally have not presented Win's gestational status as a complex issue, however; for most, Win is either pregnant or not. For Lori Schroder Haslem, Win's pregnancy is a "sham" (Haslem 448), while Gail Kern Paster

takes for granted that Win's womb houses a fetus.[105] James E. Robinson's assessment, that Win is pregnant despite the fact that she fakes her longings,[106] offers a useful complication to the issue, by focusing on her deceit; while Win's pregnancy would position her as a maternal character, her deceptive nature would emphasize a general *female* identity.

Unlike her pregnancy, Win's longings for pig prompt no debate; they are false claims of appetite, generated by her husband's "Wit" (*BF* 1.5.133). Littlewit presents his plan for Win to long following a brief invocation to "Wit": "No, Wit, help at a pinch, good Wit come, come, good Wit, an't be thy will" (lines 133-34). While Littlewit's delight in creating humorous witticisms underscores the absurdity of his invocation, the longings that it generates more seriously serve as the foundation for his suppressive endeavors. Littlewit exerts full control over Win's longings as he concocts the plan for her to long and supervises its execution. While the identification of Win as an exclusively erotic figure does not occur until her near-pimping by Whit and Knockem at Bartholomew Fair, Littlewit's attentive regulation of his wife's longings suggests that he already identifies her mouth and its contents as vehicles for restraining her sexual inclinations. Win is eroticized early in the play, as Littlewit repeatedly kisses her, and with fetishistic fascination comparable to Herrick's speaker in "Delight in Disorder," orders her to present some of her charming apparel for kissing. However, unlike Herrick's woman (who presumably consists of more than "the shoulders"—the only parts of her body Herrick mentions—and clothes "thrown / Into a fine distraction" [Herrick lines 3-4]), Win is tidily sexy; she displays no "disorder in the dresse" (1) suggesting that

Littlewit is “taken with” (*BF* 1.2.3) the proper, well-dressed appearance her tight-laced bodice, velvet cap, and “fine high shoes” makes (1.1.21). Littlewit’s fastidiousness notably extends to his vision of how Win must long. His “device” (1.5.133) theoretically will prevent Win from enjoying the fair’s non-gastronomic attractions, including the impromptu sex workers’ career fair in Ursula’s booth, where Whit and Knockem persuade Win to become a prostitute because “de honest woman’s life is a scurvy dull life” (4.5.26-27). While Littlewit wants Win to long “I’ the heart o’the Fair” (1.5.136)—presumably a location that will require her to encounter other enticements first—he also desires her to long convincingly. And to do so requires the eschewing of all pleasures but the object longed for. The pregnant women who “ardently desire” in *Mikrokosmographia* (Crooke 311), or who “earnestly” desire in Guillemeau’s *Child-birth* (21) demonstrate that foods longed for must become obsessions that completely preoccupy the female imagination. To Dame Purecraft and Busy, Littlewit describes Win’s own obsession as one typical of voraciously longing pregnant women, when he claims that his wife “longed above three hours, ere she would let me know it” (1.6.10-11); that she requires a “bellyful” of pig (and therefore, a potentially lengthy feast) (line 19); and that she experiences longings so strong that she may already have imprinted porcine tendencies upon her offspring: he refers to this “little one” as a creature “that cries for pig so, i’ the mother’s belly” [90-91]).[107] Moreover, Littlewit instructs Win to “be sick o’ the sudden” to further convince her mother that she is pregnant, and thus legitimately longs (1.5.138-39). Win obeys her husband, feigning an illness that

presumably would exclude her from partaking in other Bartholomew delights, both erotic and gustatory (1.6.4, 9, 22),.

Win's complicity in Littlewit's scheme suggests that she acknowledges and accepts her husband's reproductive control over her. Her submissiveness emerges when she first stages longings in front of Dame Purecraft; when asked by her mother, "[w]hat polluted one was it that named first the unclean beast, pig, to you, child" (1.6.7-8), Win gives no answer, but only indicates her falsified maternal weakness with an incomprehensible "[u]h, uh" (line 9). Yet when Littlewit demands a response, Win specifically says "[a] profane black thing with a beard" (12). Like contemporary midwifery authors, Jonson suggests that husbands may control the maternal imagination by mining it for information. Moreover, the subjection of the imagination to broader patriarchal examination materializes when Busy becomes integral in deciding how Win should eat the Bartholomew pig. While Dame Purecraft professes knowledge of Puritan doctrine equal to Busy's, she—and consequently Win—nonetheless requires male authorization to eat. The women discover that Busy's opinions echo those like Guillemeau articulates, who admits pregnant women must have their longings, but in a orderly way. Busy permits Win to attend the fair, as long as the pig "be eaten with a reformed mouth, with sobriety, and humbleness; not gorged in with gluttony or greediness" (65-67).

Yet the merry regulatory attitude Littlewit radiates while he generates Win's longings and she enacts them before her mother and Busy belies his anxieties about her monstrous reproductive potential. Winwife's compliment, that Win is "[a] wife…with a

strawberry breath, cherry lips, apricot cheeks, and a soft velvet head, like a melocoton" (1.2.-13-15), constructs a blazon consisting of parts belonging both to monstrous mothers and monstrous births. The garden Winwife beholds atop Win's shoulders will not satisfy his own hunger, since he "tends to fruit of a later kind: the sober matron" Dame Purecraft (lines 18-19); instead, it describes desires a pregnant Win might display. The apricot's aphrodisiac qualities make the fruit an obvious object of pregnant women's eroticized longings, Haslem notes in her analysis of the Duchess of Malfi's own voracious appetite,[108] while images of fruit often appear on monstrous births in the longings narratives of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century obstetrical literature.[109] The melocoton, a type of peach, possesses aphrodisiac qualities of its own,[110] and most strongly represents Win's inclination to long. When Winwife compares her velvet-ensconced head to a melocoton, he draws attention to desires she may harbor in her imagination; with "soft," he portrays her head/imagination as susceptible to longings. Moreover, by selecting an erotically-significant object as the occupant of Win's "head," Winwife simultaneously portrays her pregnant longings as sexually subversive.

But Littlewit has not completely failed to recognize the link between Win's alimentary and erotic appetites that Winwife's blazon suggests. In this passage, Littlewit seems to observe that he has a wife inclined to long without his assistance. He considers himself plagued by "dullness" when Winwife compares Win's "velvet head" to a melocoton (1.2.16, 15), as if he did not initially recognize the imaginative implications of Win's clothes. Furthermore, Littlewit explicitly identifies pregnancy as a delicate state, and Win as its delicate sufferer: when she objects to Quarlous's kisses in act 1, scene 3,

Littlewit calls her "womanly," and wonders that she would "[m]ake an outcry to [her] mother" (35-36), although clearly she has aimed her protestations (quite properly) at him. Littlewit's inappropriate reference to Dame Purecraft may suggest his anticipation of Win's cries to her female attendants, including her mother, during childbirth. Furthermore, his characterization of Win's reaction to Quarlous's kisses as "womanly" draws attention to her heightened sensitivity as a pregnant woman. Yet while Littlewit's allusions to pregnancy implicitly identify a wife potentially brimming with desire, he notably remains confident that he can control inappropriate longings she may experience. Littlewit paradoxically regulates Win by urging affectionate encounters with Winwife and Quarlous. Winwife greets Win with a kiss (1.2.11), *after* Littlewit instructs her to "let Master Winwife kiss you" (lines 7-8). Quarlous does not wait for Littlewit's authorization, but boldly kisses Win, much to her dismay; Littlewit subsequently mocks her "outcry" and encourages Win to accept another kiss from their visitor (1.3.36). By keeping his wife's mouth full of undesirable gentlemen,[111] Littlewit makes it impossible for her to bestow kisses upon men she may actually lust after. Moreover, he presents the advances that Win disdains as completely non-threatening. "There's no harm in" Win receiving Winwife's kiss, Littlewit argues (1.2.9), because "[h]e comes a-wooing to our mother…and may be our father perhaps" (lines 8-9). Similarly, Quarlous can "do…no harm" because as Littlewit attests, he "is an honest gentleman, and our worshipful good friend" (1.3.36-37). Paster argues that Littlewit may also keep Win full of his own sexual organ; when Win seeks a private place to pee at the fair, Littlewit accompanies her into Ursula's booth, where Ursula tells Whit the Littlewits are "at it" (4.4.189).[112] If Littlewit

does indeed use Win's urinary urges as an opportunity for sex, he significantly reasserts his control over her reproductive behaviors by literally filling her vagina so other men cannot.

Littlewit automatically articulates professional obstetrical warnings to husbands to regulate their wives' insatiable appetites. In his mind, alimentary urges *always* signal sexual desire, a belief he emphasizes when Jonson suggests that he provides Win with his "meat" in a booth full of pig, the previously-publicized object of her longings. Littlewit's own possible gynecological practice within Ursula's booth, however, would signal gross overconfidence in his ability to keep Win's imagination uncorrupted by desire. Patricia Parker's characterization of Ursula as "perpetually in heat" (267) suggests the pig-woman's booth is an extremely dangerous place for a pregnant woman; always hot from cooking pigs, Ursula produces food that threatens to make Win really long for their flesh. Connecting Ursula to Eve when the pig-woman proclaims, "I shall e'en melt away to the first woman, a rib again" (qtd. in Parker 267), Parker also associates Ursula with female sexuality.[113] An Ursula "perpetually" exuding sex is also a bad example for Win, whose sensitive mind is conceivably receptive to exhibitions of desire. Win herself, however, remains unaffected by displays of fleshliness in Ursula's booth; instead, she wonders that Littlewit will leave her alone with two men. Her quickly-incited interest in rejecting "an honest woman's life" (4.5.28) for a prostitute's soon after her husband's departure indicates that she may recognize men as an irresistible temptation, especially to the particularly sensitive mind of a pregnant woman. But Littlewit ignores, or is unaware of

this possibility; he apparently believes that he has satisfied Win sexually for at least the "half hour or so" that he plans to be gone (4.5.3).

