

TOOLS OF A TRADE:
GUILT AS A RHETORICAL DEVICE IN CONDUCT LITERATURE

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Thanks for believing—Jo, Jen and James.

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Introduction

There is a whole realm of emotion which work as motivators. Anger, fear and embarrassment are motivational. Pride is used to motivate workers and students. Yet, none hold the powerful sway that is achieved by guilt as a motivator. Guilt as a tool, a rhetorical motivator, is almost perfect. Inciting a crowd to anger in order to change a political situation is great, unless that anger begins to take on physical characteristics within the public hall. It is an emotion that can and does inspire us to move toward making changes, but it can also have a harsh backlash in physical and violent outbursts. Guilt, on the other hand, strikes a chord within each individual's "secret" self, a part that is rarely shared with others. It is a personal emotion that we attempt to keep to ourselves as we try to outrun, evade, or squelch it. Guilt has been used as a motivational force by individuals, speakers, and advertisers for a long time. It has become a part of the repertoire of persuasive tools used in modern rhetoric, and we are affected by guilt as an appeal on many levels each day. Yet, as a rhetorical device it remains under studied. It will be the purpose of this examination of guilt as a motivator to try to understand how guilt has come to be an often used social motivator, and how that tool was honed to a fine sharpness by targeting women as the recipients of such motivational guilt.

As a fan of the darkly humorous series "Buffy the Vampire Slayer" I was drawn to an episode called "Amends" while I was doing this research. Buffy, the heroine, must set out to find an evil force that is driving her former lover to suicidal ideation. Upon finally meeting the evil, personified as a woman, Buffy is told, "I am the thing that

darkness fears.” The villain has been torturing Angel, the former lover, with reruns of all the horrendous deeds he committed during his days, and years, of vampirism. This supernatural villain, in her guise as a woman, is able to recreate, and play in film clip fashion, the most awful and horrendous acts committed by the one she is tormenting. The guilt felt by Angel is not only meant to torment, but it is also used to persuade him to take the actions desired by the supernatural villain. (Whedon) This is a pop culture representation of something that happens every day in far more mundane settings. Feelings of guilt can catapult the recipient of those emotions into any number of actions. These actions may be used by the recipient to assuage the guilt, or in order to avoid it all together, but the result is the same. Some action is taken in order to alleviate feelings of guilt--it is the persuasive device of champions, and a common part of our lives. This has been true for hundreds of years, and can be documented, in part, through the reading of conduct literature for both men and women.

We are battered by modern media and its advertisers on a daily basis. Advertisers of products such as insurance, alarm systems, and products of children and infants tend to make use of such a ploy. The world of advertising uses guilt as a persuasive device in a variety of ways. For example, a major tire company makes their tires appeal to a parent’s sense of responsibility by talking about carrying precious cargo safely. If a child were injured because of a parent’s neglecting to purchase tires that kept the child safe, the effect would be devastating. Guilt for something that has yet to happen can motivate us in order to avoid that guilt. The safety of the child is foremost, but there is no doubt that the company plays on what a parent would feel if a child were injured or worse.

And yet, reference to guilt appears to be absent from the classical rhetorical

guidelines. Guilt, the strongly persuasive tool, as we experience it, may be a more modern phenomenon. Looking, then, at the emergence of conduct books in early modern society may give a clue to the historical importance and the development of guilt as a social motivator. Because guilt and conduct are closely related, this study will look at conduct books as a source for understanding, historically, how guilt has been used in modern Anglo-American culture to motivate socially accepted behavior. In order to track the ways in which guilt has been used to persuade, literature that spoke directly to people's conduct in social surroundings and social constructs is useful. For the purposes of this argument the literature that is studied will be conduct literature for the most part. Although conduct literature is not the only possible source, it is an excellent one. The close connection between guilt and conduct along with the desire of the authors to move their audience from one socially constructed position to another, create an excellent source to track guilt as a rhetorical device. It is also through conduct literature that it becomes apparent that guilt as a persuasive device, one meant to move the target from one emotional/mental position to another, has been directed more consistently toward women than toward men.

 Guilt-related emotional turmoil can be a frequent occurrence for many of us. We feel guilty because we forget to feed the cat before we leave for work. We feel guilty for not calling our mothers, and we develop a healthy respect for the line, "After all I've done for you." Aside from these small instances of guilt there are many more which play on us, that can direct us, motivate us, and often cut away at our self-respect. Unlike most other emotional motivators, though, guilt develops in a more stealthy manner. It is more difficult to deal with because it is harder to pinpoint an action that will ease it. Guilt is

sneaky, and it can be plied out of us without being overt. Guilt does not play *on* our emotions, guilt plays *with* our emotions. Rather than exacerbating a constant latent emotion, like fear of something happening to a loved one, guilt becomes an attack on our self-image. By invoking the sensation that the guilty party has somehow neglected to live up to socially accepted behavior, behavior the guilty party also believes in, self image is damaged. The damage often leaves the guilty party eager to make reparation, and ripe for suggestion. Guilt works with our emotions to make us eager to please. It becomes a part of memories or speculation without creating the fall-out of anger or the danger signals that fear generates. Guilt comes with few, if any, visible physical reaction. Guilt often does not produce outward signs of its presence, such as a blush does when we are embarrassed. It can leave the recipient of such feelings rather dumbfounded and immersed in their own emotional turmoil with little apparent physical reaction. When we are angry we strike out, vocally or physically. When afraid our pulse quickens and we wish to run. We will laugh in joy, cry in sadness, and back away in revulsion. In guilt we sit, think, and become self-involved. This allows those who wish to invoke guilt in others a strikingly indistinct vantage point.

 Guilt has become a common motivational power tool. Between 1650 and the early 1800's conduct books brought guilt, as a motivator, to the public audience of those conduct books. These books were written largely by men for a female audience, and worked to control the extent of a woman's social actions and interactions.

 The following literature examines modern-day literature that speaks to guilt as a motivator, although there is little on the topic. The sense of guilt will be defined, the context of guilt as motivator will be explored, and conduct books and their purpose will

be examined.

This study began as a way to attempt to understand how guilt became such well-used persuasive device. It soon led to the understanding that these rhetorical devices that were targeting women as the audience held more data than others. The exploration will begin by developing an understanding of modern inquiries into guilt as motivator, and definitions of guilt. Guilt invoked through prior transgressions as well as anticipatory guilt, the guilt we are afraid might assail us upon a given action, will be explored as avenues for this rhetoric. Guilt as a rhetorical device in conduct books for men was minimal, using emotional appeals to pride and humor far more frequently. Conduct books written for women by women will be used to demonstrate that some women wrote advising other women to use their minds, rather than “social ladders”, and to become products of education rather than society. It will be demonstrated that conduct books for women written by men, who were published far more frequently than women, made a much greater use of guilt as a motivator.

Chapter I: Review of Literature

Defining "Sense of" Guilt

Since this project traces the use of guilt as a tool or motivator in rhetorical devices it is logical to pinpoint when the definition of guilt that this study will use first appeared. According to the Oxford English Dictionary there are several common and current usages for the term "guilt". Some appeared as far back as the year 1000. It was then commonly looked upon, as it is at times now, as a failure of duty, delinquency; offence, crime, sin. People are guilty of failing to take appropriate care, guilty of committing crimes, and guilty of sins. Guilt can also be a verb meaning to commit an offence or trespass. However, for the purpose of this research an individual's "sense of guilt" is what will be used. According to Oxford this "sense of guilt" and was first recognized and reported in use in 1690 in a sermon by a gentleman named Tillotson. This definition, from Tillotson's sermon, is as follows: "Guilt being nothing else but trouble arising in our minds, from a consciousness of having done contrary to what we are verily persuaded was our Duty." This usage of the term guilt reflects a "turn" in how guilt is being viewed. Before it had been a word that described the wrongness of an action, as viewed by society, and here it is being used to describe an individual's sense of going against what has been taught is good social behavior. Unlike being guilty of not behaving in a responsible or dutiful manner, the term works to identify an emotion that is felt by the person who believes, or is brought to believe, he or she has performed "contrary to what we are verily persuaded" is duty. The key of this definition are the words "what we are verily *persuaded*" is our duty. That duty is brought about by social, familial, and cultural influences, and this sense of duty is often innate to our character, and thus we are

vulnerable to those that play on that vulnerability. The fact that this definition is first relayed in a religious sermon suggests that guilt is an emotion that surfaces for us in the company of others, and in our view of ourselves as we wish others to see us. It is personal and social at one time.

Rhetoric

This early definition of guilt as one's own sense of have acted contrarily to social expectations is important to this thesis and the sources to be used because it not only establishes basic meaning, but a loose time-line of usage for that meaning. Since the first notation of guilt being used to define a way in which people are led to "feel" about things appears in a sermon, it is also likely that this definition was more often used to speak of matters that were very important to the individual's view of self within a social setting. What will the neighbors, the congregation, or society think of our actions, regardless of how real or supposed the consequences to our actions are.

If, as scholars, we want to understand more fully the art of rhetoric, it is to our advantage to study further this one aspect of the art that has been virtually ignored, and how that aspect became so common. As a common facet of persuasion, it could only be to our advantage as researchers to study guilt as a motivator more fully than has been done to this point. While there is some research into the topic, it is found most frequently within the field of communications, and that research is not abundant. The communications research revolves predominantly around our modern perception of guilt as a motivator within the field of advertising. Yet, we know little of how this particular method has evolved or what has brought about the present popularity of the method. However, there are some scholars, such as Daniel O'Keefe, to whom this paper will look

for pertinent modern perceptions of guilt as motivator.

The study of the art of persuasive rhetoric has been recognized since the fifth century B.C.E. This powerful form of communication was developed in Greek probate courts and thrived in the Greek democracy and, according to authors Bizzell and Herzberg in their book *The Rhetorical Tradition*, “Rhetoric was, first and foremost, the art of persuasive speaking” (Bizzell 2). This art of persuasive speaking has been refined and developed as modern technology has allowed for greater numbers in audience. What was developed, in essence, to be applied directly to those who were physically close to a speaker, has changed as physical location becomes less of a factor. The printed word widened the audience base and allowed the rhetorician to speak without interruption. This in turn implies a different strategy for the written word. The words can be specifically applied to certain targeted audiences, for example, different strategies can be used in persuading men and women. Yet, even the most respected and widely read rhetoricians have paid little attention.

Aristotle’s Rhetoric has been pivotal to rhetorical study in past centuries. He told his students that emotion must be considered when speaking to the public, and that it was important to know the state of mind of the audience, how they felt, and why they felt that way. He also talked of those things that would drive a man to action. This list includes such things as chance, nature, compulsion, habit, reasoning, anger and appetite. The emotions that an orator could tap into to persuade the audience were calmness, anger, pity, fear, confidence, indignation and envy. Aristotle talks of emotions and motivators, yet guilt is never mentioned. It is possible that other scholars of Aristotle’s time did think on guilt as a motivator, but that chance seems slim. There must have been some feeling, or

sense of, guilt during that age as we read tales and stories that center around moral and ethical behaviors which were written (or spoken) during that time. Yet, it was not considered a useful tool for making one's point when trying to persuade others.

