ABSTRACT

“A man may have wit, and yet put off his hat”
Censorship in Ben Jonson’s *Bartholomew Fair* and *A Tale of a Tub*

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Ben Jonson’s career gives us an interesting window into English Renaissance censorship, since a number of his plays were scrutinized, altered, or suppressed by the authorities. In response to the critical consensus that Jonson’s negative view of censorship was mollified over time, this study looks at two comparatively later plays, *Bartholomew Fair* and *A Tale of a Tub*, for evidence of Jonson’s continued and even growing antipathy toward censorship. In particular, this study examines the Jonsonian trope of pretended obsequiousness as a pattern for understanding Jonson’s own behavior toward censorious authority. For instance, given the spirited defense of free speech in *Bartholomew Fair*, we have reason to doubt the sincerity of the Epilogue’s claim to submit to James’s censorship. Likewise, *A Tale of a Tub*, in both its composition history and

thematic treatment of censorship, illustrates Jonson's antagonistic attitudes toward court involvement in artistic production.

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

Because of his frequent run-ins with the authorities for objectionable material in his plays, Ben Jonson provides an interesting case study of censorship in late sixteenth- and early seventeenth-century England. Difficulties arise, however, in trying to pin down the exact nature of his opposition to censorship. On the one hand, he displayed an admirable petulance in continuing throughout his career to produce works that risked the ire of the court and Privy Council. Yet, he sometimes spoke approvingly of censorship and was for many years next in line to become Master of the Revels, the court-appointed official who regulated the content of plays. There seems to be a contradiction between Jonson's provocative literary work and his occasional apparent endorsements of court censorship. In Jonson's writings, Annabel Patterson asserts, we have, on the subject of censorship, "a record of ambiguity and interpretive difficulty, in which texts and historical events are equally resistant to simple, settled meanings" (64). The cognitive dissonance inherent in reverencing authority and yet desiring personal autonomy is a common enough human dilemma, which we need not be surprised to see in Jonson. It behooves us, however, to consider the

possibility that, on some occasions, the contradictions in Jonson's positions on censorship may be only apparent.

In what follows, I am particularly interested in cases where Jonson's apparently Janus-like position on theatrical censorship is perhaps resolvable if one can show that Jonson may have been insincere or disingenuous in endorsing authority or capitulating to the demands of state censors. In the second chapter, I examine the apparent contradiction between *Bartholomew Fair* (1614), which satirizes anti-theatrical censors, and the Epilogue written for the court performance, which endorses the king's power to censor. I suggest that an analogy perceptible between the Epilogue and the play urges us to take the Epilogue ironically. The third chapter attempts to demonstrate that censorship was an abiding concern in Jonson's last completed play, *A Tale of a Tub* (1633), even though the poet capitulated to the demands of the Master of the Revels to change the script. The topical treatment of censorship in *A Tale of a Tub* extends beyond the critique of anti-theatricality in *Bartholomew Fair*, in order to interrogate the court's power to alter theatrical performance for its own purposes. By shifting the discussion of Jonsonian censorship to these two comparatively late works, I hope to show that authorial freedom was an important issue throughout his career, not just in his impetuous youth.

For the purposes of this thesis I am defining censorship as the attempt to use legal authority to prohibit, redact, or alter a text or theatrical performance. I choose not to employ Richard Burt's more expansive definition of censorship as any "mechanism for legitimating and delegitimating access to discourse" (12), which he takes to be a more historically sound approach to Jonson's particular case, since Jonson found himself as much at odds with hostile popular audiences as restricted by the powers of the court (13). But what the Induction to *Bartholomew Fair* shows, with its references to "state-decipherer[s]" and "politic picklock[s]," is that Jonson is concerned about the censurers in the audience chiefly because of their ability to become informants to the state (Induction 103).[1] The concern that audience members may be spies who wish to improve their position at court by discovering hidden dissent in plays is even clearer in the Prologue of *Poetaster* (1601), where the monster Envy, who has a vindictive urge against the author, encourages "Spy-like suggestions… promoting sleights" (Prologue 25-26) and spurs the audience to "Traduce, corrupt, apply, inform, suggest" (54). Jonson's frequent attempts to dissuade his audience from conspiratorial interpretation are simply another occasion of his awareness of the potential power the state had over his artistic expression. Jonson militated against audience censure not as an alternative to court censure, but for fear that devious misconstruals could get him in trouble with the law.

In Jonson's dramatizations of censorship, as we shall see, censorship occurs at the instigation of four distinct agents, who should be clearly differentiated from each other. First, the court and aristocracy held the authority, exercised primarily through the Master of the Revels, to license plays. Second, Puritan religious factions objected to the very existence of the theater and wished to see it abolished completely. Third, slanderous rumors or appeals to the court made by rival artists could initiate censorship. Fourth, as outlined above, there was the risk of theater audiences conveying malicious interpretations of plays to the authorities. According to Jonson's portrayal these four types of agents of censorship—the court, the Puritans, artistic rivals, and hostile audiences—though different in station and influence, share a common means of exercising censorious impulses, in that they look to legal authority and government to actualize their censorious wishes. Although the distinction between these sources of censorship is important, their common recourse to law is perhaps more significant.

Throughout what follows, I work under the assumption that whenever Jonson protests his sincere obedience, we may err if we do not at least consider the possibility of hidden intent. Such an approach is not unprecedented and reflects Jonson's fascination with double-meanings. Stanley Wiersma, for instance, demonstrates that each line of Jonson's "To John Donne" provides a

legitimate basis for two distinct readings of the poem—one flattering to Donne and the other critical of him (4). Openly showing respect while obliquely offering criticism is, I think, an important method in Jonson's work. This method finds proverbial expression in *A Tale of a Tub*, when Scriben the writer says, "A man may have wit, and yet put off his hat" (5.7.27-29). I take this line to be Jonson's way of hinting that a show of obeisance may conceal ironic or dissenting attitudes. Consider, for example, Jonson's response to the Privy Council after the Gunpowder Plot, which, though not connected to the issue of censorship *per se*, provides the tantalizing possibility of hidden dissent.

On November 7, 1605, Ben Jonson received a warrant from the Privy Council to locate a certain priest and persuade him to come before the Council for questioning about the Gunpowder Plot. A November 8 letter from Jonson in reply assures the letter's primary recipient, Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury, of the poet's zeal and diligence in attempting to carry out the orders he was given. The letter also communicates Jonson's lack of success. There is much in the letter that would lead us to believe Jonson truly wished to assist the Council in its investigation. Jonson states there has been "no want in me, either of labour or sincerity in the discharge of this business." (Jonson, *Letter 9*, *to Robert Cecil* 656).[2] First Jonson went to the Venetian ambassador's chaplain, who suggested a go-between, who later reneged. Then, the letter goes on, Jonson made inquiry "in

other places" where he met with vague excuses and was unable to speak to anyone in person. So great is his distress at the lack of cooperation in these quarters that he reckons the Catholic faith will lose five hundred adherents within a week, "if they carry their understanding about them." Here Jonson, who would presumably consider himself one who carries his understanding about him, apparently intimates the possibility of his defection from the Catholic Church. Jonson concludes by offering his further services to the Council: "If it shall please your Lordship, I shall yet make farther trial, an that you cannot in the meantime be provided." Certainly, on the face of things, Jonson appears very much interested in making clear to Cecil his willingness, even eagerness, to provide the Council with aid.

But implicitly, the letter communicates just as forcefully, if not more forcefully, Jonson's inability (should we read unwillingness?) to deliver to the Council any useful information. What should we make of Jonson's initial invocation of not only his "labour" but also his "sincerity?" In assuring Cecil of the honesty and seriousness of the letter, does the poet protest too much? To invoke both "labour" and "sincerity" suggests that Jonson could at least imagine a response to the warrant characterized by much effort, but not necessarily effort on the Council's behalf. Furthermore, why should Jonson go to the Venetian ambassador's chaplain in this matter? Surely the Privy Council would not

require the services of an actor-playwright-bricklayer in order to make contact with a member of a diplomat's entourage. This action must have been, ultimately, a superfluous redundancy in the Council's investigations. Jonson's description of his next move—to make "attempt in other places"—is too vague for us or the Privy Council to understand in even the slightest sense what he might have done. Why hide the details of these further actions?

Jonson claims to hold in great suspicion those who have answered his inquiries with "doubts," "difficulties," and "suspensions," but it would be easy to describe Jonson's response to the Council in similar terms. If he believes his contacts are "all so inweaved" in the Gunpowder Plot, why is he at pains to conceal their names? All definitive information about the identities and locations of fellow Catholics with apparent knowledge of the sought priest's whereabouts is cloaked in a confusion of abstractions and pronouns: "one," "a gentleman of good credit," "that party," "other places," "they," "some of them," etc.

Additionally, if we take Jonson's assertion that the Catholic Church would lose five hundred members as a sign of his own spiritual struggles, borne out of his patriotic horror at the Gunpowder Plot, we must wonder why Jonson did not leave the Church until six years after. Whatever its degree of sincerity, Jonson's anti-Catholic statement conveniently portrays him as a less-than-ideal agent for the Council's purposes. Not only must he rely on intermediaries, because he can

speak "to no one in person"; he also, along with other of his sensible coreligionists, will likely soon dissociate himself from the Church altogether—or so his letter suggests. Implicitly, the Privy Council would be encouraged to seek out someone with better connections to the Church hierarchy. This seems to be Jonson's assumption as he closes the letter in such a way that, after only one day of investigation, he offers further assistance only on condition of receiving further instructions and implies an expectation that the Privy Council will "be provided" for in the "meantime" by other means. Finally, the letter's wandering periods, full of pronouns without antecedents, seem designed to cloak in grammatical obscurity whatever limited information the letter contains. There is no record of the Privy Council seeking Jonson's further assistance in the matter. If Jonson's goal in the letter was to get the Privy Council to leave him alone, he accomplished it beautifully.