While Littlewit recognizes the social impact of longings before he and his family leave for the fair, his departure from Ursula's booth, along with the permission he gives to presumably undesirable men to kiss his wife, demonstrates his ignorance of the sensitivity of the maternal imagination. Immediately after Littlewit leaves, Win negotiates her illicit sexual value with Whit and Knockem. The opacity of Win's imagination remains problematic, because Jonson ultimately portrays her as a sartorial, rather than a practicing prostitute, and thus never depicts her voraciously pursuing sex. But as Busy's antitheatrical tirade reminds readers, clothes have the power to transform their wearers—a phenomenon Phillip Stubbes characterizes as "adulterat[ing] the veritie of [one's] owne kinde" in his excoriation of cross-dressing in *The Anatomie of Abuses* (n. pag.).[114] This is also Busy's complaint, and although the Puppet Dionysius dubs it an "old stale argument" (*BF* 5.5.91), he, too, does not deny that players may "adulterate" their gender (Stubbes n. pag.)—only that puppets cannot, who "have neither male nor female amongst [them]" (*BF* 5.5.92-93). Clothes, then, conceivably endanger Win's imagination. Dressed in the "[g]reen gowns" of whores (4.5.85, 5.6.43-44), she resembles the lurking Silesian cannibal. Appareled to prey on men, she is at least poised to fulfill the insatiable sexual desires that plague pregnant women.

Haslem has characterized Win's erotic insatiability as an illustration of the conflation of pregnant women's alimentary and sexual appetites.[115] Arguing that Jonson constructs a culture in which "a [pregnant] woman's supposedly excessive, nearly

irrational longings must bespeak a body even more sexually hungry" (448), Haslem underscores the diversity of pregnant women's desires, which may focus on a variety of alimentary or erotic objects. Yet the falseness of Win's longings for pig problematizes the conflation Haslem identifies, by positioning illicit sex as her *only* longing. As Win undergoes both external and internal transformations in Littlewit's absence, Jonson suggests that she has been an uncontrolled monstrous mother all along—she just happens to long for sex, rather than food. And in opposition to regulatory imagination literature that suggests pregnant women's erotic desire is less powerful, and more easily suppressed, than their alimentary longings, Jonson portrays Win's sexual desire as the primary source of her imaginative power. This power, moreover, overwhelms paternalistic attempts, articulated primarily by Littlewit, to limit the uncontrolled development of monstrous maternity.

The overpowering of Win's knowledge of obstetrical responsibility by her sexual susceptibility to Whit and Knockem underscores the depth of her monstrous maternal reproductive potential. Win's surprise about Littlewit's departure suggests that she realizes—though her husband clearly doesn't—that imaginatively-vulnerable pregnant women should remain supervised at all times, lest shocking sights (or wicked propositions from "honest gentlemen" like Whit and Knockem [4.5.7]) corrupt their imaginations. But comprehensive obstetrical knowledge cannot restrain the imagination, and Win's eager entrance into prostitution indicates that as a pregnant woman presently unguided by her husband, she cannot resist things that "molest her mind" (Guillemeau, *Child-birth* 26). And Littlewit's little wit exacerbates the problem, because it cannot

fathom the diversity of uncontrollable monstrous maternal longings; thus, he mistakenly positions the vagina as an orifice unequal to the mouth in its ability to spread monstrous maternity. Furthermore, by transforming women's genitals from controllable to uncontrolled parts, Jonson reinforces his reinstallation of monstrous maternal power in women's imaginations and behaviors. Win's sexual monstrous identity emphasizes her association with her extravagantly lustful female sex. While the embodiment of the maternal imagination within female reproductive parts indicates that "maternal" and "female" forms of monstrousness differ, in *Bartholomew Fair*, Jonson suggests that female lust fortifies monstrous maternal power; in other words, longing pregnant women can deform paternalistic regulation by cultivating their erotic desire. Identifying monstrous mothers specifically as lustful women confounds the efforts of men like Littlewit to effectively adopt monstrous maternal characteristics—such as the ability to generate longings—in order to suppress the desires of actual women. The unrestrained sexual power that upsets marital and gender hierarchies thus remains securely beneath the skirts of women, yet always ready to be unleashed, at the end of *Bartholomew Fair.*

Win Littlewit's sexual transformation reveals that erotic and eroticized longings are not as controllable as husbands and obstetrical practitioners imagine. In the Radigund and Britomart episode of Book 5 of *The Faerie Queene,* Spenser deepens the monstrousness that the erotic maternal imagination generates by omitting paternalistic interference with women's desires. While Artegall looms as a potential regulatory spouse for both Radigund and Britomart, controlling monstrous maternity depends completely on their willingness to suppress it. The self-regulation of the imagination

most significantly materializes in Britomart's transformation from a monstrously desiring woman to a complicit "natural" reproducer willing to suppress her monstrous maternal power. She initially expresses this sentiment when "her troublous thought" of the dream of mating with a Crocodile at Isis Church dissipates only after the priest explains she has symbolically envisioned uniting with Artegall and bearing their son (5.7.24). While the priest promises Britomart she and Artegall will rule equally (5.7.23), the Knight of Chastitie must sacrifice reproductive power to share in this political authority, because her status as a reproductive mother within this "equall" union (5.7.23) requires the overthrow of usurpatory female reproductive power as men again become women's "equall" partners. Moreover, by the time Britomart has her dream, Spenser has already set her monstrous maternal decline in motion. As a woman who passionately longs for her future lover, Britomart is an eroticized figure who shares with the women of longings literature a susceptibility to restraints on her reproductive functions and behaviors. Yet although Spenser draws on the tradition of presenting the eroticized female reproductive body as a controllable entity, he also transfers controlling power from external parties such as husbands, cannibalized men, and communities to the maternal mind itself. In doing so, he retains the monstrous maternal determination of the imagination, but redirects it to fulfilling natural, physical reproductive purposes. For Britomart, longing for Artegall drives her to partial reproductive amenableness, if not submissiveness, in the sense that she must exchange absolute monstrous maternal power for shared generative duties. Her transformation, although deeply uncharacteristic, is necessary for satisfying her desires. Notably, Spenser's technique perpetuates the tension between monstrous and

natural reproduction, but it is precisely the constant presence of monstrously obsessive desire that provides Britomart with sufficient strength to self-reform.

The most explicit evidence of Britomart's monstrously-inclined imagination emerges during her dream at Isis Church, where her vision of being mounted by a Crocodile and subsequently bearing a Lion reiterates beliefs, central to early modern imagination theory, in the perverse contents of the female imagination and women's ability to imprint desires on offspring. The Crocodilian element of her dream is especially problematic, because while the Isis priest reassures Britomart that the "Crocodile doth represent / The righteous Knight, that is thy faithfull louer" (5.7.22), Britomart's bestial fantasy also has literal importance. Although the Crocodile "doth *represent*" Artegall, he is also the monstrous choice of Britomart's fancy. Furthermore, the appearance of two different species in Britomart's dream problematizes the function of imprinting and its relationship to bestial desire, since the imagination was expected to produce a clearer correspondence between women's objects of desire and their monstrous births.[116] The Lion, however, exhibiting "great might" and the ability to "all other beasts subdew" (5.7.26), embodies the nature of Britomart's monstrous mind; characterized as an overpowering force, the beast shares the nature of the unleashed maternal imagination. Its monstrousness complicates the decline of Britomart's own monstrous maternal power, which seems to occur because the Lion's "might" appears more directly attributable to its father (5.7.26). The ferocious Crocodile, who almost eats Britomart before Isis transforms him into a "meeke" creature with the help of "her rod" (5.7.16, 15), is the only visibly forceful reproductive figure in Britomart's dream. Even after Isis subdues him,

the Crocodile initiates courtship and mating, while Britomart, "accepting" his advances, becomes passively "enwombed" (5.7.16). However, Spenser does not simply portray a Britomart who lies down to accept her role as the co-wellspring of a dynasty, because her monstrous maternal imagination continues to exercise its own "great might," as she rejects a fantasy of natural reproduction in favor of bestial desire (5.7.26).

Britomart's anxiety over the "vncouth sight" she imaginatively generates perpetuates the tension between her irresistible monstrous maternity and her attempt to refocus her imagination on dynastic creation (5.7.16). While she recognizes the monstrousness of her mind, and seeks the priest's assistance in order to correct it (5.7.19), she nonetheless appears irreparably disposed to monstrous maternal obsessiveness. After the dream, she lies awake "[w]ith thousand thoughts feeding her fantasie" (5.7.17)—an act that cannot correct imaginative monstrousness, because it mimics monstrous mothers' perverse cultivation of their fantasies. Moreover, Spenser's assurance that Britomart "much was eased in her troublous thought" after the priest interprets her dream (5.7.24) fails to describe an imagination free of monstrous desire. The priest's allegorical reading of the Crocodile and Lion masks, but does not erase, the perverse content that her imagination harbors, and the manner of her departure betrays a mind still plagued by lust: "taking leaue of" her hosts, Britomart

> …forward went,
>
> To seeke her loue, where he was to be sought;
>
> Ne rested till she came without relent
>
> Vnto the land of Amazons, as she was bent. (5.7.24)

Although allegedly free of bestial desire, Britomart's compulsion to ride "without relent" to her Crocodilian lover demonstrates the connection between her erotic desire and maternal destiny. Maureen Quilligan argues that this link depends upon Britomart's perverse inclinations. Quilligan contends that Britomart's desire focuses explicitly on incestuous coupling, because in her dream, she envisions herself resembling Isis; thus, when the priest compares the Crocodile not only to Artegall but also to Osyris (5.7.22), the act of impregnation signals an incestuous fantasy.[117] But Quilligan also notes that incestuous desire goes hand in hand with the endogamy crucial to dynastic solidification, an agenda Britomart supports when she dreams of herself/Isis accepting the "enwomb[ing]" power of the Crocodile/Artegall/Osyris and ultimately producing the "Lion of great might" (5.7.16).[118] Quilligan stresses that the unchaste elements of Britomart's desire do not simply disappear when in her dream she accepts her maternal destiny. Rather, the incestuous elements in particular *generate* her wifely, procreative eroticism by allegorically illustrating her acceptance of the "familial power" upon which she, with Artegall, will build her dynasty (Quilligan 163).