The fact that there was no mention of guilt by early rhetoricians helps us to understand that there was a shift in meaning of the term. As this meaning shows up in the Oxford as being used in 1690 it is fair to say that it came about some time before. If then, one considers the technological developments of the printing press and the making of paper we can follow, to some extent, the expansion of this use of the term.

In the years to come guilt would become an often used tool of rhetoric. Aristotle's work establishes that there was a time in which guilt was not part of rhetoric. His not mentioning guilt as one of the emotional tools to be used by rhetoricians is important in establishing a loose time frame in which to explore guilt as a motivator. It also displays, to some extent, how rhetoric and persuasion have evolved along with the ability to broaden the audience base by use of printed materials.

Modern Points of View

Many of the ways we see guilt being used as a motivator are not ways that we would consider to be uplifting. Guilt is a means to an end. There are instances, though, where guilt as motivator has taken on a broader and more socially important role in advertising. Advertisements relaying the consequences of unsafe sex and the growing numbers of individuals who are HIV positive come to mind or, the timeless ad which would run late at night when I was growing up: "It's eleven o'clock. Do you know where your children are?" These ads create a sense of guilt and discomfort in the audience meant to motivate them to fulfill certain responsibilities that are both social and

personal. Ads such as these are meant to motivate viewers to take responsibility for themselves and their actions, and to promote a sense of social responsibility.

It is true that rhetoric has been studied and written on for centuries, and the finer points of rhetoric are well known. However, there is a lack of investigation into guilt as a motivator, and it is noted by Daniel O'Keefe in an article written for *Communication Yearbook*. He states, "fear appeals are commonly discussed in broad-scale summaries of persuasion-effects research. By contrast, such summaries rarely mention guilt as potentially having a role in social influence" (O'Keefe 67). How is it, then, that guilt has been studied as a motivator on a much smaller scale than other emotional appeals meant to inspire some action? It is as though guilt has "crept" into its position as a commonly used tool of persuasion today. Perhaps this is because guilt can be a more subtle and intimate emotion, and one that is rarely "shared" between individuals. One may be able to convey anger over a situation, and to convey it in such a way that another becomes angry as well. For example, coworkers may share a story of one being poorly used by the boss, and other coworkers may become angry at the boss as well. Yet, it isn't as simple with "sharing" guilt. This is due, in part, to the way individuals process this complex emotion. Freud explains guilt this way, "it is based on the tension between the ego and the ego ideal and is the expression of a condemnation of the ego by its critical agency" (Freud 652). Guilt is processed within the deepest parts of "self." It is a tension created when our ideas of who we "should" be and who we "wish" ourselves to be do not agree. It attacks our self-perception through the "critical agency" allowing our minds to voice self criticism in ways which are difficult to defend against. Unlike fear where many can be startled or made fearful by one event, guilt acts differently. While guilt can be spread,

it does not lend itself to moving from one audience member to another as easily as would fear or anger.

Since the Oxford English Dictionary helps to pinpoint when this perception of guilt as an emotion began, it would be wise to view a more modern definition. To define guilt more clearly as it is being used in this paper, an article quoting Baumeister, Stillwell, & Heatherton is being used:

Guilt may initially and briefly be described as ‘an individual’s unpleasant emotional state associated with possible objections to his or her actions, inaction, circumstances or intentions’ (qtd. in O’Keefe Guilt 68).

O’Keefe states that guilt is an “emotional state” which is then associated with objections to one’s individual actions. The objections are held by others, but guilt centers around our individual agreement with those objections. Perhaps it is the fact that guilt is based on self-perception and concern of how one is viewed by other members of society which makes it more difficult to look at guilt as a motivator closely.

Guilt is an “individual” unpleasant state. It is not an emotional state that is easily passed between individuals. This is an intimately personal dilemma, which keys directly into two different levels. It is felt on an individual level, one feels the tension of the ego and the ego ideal, in other words a tension between how we are and how we believe we *should* be. Guilt is also working on a social level, what we believe the world views our conduct to represent. O’Keefe continues:

As even this brief characterization makes clear, guilt—by virtue of being connected to possible objections to one’s conduct—is the sort of emotional state that might straightforwardly be aroused by another person (by another person’s raising

objections). That is to say, arousing guilt is the sort of thing a person might do rather more easily (say) than arousing sadness, precisely because guilt is connected to potential objections to one's conduct (O'Keefe Guilt 68).

O'Keefe makes the point that guilt is an emotion that can be *aroused* by another's words and/or actions. Which makes it an extremely good tool for the rhetorician. It is, by its nature, rhetorical. It is something that could be more easily accomplished than arousing sadness because it is "connected to potential objections to one's conduct." Regardless of intellectual knowledge that tells us what others think is unimportant, people are still social creatures and as such are concerned with the way they appear to others. Few people do not feel uncomfortable when they know that their conduct in one situation or another is, or may be, objected to by others. This makes guilt an extremely powerful emotion, and a powerful rhetorical device. By keying into such personal views of self that are intractably meshed with how society may see our "self", guilt works on a level different than other emotional ploys. It also provides guilt with the potential be a potent motivator socially.

Understanding How Guilt as Motivator Works

Guilt, as a motivator, also has some other characteristics that are unique. O'Keefe goes on to point out that guilt is more than recognizing that others will object to one's conduct. He uses a 1992 article by Maria **Miceli** entitled "How to make someone feel guilty: Strategies of guilt inducement and their goals". He states, "Miceli's analysis is cast in terms of the conditions under which guilt is likely to be aroused and identifies two initial 'essential ingredients' for one person (A) to make someone else (B) feel guilty: '(1) To make B assume that he is responsible for a certain act or event x, i.e., that: (a) he

caused x to happen either directly or indirectly; (b) his goal was to cause x, or at least (c) he had the power to avoid x but this was not his goal' and (2) To make B assume a negative evaluation of harmfulness with regard to x and, more or less indirectly, to B himself as the perpetrator'" (qtd. in O'Keefe 69). O'Keefe and Miceli are stating that one must make a person assume he is responsible for an event, the goal was to cause the event, or that the person had the power to stop the event and did not. They also believe that the person must assume this will be evaluated negatively, and that that evaluation will fall to the person as perpetrator. However, this explanation goes on to identify a third crucial element in the causing of guilt. O'Keefe states, "Hence Miceli suggests a third 'crucial constituent of the sense of guilt: the thwarting of B's self-image' The reasoning here is that B can acknowledge responsibility, but experience no guilt, in circumstances in which the negative evaluation is not based on B's own standards. [. . . Hence guilt is a 'self-judgment based on internal standards' . Because B falls short of meeting B's own standards, B's self-image is correspondingly threatened" (qtd. in O'Keefe 69). Therefore, guilt that is used to motivate must have three main elements: The person attempting to "guilt" the other into taking an action must make the other feel responsible for some event, make the other assume he and/or his causing the event will be viewed negatively, and that person causing the other to feel guilt must know that the other's self image can be damaged because of the other's own standards. It appears a very complex set of circumstances are required to "guilt" another person into taking action, however, this has not stopped people from using guilt as a motivating force. It is an excellent approach when working with socially enforced ideas. The ideas, such as those repeated in the conduct literature for women, are accepted so broadly that these

social “rules” help to reinforce the guilt induced rhetoric.

Kenneth Burke’s *A Rhetoric of Motives* also sheds light on the way in which guilt can be used as a rhetorical device. Burke’s work on identification as an aspect of persuasive rhetoric creates an understanding of how much of conduct literature, especially that directed toward men, worked. He states, “Hence, the persuasive identifications of Rhetoric, in being so directly designed for *use*, involve us in a special problem of consciousness, as exemplified in the Rhetorician’s particular purpose for a given statement” (36). Men were a part of the social structure and depended upon one another’s support in an endeavor to feel that their superiority, whether over women or over “lower classes” was justified. When rhetors were able to allow the gentlemen identify themselves with others of their class as well as with terms such as “pride” and “duty” in a positive fashion, the gentlemen were persuaded more easily.

By utilizing the “sense of guilt” definition it is obvious that today’s media uses that particular tool regularly. Authors Bruce Huhmann and Timothy Brotherton have documented the application of guilt as a method of influence. The authors analyze the “guilt advertisements” in 24 different magazine publications. One important conclusion of this analysis is that guilt as motivator is used as frequently as other popular motivators such as humor. The method most commonly used in eliciting guilt is fact. People are persuaded more by the fact that their non-participation in an event or drive will leave someone else without something significant. Allowing the audience member to believe that he or she is ignoring someone else’s needs creates a sense of guilt. It is fact that health insurance can help ease financial burdens during an illness. One feels guilty if one does not have sufficient health insurance to assure one’s family that illness will not

devastate the family's future financial security. It is a fact that seatbelts can reduce the level of injury during an automobile accident, and that children must be restrained properly for safety's sake. One feels guilty if an accident occurs when a child is not properly restrained and is injured.

The Huhmann and Brotherton article's numbers make it clear that guilt as a motivating factor in advertisements appears most frequently in in the two magazines used that were news oriented, *Time* and *Newsweek*. However, *Reader's Digest* also contained a high percentage of advertisements that were based on eliciting guilt. These magazines are popular with both men and women; however, the numbers in the magazines which were targeted specifically toward men or women were a little more interesting. *Popular Science*, a magazine thought to target men, had 3.3% of the ads that were eliciting guilt. *Cosmopolitan*, which targets women who consider themselves sophisticated, contained the same number. However, *Penthouse* had a 0.0% of "guilt" advertisements, where *Working Woman* came in with 10.8% of the ads eliciting guilt. *Sports Illustrated* and *Field & Stream* both came in with 3.8%, while *Good Housekeeping* and *Better Homes & Gardens* showed 6.8% and 7.8%, respectively, ads that were guilt oriented. It appears that magazines that consider women either as a large part of a mixed audience or those that targeted women were more likely to contain advertisements oriented toward guilt appeals. Again, it is demonstrated that guilt is an emotion thought to belong to women, and that this is a way in which to persuade women. While this application of guilt as motivator may have begun long before women considered themselves worthy of "rights", it continues to target women today.

Huhmann and Brotherton use an article by Niedenthal, Tagney, and Gavanski;

Wicker, Payne and Morgan, to define the guilt appeal in this way: “Guilt appeals focus on one’s behavior as a past or future transgression or as a failure to care for others. In contrast, shame appeals center on other people’s possible evaluations of the self should some goal not be attained (1983)” (qtd. in Huhmann 3). They go on to clarify guilt and shame appeals in this way: “A shame appeal might lead a consumer to purchase the advertised product to attain a goal or to avoid disgrace. [. . .] A guilt appeal might result in a purchase either to make retribution for or to refrain from committing a transgression” (3). The idea of persuading through guilt works through two different directions. One part is the message sent to the recipient, and the other is the viewpoint that is recommended by the one making the appeal or trying to persuade. O’Keefe’s article explains the two part process: “A guilt-based persuasive appeal characteristically has two parts: One is material designed to evoke some degree of guilt in the message receiver, and the other is the message’s recommended viewpoint or action, which presumably might offer the prospect of guilt reduction” (80). So, if one is to make an audience member feel guilty about those in society who are not lucky to have as much as he does, then the audience member is likely to take the action of sending money to an organization meant to lessen the disadvantage of those who are impoverished. However, for the appeal to work the audience member must feel that he is responsible for helping those less fortunate.