Furthermore, there are circumstantial reasons to suspect that Jonson's obedient tone in the letter may be disingenuous. He was known to have associated with some of the alleged conspirators and had even had dinner with some of them on October 9, less than a month before the plot was discovered (Donaldson 217). Jonson also had ambivalent and even hostile feelings about the recipient of the letter, Robert Cecil, Earl of Salisbury. He told William Drummond of Hawthornden, "Salisbury never cared for any man longer nor he

could make use of him" (Jonson, *Informations* 274).[3] Richard Dutton has even made the case that Jonson intended *Volpone* to be, in part, a satire against Cecil and his handling of the Gunpowder Plot investigation. In his study of this tantalizing possibility, Dutton notes that "Jonson was uncharacteristically thoughtless—even reckless—if he did not anticipate that his play of 'The Fox' would be associated with Cecil" (*Ben Jonson,* Volpone *and the Gunpowder Plot* 4). Given Jonson's apparently low view of Cecil, it is worth considering the possibility that his letter may be more politic than genuinely obsequious. Lastly, we should take note of Jonson's well-known hatred of spies.[4] It seems unlikely that Jonson would have willingly and readily engaged in the kind of spy work the Privy Council asked of him when he had such a strong dislike of such behavior.

Of course, we cannot know Jonson's true intentions in the letter or his actual degree of willingness to assist the Council in tracking down suspected priests. I am not insinuating Jonson's involvement in or even sympathy with the Gunpowder Plot. My purpose here so far has simply been to show that there is at least one plausible way of reading this letter that interprets Jonson's descriptions of his earnest efforts as a kind of equivocation. Making a show of obedience to the Privy Council, and of zeal for its cause, Jonson cleverly extracts himself from the Council's demands upon him. His divided loyalties to both Church and

country necessitate a negotiated obedience with the goal of increasing his distance from the reach of power. His letter paradoxically performs a sort of rhetorical submission of himself to the Council's authority, yet provides no real help of any kind and insulates him from further involvement with the investigation. He neatly avoids providing any concrete information about his fellow Catholics, but still manages to appear eager and willing to be of assistance.

My sense that Jonson is being deliberately unhelpful in this letter is, admittedly, speculative, but it illustrates a central difficulty in determining Jonson's attitudes toward the strictures of state authority. In regard to the subject of censorship particularly, we can little more than guess whether in any given declaration of obeisance Jonson is being sincere, ironic, or crafty. How do we resolve, for instance, the apparent contradiction that a poet whose plays were often censored desired even from the earliest days of his career to become the Master of the Revels, the court-appointed officer in charge of censoring dramatic performances in London?[5] Did Jonson's aspiration stem from sincere respect for the authority of the Master of the Revels, in spite of his licensing troubles? Or, was Jonson's touting, in his early career, of his suitability for an office he had no apparent hope of attaining actually an elaborate mockery of that office—an ironic suggestion that an actor-playwright with a penchant for invective, crudity, and

satire was the best candidate to keep watch over the manners of the stage? Or again, did he desire the position in order to usurp and be rid of that authority, at least in regard to his own work? In my view, the latter possibilities should not be discounted.

Considering Jonson's endorsements of and capitulations to censorship without an eye to possible ironies or ulterior motives has led a number of critics to a consensus that Jonson's early disdain for censorious authority diminished gradually over time as his notoriety and social position improved. Richard Dutton takes the *Epistle to Volpone* to be the turning point in Jonson's attitudes toward the licensing of plays:

> Jonson's insistence in the epistle that his own "works are read, allow'd" is his first public obeisance to that structure of authority [the Master of the Revels], and a significant change of tack from the defiance he had manifested earlier ("Ben Jonson and the Master of the Revels" 67).

A "change of tack," however, could be a change in strategy rather than in actual attitude. Fresh out of prison after nearly having his ears and nose cut off because of *Eastward Ho!*, a play jointly authored with John Marston and George Chapman,[6] Jonson had every incentive to make a public protestation of his willingness to submit to authority, even if his work would continue to press the boundaries of official license (as it indeed did). Dutton's reliance on the *Epistle to Volpone* and Jonson's letters from prison does not, I think, take quite enough into

consideration the possibility of Jonson's strategic disingenuousness in a perilous situation.

Annabel Patterson's assessment of Jonson also reinforces the dominant viewpoint that the poet eventually came to terms with the state's power to censor. She asserts that Jonson's opposition to censorship had its roots in the Roman historian Tacitus, whose subversive chronicles of Rome's imperial court were viewed as an important precedent for the power of the written word to challenge the tyrannical impulses of rulers (54-55). But Patterson proceeds to argue that a poem written sometime before 1616 called "The New Cry" shows that Jonson "changed his mind about Tacitus," because the men of the new cry, whom Jonson is satirizing for their fixation on political intrigue and conspiracy, are said to "carry in their pockets Tacitus" (56). Patterson posits that the poem demonstrates in Jonson a diminished regard for the Roman historian. But it is a common trope in Jonson to rebuke men for carrying or citing books without reading them. This is not meant as a slight upon the author of the book in question. In *The Alchemist* (1610), the gallant Dapper, "a special gentle" who "[c]onsorts with the small poets of the time," is said to have "the Greek Xenophon…in his pocket" (1.2.52,56). Surely from this description of the foolish and gullible Dapper it cannot be inferred that Jonson thought little of Xenophon. Sir John Daw in *Epicene* (1609) can rattle off the names of dozens of classical

authors, including Tacitus, even though he obviously has no notion of the significance or content of their work. "What a sack full of their names he has got!" exclaims Clerimont—a metaphor that closely follows the image of the unread book ostentatiously carried in the pocket (2.3.60). The problem with the men of the new cry is not their adherence to Tacitus, but their misreading (or not reading) of him.[7]

In what follows, I wish to work from an alternative perspective on Jonson's career, positing a growing disillusionment with the censorious forces of his day and an increasingly greater hostility toward interference in his authorial prerogatives. Such an approach is implicit in Debora Shuger's treatment of *Poetaster* and *Sejanus*. She argues that *Poetaster* calls into question—but ultimately reaffirms—the power of law over poetry and the privileges of "the ruling elite" (179-80). By contrast, in Jonson's next play, *Sejanus*, "censorship…becomes a confrontation between transgressive author and coercive state—and hence synecdoche for the larger struggle between freedom and tyranny" (Shuger 209). The indication, then, in these two plays is that Jonson was gradually becoming more hostile toward censorship.

My perspective on Jonson's increasing dissent relies as well on the insights of Catherine Rockwood, who notes, for instance, that in *Every Man in His Humor* (1598), "the Justice of the Peace is an effective and benevolent executor of

his office...whereas in *A Tale of a Tub*, the higher the office, the greater likelihood of corruption" (81-82). Indeed, between these two extremes, if we add the justices from *Volpone* (1605) and Justice Overdo from *Bartholomew Fair*, we see a neat chronological progression of Jonson's increasing disdain for that particular office. The avocatori of *Volpone* are mostly portrayed as impartial ministers of justice, but one of them does let slip a little nepotistic self-interest in wanting to marry off his daughter to Mosca.[8] Justice Overdo in *Bartholomew Fair* is pompous, ridiculous, and self-righteous, though there is at least some hint at the end of the play that he can learn from his mistakes. Justice Preamble of *A Tale of a Tub* has no apparent qualms about abusing the privileges of his office and is totally contemptible, lacking any redeeming qualities, except perhaps cunning. Lining up these four justices in chronological order—the saintly Justice Clement, the slightly flawed Fourth Avocatore, the deeply flawed but still redeemable Overdo, and the corrupt and autocratic Preamble—we obtain, I would submit, a pretty clear picture of Jonson's growing disdain for the authority of government officers. Because of this progression in Jonson's literary treatment of authority figures, I have chosen to focus on two comparatively later plays in Jonson's oeuvre.

I look at a middle-late play, *Bartholomew Fair*, and Jonson's last completed play, *A Tale of a Tub*, for insight not only into how Jonson responded to actual

censorship but also to the ways in which he dramatized censorship within the action and plotting of these plays. As we have already seen, the topical treatment of censorship in two of Jonson's early plays, *Poetaster* and *Sejanus*, has been the object of critical attention. Cynthia Bowers has shown how these two works, though not commonly associated with each other since one is a comic satire leveled at Jonson's theatrical rivals and the other a meticulously researched historical tragedy, are in fact closely linked, especially in their treatment of censorship:

> Jonson's imbrication of genres and protective discursive strategies testifies [sic] to the necessary balancing act authors in the period undertook in attempting to speak freely and registers the depth of understanding of the dangerous environment of suppression in which he labored. (153-54)

Likewise, *Bartholomew Fair* and *A Tale of a Tub* approach the issue of censorship from very different angles, yet demonstrate a consistent interest in criticizing infringements on authorial freedom.