Quilligan's analysis underscores the idea that any suppression of monstrous maternity is always a fantasy, as imaginative impropriety becomes a means for generating reformed desire. While I agree that Britomart eventually self-domesticates her desire, I would also propose that this process is more difficult, and its result more unstable than Quilligan's argument indicates, because Spenser portrays Britomart's imagination perpetually confronting monstrosity, not only because it cultivates perverse fantasies, but also because it confronts a double desire in its longing for Artegall. On one

hand, Artegall represents a vehicle through which Britomart can obtain the political power she desires. He consequently also represents a way to naturalize her imagination, since he will impregnate her with noble offspring. But Britomart also views Artegall as a resource for obtaining political *monstrous* reproductive power. In her dream, she envisions Artegall-as-Crocodile as a monstrous mother: "gaping greedy wide" to "deuoure" her, "swolne," and possessing "peerelesse power" (5.7.15), the creature resembles a longing pregnant woman ready to satiate itself with prey. Canto 7's legal interpretation of the Crocodile's eventual submission underscores Britomart's position as the controller of the Crocodile's monstrous maternity. On behalf of Britomart, Isis, the goddess of Equity, limits overreaching justice, represented by its god, Osyris/Artegall. But legal issues become obstetrical matters when Britomart herself contains and perfects the force of Artegall/Crocodile/Osyris in her womb; the omnipotent Lion, who can "all other beasts subdew" (5.7.16), exhibits overwhelming monstrous maternal-style force that he inherits from both parents. Britomart's dream transforms the idea of containing monstrous maternity: rather than placing limitations on it, Britomart envisions herself stealing more from Artegall.

Conscious Britomart, however, fails to recognize the relationship between her imaginative and physical destinies. During her battle with Radigund, for example, she focuses so completely on vanquishing her enemy that she appears utterly loathe to embrace natural maternal functions. When she and Radigund fight, they

…spared not

Their dainty parts, which nature had created

> So faire and tender, without staine or spot,
>
> For other vses, then they them translated;
>
> Which they now hackt & hewd, as if such vse they hated. (5.7.29)

Mary Villeponteaux identifies the brutalized "dainty parts" as Radigund and Britomart's breasts.[119] Conceivably, Spenser may envision the women bloodying their organs of generation, but his use of "hackt" and "hewd" seems to confirm Villeponteaux's assessment, as it evokes the legend of one-breasted Amazons, who sear off or amputate their right breasts in order to more easily carry weaponry in battle.[120] Both Amazonian elective mastectomies and Radigund's disregard for her "dainty parts" signals the deformity of the Amazonian imagination, which dismisses the breast's traditional maternal use. Britomart's own mammary-mistreatment aligns her with the Amazon Queen, an association that problematizes the relief she feels when she discovers her dream's allegorically-chaste significance. Though Britomart learns from the priest that she can obscure the monstrous inclinations of her imagination, her failure to properly defend her "dainty parts" indicates ambivalence about using them (5.7.29)[121]

In contrast to Britomart, Radigund recognizes that she requires her maternal body to obtain and exert monstrous maternal power. In a manner similar to Lady Macbeth, who envisions "direst cruelty" originating in her "woman's breasts" (*Mac.* 1.5.43, 47), Radigund relies on both the natural and monstrous aspects of her reproductive identity to consolidate her gynocratic political power. Still possessing a whole breast, Radigund potentially embodies traditions that portray one-breasted Amazons as nursing mothers.[122]

A double-edged sword therefore cuts off the Amazonian breast: while they remove a part of their physical maternal identity, Amazons also use this maternal body part in order to gain greater freedom of movement essential to the warrior lifestyle upon which their political power depends.[123] Amazons further externalize their monstrous maternal power to create and maintain their gynocratic regimes by creating the impression that their subjects originate from parthenogenetic reproduction. Kathryn Schwarz notes that Amazons may kill both male sexual partners and children, violence that shores up their political power through a fantasy of parthenogenesis.[124]

Radigund's own domination of men arises from a determined imagination focused on the monstrous maternal goal of ensuring male sexual submissiveness in her love interest Artegall. Artegall plays not only the part of the "weaker sex" when Radigund forces him to don "womans weedes" (5.5.20), but also, as Lauren Silberman suggests, becomes a distinctly sexually weak *man* when Radigund starves him to impotency.[125] Silberman cites Talus's reassurance to the distractedly jealous Britomart that Artegall "is not the while in state to woo" Radigund as evidence of the knight's impotence (5.5.16). Silberman's argument is persuasive, because while Spenser conceivably means that an Artegall swimming in his armor is unlikely to attract many women, the raging sexual jealousy Britomart exhibits when she learns "a Tyrannesse" has "vanquisht" her lover suggests that something greater than courtship plagues her mind (5.6.11). Yet while Britomart remains focused on Artegall's dainty part, Radigund may care very little whether it can "woo" or not. Because an Artegall incapable of performing sexually would take the idea of female biological reproductive domination to impossible lengths

(since monstrous mothers who want to create the impression of absolute biological reproductive power still need male seed in order to generate offspring in the first place), Silberman's argument for impotency suggests that Radigund may have monstrous maternal goals loftier than degrading Artegall. Spenser indicates that Radigund in fact abuses him in order to fortify the general monstrous maternal determination of her imagination. The Amazon queen orders Clarinda to soften Artegall with "womens witty trade, / The art of mightie words" (5.5.49), an idea that eroticizes both Clarinda and Radigund, practitioner and generator of this chatty tactic, as it recalls the conflation of gaping female mouths and vaginas. Yet while Radigund refers to a negative stereotype of women as unrestrainedly talkative when she describes speech as "womens…trade," she refocuses the power that the eroticized female body sacrifices to men in longings narratives by envisioning the technique as an "art" (5.5.49). She consequently reestablishes monstrous maternal authority, which trumps patriarchal efforts to dominate women through sexualization and other means, as she explains that Clarinda must achieve the seduction of Artegall by proxy with "mightie words" (5.5.49)—a technique that represents the focus and formative precision characteristic of the monstrous maternal mind.

Additional evidence that Radigund seeks to hone her monstrous maternal craft via imaginative techniques materializes in additional orders to abuse Artegall. Radigund again indicates that she cares not that starving, overworking, and chaining the knight will not arouse him, because she plans to "vse" him "not like a louer, / But like a rebel stout" after "his demeane" (5.5.51). In other words, if starving (and overworking and chaining)

Artegall weakens him sexually, as Silberman suggests, Radigund, in the manner of an obsessive monstrous mother, doggedly pursues the further exertion of her political power. Significantly, Radigund orders the physical abuse of Artegall only if Clarinda fails to "inuade" (5.5.49.7) him with "mightie words" (5.5.49) While Spenser's diction suggests the feminization of a penetrated Artegall, it does not indicate a similarly straightforward gender reversal for his captor. Spenser's use of language suggesting penetration resembles Shakespeare's employment of the "keen knife" to portray Lady Macbeth as a penetrating mother who embodies male and female reproductive power (*Mac.* 1.5.52). Similarly, Spenser assigns the masculine sexual act of invasion to Radigund/Clarinda, but his simultaneous portrayal of the Amazons as monstrously disposed ensures that invasion becomes a usurpatory act characteristic of absolute monstrous maternal power, rather than an uncomplicated masculinization of their "mightie" tongues (*FQ* 5.5.49).

Importantly, Radigund's intention to "inuade" Artegall emancipates Amazon identity from its traditional dependence on the violated presence of men (5.5.49). Some aspects of Amazon identity, especially tendencies toward violence and sexual aggression, are disturbing because they target men: Amazons violate male enemies in war and male sexual partners in their not-so-domesticated domestic spaces.[126] But by sartorially and verbally emasculating Artegall, Radigund simultaneously obscures male presence *and* retains her Amazonian identity. This act suggests that Radigund's Knoxian perversion of disregarding "the heasts of mans well ruling hand" underscores (5.5.25), but is not necessary for demonstrating her imaginative deformation—she exhibits Amazonian power whether we can see her vanquished enemies or not.

Unlike Radigund's parthenogenetic efforts, Britomart's version of the Amazonian parthenogenetic fantasy transforms into a desire for natural reproductive opportunities. Britomart envisions herself as a monstrous mother capable of containing and concocting her mate's monstrous maternal attributes. However, Spenser seems to suspend Britomart's leonine reproductive capacity indefinitely, when Artegall leaves Radegone to help Irena. This emphasizes the necessity of the male reproductive body to fulfilling Britomart's fantasies, which her vision of Artegall as the monstrously maternal Crocodile only ambivalently acknowledges. Furthermore, when Spenser makes Britomart not only Princess of Radigund's former subjects, but also the agent that "[t]he liberty of women did repeale, / Which they had long vsurpt" (5.7.42), he torpedoes her political fantasy of two monstrous mothers generating a dynasty. Yet remarkably, Britomart does not appear discontented with her new circumstances—at least for a knight known for wallowing in her misery; upon Artegall's departure, she is "[f]ull sad and sorrowful," but now in possession of an uncharacteristic presence of mind, Britomart "wisely moderate[s] her owne smart" (5.7.44). A "moderate" Britomart contrasts sharply with the knight whose bestial fantasies and breast-shearing violence represent her inclination for monstrous outrageousness. In obstetrical terms, Britomart reacts to anguish exactly as reproductive women should. The regimen of moderation that Guillemeau recommends in all aspects of a pregnant woman's life includes her emotional behavior. Women should "liue" in "Aire, which is neither too hote, nor too cold" (*Child-birth* 18), and "vse moderate exercise" (22), but they should also not "fret…immoderately" (23).