Guilt also works as a persuasive device on *anticipated* feelings. While persuasion through fear works mainly in the here and now, a fear that something will happen, anticipatory guilt works on avoidance of future emotional distress. O’Keefe states, “The research reviewed thus far has emphasized the role of the experience of guilt feelings in

shaping conduct” (88). However, what is interesting is that guilt can be used to not only shape conduct, but to influence conduct in another way. He goes on to say, “But emotions might play a role in social influence in another way—namely, through anticipation of the emotional consequences of behavior. Indeed, a number of diverse studies suggest that conduct can be shaped by expectations about the feelings that will result from that conduct” (88). Anticipated feelings, those that one can expect to surface during a certain set of circumstances, can play a large part in what one decides to do. One might avoid watching a movie in which the lead character dies because this action could cause feelings of sadness. O’Keefe says of guilt, “Turning to guilt specifically, it is easy enough to imagine how one’s behavior might be influenced by expected feelings of guilt:” (89). Anticipated guilt feelings are not the same as experienced guilt feelings, according to O’Keefe. Anticipated guilt might work not only through feelings of what might be if an action is taken, but on current feelings of guilt because of past transgressions as well. One has committed a transgression as defined by self and society, say sex before marriage, and one knows the feelings which occurred after the transgression. If one is considering the same transgression again, the feelings that were present after the last transgression come up. So anticipatory guilt may have a dual influencing significance in that it preys on emotions one does not want to experience, and on past transgressions of some social or personal code of conduct. It appears that persuasion by anticipatory guilt has played a large part in bringing guilt into our lives as a motivator, and it appears that it has been used as a device for motivating behavior within a social context. The conduct book rhetoric employed this tactic frequently. By playing on the woman’s responsibility for what “might” happen, the conduct book allowed the

women to “feel” what it would be like if events were to unfold in an unsavory way.

It would appear to be after the time of Aristotle and before the advent of modern advertising agencies that guilt became a rhetorical device. The advances in communication techniques may have been a part of the growth of guilt as motivator. It became a means of influencing not only an audience gathered in person, but to be able to reach an audience over across larger areas as well as social level. Because of this, guilt as a social influencer would have had a broader value. Daniel O’Keefe, in an article on guilt in the *Persuasion Handbook*, states “Guilt-based social influence mechanisms involving the influencing agent’s creating an inconsistency between the target’s standards and the target’s conduct (i.e., creating a transgression) can be quite powerful means of influence” (*Persuasion* 334). It is also to be noted that guilt is good for “social” influence, meaning that those who wish to comply with a certain social code would be more heavily influenced. Fitting in to our social circle has been an ongoing desire of men and women throughout the ages. Those social codes could be based in religious beliefs, traditional social expectations, on codes based explicitly on class and social standing, or on a combination of all of these things. It is within this realm of social codes that guilt became useful in attempts to control the conduct of the intended audience.

. Because the social context itself appears to be important when looking at guilt as a persuasive tool, literary works that speak to social conduct are important. Conduct books were a popular mode of prescribing certain social behaviors for young men and young ladies. These books would give guidance on behavior and dress as well as a number of other aspects of social life. Therefore, for the purpose of this research conduct books appear to have the qualities most applicable to the purpose of discovering

something more about guilt as a social motivator, and as a tool used primarily to persuade women.

About Conduct Literature

Conduct literature as primary sources for this paper is a logical choice. The literature focuses on the social and behavioral choices necessary to become a “productive” citizen. Since the literature itself is meant to persuade the reader to some particular type of behavior and that persuasion relies on rhetoric it is an appropriate atmosphere in which to find social motivators. It is an excellent source for guilt as motivator as it began to appear in literary texts. Conduct literature is also important because it was produced prolifically. In one search using the terms “conduct or behavior” in one database, I was able to access 851 records which were digital copies of conduct literature. The database *Early American Imprints, Series I: Evans*, brought back digitized information for the years 1673-1805. Each source was a book on or about conduct or behavior written between those years. During that time span of 132 years over 800 books were produced to guide the conduct of the young, of women, and of men. Conduct was an obsession.

Since conduct literature was generally written according to the gender of the reader the writer wished to address, literature addressing both men and women has been viewed. It becomes apparent that the literature was vastly different in tone and persuasive methods depending upon the gender of the writer in association with the gender of the reader. It will become somewhat obvious as the paper progresses that women were more likely to be on the receiving end of guilt as a persuasive device. Men were also addressed as recipients of this kind of advice, although, the manner in which it was presented is

much different. Women were constantly reminded of their roles as the submissive child-like person who needed to be reprimanded even prior to an event of poor behavior.

While they were constantly reminded that men would use any means necessary to get a woman alone to succumb to a man's sexual intentions, they were frequently told that a man's poor behavior would only be brought on by a woman's missteps.

Some background information about conduct books gives insight into their uses. In her work, C. Dallett Hemphill explores the topic. While Hemphill's article is centered on the regulation of communicated emotion through controlling one's facial expressions, her article exploring conduct literature is pertinent for a number of reasons, including historical insight. Hemphill tells the reader:

Before the middle of the eighteenth century, most of the printed conduct advice on early American bookshelves consisted of imported Renaissance courtesy works and their English imitations. These works, which described proper deportment of gentlemen, were intended for and owned only by the elite (35).

The interest in conduct, whether among the Americans or the British, was held mostly by those of the genteel classes. The books and tracts written would pertain to actions taken and behaviors displayed that would allow one to conduct him or herself well in the company of those who were socially elite. Hemphill goes on to state: "Through their conduct advice, the authors took the first steps at integrating women into their vision of the social world, while groping toward new notions of gender difference to accommodate persisting female inequality in the new world of peers" (35). So, while the authors wrote to include the women in the works, they also worked to continue the attitude that

women were not equal to men. This desire to continue to keep women “in their place” would work toward developing a different way to persuade the women, while pursuing a code of conduct that would do the same. Hemphill also notes that: “Some authors even commended “shamefacedness” and downcast eyes, though most simply asked women to avoid a ‘daring,’ ‘masculine,’ ‘bold,’ and ‘unabashed countenance” (44).

The recommended conduct for women was about physically representing oneself as meek and without strength which thereby encouraged the woman to consider herself less than the man. Why would someone recommend to women that they assume looks of shamefacedness and downcast eyes unless the women were guilty of something? While this look of humility could be considered an aspect of religious teaching, it was not an aspect that was meant to affect the men. Guilt was not only promoted to guide behavior, but it was also promoted as a way of keeping women off-guard. Women, who felt guilty, would be less likely to become assertive and independent. Hemphill also tells her readers, “So, while strictly normative, the evidence from conduct literature can tell us much about the relationship between contemporary rules for the expression of emotions and social change” (36). Conduct books express the way that men and women thought of themselves and one another. They are also important in shedding light on how people learned to speak or write to one another in order to shape behavior, and in turn shape a power structure.

The conduct book or pamphlet served a wide purpose. Jane Donawerth states, “[C]onduct books. . . helped establish the middle class as a group with shared interests by emphasizing gender roles and the domestic ideal of women’s sphere—ideologies that appealed across class and region to common ground (103)” (Donawerth 5). Not only was

the conduct book widely read and well received, it was an acceptable means of denoting a behavioral custom that was accepted by all. It was a powerful tool. Donawerth speaks of Susan Miller stating, “Indeed, Miller argues that conduct literature falls under the domain of rhetoric, for it was often used instead of rhetorical training for groups whose entitlements the privileged class wished to limit (149-150)” (6). It was not only those who were within that “privileged class” who wished to limit entitlements, it was also the men who wished to limit the entitlements of women and to continue the myth that women had only one place in the world, that as subservient to men.

Conduct books themselves have been written by and for myriad people in a myriad of situations. These books can cover any number of areas but do have certain topics or ideas that are common. In her article, Sylvia Kasey Marks states, “And while the subject matter covered is quite broad, common threads run through all these works. Most of them have something to say about the nature of nobility and its obligations. They advise in matters of education, appropriate recreations, and polite conversation” (4). All of these areas are those that could be viewed by other members of one’s social class. No matter the topic area Marks tells us that conduct books are concerned with “the formation of a good and virtuous person.” Whether the conduct book was written in epistolary form or simply as a book in narrative form, the purpose was to convey the notion of how a “good” person would act under certain circumstances. The books would advise and guide toward conducting oneself in a manner befitting a certain station in life. That station, while social, was also governed by the biological sex of the person. The station that a man held was quite different that that of a woman. Conduct advice for

ladies took on a different tone than those written for men. It would appear that guilt as a persuasive tool was more often directed at women than men.

The conduct book changed the face of guilt as motivator by bringing it into the mainstream of social and cultural interactions. These small handbooks promoted guilt into the role of often used rhetorical device instead of one that occurred only occasionally. As conduct books were more frequently geared toward women and their social behavior than toward men, guilt became a device often used toward shaping and controlling the conduct of women. This sense of guilt has been passed down from generation to generation and is still being fought by women today.

The conduct tracts and books used in the following section are provided to assert the assumption that conduct books promoted guilt as a motivator. They also provide an insight into the way men spoke to one another on issues of conduct, and used these books to speak to women in an entirely different manner. That manner is often that of kindly father figure chastising the wayward child, and is one that invokes guilt to persuade.

Chapter II: Conduct Literature

For the Gentlemen

The conduct literature that is reviewed here was written for the men during the 15th and 16th centuries. Some is written for youngsters, while others are addressed to men of standing. Although the works tend to vary in their uses of rhetorical tools which are meant to motivate the men, pride is evident in all. Pride, in one's station, sex, and standing within the household are far more often used as a rhetorical device than any other tool. The Oxford English Dictionary defines pride as a high, especially, an excessively high, opinion of one's own worth or importance which gives rise to a feeling

or attitude of superiority over others; it is inordinate self-esteem. The appeals to a man's pride make the conduct literature written for men and young men different from that for women. The appeals are more straightforward. Unlike the conduct literature for the ladies there it is not written to "reprove" the gentleman, but to "improve" his conduct. Men and young men both are spoken to as equals, rather than as errant children as are the ladies. Guilt appeals can also be found, but are very subtle unlike the guilt appeals used in conduct literature for women. Men addressed men as equal members of the human race, while they appear to have addressed women as overgrown children in need of discipline and guidance. The effect of such literature on the man would be to bolster his pride, but the effects of conduct literature on the woman, as will be seen in the next chapter, could be one that would create self-doubt and a low sense of self-esteem. While self-esteem and pride are similar, pride tends to be an overly inflated view of self, while self-esteem a more healthy view of one's own worth within social and cultural circles.

As the conduct literature for men in this paper is reviewed it has been arranged so that these appeals to pride, within each piece, grow. Further along the appeal to a man's pride grow stronger. Yet, the first piece of conduct literature which is reviewed in this section was written for young men and will be one that incorporates humor into a cautionary tale that inevitably appeals to a young man's self-esteem.