What becomes apparent in considering the many episodes of censorship from Jonson's life is that he was evidently incapable of learning his lesson: no experience of punishment could dissuade him from writing according to the dictates of his own fancy.[9] Jonson was not of the sort of temperament that easily adapts to censorious authority. He proved time and again throughout his career that he had a fierce desire to protect his right to fashion his work without

oppressive interference from the authorities. It may be too much, I think, to say that Jonson had a well-developed theory of the *general* right of free speech, such as we see in Milton's *Areopagitica*. He did, however, believe deeply in his own authorial prerogatives. Thus, many of Jonson's apparent capitulations to censorship can be better understood as tactical maneuvers designed to maximally preserve his freedom as a writer. The comparative lack of trouble with the authorities later in his life is attributable not to an increasingly favorable view of censorship, but to the fact that as his career progressed he became more and more adept at maneuvering around censorious forces, even as he continued to challenge them.

CHAPTER TWO

Bartholomew Fair and the King's Authority to Censor

Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair* debuted at the Hope Theater on October 31, 1614, and was played at court the following evening. For the latter performance, Jonson composed two poems, a Prologue and Epilogue, both addressed to the king. The Prologue attempts to excuse the coarser elements of the play by claiming that they are necessary for the realistic portrayal of the subject matter, promises to heap scorn on the vexatious Puritans, and assures the king that the satire is directed at no particular individuals. The Epilogue centralizes the authority of censorship in the person of James himself:

> Your Majesty hath seen the play, and you
> Can best allow it from your ear and view.
> You know the scope of writers, and what store
> Of leave is given them, if they take not more
> And turn it into license. You can tell
> If we have used that leave you gave us well,
> Or whether we to rage or license break,
> Or be profane or make profane men speak.
> This is your power to judge, great sir, and not
> The envy of a few. Which if we have got,
> We value less what their dislike can bring,
> If it so happy be, t'have pleased the King. (1-12)

It is important to note here the curious way in which these lines not only seem to invest King James with the authority to censor, but also deny the same authority

to anyone else. It is James who "can best allow" plays to be produced. His "power to judge" is "not / the envy of a few," an assertion which cleverly carries the double meaning that such power does not properly belong to others and that it is a power which many others would wish to have.

The fawning tone of these lines and the readiness with which Jonson apparently submits to the censorship of the state seem curiously at odds not only with Jonson's antagonistic run-ins with state censorship throughout his career, but also with the treatment of censorship in the play itself. As Paul Cantor has noted, by including an Epilogue that "shamelessly flatters the king," Jonson "seems to have it both ways" (28). In the play itself, as Cantor demonstrates, "Jonson seems to have come to realize that if marketplaces are regulated, the theater will always be among the first to come under government control, and the results will not always be beneficial to the theater and its public" (25). Yet, the Epilogue and the Prologue frame the entire spectacle "in a condescending fashion" that adulates the authority of the court (28). Richard Burt asks the provocative question, "Why should Jonson at once submit to the king's authority and resist it?" (109). This chapter will suggest the possibility that Jonson's subservient tone in the Prologue and Epilogue was disingenuous. Reading the poems in light of the play they frame encourages us to construe them as parodies that parallel the satire of subservience in the play itself.

It is the character Troubleall, a madman who haunts the fair, who, I will argue, holds the key to Jonson's covert resistance to the king's censorious authority. Troubleall's peculiar madness is that he cannot do anything (change clothes, urinate, eat) without the warrant, that is, the expressed written permission, of the local Justice of the Peace, Adam Overdo. Troubleall had once been an officer in Overdo's court, but the Justice dismissed him from his post. Since then, Justice Overdo's warrant has become, in Troubleall's mind, a necessary prerequisite for any action (4.1.42-50). Put simply, Troubleall has consolidated all authority over his life in the person of one particular magistrate—the exact same gesture that Jonson imitates in the Epilogue. The parallel between Troubleall and the speaker of the Epilogue is further supported by a number of connections discovered between Overdo and King James. The apparent implication is that anyone who would allow the king total power to regulate discourse ought to be considered a madman.

Though my argument chiefly concerns correlations between the Epilogue and the play, a word or two ought to be said about the Prologue, which, because it merely offers counterarguments to anticipated censorious complaints against the play, cannot be said to participate in the same degree of subservience that we see in the Epilogue. It does not, for instance, explicitly submit the play for the king's authorization, as the Epilogue does. There are two concerns related to

censorship that are expressed in the Prologue. First, against any objection to the setting, characters, language, and trappings of the play, Jonson insists that the king "must expect" such things, given the subject matter (Prologue 3). But this is not so much a capitulation to the king's standards, as a justification for potentially offensive material. J. A. Bryant quite correctly points out that the Prologue is "a boast…rather than an apology," for Jonson "took pride in his realism" (139). Jonson's insistence that the king "must" countenance the dramatic depiction of the vulgarities of the fair seems, in some sense, more defiant than submissive.

The Prologue also contends that no specific individuals are singled out for lampoon. The play satirizes

> without particular wrong,
> Or just complaint of any private man,
> (Who of himself, or shall think well or can). (8-10)

Yet, as we shall see, there is good reason to suspect that King James himself was the object of satire in *Bartholomew Fair*, and the puppet master Lantern Leatherhead is quite obviously an insulting portrayal of Jonson's masque collaborator Inigo Jones.[1] Furthermore, Jonson's sly parenthetical phrase unexpectedly alters the sentence to mean, not that no individuals at all are satirized, but simply that no individuals who "think well" of themselves are. The only sort of person who would bring a complaint of libel against the play would

be someone who had a low opinion of himself. The lines have the effect not of *limiting*, but of *creating* space for Jonson to satirize individuals, such as the king, because any connection an audience member perceives between himself and a vice-ridden character in the play is construed *a priori* as the result not of the author's intentional viciousness but of the spectator's guilty conscience. It is not difficult to see, then, how Jonson's Prologue, while couched in agreeable and subservient terms, does not willingly yield the author's prerogatives to royal authority.

But what of the Epilogue? A number of critics have puzzled over the tenor of the Epilogue. Gillian Manning calls it "stringent in tone" and observes that it "half-invite[s], half-command[s] James's judgement as to whether the author has remained within the bounds of comic propriety" (343). To pepper one's submissive invitation to the king with the elements of "command" seems to suggest less than total obedience. Furthermore, Richard Burt has called "Jonson's appeal to James's authority…problematic," for though the Epilogue apparently surrenders the play to the king's judgment, "Jonson clearly presumes that James will make an affirmative judgment" (102). What kind of power to censure is Jonson offering the king if the verdict is already predetermined? John Creaser goes so far as to describe the Epilogue as "coloured by…ambivalence" and

acknowledges that its claims “can be seen sceptically” (264). This critical suspicion of the Epilogue is, as I shall attempt to show, well founded.

What is most odd about the Epilogue, in fact, is the remarkable apparent difference between its conciliatory attitude toward censorship and the hostility toward censorship displayed throughout the play itself. Therefore, it will be worthwhile to set aside the question of the Epilogue for a while and take a look at the various ways in which the play dramatizes and critiques censorship throughout. Taking the time to explore the critique of censorship within the play will illustrate the puzzling contrast between the play and its Epilogue. Despite the fair’s festive atmosphere, the play continually returns to concerns about censorship and its limitations. The characters are beset by a pervasive sense of oppression, they are concerned about the effects of slander and rumor, and they engage in numerous strategies for avoiding the impositions of authority. The final scene of Busy and Overdo’s attempts to censor Leatherhead’s puppet show is the culmination of a lengthy topical treatment of the limitations placed upon expression in the fair. The showdown between authority and authorship comes about not abruptly, but naturally from the play’s pervasive concern with preserving anonymous and free discourse. Of course, it would be going too far to suggest that the people of the fair have an idealized yearning for some kind of First Amendment conception of free speech. Rather, they simply desire a certain

amount of respite from the surveillance of censorious authority. They craft modes of speech and carve out areas of anonymity that maximize their ability to engage in unhindered discourse.

The theme of censorship becomes an issue in the play even from the very beginning. The opening lines of the first scene belong to an officious proctor, John Littlewit, who makes it his business to identify and evaluate every play on words, intended or unintended, that appears in conversation. This would merely be an annoying habit with no overtones of bureaucratic oppression, except that Littlewit puts his pun-catching in the legal terms of his work as a magistrate, saying to himself: "When a quirk or a quiblin does scape thee and thou dost not watch and apprehend it an bring it afore the constable of conceit…let 'em carry thee out o'the archdeacon's court" (1.1.10-12). According to Littlewit, poetry ought to be monitored, arrested, and interrogated before the magistracy, and he himself is the self-appointed judge, jury, and policeman, charged with arraigning the speech that surrounds him.