Spenser leaves readers wondering, is the new Britomart—a proponent of male visibility and authority, and thus a woman poised for natural reproduction—his fantasy or hers? The concerns about obstetrical regulation and monstrous maternity shared by the Radigund-Britomart episode and longings literature puts Spenser in the position of obstetrical regulator when he "moderate[s]" Britomart's once-monstrous passions (Guillemeau, *Child-birth* 22). Yet although her monstrous power significantly declines as her mind moderates and she submits to patriarchal rule, it does not completely disappear, because she ultimately determines how her own reproductive activities will proceed. Britomart defines her generative authority the moment she cuts off Radigund's head. Villeponteaux notes that Britomart has no physical need to decapitate her enemy, whom she has dealt a mortal wound; however, she does it in order to symbolically excise her violent, political, Radigundian elements, which conflict drastically with her physicalized, maternal destiny as the dynastic matrix.[127] But Radigund's decapitation also signals Britomart's retention of monstrous maternal power, because with the removal of Radigund's head, she decides which bodies will participate in reproduction. When Britomart confronts the Amazon Queen in battle, she comes face-to-face with a monster she has already encountered. Radigund remarkably resembles the unreformed Crocodile in her unrelenting "greedinesse" for Britomart's destruction—a manifestation of an obsessive imagination that, should it exceed Britomart's "equall greedinesse" (5.7.30), will allow her to retain the political power that depends significantly on keeping men like Artegall invisible. While Britomart also envisions the Crocodile as "greedy" (5.7.15), she dreams of subduing his all-consuming power—an "equitable" tempering of an

excessively violent beast that allows her to fantasize the non-parthenogenetic mating that yields the Lion. While the monstrous elements of Britomart's dream persist in the fantasies of bestial mating and absorption of the Crocodile's monstrous maternal power, the Knight of Chastitie simultaneously turns toward reproductive reform. Her dream ultimately forces an imaginative transformation in the Crocodile that makes him an acceptable mate. By "turning all his pride to humblesse meeke" (5.7.16), the Crocodile suppresses his monstrous maternal tendency to tyrannically, rather than physically generate.

Britomart's relationship to monstrous maternity becomes increasingly complicated once she begins to act as *both* an agent of suppression and a typical imaginative pervert. By severing Radigund's head, she clarifies, but does not simplify her monstrous maternal identity. The decapitation of Radigund represents the destruction of the Amazon Queen's politically-reproductive imagination, a faculty that keeps Artegall in thrall and consequently prevents Britomart from starting her uterine dynastic endeavors.[128] At the same time, the symbolic removal of an imagination that relies on parthenogenetic fantasizing to generate Amazonian power represents the transformation Britomart requires for both herself and Artegall. Britomart's dream exposes their mutual desires for absolute power, which she envisions as Artegall's Crocodilian appetite and her own power-hungry womb. However, fantasies of longing, rogue-agent orifices that reflect monstrous maternal desires do not generate vigorous offspring, like the son Britomart desires. In her dream, Britomart thus recasts the Crocodile and herself as genitally- and seminally-compatible mates: he initiates the "game" of intercourse, after

which "she soone enwombed grew" (5.7.16). Britomart cuts out—or cuts off—the parts of the imagination hostile to "enwomb"-ment. But while Radigund and Artegall consequently lose their monstrous maternal imaginative power, Britomart retains and tames hers, as she imaginatively determines what kinds of minds and bodies will participate in her reproductive life.

*

The literature of longings brings the identity of the monstrous mother into sharper focus, as it exposes her unequivocal female identity. As we have seen, monstrous maternity, a force associated with overwhelming power, voracious ambition, and violence, may manifest in non-female bodies like Macbeth's and Artegall's. But the limited power of these male maternal monsters indicates that monstrous maternity is essentially a female, as well as a maternal force. The confused gustatory and erotic appetites of pregnant cannibals for man-meat threaten to dehumanize, and thus, de-gender them. Yet lascivious femininity continues to lurk in their imaginations—a characteristic that Jonson, through his portrayal of Win Littlewit, presents as equal to monstrous maternity in its formidability. By linking Britomart's monstrous maternity to her desire for physical reproduction, Spenser establishes that women's formative power exerts itself not only parthenogenetically, but also biologically, as the maternal imagination shapes male partners who will co-produce desirable offspring. The involvement of men in generation, however, does not obscure or eliminate monstrous maternal power in *The Faerie Queene,* where Britomart's imagination determines her uterine destiny. Because of the intimate link between mind and womb, Britomart's

monstrous maternity remains a specifically maternal force. It reminds us, too, that Lady Macbeth's own monstrous maternity originates in her "woman's breasts" (1.5.47). Even as Lady Macbeth's imagination produces a disembodied, monstrous *force,* Shakespeare underscores that truly destructive, unmanageable monstrous maternity has female origins.

CONCLUSION:

GODLINESS IS NEXT TO MONSTROUSNESS: ANTI-IMAGINATIONISTS AND THE INESCAPABLE MONSTROUS MOTHER

This project began with an exploration of how authors of early modern English professional reproductive texts establish the two-sexed nature of female bodies—the bodies from which diverse manifestations of monstrous maternity develop. In professional imagination literature, the duality of natural female reproductive identity facilitates this development, by furnishing two reproductively-separate bodies, a conceiving one and a gestating one, whose processes the monstrous maternal imagination disrupts, usurps, and circumvents. For professional authors, these bodies also represent sources of other transformations effected by the imagination, because during conception, non-pregnant women join with men, and thus introduce to reproduction another body whose functions the maternal imagination may transform. Consequently, the very act of generation itself is denaturalized.

But while female reproductive bodies are foundational elements of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century monstrous generative theory, women's full monstrous capabilities simultaneously elude professional understanding. Monstrous maternity, as I argue in chapter 3, may become not only a characteristic of individual women, but also an uncontrollable, incomprehensible force. The recognition by Shakespeare, Jonson, and Spenser that the monstrous maternal imagination not only transforms reproductive anatomy and physiology, but also destroys political and domestic stability,

simultaneously relies upon and complicates imagination theory, because the extensive imaginative powers of the monstrous mothers they portray are grounded in medical knowledge of reproductive women's diverse, impressively capable bodies. At the same time, the mightiness of monstrous maternal power frustrates professional attempts to limit the monstrous capabilities of women's bodies, because their dietary and behavioral guidelines for maintaining reproduction's natural course cannot anticipate every regicidal, lascivious, and bestial manifestation of monstrous maternity.

Spenser implicitly addresses this frustration in the Britomart-Radigund episodes of *The Faerie Queene,* where he suggests that advancing professional regulatory initiatives is futile, because (as Britomart's imaginative self-reform demonstrates) the monstrous maternal imagination itself generates the natural reproductive bodies and functions required for ambitious procreative endeavors such as dynasty-making. By confirming what early modern professional authors already seem to suspect—that they cannot control monstrous maternal power—Britomart's monstrously-generated acceptance of natural reproduction represents a grim solution for frustrated professional authors: rather than jockey for power with monstrous mothers, they should instead surrender attempts to control the destructive influence of the imagination to mothers themselves. In *Child-birth, or, The happy deliuerie of vvomen*, Jacques Guillemeau seems to share this view; while he orders women to "refraine and ouer-maister themselues…as much as they can" from succumbing to longings for vile meats, he also concedes that sometimes, they "cannot forbeare." In such cases, Guillemeau recommends that readers "suffer them a little, and let them haue their longings, for feare

least it should proue worse with them" (20-21). For Guillemeau, it seems that heavy-handedness in pre-natal care is pointless, because if pregnant women's longings remain unsatisfied, they will not only become monstrously desirous, but also will deform or destroy their offspring.

Later imagination theorists, however, did not universally share Guillemeau's sentiment. In the 1720s, James Blondel's treatise, *The strength of the imagination in pregnant women examin'd* (1727), transformed English imagination theory from a narrative of competition between natural and monstrous reproductive forms written by obstetrical, medical, and teratological authors, to competing narratives by imaginationists—supporters of traditional beliefs in the formative ability of the maternal imagination—and anti-imaginationists, who objected to the doctrine their opponents upheld. Representing the latter, Blondel bewailed the current state of imagination theory, asking,

> *[W]hat can be more scandalous, and provoking, than to suppose, that those whom God Almighty has endow'd, not only with so many Charms, but also with an extraordinary Love and Tenderness for their Children, instead of answering the End they are made for, do bread* [sic] Monsters *by the Wantonness of their Imagination?* (a2)

Throughout his treatise, Blondel attempts to demonstrate why the imagination cannot form monstrous births, often by insisting on the separateness of maternal and fetal identities: "the *Fœtus,* in respect of the Mother, is all along no more to her than a Child, that is in a Nurse's Arms, and at her Breast, by which it receives Nourishment" (58).[129]

His position reflects the trend in early modern obstetrical art, cited by Karen Newman, to "suppress completely fetal dependence on the female body by graphically rendering that body as a passive receptacle, the scriptural woman as 'vessel'" (33). Later in the treatise, Blondel even rejects the imagination's formative capabilities by denying that reproductive women exercise any formative power over developing offspring at all:

> [b]y what Right has the Mother's Fancy any Influence upon the Body of the *Foetus*, which comes from the *Semen virile,* and which is, in respect to her, but a *Passenger*, who has taken there his Lodging for a short time? If the Father could not cause, by the Strength of Imagination, any Change in the Animalcule which was originally in his Body; I desire to know, why the Mother should plead that Priviledge in Exclusion to the Father? (47)

The reinstatement of men's superiority to women in this passage suggests that in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, Crooke and the authors of pregnant cannibal narratives were on to something when they envisioned monstrous mothers, plagued by eroticized gustatory longings, submitting to the control of husbands and other men already adept at disciplining sexually-voracious wives. However, earlier authors mistakenly relied upon a Galenic three-sex model that granted women both seminal and uterine formative power. Only by establishing biological male formative omnipotence, Blondel suggests, can imagination theorists effectively endow men—specifically themselves—with the ability to determine the course of women's physical, and therefore their imaginative, reproductive lives.