Humor

In an early American work entitled The Pleasant history of lazy Laurence, published sometime in the 1770's, it is humor that is used by the author in the attempt to persuade young men to good conduct. The piece also appeals to a young man's sense of self, or self-esteem. This book does not "preach" about conduct, but uses funny tales to

relate the importance of exhibiting certain behaviors, as well as the avoidance of other behaviors.

The main character, Laurence is lazy and his lack of desire to put forth effort brings about a series of mishaps, and eventually his own downfall. The author resorts to short spurts of humorous poetry and anecdotes to capture the interest of his youthful audience. It is the character's downfall at the end which the author uses in order to persuade.

This manner of writing creates entertainment, while at the same time advising about conduct. The first chapter begins: "Sir Laurence Lazy, governor of Lubberland Castle, in the county of Sloth, married a fair and beautiful lady named Catherine Careless, by whom he had one only son, which he called after his own name Laurence" (2). The author invokes humor through alliteration and creates a story which welcomes the reader to enjoy himself. While this could be considered a cautionary tale, unlike some conduct books, it is still one that presents behaviors that should and should not be acceptable to the reader, the only difference being that the author includes very straightforward information about the results of the character's conduct.

In this case the book tells an exciting tale of Laurence being able to charm individuals and get away all manner of things. He is able to put the school master and the students in a stupor and in order to escape the boredom of the classroom. He is able to trick those willing to help him, steal from them and go on. The author tells the reader, "Laurence in a short time grew so notorious by the many exploits which he had wrought on those that affronted him, that at length there was warrants issued forth for the apprehending of him," (8). Laurence's exploits are silly and cause no permanent damage,

but the warning lies in the fact that he is eventually sought after by the law. He has become “notorious”; he is known only for his poor behavior and lazy nature. The young man reading the book has a tale that in turns makes him laugh and think about consequences to actions that may seem unimportant at the time they are committed. The author is also working to allow the young reader to identify, in some ways, with Laurence. The young reader’s pride would be affected, and he would wish to avoid becoming known only for his lazy nature and the misdeeds he uses to get what he wants. The author uses humor and exaggeration to draw in the young male reader, and then offers consequences which are unpleasant.

It could be that some feelings of guilt are brought about through a young man’s recognition of Laurence’s character in himself, but guilt is hardly a blatant ploy. Laurence is made to look foolish and foolhardy, and the effect of this would again be an appeal to a young man’s pride. The young man, in order to feel proud of himself, would wish to avoid looking imprudent. The actions in the piece have consequences, but these are made to look humorous rather than to draw on a sense of guilt. More, the author is attempting to allow the reader to identify a connection with those of lesser character, such a Laurence, and through that identification make the young male reader aware of consequences to the most mundane of offences.

In *A Rhetoric of Motives* Kenneth Burke explores the importance of identification as a rhetorical device. The unknown author of Laurence’s exploits understands that one young man may quite well identify with another’s sense of boredom and restlessness. Burke states, “A is not identical with his colleague, B. But insofar as their interests are joined, A is *identified* with B. Or he may *identify himself* with B even when their

interests are not joined, if he assumes that they are, or is persuaded to believe so” (Burke 20). The young man who identifies with Laurence’s boredom and restlessness can more easily understand how Laurence could get himself into such trouble. By doing so, the young reader will also note that he could fall into the same poor behavior patterns as well.

This makes the young man aware that not only does poor behavior create problems for everyone, but damages his own reputation as well. The author is careful to make this conduct piece pleasant and without the usual lectures that bore young men. He draws his readers in with his seemingly innocuous tale and his use of humor. However, he appeals to the young man’s sense of self-worth and his future reputation to keep the young man clear of trouble. The author lays out the consequences of Laurence’s improper actions so that the identifying reader can avoid such outcomes. Kenneth Burke recognizes the type of rhetorical device. He states, “For substance, in the old philosophies, was an *act*; and a way of life is an *acting-together*; and in acting together, men have common sensations, concepts, images, ideas, attitudes that make them consubstantial” (21). People share common ideas and senses, and these shared ideas are an ideal rhetorical device.

By allowing men, or young men, to identify with those exhibiting poor or proper behavior the male authors were able to appeal to the male reader more strongly. While this author relied on humor to create a bond with young readers, others would rely more heavily on pride.

Fatherly Advice

Like the piece about Laurence just examined, the next piece was also written with young men in mind. This book, printed in 1632, is one in which Sir Walter Raleigh gives advice to his son. The book, entitled *Sir Walter Raleigh's Instructions to his Sonne: and to Posteritie*, is meant to give advice to the young man of the time. The advice is given in a straightforward manner and points out the benefits of conducting oneself according to the advice. The young man who is reading the book is not subjected to a lecture so much as he is spoken to on the aspects of his life which could, if not carefully thought through, become troublesome. In the first chapter Raleigh advises on the choosing and acceptance of friends:

There is nothing more becoming a wise man, than to make choice of friends; for by them though shalt be judged what thou art: let them therefore be wise and virtuous, and none of those that follow thee for gain; make election rather of thy Betters than thy Inferious, (B2).

He neither lectures nor creates fear, but states that carefully chosen friendships can benefit a man greatly. A good friend is “becoming” to a young man, this friend makes him look good and helps to establish a reputation that is worthy of respect. A young man should choose friends of the same or higher station in order to benefit from the relationships, and to avoid those who will only befriend him for their own gain. He appeals to pride by stating that a “wise” man makes a good choice of friends. The advice, while obviously written to a male of lesser experience, is written with respect and without a condescending attitude. This particular trait, that of speaking to the reader with respect and without the condescending attitude, is one that will remain almost solely in

the books written for gentlemen, but not for ladies. Raleigh expects his readers to be able to understand and follow the advice, and treats them in that manner.

He also advises young men: “have care thou doest not marry an uncomely Woman for any respect; for comeliness in Children is riches,” (C2). It seems odd to suggest to young men that they should choose their wives for their appearance, but Raleigh explains the reasoning. Children who are “comely” are riches. This advice is double edged. Children were considered “riches” simply for being, but it is quite possible that Raleigh meant riches in a more direct manner. A beautiful daughter would be far easier to marry off, and to marry off advantageously. An advantageous marriage could bring more wealth to the family as a whole. A son who was handsome would have a wider choice of young women to choose from, and could also use this to marry someone who would bring more wealth to the family. Raleigh’s marital advice is mercenary, but it is given straightforwardly and with respect to the reader’s intelligence. However, it is also given with an eye toward the reader’s self-respect, pride, and desire for a good reputation within his social circle.

The conduct he suggests is put forward without the appealing to emotions such as guilt or fear. Raleigh’s advice, while written to try to gain a certain type of conduct from his reader, appears to be a road map of sorts for living a life free of complex problems that are created with unwise decisions. There is little judgment involved, and it is left up to the reader to decide whether or not to conduct himself in the manner suggested. The reader is left to choose with little emotional baggage, except that related to pride, attached to the advice. Yet, a gentleman’s world was somewhat wider than those things that were personal to him, or to his society. He must also consider the

business world in which he operated.

A Gentlemen's Gentleman

Gentlemen's conduct books covered a wider area than simply the social graces, or the manners and behaviors that were expected in strictly social situations. Gentleman's conduct literature was also inclusive of the world of his business. In 1713 Cotton Mather wrote an essay for gentlemen on the matter of keeping their word, or standing by promises and verbal contracts. The essay is entitled simply "A Man of his Word", but is described on the front piece as, "A very brief Essay on Fidelity in Keeping of Promises and Engagements. Declaring *How* and *Why* a Good Man will be *as Good as his Word.*" Mather's intention in the essay is to persuade his audience or his readers to understand the importance of keeping a verbal promise or contract. As we'll see in the next chapter, most conduct literature written for young women was based upon attitudes toward the social graces, but Mather's essay goes beyond the social and into the business world.

Mather does not use guilt blatantly, although it appears to factor in to some extent. He appeals to a man's desire to be righteous, and to appear to be a man of God. Instead, he uses the religious doctrine that was most prevalent in society. A man of good standing, of high reputation, was always "a man of God." The association with the world of religion was important to status, and status, of course, was important to a man's pride.

Mather, then, appeals to pride and to a sense of being "right with God." He states, "If he be a man who would break his word that he may get a penny, he is one of the *Covetous, whom the Lord abhors.* But a man, who is what he should be, is One, that will rather suffer Loss, than be *worse than his Word.* (Mather 3). A man who finds his religious beliefs to be the most important aspect of his life, as many did at the time

especially those within Mather's social circle, would clearly see keeping his word as his duty to God. Mather is using a man's interest in his righteousness in order to convince the reader to be true to his word. That sense of righteousness connects directly to a man's pride, to his ability to be the best he can be and to upholding his reputation as a "man of God."

It appears that Mather also uses repetition as a means to an end. Although he does appeal to a man's pride to some extent, he is more inclined to rely on repetition and a man's desire to be right with God. The repetition is an excellent way to reinforce the importance of certain behaviors, and of certain emotional states. Through repetition Mather encourages the gentleman to see that his pride in righteousness is essential. He states, "If a Good man, have given his word, *he Changes not*; he won't fall from it; he won't be false to it; This Temptation, *It will be to my Damage, if I keep my Word*, makes no Impression upon him. He is a *Faithful man*, and when he has bound himself by a *Promise*, his *Word is as good as a Bond*; he will *Faithfully* keep his Promise; Faithfully do his best, for the *performing* of what he has *promised*. (5) Mather relies heavily on the ideas of duty, faith, and what makes a "good man" in order to convince his reading audience that they should follow his advice on their conduct. Mather relies on a man's desire to be good rather than on his pride or his fear of offending God. Mather appeals to a man's desire, rather than his past or future failures. He tells a man what will make him a "Good man" rather than focusing on what he has done, or will do, that would be damaging to himself or others.

It is also interesting to note that this makes plain the divide in the development of reputation between men and women. As will become evident in the following chapter, a

woman's reputation was based almost solely on her familial ties and her virtue, while a man's reputation was based more on his actions with other men. These actions with other gentlemen are considered of greater importance to the community in general, while a woman's actions were considered important only to her immediate circle of family and friends. A woman's virtue related to her character as a marriageable female, her ability to stave off advances, and her willingness to accept the social restrictions that were placed on her as a woman. These roles had little to do with the community as a whole. A man's reputation, however, was considered something that could effect the community in general.

Like Mather's book, the one which follows is based on a man's role within the community and business world. *The government of the tongue* published in 1674, and written by Richard Allestree writes on the conduct that should be observed by gentlemen when speaking. He defines speech as being used to glorify God and benefiting man. He states, "And now since the original designs of speaking are so noble, so advantageous, one would be apt to conclude no rational creature would be tempted to pervert them. . ." (7) Allestree makes clear to the gentlemen reading that speech is an important aspect of their lives, and can be an advantageous, even noble, part of their conduct.