Set against Littlewit's meddlesome censoriousness is the gamester Quarlous, who values anonymity and is concerned throughout the play to defend his liberty to speak freely. When Quarlous visits Littlewit, with whom he had a wild bout of drinking the previous night, Littlewit proceeds to remind

Quarlous of a certain agreement (we never do find out what it was), which they made in their cups. Quarlous testily responds,

> By this head, I'll beware how I keep you company, John, when I drink, an you have this dangerous memory!...Before truth, if you have that fearful quality, John, to remember, when you are sober, John, what you promise drunk, John; I shall take heed of you. (1.3.19-20,25-27)

Quarlous holds the expectation that the good fellowship of the tavern provides an arena in which discourse can be free and anonymous. Littlewit's too exact memory is felt by Quarlous to be an impingement upon his freedom to engage in unhindered discourse, if not at all times, at least in discreet circumstances. Here Jonson seems to be drawing an analogy to the kind of censorship that might proceed from popular rumor and misinterpretation, as in the case of a hostile theater audience. Quarlous, like Jonson, fears the repercussions that might result from someone spreading abroad a false understanding of a statement made in private or on the stage. As the conversation proceeds, it becomes apparent that Quarlous, as well as his friend Win-wife, value such discretion in conversation because of the perceived danger of certain kinds of speech—a danger to which Littlewit seems oblivious. Quarlous warns him, "this ambitious wit of yours (I am afraid) will do you no good i'the end," and Win-wife ominously adds, "A wit is a dangerous thing in this age" (1.5.56-56,63).[2] Indeed, Quarlous and Win-wife's warnings to Littlewit appear prescient, as we shall see, since both Justice Overdo

and the preposterous Puritan Zeal-of-the-land Busy try to censor Littlewit's puppet show in act 5, thus demonstrating that a small-time censor like Littlewit can become subject to the anti-theatrical forces of both the Puritans and the representatives of the court.

The preoccupation with slander in *Bartholomew Fair* is also an important element in play's consideration of censorship. English censorship laws placed great emphasis on protecting reputations from libel and slander, which belonged to the general legal category of *iniuria* and thus were construed as forms of assault (Shuger 8-9). Part of the reason there seems to have been no principled outcry against censorship in early seventeenth-century England was that such laws conformed to general societal standards regarding the proper treatment of one's fellows and one's betters. According to Shuger, "Jonson and his fellow-dramatists insisted upon the distinction between satire and lampoon, speaking the vice and skewering the person, because the latter not only risked offending the powerful but violated cultural norms in which they had an investment" (166). Thus, concern for shielding reputations from *iniuria* provided an important basis for the court's authority to censor.

The *iniuria* paradigm had its shortcomings, however. The law had to punish true reports and false reports with equal severity, since a scandalous true report might damage a reputation as much as a false one. We see just such a

situation arise in Jonson's 1601 play *Poetaster*, a play that was a part of the so-called "Poets' Quarrel" (Riggs 72-84). Here we see Jonson preoccupied with the third sort of censorious agents described in my first chapter—rival artists. Jonson wrote the play in response to a Dekker and Marston play in which he himself had been personally satirized under the name of the character Horace. *Poetaster* responds with an equally transparent satire of Dekker and Marston in the characters Demetrius and Crispinus. The difference between the treatment of the regulation of slander in *Poetaster* and in *Bartholomew Fair* is an instructive example of Jonson's growing disillusionment with the censorious authority of the crown.

Jonson was aware that his *Poetaster* could be seen as violating social and even legal standards by representing Dekker and Marston, and he carefully considers the question in several passages of the play. Jonson's mouthpiece in the play, Horace, argues that the satirist does in fact have the right to treat individual persons if he has been attacked first.[3] Horace's interlocutor Trebatius goes even further, asserting that the satirist should be within his rights to "tax in person a man fit to bear/ Shame and reproach" (3.5.138-39). Trebatius thus implies that personal satire should be permitted in cases where the object of satire is a deserving target. Jonson thus justifies Demetrius and Crispinus, the satirical portraits of Dekker and Marston, by pointing out that they attacked him first and

that they intrinsically merit his counterattack. Both sides are libeling each other, but, Jonson would argue, only one side deserves it. Of course, Jonson's justification provokes the question of who should adjudicate in such matters. How does the law determine which personal satires are justified and which are not? For this reason, the last scene of the play portrays Caesar Augustus giving Horace the task of meting out punishment for Demetrius and Crispinus. As Debora Shuger concludes, "In *Poetaster*, the poet's right to expose and punish does not depend on his motives, but on the imperial *beneplacitum* [i.e. Caesar's approval]" (179). There appears to be hope here in the early stages of King James's rule that the benevolent monarch will be able to distinguish between libelous treatment of the undeserving and warranted satire of foolish individuals.

In *Bartholomew Fair*, Jonson revisits the issue of slander and reputation, but with a more myopic view. Now there is no more benevolent, wise emperor-figure to whom the characters can go for the adjudication of true and false slanders. The distinction between deserved shame and undeserved ridicule, so essential to the plot of *Poetaster*, is hopelessly confused. When Littlewit reports finding Zeal-of-the-Land Busy gluttonously masticating on a "cold turkey pie…with a great white loaf on his left hand, and a glass of malmsey on his right," his mother Dame Purecraft replies, "Slander not the Brethren, wicked

one” (1.6.28-30). Purecraft calls Littlewit’s statement “slander,” even though Littlewit speaks the plain truth, and not even necessarily with satirical intent. A straightforward report about what someone is doing in the next room is considered slander, because it may endanger a reputation. The scene calls into question the social norms and legal standards dictating that satire should abstain from targeting individual reputations, even if the scurrility the satire presents is absolutely true. By portraying Purecraft’s implication that Busy should not have to suffer even a true accusation, Jonson is pointing up the absurdity that laws construing personal satire as slander protect both the deserving and the undeserving alike.

A later exchange between Quarlous and Win-wife makes a similar point. In the company of Grace, whom they are both pursuing, Quarlous brings up Dame Purecraft, the former object Win-wife’s romantic advances. Win-wife attempts to silence Quarlous, who responds, “Cry you mercy…must the widow not be named?” (3.5.255). In an allusion to the possibility of censorship originating in the grievance of a rival, in this exchange Win-wife wishes to impose a kind of personal censorship on Quarlous. The implicit appeal is to the standard of *iniuria*. Quarlous cannot be charged with spreading falsehoods about Win-wife. The only fault his statement seems to have is that it may diminish

Grace's good opinion of him. Once again, Jonson points out that the social standard protects reputation without regard to actual conduct.

Justice Overdo's court lacks the power of the imperial court of *Poetaster* to regulate slander. When Lantern Leatherhead threatens to make known the unsavory ingredients of Joan Trash's gingerbread, she replies: "Do thy worst: I defy thee…I'll find a friend shall right me, and make a ballad of thee and thy cattle [i.e. hobby-horses], all over." (2.2.11,13-14). In response to Leatherhead's threat of lodging a legal complaint, Trash would have him excoriated publicly via popular entertainment. In the escalation of the argument, personal humiliation by a satirical ballad-maker is apparently equal to or even more damning than penalties assessed by the law. Justice Overdo narcissistically misses the point when Leatherhead threatens to arraign Trash at his court. Joan laughs off the threat, contemptuous of Leatherhead's assertion that Overdo could "charm" her, as if she were a snake (2.1.19,21). Overdo comically takes the exchange as a sign that his "name is their terror" (2.2.22)—a conclusion flatly contradicted by Trash's obvious *lack* of terror at the mention of Overdo's name.

Notice also that Trash and Leatherhead regard slander as leverage against each other without regard to the truth of such slanders. We do not know whether Leatherhead's claim about the ingredients of Trash's gingerbread is true. We do not even know for certain what the content of Trash's satirical ballad made

against Leatherhead will be. The point is only that through law and poetry, both vendors have access to means of perpetuating slander. But unlike the situation in *Poetaster*, law no longer enjoys a position of power over poetry. Trash and Leatherhead's conversation shows that Nightingale the ballad-maker has as much power to shame wrongdoers (or indeed the innocent too) as Justice Overdo has.

Thus, part of Overdo's purpose in disguising himself and spying on the fair is that he wishes to be like *Poetaster*'s Caesar, capable of differentiating between true and false accounts of citizens' behavior. By finding out enormities, he supposes he can ensure that all reputations in the fair accurately correspond to people's true deserts. He fancies himself like the "Epidaurian serpent" able to achieve a panoptical vision of the fair (2.1.4). His approach is shown to be well-intentioned, but invasive and futile.

Why does his plan fail? Certainly we can look to Cantor's reading of the play on this question. Cantor shows that the futility of Overdo's attempt to ascertain information about all the minutiae of the fair's goings-on demonstrates the economist Frederick Hayek's argument about the problem of knowledge and economic regulation. Cantor describes Hayek's challenge to economic regulation thus: "For a government to regulate the economy successfully, it would need knowledge of every detail of its working....But in fact this knowledge in all its

complexity of detail is never available to any one person or centralized authority" (Cantor 38-39). In Cantor's view, *Bartholomew Fair* provides a satirical and absurd example of the impossibility of government regulation. Overdo fails to take in a panoptical view of the fair, because it is impossible for a single person, or even a whole bureaucracy, to do so.

But other factors are also at work against Overdo's mission. For one, his own corruption negatively affects his ability to divide merited and unmerited slander impartially. He takes for his model a certain public official known for assiduously regulating "the length of puddings...the gauge of black pots and cans...and custards" (2.1.15-16). But Overdo inadvertently reveals that his exemplar corruptly practices nepotism: whenever he finds custards that do not conform to regulations, he would "send for 'em home [and] give…the custards to his children" (2.1.18-19). This practice quite nicely corresponds to Overdo's nepotistic abuse of his wardship of Grace Wellborn, whom he plans to marry to his close relative, Bartholomew Cokes, in order to keep her vast wealth in his own family. This private enormity hypocritically undermines Overdo's attempts to impartially judge the reputations of the fair folk.