With a reformed theory of generation that grants no authority to the monstrous imagination, Blondel seems to demonstrate that reproductive professionals need not throw up their hands in a gesture of Spenserian surrender to the power of monstrous maternity. Instead, they must do away with the monstrous mother, and the actively-conceiving and formatively-gestating female bodies from which she materializes. Yet at one point in his treatise, the precariousness of professional authority reemerges, illustrating that even anti-imaginationists cannot completely suppress monstrous maternal imaginative power. Blondel inadvertently acknowledges the power of monstrous maternal desire specifically when he attempts to argue that the biblical story of Jacob breeding spotted goats and sheep by placing spotted rods before them does *not* testify to the formative power of the maternal imagination.[130] Earlier imagination theorists frequently cite this story as proof of women's monstrous imaginative influence, but Blondel contends that their credulity stems from a misreading by the translators of the King James Bible.[131] He argues that verse 39 of the Genesis story, "And the flocks conceived before the rods, and brought forth cattle ringstraked, speckled, and spotted," suggests "that the Cattle *conceived* by virtue of the Rods, without the usual Means of Generation" (Blondel 34)—an idea that emphasizes the traditional belief in women's monstrous ability to deform generation itself. Yet inept translators misconstrued the meaning of the original Hebrew, thus generating the idea that Jacob increased his herds through the husbandry of monstrous ewes and does.

In his own translation, Blondel corrects former mistakes, rendering the text, "And he set the Rods in the Ducts, in the Channels of the Waters, which the Flocks came to

drink, and they were *rutting*, when they came to drink. And the Flocks grew hot towards the Rods, and brought forth Cattle ringstraked" (35). The major problem for the anti-imaginationist that this passage presents—that "the Flocks grew hot" not for appropriate mates, but for non-generative objects—is no problem for Blondel.[132] He argues that since "the Scripture does not tell us in what manner the Rods were placed, we may lawfully suppose, that they made afar off a rough Representation of a speckled Ram, or He-goat" (35). Furthermore, Jacob created this peculiar arrangement

> …in all Probability, to incline the Ewes, in *rutting* Time, to take the Rams that were speckled before others. Experience shewing, that Animals are taught Abundance of Tricks, in Expectation of their Victuals: And, as the Ews, in that hot Country, could have no water, except they drank it, where the party-coloured Rods were placed, that Colour became very pleasant to them, and naturally determined their Inclination towards the speckled Rams preferable to others. (35-36)

Blondel discovers a form of reproduction "naturally determined" within his translation and subsequent explanation, but it is hard to see how he reaches this conclusion. In his reading, female desire—an unequivocally monstrous sentiment in earlier imagination literature—determines the course of generation. The ewes and does, even if they behold what they believe are natural generative partners, are still amorous, and intent to satisfy themselves sexually with the objects of their desires—a determination characteristic of the monstrous mothers whose existence Blondel attempts to deny. Blondel's argument that thirst motivates the animals' behavior only serves to

solidify the irresistible presence of monstrous maternity in this passage, as he equates the animals with longing women.

The unexpected reemergence of monstrous maternity in *The strength of the imagination in pregnant women examin'd* raises the question of *why* Blondel decides to spend so much time reinterpreting a story that features female desire, strange sexual temptations, and alimentary longings—three of the most common elements of the imagination literature he attempts to discredit. In *A directory for midwives* (1651), Culpeper suggests one possible reason why Blondel might risk undermining his own argument: the power of the mighty monstrous maternal imagination represents to reproductive professional authors something not only to eradicate, but also to appropriate. In other words, the absolute power monstrous mothers exert over reproduction is worth emulating; as monstrous mothers transform reproduction, so might theorists imagine themselves possessing comparably incredible power to shape generative functions, Culpeper suggests. To serve his theoretical purpose of centralizing a non-imaginative source as "the greatest cause" of the production of monstrous births (140), Culpeper, like Blondel, features a narrative concerned with female desire. "[T]he act of Copulation…done at that time when the woman had her Menstruis upon her," Culpeper explains, is "the greatest cause of womans bringing forth Children imperfect, or mutilated, or crook-backt, or with Issues or Leprosie, &c." (140-41). This cause, we will remember, refers to the familiar belief that a woman's discharged menstrual blood is filthy, and therefore exerts deforming influence on fetuses conceived during her period.[133] Significantly, its physical nature undermines the power of the imagination to

deform offspring, a cause which Culpeper "cannot close with," although as the author of the four-thumbed boy story I discuss in chapter 2, he does admit that the imagination "may be the cause of some deformity" (140). However, Culpeper is more concerned with deflating the power of the monstrous maternal imagination, a maneuver which in turn inflates his own reproductive authority.

Although desire becomes a key feature in Culpeper's continued discussion, he makes two significant attempts to obscure the power traditionally attributed to women's lust in imagination literature. Immediately after identifying his "greatest cause," Culpeper cautions that

> It was not for nothing God Himself forbad a man to touch a woman at such a time; and from such corrupt beginings usually little good proceeds; and although the Grace of God is free, and laies hold on whomsoever he pleaseth, yet usually (I do not say alwaies) such are as perverse in mind and manners, as in body, *Cavendum ab iis quos Deus notavit* (saith the Latin proverb) Beware of such whom God hath marked. (141)

Here, the godless disregard of religious law by lust-driven fornicators becomes a masculine trait; menstruating women, in contrast, are the passive recipients of men's "touch." While Culpeper's reference to those "perverse in mind" also summons the idea of women's imagination-borne desire, by casting men as the initiators of monstrous reproduction, he challenges traditional beliefs in women's overwhelming, sometimes parthenogenetic monstrous imaginative generative power. The maternal imagination becomes increasingly powerless, as Culpeper suggests not only that women require male

partners for monster-making, but also that they may depend on men to generate the *idea* to corrupt natural reproduction.

More remarkably, Culpeper also attempts to vanquish monstrous mothers' tyrannical domination of reproduction in a rhetorical move that rivals in its outrageousness Shakespeare's equation of monstrous formative power with regicide in *Macbeth*. While Lady Macbeth imagines her generative power in political terms, however, Culpeper envisions a personal ascent that is both spiritual and professional, when he grants himself exclusive access to godly knowledge of men and women's secret sins. Mary E. Fissell characterizes Culpeper's reproductive knowledge in *A directory for midwives* as "curiously privileged" (146)—a reference to his exclusion of pictures of female reproductive anatomy, and simultaneous profession that he comprehends the anatomy of these bodies because he has seen them.[134] But as a medical interpreter of divine law, Culpeper also claims knowledge even more "curiously privileged" than his elite, visually-founded understanding of female reproductive anatomy (146).[135] Significantly, Culpeper does not sacrifice his theoretical authority by deferring to the divine, because he does not derive his teratological theory exclusively from scripture. Rather, together he and God enjoy privileged access to seeing "whom God hath marked" (141). Culpeper knows that fornicators will expose their "perverse[ness] in mind and manners, as in body" (141), and thus externally exhibit their damned souls; however, he withholds information about how these signs manifest themselves. Moreover, Culpeper's "curiously privileged" knowledge appears to encompass invisible evidence of damnation (Fissell 146), since he knows that only "usually," but "not…alwaies," monster-producing

sex maniacs physically display their sin (Culpeper 141). Again, he leaves readers feeling that he knows something that they do not.

Culpeper's epistemological coup replicates literary treatments of monstrous maternity, which recognize the social and political, as well as the anatomical and physiological transformations monstrous mothers may effect. While Culpeper, like Shakespeare, Jonson, and Spenser, portrays an astonishing expression of reproductive power, the power he envisions for himself is professional, rather than maternal, and it endows him with absolute reproductive knowledge, rather than with the absolute monstrous maternal formative power reproductive women exert. But Culpeper's knowledge also doubles as professional authority; by revealing that monstrous generation results from the mutual embraces of men and women, he reinserts their bodies into a narrative of natural reproduction, rendering them comprehensible and predictable, and conceivably, controllable. Moreover, if readers will heed his holy communication, Culpeper will be their exclusive regulator.

And yet, at times Culpeper seems no more skillful than Blondel at discrediting the power of the monstrous maternal imagination. The "perverse" minds of those who engage in intercourse while the female partner menstruates seem not to be both male and female, but indisputably *maternal* when they betray God's "mark[s]" upon themselves. While men may exhibit a "perverse…mind and manners," only lustful, conceiving women also bear the deforming "mark" of menstrual blood (141). While this blood explicitly represents for Culpeper part of a physical, rather than an imaginative cause of monstrous births, it simultaneously suggests that in addition to pregnant bellies and

damned spots, women also display their monstrous maternity in menstrual blood. Like Blondel, Culpeper ultimately fails to eradicate monstrous maternity from his anti-imaginationist writings because the monstrous mother keeps reemerging in images commonly associated with monstrous mothers.

Despite their anti-imagination arguments, Blondel and Culpeper resemble other professional imagination authors who contend with the tensions between natural and monstrous reproduction. Their separate, ineffective efforts to re-naturalize reproduction permanently emphasize the monstrous mother's lasting impact on early modern English reproductive theory. Moreover, they invite questions about the monstrous mother's legacy. Since Blondel and Culpeper write nearly eighty years apart, their work suggests that at least in the early modern period, monstrous maternity persistently plagued reproductive thought. But do fears of unnatural reproduction continue to permeate contemporary texts on conception and pregnancy? If a monstrous maternal figure continues to materialize in these texts, which bodies and processes does she threaten?