Allestree wishes to create in his readers the assumption that speech is something to take pride in when used well. Rather than impose guilt on the gentlemen reader, here, Allestree attempts to invoke pride as well as fear in order to persuade his audience to guard their tongues and speak well. He encourages the reader to examine his own use of speech and states:

It will therefore nearly concern us to enter upon this scrutiny, to bring our words to this touchstone: for tho in our depraved estimate the Eloquence of Language is more regarded then the innocence, tho we think our words vanish with the breath that utters them, yet they become records in Gods Court, are laid up in his Archives as witnesses either for, or against us: (6).

This statement encourages the man to think of his words as being a permanent aspect within the eternal system of recording man's behavior. The words that man utters, according to Allestree, should be viewed with either pride or fear, and that view should guide the gentleman's speech in the future. Allestree talks to the man about how his actions will affect himself and his own life and after-life. If he wished to appeal to a man's sense of guilt he might have spoken of the lasting ill-effects spoken words can have on others, however, Allestree focuses on how words will effect the gentleman's future.

When Allestree does begin making connections between the use of language and the consequences that can follow he does so not by pointing out the errors of men, but the error of a woman. He states:

Original Sin came first out at the mouth by speaking, before it entered by eating. The first use we find *Eve* to have made of her language, was to enter parly with the temter, and from that to become a temter to her husband. And immediately upon the fall, guilty Adam frames his tongue to a frivolous excuse, which was much less able to cover his sin then the fig-leaves were his nakedness (7-8).

The problems with speech and the problems had by man who followed Adam only came about after Eve had made use of language and tasted the apple. Allestree's italicized text places emphasis on Eve and goes further to emphasize that if there is guilt and blame to be placed because language can be used for evil, then that blame should be Eve's. The author's subtle suggestions that the use of language for ill came from Eve has a two-fold effect. First, man cannot be blamed fully for his misuse of language as a tool. Secondly, that men who do use language in a way which produces ill effect then he is acting like the first woman, not like a man. It is, more or less, a woman who would show poor "government of the tongue."

Comparatively Speaking

In light of the remarkable effect one sees in the difference in conduct books written for gentlemen and for ladies, two other books are very interesting. These two conduct books written by Braithwait and Allestree contain sections for both men and women. The different sections of both books provide enlightening information.

In 1641 Englishman Richard Braithwait wrote a conduct book which consisted of a section for the gentleman and a section for the gentlewoman. The volume begins with the man's book, covering his youth and moving forward. Most conduct books appear to have taken the time to speak of dress and how the proper lady or gentleman should adorn him or herself. Braithwaite's book is no exception. For the gentleman Braithwaite "wonders" why a man would wish to adorn himself in fancy "rags of shame". He states,

Wherein I have not a little wondered, falling now and then into more serious meditation with my selfe, how any *man*, having reflex, by the eye of his Soule, to his first fall, should glory in these robes or rags of *shame*, being purposely invented

to cover his *sinne*. Sin indeed; for had not man sinned, his shame had never been discovered (English 9).

Clothing, according to Braithwaite, was invented only to hide a man from the original sin, and he wonders why one would go to certain lengths to make that clothing fancy, or take pride in the clothing considering the origins of it. He goes on to tell the gentleman that: “All gorgeous *Attire* is the attire of sinne; it declines from the use for which it was ordained, to wit, Necessity . . .” (9). Men should dress only to cover the body and should not attempt to dress in ways that will create attention. Clothing is meant only to cover the body and hide it from the eyes of God. What he says to the gentleman is fairly straightforward, and is said as a reminder that clothing is a necessity such as food and water. While Braithwaite does appear to consider “fops” to be flaunting themselves unnecessarily, he only tells them so and moves on. Braithwaite relies, here, on a man’s desire to recognize and negate sin. Rather than pride, Braithwaite is using logic. If man must dress because of original sin, then he should not take pride in dressing.

In further extolling the virtues of wearing plain and simple clothing, Braithwaite goes on to talk to men about their worth, and how unworthy it is of them to pay too much attention to dress. He states: “Come then and heare mee, thou perfumed *Gallant*, whose *sense* chiefly consists in *sent*; and observe how much thou deroga’st from thy owne worth, in covering a shell of corruption with such bravery” (9). He tells the gentleman that his actions by overdressing “derogate”, or impair, his worth as a man. The man is a worthy creature, and Braithwaite appeals to the gentleman’s pride. Rather than trying to fill the reader with regret or guilt, Braithwaite appeals to a sense of pride and a sense of self worth.

Further on, Braithwait incorporates a man's desire to be associated with powerful and well known gentlemen of the past which is also an appeal to pride. Recreation is a part of Braithwait's conduct book. He is quick to recommend certain pastimes that can be considered those of good taste. He first begins extolling the virtues of sports by telling the reader how they have been utilized in the past. He states, "*Bowling* amongst the *Romans* was much used, especially in *Lucullus* time, whose Garden-alleyes were ever stored with young *Gentlemen*, who resorted thither to *Recreate* themselves with this exercise" (94). He uses an association with a well respected civilization in order to give the recreation he recommends a certain respectability.

Braithwait also uses pride of association in order to instill in his readers a desire to adopt moderation as an aspect of all their behaviors. Braithwait states:

What admirable moderation divers ancient Princes have shewen, especially in their contempt to the glory and pompe of this life, Histories can afford sufficient examples; but to omit forraigne instances, my pupose is to insert here one of our owne; which, by how much more neere us, by so much deeper impression should it enforce in us (173).

Rather than explaining what can come from not following moderate behavior patterns, Braithwaite is first setting up his reader to associate that kind of behavior with a man of history. While time may make this distant, the fact that this was not a foreigner is used to make a "deeper impression." He is very carefully maneuvering his reading audience in an attempt to move them toward behaviors that are considered good. Pride in following in the footsteps of a fellow countryman is used to insure ability to show moderation in all things.

Richard Allestree also wrote a conduct book for young gentlemen and one for young ladies published in 1659. Books of this type, especially at this time, were intended for ladies or gentleman of good birth. The intended audience for the book was made clear by Allestree as he called it *The Gentleman's Calling*. It was perceived that gentlemen had certain responsibilities that coincided with their rank at birth. This is made clear through a letter written by a friend for Allestree at the front of the book. The letter states:

A *Manual* which is enriched all these Graces, shall (I trust) not only be frequently and attentively perused, but that it will live affect, and sit close to the Reins, and penetrate the Heart of the *Reader*, especially that Reader for whom it is designed; and for this Blessing on the *Gentry*, it is our Duty to Solicite the *Divine Goodness*. (A4).

The duty of the young gentleman was to follow certain rules of conduct in order to fulfill his role as gentleman. Allestree addresses the gentlemen as peers, and proceeds to stimulate his persuasion with words that would speak to pride and duty. In speaking of the advantages of being a gentleman, Allestree counsels his readers about reputation, which he considers a gift by which the gentry can share the wisdom of piety and virtue: “This they may sometimes do by *Counsel*; to the success whereof there is nothing more contributive than an esteem of the Adviser, most men being rather apt to consider who speaks, than what is spoken” (123). Because of the gentleman’s station, he becomes a respected orator to those of lesser standing within the social community. He, the gentleman, should pride himself on the fact that he can impose a more fitting lifestyle on others. Allestree goes on to speak of actual behavior: “But Counsel will be of little

efficacy, if it not be seconded by *Example*. They must therefore look their Lives be such, as may shew they believe themselves, whilst they go about to perswade others” (125).

He speaks of the gentleman as he will influence those beneath him. Rather than tell the gentleman that his actions may have ill effects on others, Allestree tells him that he should pride himself on being an exemplary example. Pride is defined in two forms, as a noun or as a verb. In the *Oxford English Dictionary* the verb form is defined: “To ornament or adorn magnificently or proudly.” A man should adorn himself with those qualities considered the most magnificent, according to Allestree. The *OED* defines the noun in this way: The overweening opinion of one's own qualities, attainments, or estate, which gives rise to a feeling and attitude of superiority over and contempt for others; inordinate self-esteem. Allestree, in his attempt to persuade the gentlemen for whom he wrote his conduct book, was building up that pride and using it as a mechanism that would allow the reader to accept the rhetoric and follow Allestree’s advice. Allestree’s persuasive technique speaks to the readers pride in himself and in his station. He goes on to make the point that those of gentility could have a lasting effect on the wages of sin, an accomplishment that could change the world. This, in itself, is a huge attempt to stroke the pride of the reader. He states:

For what can be more perswasive to those of the lower Ranks to embrace Vertue, than to see it made the election of those whom they suppose to have most judgment to discern its value, and so fall not on it blindfold, and who have also all the contrary pleasures of Sin within their reach; nay prostrate at their fee, suing for entertainment, and so are not cast on it by impotence? (126)

Rather than have the gentleman take responsibility for bad actions, Allestree works to

make good conduct an act of charity toward those less fortunate, as well as a heroic effort. In this way he can persuade his peers without offending the gentleman reader. He does not point out specific conduct which would be considered sinful, base, or antisocial. He allows the reader to assume the pride without being specific enough to accuse or make a reader feel guilty for past transgressions. In this way, Allestree is able to speak to men who do commit certain transgressions of sin or conduct without offending them. Instead, the reader is puffed up and pleased by Allestree's assumption of his worth, and may, as an effect, take them to heart and follow the advice given. Allestree's persuasive technique, in this case, is based upon making the gentleman feel good about himself and his station in life.

There were a variety of types of rhetoric used to persuade men to certain kinds of behavior, yet, it appears that the most popular was the appeal to a man's pride. Little of the conduct literature for gentlemen herein used guilt or shame to motivate the men of the time. This is quite different from the rhetorical tools used by men to motivate women to certain kinds of behavior.

Chapter III: For the Ladies

Allestree & Braithwait: Writing for Women

In the last section an overview of different approaches to writing conduct literature aimed at gentlemen was examined. While using a somewhat varied approach, most appear to use pride as a motivator most frequently. The following section will track a similar overview of the conduct literature written for the ladies. It will become apparent that pride is not a motivator in this literature, but guilt, and at times shame, are used instead. For the benefit of comparison the section begins with two selections from

authors who have already been introduced. Richard Allestree and Richard Braithwait were two gentlemen who wrote for both the gentlemen and the ladies. While different authors could display different styles which might explain the difference in the rhetorical styles, it is interesting to note that the gentlemen who wrote for both ladies and gentlemen show that the difference is not due to the author's own style, but due to the anticipated gender of the audience member. Richard Allestree's work demonstrates this claim well, as do those of Richard Braithwait.

In the last section pride and identity were combined to create a rhetoric for the gentlemen. Similarly, identity comes into play here in the section about women's conduct literature. Kenneth Burke tells us:

For purposes of praise or blame, the rhetorician will assume that qualities closely resembling any of these qualities are identical with them. For instance, to arouse dislike for a cautious man, one should present him as cold and designing. Or to make a simpleton loveable, play up his good nature" (55).

These gentlemen used as part of their rhetorical repertoire this system of identification for the women as well as the men. However, the identification for the ladies is often with people of a less desirable quality.

Unlike with the gentlemen's conduct literature this section will also introduce O'Keefe's "anticipated guilt" as a rhetorical tool. As learned in the literature review anticipated guilt relies on the audience member's ability to look ahead at the ramifications of actions not yet taken.