Overdo's investigations are further frustrated by his lack of understanding of the role slander plays in the fair's social discourse. The pervasive fear of spies, informants, and censors has caused highly evolved

practices for the protection of anonymity among the fair's denizens. Hopelessly out of place on the actual grounds of the fair, Overdo cannot accurately assign true value judgements to what he hears. The problem is one of class. J. A. Bryant divides the characters of the play into two types: the low-class fair folk and the well-to-do visitors and further argues that given a choice between the respectable sort and the vendors, Jonson seems to "prefer unapologetic roguery to conspicuous moral rectitude and piety" (139). But what is interesting about the rogues of the fair is that they accuse each other of greater roguery than they actually commit. Among the lower class of Smithfield, strategically disseminated slander paradoxically serves the purpose of protecting reputations from the malice of spies like Overdo. Fictionalized slanders, such as Knockem's rumor that Ursula has died from "a surfeit of bottle-ale and tripes" (2.3.12), keep the authorities in a perpetual state of doubt about the activities of the people in their charge. Overdo's susceptibility to false rumor is a major source of anxiety for him: "a while agone, they [i.e. his spies] made me—yea me—to mistake an honest zealous pursuivant for a seminary, and a proper young bachelor of music for a bawd" (2.1.25-27). Overdo goes undercover, then, because he foolishly believes he can separate rumor from truth where his spies could not. He does not succeed, because the Smithfield vendors have created strategies, such as the

deliberate spreading of false rumors, that protect their anonymity by preventing the authorities from establishing definitive information.

Almost immediately, Overdo falls into the trap of taking idle slander of the fair folk seriously. He thinks he has located an enormity when Ursula accuses Knockem of "cutting purses" (2.3.6). Overdo fails to realize that what he has heard is part of a deliberate flurry of banter that clouds in confusion actual revelations of enormity that might arise. Mooncalf's clarification that Knockem is not in fact a cutpurse shows how profuse the tangle of false accusations becomes.

> JUSTICE Thy dainty dame, though, called him cutpurse.
> MOONCALF Like enough, sir, she'll do forty such things in an hour. (2.3.26-27)

Far from being merely an effect of Ursula's temper, this constant stream of slander and accusation actually protects Ursula's compatriots by making a spy's work all but impossible. Overdo cannot determine anything about them with any degree of accuracy.

While the vendors have such strategies in place to protect their anonymity, Bartholomew Cokes serves as a foil to them, demolishing his anonymity wherever he goes, since he is unaware of the dangers of notoriety. Because Nightingale is not yet acquainted with Cokes in act 3 scene 5, he offers to sell him a ballad for the low price of one penny. Cokes foolishly reveals that if Nightingale knew who Cokes was, he would know he could charge Cokes extra:

NIGHTINGALE 'twill cost a penny alone, if you buy it.
COKES No matter for the price, thou dost not know me, I see—I am an odd Barthol'mew. (3.5.34-37)

Anonymity is advantageous in the fair, but Cokes is eager to part with it and make himself known.

Another strategy used by the citizens of the fair to avoid surveillance and protect their liberty is the disingenuous condemnation of their own behaviors and the endorsement of that which they deplore. Nightingale's ballad "A Caveat against Cutpurses" preaches in the strongest tones about the evils of cutting purses, but in reality is meant to provide an opportunity for Edgworth to rob unsuspecting visitors. The ballad engages in what it ostensibly condemns. Similarly, when Busy tries to convert Knockem, the horse courser fakes a contrite conversion in order to be rid of the Puritan: "Sir, I will take your counsel, and cut my hair, and leave vapours: I see that tobacco, and bottle-ale, and pig, and Whit, and very Urs'la herself is all vanity" (3.6.19-21). Knockem flatters Busy with a Puritanical litany of the fair's evils, making a show of assent to Busy's religious authority, but with the actual purpose of completely disregarding what Busy has to say. Knockem and Nightingale's ostensible obedience, saying what an authority figure wants to hear, while secretly continuing to follow one's own notions, prepares us for the same possibility in the Epilogue.

The game of vapours provides yet another instance of the strategic protection from censorious forces. Here, the game's central premise, "*every man to oppose the last man that spoke, whether it concern him or no*" (4.4.24-28SD), makes it impossible to tell what any player's true opinion about anything really is. The game opens up a freedom of discourse and provides an outlet for pent-up feelings. Anything outrageous or inflammatory spoken within the game can be defended as merely an element of the gameplay. The game is supposed to provide relief from the oppressive restraints on speech in the fair, which is partly why Wasp objects so strongly to Haggis and Bristle's breaking up of the game:

> When he learns that the intruders are "His Majesty's Watch," Wasp is not pleased with the government's panoptical surveillance.... Wasp would like a respite from the all-seeing eye of the government. One gets the sense from *Bartholomew Fair* that Jonson, several times the victim of government surveillance himself, sympathized with this position. (Cantor 40-41)

Breaking up the game of vapours constitutes a violation of one of the few spaces of the fair that seems to have avoided the intrusion of spies and figures of authority. Wasp feels as if Bristle and Haggis are removing one of the few remaining opportunities for anonymous discourse in the fair.

Demonstrating that Wasp is right to feel the authorities are intervening too much in the life of the fair, the play ends with the performance of a puppet show, scripted by Littlewit, which meets with attempted censorship by Busy and Justice Overdo, who represent Puritan anti-theatricality and government

censorship, respectively. Busy is drawn into a comical theological debate with Dionysius, one of the puppets, and having been refuted or gainsaid on every point, resorts to the standard Puritan argument against the theaters: "my main argument against you is that…the male among you putteth on the apparel of the female, and the female of the male" (5.5.77-78). Dionysius has a ready reply: he "*takes up his garment*" and declares "*we* [puppets] *have neither male nor female amongst us*" (5.5.84SD,83). In a comical reversal of censorship, the stage silences the officious Puritan, indecent exposure exonerates the actor, and the provocative expression of gender in the theater is put in its proper place as merely illusory. The attack on censorship here may seem wanting in some respects—specifically in that Dionysius's argument is *ad hoc* and sidesteps the actual issue of cross dressing. Busy's objection is answered for the puppets, but not for the theater in general. But the point here is that Puritan objections to the theater were themselves *ad hoc* and inconsistent. Busy attacks the theater because he misjudges its variety and diversity. As his conception of the theater is monolithic, he has no adequate response to an expression of the theater that does not fit his oversimplified view of what occurs on the stage.

With Busy's attempt at censorship having failed, Justice Overdo emerges and attempts to censor the puppet show. Now, he believes, is an excellent opportunity to shame the citizens of the fair by revealing that he has been

sneaking around the fair all day in disguise, keeping track of all their various "enormities" (5.6.26). He busies himself about the room, officiously lining up those whom he plans to accuse (which includes almost everyone, except the cutpurse, whom Overdo obliviously calls an "honest young man" [5.6.35]). But the Justice has hardly any time at all to share his discoveries of enormity before it is revealed that his own wife is in the audience, drunk to the point of sickness and unknowingly wearing whore's garb. As both Overdo and Busy's attempts at censorship illustrate, the censor, being human, reprehends vices that he himself shares in. Silencing the puppets leads not to the acknowledgement of the puppet show's scurrility, but to the revelation of the hypocrisy of the censorious authorities. As Richard Allen Cave notes, "Jonson's theme [is] that judgement is subjective, impressionistic, and immediately reflects on the character of the speaker" (100). As Busy and Overdo are compelled to acknowledge their own vices, the inherent hypocrisy of the authoritarian impulse gives way to the generosity of tolerance. Thus, in keeping with the spirited impulse toward creating space within the fair for free discourse and the strategic avoidance of authority practiced by many characters throughout the play, the concluding scenes reinforce a negative view of censorship.

The reason for concluding the play with such a forceful reproof of censorship, as Robert Watson argues, is that Jonson had spent so much of his

career parodying and excoriating other playwrights that he seemed unwittingly to have become allied with the "censorious forces that were threatening to close down all the theaters" (140). In *Bartholomew Fair*, and in the puppet show scene specifically, Jonson aligned himself with the theater and against its foes:

> By creating only foolish and futile advocates of censorship, Jonson parodically reduces his own determination to discipline the crude but lively spirit of the popular theater, and thereby breaks free of his inadvertent alliance with the Puritan determination to suppress the spirit entirely. Authorship…here distances itself from authoritarianism. (Watson 142)

Jonson clearly understood at this point in his career that the forces determined to suppress certain kinds of discourse would not limit themselves to low art like puppet shows. He seems to be aware that he could not support the censorship of others without putting his own work in danger of suppression. The puppet show is at pains, therefore, to endorse the freedom of even the most tasteless and vulgar free expression. Paul Cantor points out that the sheer awfulness of the puppet show makes Jonson's defense of the freedoms of the theater all the more compelling: "By portraying what is in effect a worst-case scenario, he is able to make his point clearer—any theater is better than no theater at all" (46). Furthermore, the censorious authorities who wish to punish vulgarity are revealed to participate in what they condemn. The whores of the puppet show anticipate the revelation of Overdo's wife unwittingly wearing prostitute's clothing, and the raillery of the puppets foreshadows Busy's vociferous

denunciation of them. The censors are thereby transformed from figures of authority to objects of ridicule.