What to Expect When You're Expecting—a text referred to by one critic as "[t]he pregnant woman's bible" (Murkoff, Eisenberg, and Hathaway, back cover)—offers a place to start answering these questions. In their treatment of "Extreme emotional stress," authors of the fourth edition, Heidi Murkoff and Sharon Mazel, note that

> [s]ome studies have shown a link between extreme emotional stress (not your everyday "I've got too much to do and not enough time to do it" stress) and premature labor. Sometimes the cause of such excessive stress can be eliminated or minimized (by quitting or cutting back at an unhealthily high-pressure job, for

> example); sometimes it's unavoidable (as when you lose your job or there's been illness or death in the family). Still, many kinds of stress can be reduced with relaxation techniques, good nutrition, a balance of exercise and rest, and by talking the problem out with your spouse or friends, your practitioner, or a therapist. (46)

The monstrous maternal imagination is alive and well in this passage, in the form of oppressive, mismanaged anxieties that may disrupt both fetal development when gestation is cut short by premature labor, as well as the forty-week gestational period of natural reproduction itself. Happily, Murkoff and Mazel imagine a Spenserian monstrous mother capable of *using* her imagination to *naturalize* her imagination; unhappily, they attempt to regulate the maternal mind themselves by insisting on its calmness. Readers who do not consider their remarks on stress, however, may find themselves in possession of imaginations that are up to their usual tricks of disrupting reproductive processes and hindering fetal development.

NOTES

[1] Paré cites God's glory and wrath, excessive and insufficient seed, the maternal imagination, small wombs that restrict fetal growth, wombs deformed by women's postures or activities, violent accidents that befall pregnant women, hereditary diseases, human-animal coupling, and demonic interference as causes of monstrous births within his comprehensive teratological treatise, *Of monsters and prodigies*. See Paré 962-87. See Rüff 153 for early modern claims of the supremacy of divine causes of monsters. Regarding causes not listed by Paré, see Culpeper 139 for a discussion of astrological factors. Guillemeau demonstrates the collaboration of imagination and body in monstrous creation when he suggests that a vain maternal imagination may lead to the deformation of fetuses within a restrictive uterine environment. He admonishes women to "leaue off their Busks as soone as they perceiue themselues with child, not lacing themselues too straight, or crushing themselues together, for feare least the child be misshapen and crooked" (Guillemeau, *Child-birth* 26).
[2] Leviticus 15:16-30. For an extended discussion of the menstrual taboo, see note 135, below.
[3] See Culpeper 140 and Lemnius 23 on the belief that intercourse during a woman's menstrual period produced children misshaped by skin diseases.
[4] Culpeper positions women themselves as the bespotted provocateurs of their own imaginations in his discussion of forbidden menstrual sex. See my discussion of Culpeper's view in the conclusion.
[5] Cited throughout early modern English obstetrical, teratological, and wonder literature, the most popular stories described hairy children born to women who beheld a picture of John the Baptist clothed in camel's hair while they conceived, and black children born to white parents after their mothers looked upon a picture of a black man during conception. I discuss the importance of these stories to understanding women's sexually-transgressive desires in chapter 2.
[6] On concerns about women's ability to imaginatively obscure men's contributions to reproduction, see Huet 13-24.
[7] The work of Katharine Park and Lorraine J. Daston best represents this work. Park and Daston's breakthrough study of monstrous births, "Unnatural Conceptions: The Study of Monsters in Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century France and England," traces the transformation of these figures from prodigies to natural wonders to subjects of scientific examination in early modern thought. More recently, Park and Daston have revised this chronological scheme to instead argue that the complex early modern European reception of monsters can be understood through the reactions of "horror, pleasure, and repugnance" (176)—reactions that overlap, but do not progressively succeed one another. On this view, see Daston and Park 173-214.
[8] See, for example, Guillemeau, *Child-birth* 21.
[9] For an overview of general early modern English views on how female sexual appetites threatened men, see Francus 829.
[10] See Huet, chapter 1.
[11] On women's greater contributions to generation, see, for example, Lemnius 19.
[12] While the influence of other ancient authors, including Hippocrates and Aristotle, materializes in early modern English reproductive literature, sixteenth- and seventeenth-century authors often conflate their ideas with Galen's, thus producing a body of literature that is essentially Galenic.
[13] In chapter 1, I identify the cervix and vagina as the characteristic reproductive parts of non-pregnant women, because they aid in conception by assisting the male sperm to pass from man to womb.
[14] *Mac.* 5.1.33-38.
[15] Burton 35.
[16] For a discussion of imagination theory prior to the 1600s, see Ballantyne 105-10.
[17] The debate between the imaginationist Daniel Turner and the anti-imaginationist James Blondel opened traditional imagination theory to criticism in medical circles. On Turner's view, see his treatise *De morbis cutaneis;* on Blondel's, see his response to Turner in *The strength of the imagination in pregnant women examin'd* (1727). Imaginationists also came under fire in the 1720s, when the Surrey woman, Mary Toft, claimed she gave birth to rabbits after having unexpectedly encountered a rabbit while she was pregnant, an

incident that she said prompted her to long hopelessly for its flesh. Physicians later revealed that her claims were a hoax. For a discussion of medical reactions to the Toft case, both credulous and incredulous, see Todd.

[18] For Laqueur's position, see *Making Sex* 63-113. While this work represents the most comprehensive articulation of the one-sex model, Laqueur discusses his position earlier in "Orgasm, Generation, and the Politics of Reproductive Biology." See especially 2. Prior to the publication of *Making Sex*, Greenblatt also identified early modern Galenic authors as proponents of anatomical homology. See Greenblatt 79-80. The Laqueurian legacy also manifests in Connell, who addresses the charged term, "mutilated," which Galen applies to women. On the significance of this term to Galen's reproductive theory, see my discussion of Connell below. For further reading on the coexistence of isomorphic and dimorphic reproductive models in early modern medical literature, see Schleiner, who addresses early modern European objections to the homological aspects of Galen's theory. On the significance of early modern anatomical models that stressed women's sexual differences from men, see Stolberg. See Park and Nye 54 on the identification of two-sex models with Aristotle's reproductive theory.

[19] For further discussion of Crooke's complex portrayal of male and female sexual similarities and differences, see Orgel 21-22. Orgel proposes that isomorphic and dimorphic models coexist in *Mikrokosmographia* because "Crooke…has, in effect, one theory when his attention is focused on men, another when it is focused on women" (22); for example, Orgel notes that in his discussion of male testes, Crooke employs a homological model through which he "explains women as incomplete men" (21), but emphasizes sexual difference when he addresses the anatomy of the clitoris, which not only lacks a Galenic analogue, but is also *not* like the penis (22).

[20] See especially Laqueur, *Making Sex* chapter 3.

[21] Galen, *On semen* 175.

[22] Laqueur 40.

[23] Galen, *Usefulness* 632-34.

[24] In contrast with Cadden, analysts of early modern reproductive models have tended to view the issue of discrepancies in texts as contradictions, rather than as moments in which authors "undermine" themselves (Cadden 35). Dubrow positions contradictions as epistemological gold mines. Orgel's work further elucidates Dubrow's admonition to readers "not to allow our preoccupation with univocal, hegemonic discourse…[to] distract us from the disagreements that pepper the [early modern] gynecological manuals" that she addresses (Dubrow 69). He notes that apparent "contradictions" in early modern reproductive theory result from the authorial practice of presenting each theoretical tradition they employ as "authoritative," because "each has its utility in explicating some part of the subject; each is produced not in the abstract, as part of a synthesis of gender theory, but at the appropriate moment in a discussion of physiology and behavior" (Orgel 22).

[25] For Galen's explanation, see *Usefulness* 637-38.

[26] For Galen's full description of male and female anatomical correspondences, see *Usefulness* 628-29, as well as my discussion of this passage below.

[27] Galen, *Usefulness* 629.

[28] Laqueur, *Making Sex* 26.

[29] Connell explains that some historians of classical medicine have compared the theories of Galen and Aristotle to conclude that "Galen's theory is considered better than that of Aristotle" because Galen, for example, attributes to women the production of seed that parallels men's (Connell 405). Connell criticizes this position, arguing that it stems from "the assumption that empirical methods and theoretical rationality remain constant throughout history, so that science must progress chronologically, making Galen's theories closer to those of our science than Aristotle's" (409). Following this line of thinking, Connell notes, some critics position "Galen's theory of the female role in reproduction [as] more advanced than Aristotle's because it is closer to our own view that women contribute half of the genetic makeup of offspring" (409).

[30] Connell 419.

[31] The Greek terminology in the following analysis is quoted from *Galēnoũ Peri chreias moriōn IZ'* 299.

[32] Toscano. For additional expressions of this classical view, see Aristotle 1132, passim.

[33] Toscano.