It will become apparent that the types of rhetorical devices used toward women were those that relied on either a negative identity, an anticipation of negative results, or

both combined to create a negative self-image. The conduct literature for the gentlemen was more consistently based on pride in oneself or in one's station.

Allestree's endeavors to enhance the conduct of the gentility did not end with the gentleman. He also wrote for the ladies in his, *The Ladies Calling In Two Parts*. Once again he writes about conduct and the supposed consequences, but he approaches the ladies in an entirely different manner. This difference of address appears almost immediately within the preface as he states,

To advise, or reprove, is so ungrateful an Office, that he that undertakes it, had need use all previous arts to vindicate the sincerity of his purpose, and to convince the person admonished, that tis neither spleen or prejudice, but the most real exuberant kindness which prompts him to inflict those wounds of a friend, (b).

It appears that there is little doubt that some who read this work might become offended at the way in which he approaches the matter. Unlike his book written to the gentlemen of the upper-class which concentrates on pride his conduct book to the ladies will be more specific, and raise more emotional backlash.

To the gentlemen in a statement about their conduct, he states, "For what can be more perswasive to those of the lower Ranks to embrace Vertue, than to see it made the election of those whom they suppose to have most judgment. . ." (126). While the above statement to the ladies is on a different topic, it is apparent by viewing both, that the lady is not being addressed as an equal. He comments that it is an "ungrateful office" to reprove the ladies. He does, to a minor extent, tell the ladies that he does so without malice, but he does not appear to be overly concerned about wounding the pride of the gentlewoman who may be reading the work. Rather than stating that he will be giving

the women advice on conduct that will lead to a richer life, he writes that the work will “admonish” the person. He will warn her assuming that she does not know that certain behaviors will have dire consequences. Unlike with the gentlemen, he assumes his words will “inflict those wounds” meaning that he believes his words will be harsh and taken badly, he does not tell the ladies that they should take pride in anything, only that his words will be harsh as to their behavior.

He begins by letting the ladies know that there may be issues that are “coincident” between men and women, but that they weigh heavier on the responsibility of the lady. He describes his efforts and his book this way. He states,

It will therefore be no absurd attempt to decipher those excellencies, which are the genuine and proper ornaments of Women: which tho in som instances they may perhaps prove coincident with those of Men; yet even those which are equally inclusive of both, by the divine command may have som additional weight on the female side, in respect of decency, fame or som other (not despicable) consideration” (6As).

Allestree will not attempt to state what is good about women, or to exclaim what that goodness means, but will instead point out why a woman’s similarities to the man, in the province of conduct, prove to turn the “responsible” behavior to her. They have “som additional weight” on the side of the lady, to be taken care of by her instead of the man. In this way the woman assumes responsibility not only for her actions, but for actions of a man as well.

This is made more clear further on in the passage when Allestree begins talking of modesty and the role it plays in the social realm. He speaks of modesty as being opposed

to boldness and indecency as well as lightness and wantonness. The virtue of modesty is further defined this way: “In the first acception, Zeno has not ill defin’d it, to be the Science of decent motion, it being that which guides and regulates the whole behavior, checks and controles all rude exorbitancies, and is the great civilizer of conversations”

(5). If a woman exhibits modest behavior, then her social circle and those around her will be checked, controlled and regulated. Modesty being the great “civilizer” of conversations will allow the woman to have conversations that are well within the bounds of propriety. In effect he is stating that a woman’s immodest behavior lets loose the uncivilized behavior in all that are around her. While Allestree does not directly state that a woman’s modesty will “control” the behavior of those around her, he does imply it. If a woman is quiet, modest, and well behaved then there will be less inclination on the part of those around her to behave badly. She becomes responsible, through her modesty or lack thereof, for the actions of those with whom she is spending time. While the man may behave badly, it is quite possibly because the woman’s lack of modest conduct invited him to do so.

Turning to O’Keefe’s definition of anticipated guilt, we find evidence of that persuasive tool being used here. If a woman conducts herself without modesty then the actions of others who are with her can be laid at her feet. If those actions are socially unacceptable, then the lady has brought them about and the consequences of those actions are her responsibility. There is a rather wide discrepancy between the way in which Allestree approaches the topic of proper behavior to the man and the woman. The man is plied with pride and a sense of honor, while the woman is plied with guilt over what *may* happen. While there appeared to be little use of “guilt appeal” in Allestree’s work for the

gentleman, he uses this persuasive tool unabashedly when writing for the ladies.

Richard Braithwait's work was also reviewed in the previous section as he wrote about the conduct of the gentleman. Braithwait also wrote a number of different conduct pieces. He published *A Ladies Love-Lecture: Composed And From the Choicest Flowers of Divinitie and Humanitie* in 1641. In his preface addressing the reader, Braithwait cautions that the "loose" pens of such authors that may be offensive to young women have been omitted, and that the ladies will find the book entertaining as well as profitable. In order to encourage young women to maintain a state of virginal purity, he writes:

For hence might be divinely concluded: There is nothing comparably precious to a continent soule: Nothing of so pure nor preetious esteeme, as a virgin state. And that a woman, being the weaker vessel, when shee either in her virgin-condition remaines constant, or in her conjugall state loyall, she so much more enlargeth her glory, as her Sex or condition partakes more of frailtie" (Braithwait 425).

While Braithwait remains subtle about giving the woman full responsibility for her virginal state, he makes it clear that not maintaining the pure state will sully not only the woman's reputation, but the reputation of other members of her sex as well. Her "Sex" will only "enlarge" its glory by remaining constant and by following the social and religious rules about sex and sexuality. The woman is only precious and pure when she remains virginal or loyal to her marital partner. Braithwait's persuasive technique is subtle, but combines the use of guilt (for transgressions that may have transpired) with anticipatory guilt for transgressions that could come about. Anticipatory guilt is also

implied for the young woman who, being the weaker vessel, loses that virginal state and ruins the precious purity that is so strongly desired by her family and friends. The young lady would be assaulted by images of herself defiled and lacking the glory that she is to pursue.

It is this desire to remain precious and pure that would become part of the social code that would direct the lives of young women of the future. Young ladies would wish to distinguish themselves and set themselves apart from the rest of the “weaker” sex. Rather than identifying with something of high social standards, the women were warned to distinguish themselves from those that fell to that weakness. The “lady” was a woman of strong character apart from others, her identity one of a singular quality. There were rules, sometimes convoluted, that structured her life. Of course, included in these rules were maxims about appropriate dress which Braithwait addresses in a different book, *The English Gentlewoman*, also published in 1641.

Braithwait’s approach to the ladies and their dress begins very differently than his approach to the men and their dress. He states:

As Adam never committed *sinne*, he had never needed *figge-leaves*, to cover his *shame*. Sinne made him fly to the grove for shelter, and shame compelled him to play the arte of Tayler, and through mere *necessity* to make him a Cover. Well enough was he before that time attired, albeit naked: and so happily stated, as we are to imagine, that ignorance kept him not from the knowledge of his nakednesse, but that his originall purity freed him from these necessities. But no sooner was the forbidden fruit tasted, then poore Adam became tainted, . . . (271).

He begins the ladies’ section on attire by talking about Adam, and why Adam must now

wear clothing. He very pointedly states that Adam was happily naked and that this state of undress was fine due to Adam's original state of purity. Yet, he tells his lady reader that all of this unassuming bliss is ended the moment the "forbidden fruit" was tasted. Eve is not mentioned during yet it is obvious that Braithwaite is referring to her. It is left to the woman reader to assume guilt for the first woman who destroys Adam's happy clothing-free state. Looking at the two passages regarding the same thing, attire, we can see the defined difference in Braithwaite's persuasive methods when he is talking to the ladies as opposed to the gentleman. However, Braithwaite uses a technique involving a more "assumed guilt" for the past transgressions of the sex instead of guilt felt for actual transgressions that may have been committed by the lady that is reading his work. It is interesting to note the difference in approach: man is wearing clothing to cover his own sin, where woman is responsible for the need to wear clothing to hide sin as it was a member of her sex that created the conundrum according the Biblical story.

In further extolling the virtues of wearing plain and simple clothing, Braithwaite goes on to talk to men about their worth, and how unworthy it is of them to pay too much attention to dress. He states: "Come then and heare mee, thou perfumed *Gallant*, whose *sense* chiefly consists in *sent*; and observe how much thou deroga'st from thy owne worth, in covering a shell of corruption with such bravery" (9). He tells the gentleman that his actions by overdressing "derogate", or impair, his worth as a man. The man is a worthy creature, Braithwaite's appeal to the gentleman's pride, and that overdressing takes away from that worth, or from man's ability to take pride in himself. Rather than trying to fill the reader with regret or guilt, Braithwaite appeals to a sense of pride and a sense of self worth. His remarks to the ladies are more biting.

He begins by asking the ladies: “Thus attired, thus adorned you came to us; what makes you then so unmindfull of that poore case wherin you came among us? Hath beauty, popular applause, youthfull heate, or wealth taken from you the knowledge of your selves? (279). These questions remind the young woman that she has enjoyed her role in society, and that she has forgotten the manner in which she was first presented to the world. A woman is born with nothing, and should remember that when she sets out to clothe herself.. According to Braithwaite she is driven by her beauty, her youthful heat and possible wealth to forget who she really is, just a lowly woman, and it is not wise, modest or virtuous for her to do so. Braithwaite continues in this vein raising the stakes: “Why do you walke with such haughty necks? Why doe you extol your selves so highly in these Tabernacles of earth? Attend and consider; you were but vilde corrupted feed at the first; and now fuller of pollution than at the first” (279). Where the man is reminded of his worth, the young woman is reminded only of her own ability to corrupt herself, and to pollute her own natural state. This is the use of guilt. Braithwaite pressures the young woman to see her actions, those of following fashion, as corrupting and polluting herself, a self that was nothing more that wild and corrupted in the beginning. The manner of persuasion appeals not to her sense of pride or worth, but to her sense of having done wrong by the gift she was given by God. While the young woman is expected to try to make herself attractive to young gentlemen, she is expected to do so while remaining conscious of her lowly status, and making that status apparent to the world through dress and deportment. The young lady who fancied pretty things, and carried herself well was one who was forgetting her place. Conduct books reminded young women of their place, and since that place was designated as being lower than that of their male counter-parts, it

might have seemed advantageous to have women write on women's conduct.

Writing In Disguise

It may have been felt that a conduct book written by a woman could have a more powerful influence. Young women readers may have seen a woman writer as a possible role model, and been thought to wish to identify with that role model. In something of a twist William Kenrick wrote *The Whole Duty of Woman* which was advertised as having been written by a lady at the request of a gentleman of some importance. One can only question why the author and his publisher thought it best to write disguised as a lady.