Bartholomew Fair's pervasive critique of censorship brings us back around to the question with which this chapter began: how can the servility of the Epilogue be reconciled to the celebration of freedom and resistance to censorship in the play itself? The meta-theatrical language of the play's opening and closing scenes should encourage us to attempt some such reconciliation. The beginning and ending lines of the play, as Ian Donaldson notes, resist any sense of a definite beginning or ending to the play (333). Before the play has even started, someone designated "Stage-Keeper" rushes out, saying "Gentlemen, have a little patience," and assures the audience the actors "are e'en upon coming instantly" (Induction 1-2). As Donaldson observes, this bit of meta-theatricality may have actually fooled the original audience into thinking that there really was some delay with the actors. In a similar way, the final lines of the play avoid finality. Justice Overdo, who had sanctimoniously interrupted the puppet show, has been chastened by his failed attempt to censor the enormities of the fair and has invited everyone to a festive celebration at his house. His simple brother-in-law, Bartholomew Cokes, insists that the puppets be brought to dinner as well: "bring the actors along, we'll ha' the rest o'the play at home!" (5.6.95). Though by "the play" he of course means the puppet show, his declaration evokes the sense that

the play, that is, *Bartholomew Fair*, has not really ended. This device, while entertaining in itself, has the interesting effect of grafting the Prologue and Epilogue into the play itself. They should not be read, or heard, as autonomous entities, but are only properly seen in relation to the story that they frame. By reading the Epilogue as a kind of analogous action to the play itself, we can begin to see the reasons for regarding its obeisance as ironic.

The first point of connection between the framing poems and the play itself is that, as numerous critics have noticed, Justice Overdo, the absurd would-be censurer of the fair, has many striking similarities to King James, to whom the Epilogue and Prologue are addressed. Julie Sanders observes that Overdo "sees himself as a representative of the state, even invoking Jamesian rhetoric," including, for instance, "hyperbolic self-comparisons with Jove" and an "oration on the evils of smoking" (94, 106). Gillian Manning was the first to note that Overdo's concluding Latin quotation at 5.6.93-94 is drawn from a speech the king gave to Parliament in 1609 and tentatively suggests that Overdo's mistaken high opinion of Ezekiel Edgworth, a cutpurse who robs unsuspecting fairgoers, "may touch upon the King's known weakness for handsome and mercenary youths" (343). Indeed, critics have not noticed, or have not considered it significant, that Overdo begins his disastrous fair exploits by invoking the king's name (2.1.1). But what is most surprising about studies that highlight the similarities between

Overdo and King James is that they almost always assume that such a comparison would be complimentary.[4] In response to such readings, Cantor rightly asks, "what kind of a compliment is it to James to associate him with an officious fool like Overdo?" (53). Even if we imagine that James was narcissistic enough to regard the onstage echoes of his own speech and behavior as an admiring tribute, that would hardly be reason enough to suspect that Jonson intended them that way.

If it is clear that Overdo is, in some respects, a satirical portrayal of King James, then the second link between the Epilogue and the play becomes clear: the speaker of the Epilogue is also modeled upon Troubleall.[5] The Epilogue's servility mirrors the servility of Troubleall. Just as Troubleall confers upon Overdo all authority over Bartholomew Fair, so the speaker of the Epilogue confers upon James all authority over *Bartholomew Fair*. The peculiar madness of investing a single person with sweeping authority over oneself is parodically displayed in the play, then repeated suggestively in the Epilogue. When the epiloguist declares, "This is your power to judge, great sir, and not/ The envy of a few," he is expressing a sentiment strikingly close to Troubleall's assertion "If you have Justice Overdo's warrant, 'tis well: you are safe…I'll not give this button for any man's warrant else" (4.1.16-17). Both Troubleall and the speaker of the Epilogue diminish all other authority in favor of one particular person. Are

we not led, then, to think that the speaker of the Epilogue should be regarded as insane, just as Troubleall is?

Furthermore, as the speaker of the Epilogue is specifically addressing the authority to censor, it is significant that Troubleall's insane slavishness leads him to censor his own language in a peculiar way. In the Induction, Jonson anticipates that the audience will take offense at Troubleall's language, "challeng[ing] the author of scurrility because the language somewhat savours…of profaneness because a madman cries 'God quit you' or 'bless you'" (Induction 111-14). Strangely, however, Troubleall never gives the audience a chance to take offense. As C. H. Herford and Percy and Evelyn Simpson explain: "Throughout the play the mad Troubleall invariably says 'quit you', 'multiply you', 'save you', 'bless you', except in IV. iii. 79, 'Heaven quit you'. He never prefixes 'God' (10:178). Herford and Simpson go on to posit that this odd speech pattern reflects the "the statute against profaning God's name in plays," i.e. the Bishops' Order of 1599" (10:178). Other characters in the play never scruple to exclaim God's name in an irreligious way. Take, for instance, Cokes's cry, "Oh God! my purse is gone" (3.5.148-49). Troubleall on the other hand actively calls attention to his steadfast obedience to the Bishops' Order by eliminating "God" from his parting blessing on the other characters.

To my knowledge, critics have always regarded Troubleall's "quit you" and "multiply you" as a peculiarity separate from his slavishness to Justice Overdo, but the two attributes of madness are interconnected. Troubleall's self-censorship profoundly illustrates the unintended consequences of authoritarianism. With "God" being absent from Troubleall's parting blessings, his madness begins to deify Overdo instead. Troubleall describes Overdo's warrant in Biblical syntax –"the warrant of warrants" (4.1.16-17). When Purecraft, in response to Troubleall's request for a warrant, appeals to the Bible ("I have a warrant out of the Word"), Troubleall replies, "It is Justice Overdo's warrant that I look for. If you have not that, keep your word, I'll keep mine. Quit ye and multiply ye" (4.1.88-91). In Troubleall's troubled mind, the obedience to the Bishops' Order and his reverence for Overdo have combined in such a way that Overdo's Word eclipses the Word of God. Soon, Troubleall is no longer saying "quit you" and "multiply you," leaving the implied subject ambiguous; instead, he has substituted Justice Overdo:

> COKES Farewell, you are a very coxcomb, do you hear?
> TROUBLEALL I think I am, if Justice Overdo sign to it, I am, and so we are all. He'll quit us and multiply us all" (4.2.88-90)

Troubleall has invested Justice Overdo with such authority that there is no room for God in his consciousness, or even in his vocabulary. The missing word in front of "quit you," "multiply you," etc. is no longer "God," but "Justice

Overdo," who rules Troubleall's life like a deity, quitting, multiplying, and blessing his many subjects. Troubleall's voluntary acquiescence to censorship has melded with his insanity to produce religiously disastrous results. Surely, then, this feature of Troubleall's character should make us look askance at the voluntary acquiescence to censorship in the Epilogue.

We have drawn an analogy, then, between the audience of the Epilogue (James) and a character within the play (Overdo) as well as an analogy between the speaker of the Epilogue and the character of Troubleall. The third analogy I should like to propose is between Jonson himself as author of the Epilogue and the conniving gamester Quarlous. Just as Overdo must deal not only with the slavish Troubleall, but also with Quarlous disguised as Troubleall, so too in the Epilogue the King is addressed polyvocally by both the speaker and the author. While Troubleall's insanity is genuine, Quarlous merely impersonates Troubleall, wearing Troubleall's old clothes and false beard and calling himself "mad from the gown outward" (5.6.52-53). Troubleall's diminished personality becomes a garment that Quarlous can wear. Likewise, the Troubleall-like speaker of the Epilogue is a kind of mask or disguise, through which the author, Jonson himself, can speak to the king with ironic servility.

For Quarlous, pretending to be Troubleall offers the opportunity to advance himself at Overdo's expense, as well as teach the Justice a lesson.

Quarlous steals Troubleall's clothes and dons a fake beard in order to bilk Justice Overdo of his pretty young ward Grace (and the inheritance that comes with her). Justice Overdo, distraught that he seems to have unintentionally driven Troubleall mad, approaches the disguised Quarlous and offers him whatever he wishes: "Speak whatsoever it is, it shall be supplied you. What want you?" (5.2.77-78). In response to Overdo, Quarlous, still feigning madness, requests his "warrant," but refuses to say for what purpose he desires the warrant. Unable to obtain a specific request, Overdo gives him a blank warrant: "if there be any thing to be written above in the paper…[i]t is my deed: I deliver it so" (5.2.95-97). Quarlous is able to exploit this warrant in whatever way he wishes and eventually uses it to transfer Grace's wardship to himself, so that Winwife has to pay *him* rather than Justice Overdo in order to marry Grace. By putting on the guise of the obsequious Troubleall, Quarlous is able to obtain a signed waiver that will allow him to do or say virtually anything in Overdo's jurisdiction. Thus, if Troubleall represents total servility, Quarlous represents the simulation of servility to obtain the favors of the vain and unsuspecting magistrate. He presents himself to Overdo in the guise of obsequiousness, but he is craftily usurping Overdo's authority for his own aims.