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[34] Galen, *Usefulness* 630.
[35] Ibid., 628-29.
[36] Chauliac echoes Galen's anatomical differences in what follows: "And as men haue two ballockes or stones that passe and appeare outwarde, so haue woemen inwarde, except that they bee bigger in the man, then in the woman. And in men they are longwise and rounde, and in women they bee rounde and flatte, and are set on both the sides of the matrice, each on a side. And euen so as the vessells spermatickes are in the middest of the ballockes outward, so be they inward in women" (33_r).
[37] 628-29.
[38] For additional reading on early modern reproductive nomenclature, see Hobby, who explains that "[a] seventeenth-century womb and a twentieth-century one are not the same body part," since early modern authors use "womb" to signify not only the uterus, but also the attached vagina and cervix (Hobby xxxi).
[39] While Aristotle does categorize men as "active" and women as "passive" participants in conception, he does not suggest that women do not have reproductive purpose (1132). Mayhew elaborates on the importance of women in Aristotle's theory.
[40] See for example, Haslem 443, as well as my discussion of her analysis of this image in the introduction of this project. Fissell further addresses belief in the voracious womb's ability to parthenogenetically produce monsters. See Fissell 65.
[41] In addition to Chauliac, see Ross 48. Ross refutes the idea that menstrual blood is an irremediably corrupt substance by associating it with breast milk. His view underscores the reproductive independence of nurturing female bodies: "[t]hough the menstruous blood may receive corruption by its long suppression, or by the moisture of some bad humors, yet in sound women, it is as pure as any other blood in the body: For it is appointed by nature for nutriment of the infant, whilst it is in the womb; and after birth it is converted into milk" (48).
[42] Galen, *Usefulness* 638.
[43] All quotes from *The byrth of mankynde* are taken from the 1545 edition.
[44] This image is commonplace in early modern medical and obstetrical literature. Its Galenic source can be traced to *Usefulness of the Parts,* where Galen explains that at conception, the cervix "closes so accurately that it allows not even the smallest quantity of anything to pass out from within or to be admitted inside from without" (623). For early modern examples, see Raynalde fol. 15_v and Rüff 51.
[45] Although Culpeper adopts Galenic ideas, his assertion that the womb and yard exist in opposition to one another does not occur in a passage that explicitly describes male and female genitals as reversible reflections of one another, as Galen does in *Usefulness of the Parts.* Rather, Culpeper introduces this idea within a discussion of a sickly, "inverted" womb, which "is not directly opposed to the Yard" (32).
[46] On the importance of non-human analogues for understanding female body parts, see Adelman, "Making Defect Perfection" 27. On the significance of analogy for understanding the nature of bodies in early modern thought, see Paster, "Melancholy Cats" 113-29.
[47] For a full account of Galen's seed theory, see *On semen,* as well as *Usefulness* 631-38.
[48] Galen explains in *On semen* that men's seed "is hotter and thicker" than women's (177).
[49] For an extended discussion on the ways Raynalde celebrates the female body, see Fissell 31-36.
[50] This is a common profession made by obstetrical writers. See, for example, Sharp 11-13. Anatomical knowledge was a contentious issue for obstetrical authors starting around the mid-seventeenth century, when female and male writers increasingly charged one another with incompetent practice, based in part on their ignorance of anatomy. Knowledge of the parts represented just one aspect of the rising tensions between male and female practitioners, who, during this period and into the eighteenth century, increasingly competed for clients as male physicians and man-midwives began to practice regular midwifery; prior to this, male practitioners generally attended only deliveries gone awry. On the history of the changing obstetrical profession in early modern England, see Wilson and Donnison. Knowledge of anatomy united practitioners, and represented a way for them to develop coherent obstetrical theory in their works. Sharp, for example, identifies anatomy as "*the Principal part effectually necessary for a Midwife*" (6); notably, she complains that "*unskilful Midwives*," rather than male practitioners, lack "*skill in Anatomy,*" and consequently locates her concerns within debates about professional skill, rather than the context of gendered competition (6).

[51] On the portrayal of the womb as a wonderful, capable organ, see Fissell chapter 1.
[52] Galen, *Usefulness* 628-29.
[53] Throughout her edition of *The Midwives Book,* Hobby addresses Culpeper's influence on Sharp. See especially xxii-xxix.
[54] In her notes on this passage, Hobby explains that the "water course" is the "hypogastrium" or "lowest part of the belly" (Sharp 54).
[55] On the womb's ability to deform offspring, see Paré 980.
[56] Throughout early modern medical and obstetrical texts, "imperfect" is used interchangeably with "monstrous" to characterize deformed offspring; both terms therefore contrast with "perfect" as a way for describing offspring who lack malformations. For an example of the use of "imperfect," see Culpeper 139.
[57] Galen, *On semen* 175, 177.
[58] Notably, if a monstrous conception is ambiguously-sexed, the formation created by the coupled seeds may elude sexual classification altogether.
[59] On the relationship of legitimacy and paternity to the female imagination, see Huet 13-24.
[60] Ibid.
[61] On the issue of internal monstrosity in the Renaissance, see Brammall.
[62] Lemnius asserts that "neither the Law of Nature, nor the publick consent of Mankind will suffer a child to be laid to any man because it is like him" (12).
[63] Lemnius 19.
[64] Brammall 3.
[65] See Culpeper 140 and Sharp 92. While Sadler cites Aristotle as his source, early modern authors usually attribute the story to Hippocrates.
[66] On erotic rhetoric in early modern midwifery literature, see Fissell 53.
[67] Fissell presents a contrasting view of Culpeper's knowledge as deeply exclusive. See Fissell 146.
[68] For example, see Rüff, who addresses the effects of surprise on the imagination. He attributes "Hare-lips" for example, to "terrours, and sudden sights of Hares, Swine, or other Cattell, this sudden terrour troubling and moving the conceived seed"; he further links monstrous births with "divers spots and markes imprinted on the body, to wit, of Hares, of Mice, of divers colours, of a bunch or cluster of grapes, of flames of fire, and other things" to "longing & terrors" (154-55).
[69] On the imaginative effects caused by animals, see Rüff 154-55.
[70] Gen. 3:16.
[71] Reynolds 441.
[72] Early modern reproductive authors sometimes use "fancy" interchangeably with "imagination." See, for example, Turner 105-20.
[73] Leontes' anxieties reflect Laura Gowing's assessment of the effects of early modern female adultery. The legal testimony of husbands, Gowing notes, "testified not just to illicit sex, but to the whole spectrum of disturbances associated with it" (185). These included women's usurpation of men's role as heads of families, and even spousal murder.
[74] Brammall 3.
[75] On these roles of monstrous births, see Shapiro 86-104.
[76] Park and Daston, "Unnatural Conceptions" 23.
[77] Daston and Park, *Wonders and the Order of Nature* 173, 189.
[78] Goulart 73.
[79] The issue of women's ability to nurse indefinitely arises in a late seventeenth-century account in *Philosophical Transactions* that details four instances of women breastfeeding infants though they had long since let their milk dry up. The first two reports feature grandmothers who nurse their grandchildren, and therefore introduce the possibility that no-longer-maternal bodies may once again become maternal. Notably, the author of this account explains that one of the grandmothers utilizes the strength of her imaginations to produce milk. She offers her breasts "out of great pity" to her hungry grandson, whose mother died "presently after her delivery" ("Relation" 100), and after several attempts, her "Breasts did (from that old Woman's strong imagination and vehement desire to give Suck to this Child) begin to yield Milk" (100).

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[80] See Frye 15 and Callaghan 363. Chamberlain reviews interpretations of Lady Macbeth as a masculine figure on 79.
[81] Chamberlain 79-80.
[82] Guillemeau actually declines to imagine that women may pass ill qualities to their children while nursing; this form of aggression is the province of nurses. While he concludes that children may be "*fashioned by the Mother*" (n. pag.), he only describes "*vitious, and wicked*" qualities passing from nurse to child. On the other hand, Guillemeau positions mothers as "honest" figures whose good influence may nonetheless be overcome by bad nurses (n. pag.).
[83] Muir elaborates on these in his notes to the Arden edition (30, n. 48).
[84] For further reading on the idea that Lady Macbeth becomes a wet-nurse, see Levin 41. Levin argues that the image of the "Spirits" suckling Lady Macbeth recalls stories of witches nursing animal familiars.
[85] Muir 30.
[86] In addition to Harding, see Ramsey's discussion of the deterioration of manly virtue in *Macbeth*. Ramsey also explores ways Lady Macbeth contributes to Macbeth's changing views of masculinity. Klein examines how Macbeth "becomes less and worse than a man" (241), because he embodies the violence that Lady Macbeth "ignorantly and perversely identified with male strength" (250). Klein adds that Macbeth does not exhibit the "human kindness" (*Mac.* 1.5.17) that Lady Macbeth attributes to him; rather, he enters the play as brutal and dangerously ambitious (Klein 245).
[87] Harding 247.
[88] Greene, for example, refers to a woman who "would…fall into the greene sicknes for want of a husband" (8).
[89] For example, see Culpeper 139-141 and Sharp 92.
[90] On the pervasiveness of the John the Baptist-as-pinup legend in early modern European obstetrical literature, see Huet 19-21. Huet notes that the idolatrous imaginative adulteresses in these stories bear hairy girls, although mid-seventeenth-century English writings feature an ungendered "child" (Culpeper 140, Sharp 92).
[91] Some early modern reproductive theorists argue that bearing more than two children at a time itself constitutes monstrousness. I address this issue in chapter 2.
[92] On the multi-purpose nature of women's orifices, see Newman, "City Talk" 184.
[93] Jardine shows that the sanctioning of female eroticism is achieved in *The The Duchess of Malfi*, where she notes that "[f]rom the moment of her assertion of sexual independence, the Duchess moves with dignity but inexorably towards a ritual chastisement worthy of a flagrant breach of public order. Thereafter her strength lies in her fortitude in the face of a doom she has brought upon herself" (77). For Jardine, the duchess's "threat to patriarchal order never [was] an actual one" (77).
[94] While pregnant women's alimentary longings represent an unusually controllable facet of the maternal imagination, as a dietary issue, they are treated similarly to other obstetrical dietary regulations. The authors of midwifery manuals who address pregnant women's diets produce extensive lists of foods that will ensure maternal and fetal health. In his regimen, Guillemeau warns women not to eat foods linked to fetal deformation, such as "salt meate," which may cause "her child …[to]be borne without nayles; which shewes, that he will not be long liued" (20). Rüff's work illustrates how diet was used to cure multiple ailments of pregnancy, including constipation, vomiting, premature delivery, and spotting (69-73).
[95] In an analysis of the Duchess of Malfi's staged pregnancy, Haslem similarly argues that early modern dramatists and their audiences conflated women's alimentary and sexual appetites. Webster signals this not only by employing an apricot (a reputed aphrodisiac) as the object of the Duchess's desire, but also by using the heteroerotically-charged spelling, "apricock." See Haslem 455.
[96] Williams 480-81.
[97] The mulberry is a romantic, if not erotic fruit in early modern literature. Arthur Golding's 1567 translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* features the transformation of the mulberry tree in the Pyramus and Thisbe myth; when Pyramus stabs himself because he believes a Lion has eaten Thisbe, "the bloud did spin on hie" and "The leaues that were vpon the tree besprincled with his blood / Were died blacke. The roote also bestained as it stoode, / A deep darke purple colour straight vpon the Berries cast" (Ovid 45_v). Shakespeare also introduces the mulberry tree as a symbol of tragic, unconsummated love in *A Midsummer*