This conduct book seems to convolute the ideas of persuasion with those of literature and of lecturing. While guilt does play a part in some of the passages, there is also a reliance on shame as a motivator. The OED online defines shame this way: The painful emotion arising from the consciousness of something dishonoring, ridiculous, or indecorous in one's own conduct or circumstances (or in those of others whose honor or disgrace one regards as one's own), or of being in a situation which offends one's sense of modesty or decency. It appears that the major difference between these two emotions is that shame is centered on what has happened to self and guilt on that which may happen to self and others because of an action. This distinction is important because it becomes difficult to tell where this author uses anticipatory guilt to motivate, and when he uses shame. It is also notable that the writing style employed by Kenrick, in his guise as a lady, is lofty, flowery, and complements women's appearance a great deal. The book sections include not only modesty and behavior, but applause (the giving of commendations) and frugality, as well as friendship and employment. This particular book is interested in affecting every aspect of the young woman's life.

Kenrick approaches the topic of modest with a blend of flattery and anticipatory guilt. He begins the section: “Behold the daughter of innocence! how beautiful is the mildness of her countenance! How lovely is the diffidence of her looks! (27). He tells the young ladies that the modest young woman is a beautiful girl and beauty is admired by most people. However, he goes on to incorporate guilt into his flowery work: “Is there who hath forgotten to blush, who playeth with the wanton glances of her eyes, who replenisheth the cup when the toast goes round, and despiseth the meekness of her sister” (28). The young lady who may have committed one of these transgressions in the past will feel guilt for not having lived up to the lofty heights of modesty. If, having read this, she thinks of committing one of these minor social crimes the passage will surely have her thinking twice about making such a decision.

Kenrick goes on to advise young women on employment, or on keeping themselves busy and keeping good hours. He asks the young ladies, “From whom cometh evil? from whom poverty and dejection of spirit?

Idleness is the mother of mischief: idleness is the parent of shame and disease. (42). From the start of the section the young lady is meant to feel guilt, a failing in her duty, if she is not busy. Yet, the young woman who is industrious and awakens at the appropriate hour is lyrically commended. He states: “Her garment sweepeth the dew-drop from the new stubble and the green grass, and her path is by the murmuring of the purling brook” (43). There is no doubt that the young lady who attends parties in the evening and sleeps late in the day is parenting mischief, shame and disease. While this may be what is considered “fun” in her social circle, it is actually the perpetuating of a state that will eventually result in shame and disease.

Kenrick's attempt to pose as a woman author presents interesting results. It is obvious that he believes he must persuade young women to act according to certain codes of conduct, but that to do so he must "sweet-talk" them, and then go on to feel guilt. This approach is neither straightforward nor is it easy to pull out the persuasive technique, however it is obvious that guilt is a part of his persuasion.

It is worth noting that guilt appears to play a part in a man's version of persuading conduct to a woman more than it does when a man is trying to persuade other men. It appears that persuading men was tied into other emotional controls, such as identifying with pride, rather than a blatant attempt to make the man feel guilty. Some works attempted to disguise this discrepancy in other ways.

In a work published in 1750 by Samuel Richardson there is a different tone altogether in the introduction when addressing both genders on their actions. He addresses young men as well as young women and states his intention for his book of letters in his preface. He states, in part:

With regard to the Letters of *Courtship*, the Author has aimed to point out such Methods of Address, to a young Man, as may stand the Test of the *Parents Judgment*, as well as the Daughter's Opinion; and at the same time, that they should not want the proper Warmth of Expression, which Complaisance, and Passion for the beloved Object, inspire (and is so much expected in Addresses of this nature), they should have their Foundation laid in *common Sense*, and a *manly Sincerity*; and, in a Word, be such as a *prudent Woman* need not blush to receive, nor a *discreet Man* be ashamed to look back upon, when the doubtful Courtship is changed into the matrimonial Certainty (4).

Richardson is addressing issues of courtship in his preface as effecting both the young man and young woman equally. He has stated a desire to bring insight into matters that can be struggled with successfully through common sense and has altered the reading audience that he wishes neither man nor woman to come away from a courtship without being able to look back without shame on the affair. Richardson appears to be treating men and women almost equally.

Richardson is not quite as unbiased, though, when he uses a letter from an uncle to a niece as an example of the problems of following fashion. The young woman's writing habit is the article of clothing in question. The Uncle is questioning the young woman's choice of style and states:

I have been particularly offended, let me tell you, my Dear, at your *Riding-habit*; which is made so extravagantly in the Mode, that one cannot easily distinguish your Sex by it. For you neither look like a *modest Girl* in it, nor an *agreeable Boy* (125).

The writer's edge is to make the young lady feel guilt because she has so offended her uncle. Her guilt lies in the fact that she is not appearing to be a modest girl, and furthered because she does not even appear as an agreeable boy. He goes on to state, "Modesty in outward behavior is a strong Prepossession in a Lady's Favour; and without it, all your Perfections will be of little Service, either as to Reputation or Preferment" (126). First, the young lady has gone so far as to commit the action of "offending" her uncle, in other words by acting in a way that was somewhat harmful to him. She has then neglected to appear modestly in her behavior threatening her "Reputation." The uncle has stated plainly that her actions are causing discomfort (a past transgression to feel

guilty for) and that it is creating a problem with her Reputation (a problem that is keyed into anticipatory guilt). While the book addresses sample letters and notes to both sexes the treatment is blatantly different for each.

Continental Approaches

There appears to have been a vast interest in conduct, and in observation of the “correct” manner in which to behave. The following was written in the eighteenth century and was promoted as having been “taken from the French” giving it a more continental appearance. It is titled *The lady’s preceptor* with the following note about the book’s origin and the author: “Taken from the French of the abbe d’ Ancount and adapted to the religion, customs, and manners of the English nation. By a gentleman of Cambridge” as a part of the title. This work addresses young ladies on all manner of topics of conduct in society, and was published in 1759.

In a section titled “Of Friendship with Men” the author discusses the young woman’s responsibilities when developing friendships with men. He states:

Our Esteem and Friendship should always bestowed on true Merit, that’s to say, on those whom you both know to be possessed of it, and to have the Reputation of being so; but then, if they should happen to be Persons of our Sex, and such as would probably take Advantage of your good Opinion of them, be careful of maintaining that strict Watch over your Eyes, Words, and Heart, that they may not in the least perceive you have any particular Regard for them, otherwise you have taken a dangerous Step, which may give them Hopes of your going still farther (20).

The young lady is to be able to tell which young men possess true merit, and which young men who would take advantage of her. While in some cases this might be easily deduced, it is also likely that in some cases the young woman would have no idea with which men she should maintain a strict watch over her eyes, words and heart. If a man has already made unwelcome advances toward a young lady she knows, by reading this, that it is her own misjudgment that is to blame. If, on a future occasion, she is taken advantage of her only recourse is to feel guilt for giving the young man the go ahead by not maintaining a demeanor that is protective enough. In the end, the lady being spoken to is being told that she is not only responsible for her own behavior, but for the behavior of the man because her look, words or manner gave him the notion he could do as he pleased. This is a rather convoluted manner of invoking anticipatory guilt. The woman knows that what befalls her despite her efforts will be her own doing. Of course, the passage also invokes guilt over past events that may have led to such results.

The gentleman goes on to talk about the young lady's responsibility in romantic situations:

You, Madam, are young, rich and fair, and consequently have a thousand Occasions of loving and of being loved; but these very Advantages are what lay you under an indispensable Obligation to be more circumspect and reserved than others less happy in those Respects; consider that there is nothing more important in every State of Life, than to conduct yourself prudently with Regard to our Sex: Most of them take as much, nay indeed more Pleasure in being thought to gain Victories over the Fair, than in Reality to do it: This is a Piece of Vanity built on the Notion, that the World must imagine them to possess some irresistible

Accomplishments who could vanquish the most rigid Virtue, adorn'd with Beauty and Merit at the same Time (21).

This paragraph once again puts the responsibility for the man's behavior on the woman's shoulders. While he does explain that it is the man who believes he must gain "Victories over the Fair", he also blames that desire on the woman's beauty. Here he is not instilling guilt, but laying the foundation for guilt should anything considered to be untoward occur. He again goes on to tell the young woman to guard what she says, he tells her that she cannot "drop an expression" that may flatter young men because they might feel hope that they will succeed in their quest. Her responsibility as an object desired by men is to curtail her own conduct in order to ensure that the male curtails his. Women who have, in the past, given a flattering comment to a gentleman that attempted to take advantage could easily find themselves feeling guilty for having led the poor man astray. Young ladies that like to chat, flirt and flatter would find themselves feeling guilty over what they may have made a young man feel. This piece works on anticipatory guilt in that should that young lady be of a mind to flirt with a gentleman or to envision herself the center of gentlemens' attentions, she would see herself as possibly flattering his ego in a way that would push the gentlemen into acting in a very uncouth manner. The young man, of course, is only following her lead. This not only encourages the young woman to anticipatory guilt, but also allows the young woman to feel guilty if a gentleman has stepped beyond the bounds of what is considered proper and made advances. She must have said, or implied in some fashion, that he could hope to "conquer" her virtue. This line of thinking is brought up in other conduct books as well.

The Benevolent Uncle

In a series of letters published in 1803, supposedly written to a niece desiring the advice, a gentleman known only as Patruus; writes on the conduct of women.

He begins his preface in this way: “To inculcate virtuous principles; to dispel ignorance, to refine the manners, to advance the blessings of life, and to instruct the Fair Sex in the DUTIES OF LIFE;” (Preface). This is no small task the gentleman is taking on. However, the interest is in those three words in all capitals, DUTIES OF LIFE. This is not simply advice on gaining entrance to the most popular households, it is instruction on a woman’s duties of life. This makes the work very heavily laden with overtones of doom and gloom if these little rules are not followed. Part of the “sense of guilt” definition relies on a sense of failing to fulfill a duty. He sets this up well.

He begins with advice on beauty and fashion, a very popular topic for conduct books. He states: “but women do not sufficiently reflect, how much they degrade themselves when they aspire to no higher or durable excellencies than the bloom of youthful beauty. . .” (17). However, women were far from being able to focus on bettering their minds or taking on some kind of work other than family. They were schooled, through conduct books as well as other women and society, to groom themselves to “catch” the most advantageous match they could. Women who did focus on books and learning were deemed “bluestockings” and were not high in demand. This advice leaves the young lady with little notion of what she should do instead of focus on beauty. There were few available avenues in which she could focus her interest, and the career she had to prepare for was marriage and family life. Later, Patruus goes on to tell the young women:

But when women, who are the ornament of society, unite a solid understanding and an honest heart to a graceful person; the natural inclination we have toward them excites a mutual display of our most excellent qualities; they open in mankind a suitable desire to improve in every virtue (17).

In one blow he has confused the young ladies. They are not to worry about beauty, but they are the “ornament” of society. The young lady’s graceful person, and honest heart, will make sure that men act accordingly. The problem with this lies in that the young woman will always blame herself regardless of the situation. The passage leads her to acknowledge that she is an ornament with something close to supernatural powers. It is her responsibility to act in so perfect a manner that she insights only excellent behavior in the gentlemen of her acquaintance. When a young woman enters a room and a gentleman acts without taking all of this into consideration, she will only blame herself for his behavior. He bears little of the responsibility for anything untoward that happens. To further this belief that the young woman is responsible for the man’s behavior Patruus continues:

In the first place let me warn you to be extremely cautious of entering into a familiarity with any man, let his character in ordinary life be ever so excellent; for as the connexions between man and woman, are always conducted with all possible privacy; the best of men, in other concerns, cannot persuade themselves to be public hypocrites, or private villains, though they bear a fair character in the world; at the same time they are planning the ruin of some unthinking innocent girl (24).