The distinction between Quarlous and Troubleall is as subtle, yet as expansive as the difference between the benign outward expression of the

Epilogue and the ambiguous motives of its author. As we have seen, Quarlous describes the contrast between himself and the servile character he imitates first as a difference between outward appearance and interior reality—he is "mad but from the gown outward" (5.6.52-53). He also distinguishes his "madness" from Troubleall's by demonstrating that his madness is the product of his own will—"I can be mad…when I please" (5.6.72). The play calls attention to the difference between true and pretended madness by describing Quarlous as "madcap" rather than as mad. A "madcap" is "A person who acts like a maniac; a reckless, wildly impulsive person" (OED, defn. A.b). Even from the beginning of the play, Quarlous has the reputation of being madcap. When Purecraft is told by fortune tellers that her future husband "must be a madman" (1.2.39), Littlewit wants to know if a merely "madcap" fellow, like Quarlous, would suffice (1.2.31,47). As Quarlous shifts into Troubleall's clothes, he puns on the madman's "cap" to recall the distinction: "I have made myself as like him as his gown and cap will give me leave" (5.2.11-12). Emphasizing the intact will behind his apparent madness, Quarlous calls his outward trappings of madness a "madman's shape" (5.2.91) and says that he and Purecraft will "*proceed* in madness" (5.2.104, emphasis added)—a neat, paradoxical phrase that juxtaposes purposeful will and witlessness. These continual reminders of Quarlous's hidden identity serve

as reminders not only of his sanity, but also of the disingenuousness of his obeisance to Overdo.

The play itself, therefore, warns us through the interaction between Overdo and the disguised Quarlous that the genuflecting sycophant may in reality be a conniving and ironic impostor. Surely we are meant to remember that lesson as the epiloguist addresses the king. Thus, if the speaker in the Epilogue, considered without irony and taken to be genuine, reminds us of Troubleall, then the dissimulating author behind the Epilogue analogously resembles Quarlous. In other words, in his tribute to the king Jonson plays the part of Quarlous by imitating the kind of servility that characterizes Troubleall. The audience has just heard Troubleall declare "I fear no man but Justice Overdo" (5.6.45), and now Jonson declares that he cares for no man's censure but the king's. What the preceding play hints at is that an apparent Troubleall abasing himself before the king may in fact be a Quarlous on the make. By his disguise, Quarlous demonstrates the power of dissimulation—the power of an actor to appear in whatever guise suits his purposes. Members of the court audience might be in a permanent state of mad sycophancy toward King James, as Troubleall is to Overdo. But Jonson, like Quarlous, is only temporarily wearing the madman's gown when subjecting himself to the king. Quarlous's

plotting demonstrates that the flattering servility of the pretended Troubleall is not to be trusted. Nor, indeed, should that of the speaker of the Epilogue.

In sum, what I am suggesting here is that there are three analogies between the Epilogue and the play itself, which urge us to read the Epilogue as disingenuous. First, Justice Overdo, to whom the moral of the play is addressed, seems to be modeled on King James, to whom the Epilogue is addressed. Secondly, Troubleall's madness provokes him to consolidate all authority over his life and the fair he inhabits in the person of Justice Overdo, which appears to be the very same gesture Jonson makes in turning over to the king, and to no one else, the authority to censure *Bartholomew Fair*. Thirdly, if indeed Jonson is pretending to be like Troubleall in the Epilogue, the character he is really imitating is Quarlous, who merely pretends to abase himself before Justice Overdo as a convenient means to his personal ends. The gesture of servility becomes, at best, professional and mercenary. Thus, the Epilogue, far from undermining Jonson's commitment to artistic freedom, plays out in parodic terms what state censorship requires of writers. Because the Epilogue is still in a sense part of the play, its servility is a *mock* servility. The surrender of literary authority to political authority in the Epilogue is made all the more absurd by the fact that the very political figure in question, the king, has been scathingly satirized as a meddlesome magistrate throughout the preceding show.

It is tempting to speculate that perhaps the actor who played Troubleall, or better yet, the one who played Quarlous, was chosen to recite the Epilogue at the court performance. Of course, no concrete evidence can be mustered to support such a conjecture, but I would at least point out that Jonson's two previous plays, *Epicene* and *The Alchemist*, end with an address to the audience spoken by mutable tricksters (True-wit and Face, respectively) who have been, like Quarlous, responsible for relieving the other characters of their pretentions (and their money). Therefore, it would be in line with precedent to give the lines of the Epilogue to Quarlous.

Bartholomew Fair's performance history provides a final piece of evidence that Jonson's Epilogue was less than heartfelt. As there was no repeat performance of the play at court, it presumably did not meet with the king's highest approbations.[6] Yet, rather than submit to the king's wisdom, as the speaker of the Epilogue seems to do, Jonson wrote a now lost piece of literary criticism entitled "Apology for Bartholomew Fair." Though the Epilogue says to the king "you best can judge," Jonson seems not to have been afraid to counter the negative judgement in writing.

The Epilogue of *Bartholomew Fair* serves as an instructive instance of Jonson's power to write along the ambiguous lines between obedience and dissent, to present himself as submissive, while drawing analogies from the play

that hint at a more wily, "madcap" set of motives. Such a reading of the Epilogue brings it back into dialogue with the play and better harmonizes with the fair folks' spirited objections to censorious encroachment upon their self-expression. As the interruptions in Leatherhead's puppet show demonstrate, Jonson feared attacks on the autonomy of the theater not just by religiously motivated Puritans like Busy, but also by agents of the court like Overdo. Jonson told Drummond of Hawthornden that he wished he had been a clergyman, "so he might have favour to make one sermon to the King, he careth not what thereafter should befall him, for he would not flatter though he saw death" (Jonson, *Informations* 254-56). There were, apparently, a number of harsh and critical messages Jonson dearly wished to be able to convey to the king, but felt he did not have the standing to utter. The tactical ambiguity of the Epilogue would have given Jonson a way to confront the king obliquely by putting on a kind of dissimulated obedience, just as Quarlous does so by putting on Troubleall's clothes. Highlighting some of the king's faults through the character of Overdo, Jonson called for a change in royal attitudes, emphasizing generosity and leniency. The Epilogue speaks to the king of "that leave you gave us," but the play indicates that if one wants the warrant of Overdo-James, one does not depend so much on his generosity as on one's own ability to pretend servility, for it is, as Quarlous says, the cap and gown of Troubleall that "will give me leave" (Epilogue 6;

5.2.11-12). The Epilogue parodically replays Troubleall's servility in order to contrast with the newly reformed Overdo, the egalitarian host of a banquet that even the puppet-actors can attend, with some apparent hope, perhaps, of a change within James himself.

CHAPTER THREE

Court Censorship in *A Tale of a Tub*

In *Bartholomew Fair* (1614) when Zeal-of-the-Land Busy and Justice Overdo attempt to censor Leatherhead's puppet show, they aim to shut down the production based on principled objections to theater *per se*. In contrast, the censorious forces of *A Tale of a Tub* (1633) are much subtler: the play shows how those with legal authority or social influence can intervene in a textual or theatrical event in order to redirect or alter it for self-interested purposes. The treatment of censorship in *A Tale of a Tub* shows that Jonson understood that not all censorship is anti-theatrical. Those with the authority of the state may choose to make use of the theater by collusion, rather than repress it altogether. As such, *A Tale of a Tub* provides an ironic commentary on its own composition and production, since Henry Herbert, Master of the Revels, compelled Jonson to make extensive revisions to the play because of its satirical send-up of Inigo Jones. Because protection of reputation was central to English censorship laws, Jonson would have known that his play would meet with official disapproval, and he strove to anticipate official objection topically in the play by implying an alliance between local festivity and poetry against the power of law and the court.

Although Jonson and Jones had for many years provided masques for court occasions, Jonson writing the scripts and Jones designing the sets and costumes, the relationship between Jonson and Jones had been in decline for some time. In 1631, they collaborated on the masque, *Love's Triumph through Callipolis*. But in contrast to their previous works, here Jonson's text plays a more minor role than Jones's elaborate sets and costuming. The poetry seems peripheral to the visual art, merely descriptive, rather than driving the action (Riggs 321). Almost a year later, Jonson would discover that because of Jones's bitterness at having his name placed second to Jonson's on the title page of the printed copies of *Love's Triumph through Callipolis*, Aurelian Townsend had been selected to replace Jonson as the court's masque writer for the 1631 Christmas season (Riggs 325). Written in early 1633, *A Tale of a Tub* presented Jonson with an opportunity to strike back satirically at Jones, though, as I will argue, Jonson must have known that the censors would attempt to protect Jones's reputation from ridicule.

Close parallels between *Bartholomew Fair* and *A Tale of a Tub* increase the likelihood that Jonson meant for the two plays to be understood comparatively, or at least that he had *Bartholomew Fair* in mind during the composition of *A Tale of a Tub*. Both plays take place on an important saint's day—*Bartholomew Fair* on St. Bartholomew Day and *A Tale of a Tub* on St. Valentine's Day. Fatuous grooms

Bartholomew Cokes and John Clay are dispossessed of their brides by means of false warrants. The amorous widows Dame Purecraft and Lady Tub are also both overbearing mothers. The namesake of each play attaches great importance to the appearance of his name in the title: "I call't my fair, because of Barthol'mew: you know my name is Barthol'mew, and Barthol'mew Fair" (*BF* 1.5.52-53); "I am Squire Tub,/ *Subjectum fabulae*" (*ATT* 5.7.21-22). Each is followed about by an irascible governor (i.e. tutor)—Wasp and Hilts, respectively. Legally presiding over the locations in which the plays are set are two pretentious justices of the peace, Overdo and Preamble. Win is pregnant and has "a longing to eat pig" (*BF* 1.6.33-34). The delay of Audrey's wedding feast produces similar sentiments. Puppy imagines his hunger as a pregnancy: "I am with child of a huge stomach, and long" (*ATT* 3.8.40). Turf wistfully declares, "Oh, there are two vat pigs/ A zindging by the vire" (3.1.48.49). Additionally, a number of small details in *A Tale of a Tub* apparently allude to *Bartholomew Fair*. For instance, Puppy thinks the Magna Charta is "a horse" from "Smithveld" (*ATT* 1.2.35-36), recalling the horse market held at the Smithfield Fair, as well as, parodically, the hobby horses sold by Lantern Leatherhead. Though not all the parallels here have a direct connection to the issue of authorial freedom, they indicate that *Bartholomew Fair* was likely on Jonson's mind as he composed *A Tale of a Tub*.