Night's Dream, where Quince explains that Pyramus, "with blade—with bloody, blameful blade— / He bravely broached his boiling bloody breast" while Thisbe is "tarrying in mulberry shade" (5.1.145-47). Willa Cather more fully eroticizes the myth in *O Pioneers!*, when Frank Shabata shoots his wife Marie and Emil Bergson after catching them making love "under the white mulberry tree" (150). For Old Ivar, who finds their bodies the next day, "[t]he story of what had happened was written plainly on the orchard grass, and on the white mulberries that had fallen in the night and were covered with dark stain" (156).
[98] On the fruit-shaped marks of monstrous births, see Rüff 155 and Turner 124-26.
[99] See chapter 2.
[100] Boaistuau's text demonstrates how misogyny manifests in passages not concerned with the imagination in reproductive works. While Boaistuau does not criticize female reproductive roles exclusively, women emerge as the most threatening of all the reproductive figures he describes. For example, Boaistuau includes that venerable chestnut of misogynistic complaints, the notion that the womb creates filthy substances. In fact, he is so disgusted by the idea that the fetus "is a substance of bloud" that he "can not withoute greate horror rehearse that which the Philosophers and Phisicions haue written, that haue treated of the secrets of nature." He feels compelled to refer readers to Pliny on the matter (Book 2). His view of women becomes more complex later in the passage, not because women transform into less filthy man-eaters, but because they become simultaneously repellant and pitiable when another repulsive reproductive figure, the surgeon, tortures them during difficult births. In this section, the graphicness of Boaistuau's description of the dangerous and endangered womb surpasses even John Donne's portrayal of the uterus in *Death's Duell.* The vexed Donnean womb acts simultaneously as both agent and victim: after it "shut[s]" (4), it becomes "a *body of death,* if there bee no deliverer" of the child (5); at the same time, there is no "*grave* so close, or so *putrid* a *prison*, as the *wombe*" (4) *because* children who die within it corrupt it. Boaistuau takes readers beyond the filth to the womb's—and woman's—violent end, when he concedes that "sometime it behoueth to open the poore innocent mother aliue, and put yron tooles in hir bodie, yea to murther hir for to haue hir fruite" (Ei_r).
[101] Schoenfeldt 260-61. While Schoenfeldt argues that "eating" does not carry "the modern American sense of specifically oral sex" (260), the meat-tasting the Silesian cannibal desires appears precisely to indicate a longing to perform fellatio on the bather.
[102] On obstetrical authors' dietary guidelines, see note 94.
[103] This is an idea unfamiliar in Galenic theory, which effectively renders pre-pregnant women reproductively powerless because the womb, rather than cold, runny, weak female semen, makes a fetal formative contribution comparable to that made by male semen.
[104] Other women are "weake and womanish" or "bold and moderate" (Crooke 309).
[105] Paster, *Body* 38.
[106] Robinson 68-69.
[107] If Win really was longing, Littlewit's claim of his child's apparent wish to escape could provide evidence that Win's pregnancy has reached full term. Early modern obstetrical theory emphasizes that the onset of labor may occur because the fetus needs other nourishment beyond what the mother provides. Boaistuau describes the unborn child becoming vigorous and consequently causing its mother pain because it needs "to seeke sustenance" (Ei_v). Boaistuau's image is particularly interesting to consider alongside *Bartholomew Fair*, because both texts present a pregnant body intimately connected with alimentary longings that actually belong to someone else.
[108] Haslem 455.
[109] For example, see Rüff, who mentions marks resembling "a bunch or cluster of grapes" (155). Turner also addresses fruit-shaped deformities. See Turner 124-26.
[110] Williams 31.
[111] Lawrence Stone's discussion of kissing practices in early modern England suggests that Winwife and Quarlous plant their kisses upon Win's mouth, rather than upon her cheek or hand. See Stone 520.
[112] Paster 38.
[113] Parker 267-68.
[114] The quotations from Stubbes appear on image 48 of the edition of *The anatomie of abuses* in *Early English Books Online.*

[115] Haslem 443-50.
[116] The repeated appearance in reproductive literature of the story of the woman who fantasizes about John the Baptist dressed in camel-hair robes and who consequently bears a remarkably hairy child represents this expectation for more precise correspondences. Huet discusses the hairy child as a form of divine punishment for its mother's bestial desire. See Huet 21.
[117] Quilligan 160-61.
[118] Ibid., 163.
[119] Villeponteaux 220-21.
[120] On traditions that portray Amazons as two-breasted women, see Schwarz, "Missing the Breast" 148.
[121] Moreover, as Janet Adelman notes in her analysis of the future Richard III's anxieties about deforming maternal power, hacking and hewing around women's reproductive parts occurs from inside, rather than outside the womb. Adelman presents Richard fantasizing about escaping what she identifies as a womb-like "thorny wood." In this passage from *3 Henry VI*, Richard declares, "I will free myself / Or hew my way out with a bloody axe" (qtd. in Adelman, "Born of Woman" 92). And of course Spenser himself isn't known for characterizing female genitals as "faire"; his "chaster Muse for shame doth blush to write" about Duessa's "neather parts" during a pornographic disrobing that does not spare readers from learning that she sports a "dong"-be-"dighted" fox's tail swishing behind her (1.8.48). Moreover, Duessa's "secret filth" (1.8.46)—her filthy "secrets"—is not the only set of external female generative organs that make Spenser and his Muse blush, since these "parts" are "the shame" of all women (1.8.48).
[122] Wright notes the discrepancy between an etymology that defines "Amazon" as "'reared without woman's milk'" and traditions that portray Amazons breastfeeding their daughters (452).
[123] On the tradition of Amazonian breast removal, see Villeponteaux 213-14. Villeponteaux reads William Painter's account of Amazons in *The Palace of Pleasure* (1566-1567), as a depiction of "monstrous" female erotics and maternity. Schwarz adds that Amazonian breast removal complicates male identity as Amazons usurp men's roles as armed warriors (*Tough Love* 5).
[124] Schwarz, *Tough Love* 5.
[125] Silberman 10.
[126] A notable exception in stories of undefeatable Amazons is Shakespeare's Hippolyta in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. As the play opens, her future husband Theseus describes how he sexually and politically violated her: "Hippolyta, I wooed thee with my sword, / And won thy love doing thee injuries" (1.1.16-17).
[127] Villeponteaux 221.
[128] Villeponteaux portrays Britomart's excision of her Radigundian elements as ridding herself of her inclination to remain virginal. She describes the "conflict" between Britomart and Radigund as one of "procreation vs. sterility" (218).
[129] Later, Blondel argues, "the Child is as distinct from the Mother, as a Child at the Breast is, as I have said before, separate from its Nurse, upon whom it feeds, And 'tis no more possible for the Mother's Imagination to act upon the Child in *Utero*, than for a Nurse to make by her Fancy upon the suckling Babe any Mark, or Impression" (77). Here he asks readers not only to abandon their belief in the formative power of the maternal imagination, but also to reject the notion that breast milk may shape its infant consumers. However, William Smellie's emphasis in the mid-1700s on the importance of hiring imaginatively-stable wet-nurses indicates that practitioners continued to espouse the idea that nurses could imaginatively communicate the properties of their milk to their charges. In the fifth edition of *A treatise on the theory and practice of midwifery* (1764), Smellie contends that nurses "ought to be…sober, patient, and discreet" (284)—qualities that testify to imaginative calmness. Although Smellie does not explain how the milk of tranquil nurses benefits children—or how the milk of their volatile colleagues damages children—these requirements echo earlier obstetrical writers, who anxiously insist that nurses be imaginatively stable, lest children imbibe their mental faults. For example, Guillemeau notes that a nurse "ought to be of a good behauiour, sober, and not giuen either to drinking, or gluttonie, milde, without being angry, or fretfull: for there is nothing that sooner corrupts the bloud, of which the milke is made, than choler, or sadnesse" (*The nvrsing of children* 4).
[130] Gen. 30:35-42.
[131] Blondel 34-35.

[132] Happily, "rod" has been an acknowledged slang term for penis since 1641, so Blondel arguably conflates the natural and monstrous erotic desires of the ewes and does. See "Rod," def. 10.
[133] Lemnius offers an explanation as to why menstrual blood that women issue every month compromises fetal development. Women's terms consist of blood intended to be expelled, so when a man "stops her flux" during conception, "the blood is forced back again," and male seed combines with "filthy moisture" not conducive to "mak[ing] a perfect man" (23). Like Culpeper, Lemnius also mentions biblical sanctions against intercourse during a woman's menstrual period. Patricia Crawford documents early modern debates about biblical sanctions against copulation during menstruation. See P. Crawford 61-63. Express forbidding of contact with menstrual women appears in Leviticus 15:19-30, while the apocalyptic significance of menstruating women who bear monstrous births occurs in 2 Esdras 5:8.
[134] The single illustration in the 1651 edition portrays a baby with its umbilical cord attached, limbs tucked tightly against its trunk, and eyes closed. Only the fact that the baby is lying face up with its head positioned toward the top of the page suggests that it is not ready for delivery, since early modern obstetrical authors generally characterize any presentation except occipito-anterior cephalic as unnatural. However, Fissell notes that the absence of any maternal anatomical markers in the illustration suggests that the child "might be a newborn baby, with the umbilical cord positioned across its body as yet uncut" (145-46).
[135] Fissell notes that Culpeper considers reproductive studies "a godly project" that reflect his reforming religious beliefs (156).

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