Young women were, in effect, oriented toward making a good marriage match. Yet, they were warned against trying to beautify themselves for that match. In the above statement Patruus warns the young ladies about becoming “familiar” with any man, because they are “planning the ruin of some young woman.” This is set down fairly straightforwardly, until we come to the word “unthinking.” Men don’t attack just any young ladies, only those who are “unthinking” and not planning some counter measure in case of such an attack. Nice young ladies are “thinking” and constantly have a good structure of protection around them. Yet, this again lays the responsibility at the feet of the young woman. If she is not set upon by some typical and normal gentleman who is only following his instincts and “planning the ruin” of her person, then she can consider herself a thoughtful young lady. However, if the young woman is subject to a man’s unwanted advances, then it is she who must take on guilt for the incident by not being thoughtful enough to make sure the proper protections are in place. Immediately the young lady reading this who has been the unfortunate victim of an incident will feel guilt for not having been on guard to the appropriate level. There is little said in the conduct books for men that were examined for this study about the male conduct in female company.

Patruus discusses the plight of the prostitute with his niece. He tells of these women’s miserable lives as being one of constant intoxication and death from diseases brought on by their profession. All of which is probably true. He then goes on to describe why this occupation exists:

This, however disagreeable, you must allow to be a true picture.

Let us now consider whence these miseries usually originate. I am sensible

that the women too severely ascribe them to the men: that we are sometimes in fault I will not deny; and a man in the prime of life, animated by passion, seduced by beauty, and prompted by opportunity must be an anchorite to curb his inclination at all times (33).

Men are *sometimes* to blame for this situation. They are, however, in the prime of life, animated by passion, and seduced by beauty, so they aren't really at fault. Then who is? There is only one choice, and that is the women. So, not only is it members of her sex that participate in making a living this way, it is the sex as a whole who are responsible for the situation. The woman carries the guilt.

Ladies' time with other ladies is also strongly admonished. Women, gathered for tea or simply visiting, talk, and this talk creates problems according to Patruus. He states:

To conclude this letter, I do aver from an intimate acquaintance with the sex, that more women have been ruined in one year, by Tea-table gossips and female seductresses, than by our whole sex (35).

From men who will manipulate young ladies into compromising situations that the young lady should have prevented, to female seductresses there is only one theme. Women are the cause of the problems that can come to pass through being with men. Women are too beautiful, seductive, and unthinking. And yet, if they were to be wooden sticks with little to say they are responsible for failing to acquire the ultimate goal of husband and family. Ladies were to assume guilt at all corners.

The issue arising from such conduct literature, is one of guilt. The woman was meant to assume responsibility not only for her own actions, but the actions of the men of the world. She was to be constantly aware of her duty to remain pristinely virginal and

attractive at the same time. By assuring young ladies that this was their duty, and at the same time telling them that men had little to do with their own bad, cruel, or insidious behavior one thing is accomplished. Women felt anticipatory guilt, and guilt for past transgressions fully. Little insight was offered to the ladies about how they should occupy their minds, what careers they could pursue other than marriage. They were placed in a position that was extremely difficult to traverse without something occurring over which they were told to assume guilt. Sometimes even women encouraged the assumption of guilt by other women.

Woman to Woman

Women as writers of conduct for other women varied in their use of guilt as motivator. While it did happen in some instances, such as the following, it was not as pervasive nor was it as blatant.

Mrs. Martha Sherwood, wrote a piece advising young women of their conduct while in service. In regard to a young woman named Mary, Mrs. Sherwood tells of the young lady coming to see herself as being worth a great deal to her employer. She states:

“I must not hide it from my reader, that when Mary found she was worth seven guineas, she began to think very highly of herself, and once or twice answered her mistress rather impertinently; but her excellent mother, happening to arrive at this time made her beg pardon of her mistress, and laid before her the ingratitude of such conduct, . . .that Mary become thoroughly humble and ashamed of herself” (9).

If Mary became ashamed and humbled, the reader is led to believe that such behavior in herself should have, and will, bring on a sense of guilt or shame like the

feelings that “Mary” is experiencing. Mrs. Sherwood allows the reader to see that Mary’s over-estimation of her worth has caused her mother distress as well as her mistress, and that it was Mary’s own actions which brought about the distress felt by the two older ladies. However, this is easily rectified through apology, and Mary is able to carry on her duties as servant and her life without much disruption. Women, when writing conduct books were not apt to spend as much time bemoaning the ruining of a life as they appeared to be spending time directing young ladies on how to avoid such things.

Rarely, though, there were those who were able to write conduct books that actually made sense to the young ladies, and did not employ any kind of guilt.

Unlike the greater number of conduct books written in the Seventeenth Century, there were a few that were penned by women. Unlike those written by the men, however, these books took a different attitude toward encouraging proper conduct by the ladies. Where other conduct books encouraged young women to remain quiet and modest in order to allow for more virtuous conduct on the part of the young woman, author Mary Astell had a different way to contrive proper conduct from a young lady. Her book, printed in 1694, calls for educating the young lady. She states:

And the best way to improve their understandings is to bring them up to the Knowledge of Letters: For young Ladies when they have arrive to some knowledge by reading, afford great pleasure in their Conversation to others, and receive no less when they are alone by themselves; for Reading Assisteth Conversation, and is absolutely necessary to make the Spirit acceptable and graceful; (3).

This piece allows readers to see that there are not only differences in how men write to men on conduct and how they write to women, but how to women write on conduct as well. Mary Astell approaches the topic with the young ladies abilities in mind. The young woman not need feel guilty about speaking, if she has read enough to assist her conversation in a good manner. Rather than depending upon modesty and withdrawn behavior, Astell believes that a young woman's mind, when properly educated, can be key to her abilities to conduct herself well in company. On the matter of dress and deportment Astell continues to approach the young lady in an entirely different manner, relying on persuasion through connecting to the young ladies' pride. She states, “

I therefore persuade my self, you will not be less kind to a Proposition that comes attended with more certain and substantial Gain, whose only design is to improve you Charms and heighten your Value, by suffering you no longer to be cheap and contemptible (2).

Astell wants the young woman to understand that she needn't try to look flashy in order to make herself appear attractive. While the gentlemen wrote about the same issue, theirs was a less straightforward attempt. Astell simply says that dressing the wrong way will make a young lady look “cheap.” There were a number of things young ladies were trying to convey through dress, but being “cheap” was not one of them. She goes on to tell the reader that her aim is to allow the lady to “fix” her beauty, and to make it lasting and permanent adornment. She states: “And to place it out of the reach of Sickness and Old Age, by transferring it from a corruptible Body to an immortal Mind” (3). Rather than focusing on dress and deportment, Astell wants women to expand the mind and to

become focused on increasing knowledge. In this way she will have an asset that is not corruptible by the onset of age.

Unlike her gentlemen counterparts, Astell believes that the education of the mind to be key to a lady's future happiness. She states,

Whereas Women were they rightly Educated had they obtain'd a well inform'd and discerning Mind, they would be proof against all these Batteries, see through and scorn those little silly Artifices which are used to ensnare and deceieve them (38).

This woman writer had not only conduct in mind, but the woman's welfare in mind as well. An educated woman would not fall into certain bad situations were she educated enough to understand that she was being charmed only to be deceived.

Empowering women at this time was not something that was looked on with gracious admiration. However, it seems that while Astell's idea toward better conduct through educating the mind was a worthwhile effort, it seems possible that the ladies in question may have found it somewhat dry and without the more scintillating fascination of the social world they were used to. Astell tells them, "You will only quit the Chat of insignificant people, for an ingenious Conversation; the froth of flashy wit for real wisdom; idle tales for instructive discourses" (64). All of these things are significant and wise, however, to the young lady of the time might have seemed boring as well. Those insignificant chats were probably fun, and flashy with would brighten the day. While it is probable that men of the time would find such a book written by a woman unworthy of the women in their life, it is also probable that had young ladies read it they would have been put off by the thought of giving up their fun.

CONCLUSION

Why were women the recipients of induced guilt more than men? It could have been simply coincidence. Yet, a more convincing answer becomes clear when reading on the subject of gender and feelings of guilt. In an article about gender role stress in relation to shame, guilt and externalization there is information on the way women process feelings of shame and guilt differently than men. When listing primary tenets for positing that gender role stress contributes to these emotions, authors Efthim, Kenny, and Mhalik state:

[G]uilt proneness may be associated with more rigid adherence to traditional feminine norms (Zahn-Waxler et al., 1991), particularly norms concerning care and community. A personal disposition to experience guilt has been empirically linked with empathy (Tangney, 1991, 1995) which in turn has been identified as central to feminine role norms (Gilligan, 1982; Miller 1986)" (Efthim, et. al., 432).

This information supports the argument that inducing guilt emerged during a time when women's roles were extremely rigid. If guilt-proneness is associated with traditional feminine roles, particularly those concerning care and community, then that "proneness" would have been evident during the period when conduct books were at their peak. A woman's ability to be empathetic, which is associated with women and guilt feelings, was expected. A good mother was aware of her children's needs because of her empathetic nature, and a good wife would empathize with her husband's troubles. Perhaps the information was not written down and set out in front of the authors of

conduct books, but it could be come across with a use of common sense by a writer who is not only intelligent, but perceptive.

The question began as “How did guilt become a major motivator?” and in the end was something more. It is evident, though, that conduct literature promoted the idea of guilt as a motivator, and as a motivator pointed at directing and manipulating the actions of women.

There is a stereotype of women that is often used, that of a woman who is feeling or trying to induce feelings of guilt. Perhaps there is a reason that this has become so popular. Guilt is a woman’s emotion. Not the act of being guilty, nor the sentence of guilt as apposed to innocence, but that sense of guilt one tends to have during certain situations where we tell ourselves we have failed in one duty or another. Proclaiming guilt to be a woman’s emotion may seem to be overstated, but through the research for this paper it appears to be true. It is our mothers who attempt to work with guilt in order to obtain a visit or a phone call. It is more likely to be a woman who dithers over not accepting a date with an unwanted suitor than a man will over cancelling date with a lady. It is a mother who will worry over being poor at her job as mother when a child is ill, while the father is more likely to consider illness a matter of germs and random exposure.

It appears that guilt was cultivated as a rhetorical device aimed at women. It proved effective, and was adapted by those who wished to keep “woman in her place.” Yet, guilt does influence most everyone. That influence, guilt being a strong rhetorical device, is one that is little studied and one that demands our attention. Recognition of the use of guilt as a significant rhetorical device, and recognition of guilt when it is being

plied out of us, is important in order to better understand this motivational force as well as its ramifications.

It is easy to see that guilt can, and does, have a negative effect on self-esteem. While this aspect may appear to be more a purview of psychology, it is important to the study of rhetoric in order to broaden our view of how rhetoric is used and to what ends.

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