Furthermore, inclusivity and tolerance, two terms that have characterized critical readings of *Bartholomew Fair*,[1] are important elements of *A Tale of a Tub* as well. Resolution of the action of both plays is signaled by the proposition of an invitation to dinner:

> QUARLOUS Forget your other name of Overdo, and invite us all to supper." (*BF* 5.6.81)
> TUB Then, madam, I'll entreat you/…please to take/ All this good company home with you to supper." (*ATT* 5.4.28-30)

Festivity and food trump the prerogatives of law and aristocracy. Public order is restored not by judicial fiat, but by generosity and forgiveness.

Both plays also conclude with masques to commemorate weddings, though the performances actually turn out to be mere puppet shows, and the puppetmasters, who narrate the action in couplets, are obviously satirical portraits of Inigo Jones. In the case of the latter play, Jones's position at court was great enough that he could expect to be protected from Jonson's satire. As in the case of *Poetaster* described in the previous chapter, Jonson once again had reason to be concerned about censorship originating from the grievance of a rival artist. Jones complained to the Lord Chamberlain, who gave specific instructions to the Master of the Revels about changes that were to be required of the play (Riggs 334). Herbert ordered Jonson to remove the character of Vitruvius Hoop, the masque inventor who bore too close a resemblance to Jones, as well as the final scene of a mock masque in which an old saltpeter tub parodically replaced

Jones's masque technology (Adams 19). Later in this chapter, we will examine Jonson's not very cooperative response to Herbert's instructions, but for now it is enough to observe that the protection of Jones's reputation was at the heart of Herbert's cancellations and requests for emendation.

Now, in asserting that Jonson is treating the topic of censorship in the main plot of *A Tale of a Tub*, I may seem to be anachronistically reading into the composition of the play a controversy that would not have arisen until the original draft had already been sent to the Master of the Revels for licensing. For my claim to be true, it must have been the case that Jonson suspected his play would be censored even before the Master of the Revels had seen it. If Jonson was able to predict Henry Herbert's objections on Inigo Jones's behalf, he could have decided to respond preemptively with a subtle thematic portrayal of the negative effects of censorship. Is it possible that Jonson assumed beforehand that he would be censored? It is not only possible, but likely.

Personal satire aimed at a particular individual, such as Jonson included in *A Tale of a Tub*, was precisely the sort of behavior English censorship laws were meant to prevent. As we had cause to mention earlier, Debora Shuger's study of Tudor-Stuart censorship demonstrates that English censorship laws placed great emphasis on checking malicious speech directed at particular persons (8). The tradition of English censorship law traced back to the Roman

legal concept of *iniuria*, a category of crime that included any kind of personal attack from assault to defamation, from property damage to slander (Shuger 9). We tend to think of Early Modern censorship as quelling seditious sentiment or eliminating religious perspectives contrary to the state-approved church, but one of the additional primary purposes of English censorship was to protect individual reputations from libel, just as, analogously, laws against battery protect the body from deliberately inflicted harm.

Granted the importance of reputation in English censorship law, we are still left with the question of whether Jonson would have been aware of the transgressiveness of his satire during the composition of *A Tale of a Tub*. In contrast to other scholars who emphasize the chaotic and inconsistent enforcement of Renaissance English censorship, Annabel Patterson has shown that there were broadly understood and consistent conventions governing writers—"conventions as to how far a writer could go in explicit address to the contentious issues of his day, and how, if he did *not* choose the confrontational approach, he could encode his opinions" (Patterson 11, emphasis in original). Jonson should have known that his mockery of Jones would be seen as far too transparently "confrontational" and not, in Patterson's word, "encode[d]" enough.

Jonson's frequent personal experience of censorship would have acquainted him with the conventions of the practice of English censorship, especially pertaining to the defense of reputation. It is true that sometimes Jonson's plays came under scrutiny because of elements perceived as seditious. For instance, Chief Justice Popham questioned him before the Privy Council about possible "popery and treason" in *Sejanus* (Jonson, *Informations* 252). Furthermore, sometimes the reason for the suppression of a Jonson play is not known. There are a number of theories about why Jonson's earliest known play, *The Isle of Dogs*, coauthored with Thomas Nashe, got him imprisoned and possibly tortured, but as the text of the play is lost, we have no way of knowing exactly why the play offended.[2] Most often, however, Jonson's work was censored because of perceived insults to individuals. *Eastward Ho!* portrayed King James satirically on stage, giving him a Scottish accent and poking fun at his favoritism toward his Scottish retainers. Lady Arabella Stuart thought she detected an insult to her person in *Epicene* and had the play "suppressed" (Riggs 156). King James pressured Jonson to "conceal" a too transparent satire of court favorite, Sir Robert Carr, in *The Devil is an Ass* (Riggs 244). A complaint from the Spanish ambassador compelled King James to delay and ultimately cancel the performance of Jonson's court masque, *Neptune's Triumph* (Riggs 290-291). Clearly Jonson knew from experience that satirical portrayal of prominent people

who had influence with the court would likely lead to official intervention or suppression. Therefore, it seems likely that he knew his thinly veiled satire of Jones would probably suffer censorship.

In fact, the scenes in which Jonson mocked Jones are not the only scenes in *A Tale of a Tub* that seem designed to skirt the edge of the boundaries regarding the treatment of individual reputations in plays. Early in the play, Lady Tub poses the following question to her maidservant, Dido Wisp:

> I pray thee, Wisp, deal freely with me now;
> We are alone, and may be merry a little.
> …
> What man would satisfy thy present fancy,
> Had thy ambition leave to choose a Valentine
> Within the queen's dominion, so a subject? (1.7.16-17,20-22)

There is an illicit quality to the question, evidenced in Lady Tub's cautious manner of putting it forth. She seems to assume that Dido will name a prominent duke or earl. Such an answer would have had great potential to get Jonson into trouble with the authorities, since, as a satirist, he must constantly maintain his insistence that he treats types, and not persons. Lady Tub has presented the audience with the tantalizing prospect that Dido will describe or even name outright a particular real-life person far above her station, and there is little doubt that the man in question would have found it tremendously embarrassing for a servingwoman to be pining for him on the stage. Dido sidesteps the explosive question by choosing for herself a fictitious Valentine, "the properest

man/ A tailor could make up; or all the poets,/ With the perfumers" (1.7.26-28). Still, merely raising the possibility of personal satire in this way, Jonson is playing at the edges of what was conventionally acceptable in the theater.[3]

Furthermore, Jonson's portrayal of Lady Tub at other points could be taken as an oblique mockery of Herbert's stuffy attitude toward the use of certain impolite words in plays. Herbert appears to have been a humorless fellow who wished to refine the coarse language of the stage. He ordered that "ould plays" licensed by former Masters of the Revels be brought again for review before performance, since, as he put it, "in former times poetts tooke greater liberty than is allowed them by mee" (Adams 21). In particular, Herbert made it his practice to excise "oaths, prophaness, and ribaldrye" (Adams 20). In January of 1633, the year in which *A Tale of a Tub* would later be written and performed, Endymion Porter appealed to the king on behalf of the playwright William Davenant, from whose play, *The Wits*, Herbert had struck a number of mild terms, like "faith," "death," and "slight." Charles allowed the words to stand, and Herbert recorded his grudging acceptance of the king's verdict: "The kinge is pleas'd to take faith, death, slight, for asseverations, and no oaths, to which I doe humbly submit as my master's judgment; but, under favour, conceive them to be oaths, and enter them here, to declare my opinion and submission" (Adams 22).

I believe Jonson is having a little fun at Herbert's expense in the character of Lady Tub, who is so modest about the use of offensive-sounding language that she has renamed her servant because his surname was "Polecat"—"A stinking name, and not to be pronounced/ Without a reverence in any lady's presence" (1.6.24-25). Later, Constable Turf's servant, Hannibal Puppy, extends the satire of Lady Tub's delicacy by speaking bawdily to her, yet cleverly avoiding culpability for doing so by pretending that he is actually censoring himself.

> PUPPY [*to Lady Tub*] Dame, let me take this rump out of your mouth.
> DAME TURF What mean you by that, sir?
> PUPPY Rump and tail's all one.
> But I would use a reverence for my lady;
> I would not zay, sir-reverence, "The tale
> Out o'your mouth," but rather "Take the rump." (3.5.40-44)

Puppy pretends that Lady Tub's fastidiousness motivates him to find a substitutionary word for "tale" because it might be mistaken for "tail." But, of course, the euphemism he chooses, "rump," has far more potential to offend. The word provokes Dame Turf's demand for an explanation, which gives Puppy the opportunity both to say the word again and to speak the word "tail," the term that was ostensibly meant to be avoided in the first place. Thus, by means of the pretense that he has carefully "weighed his wordz [sic]" (3.5.47), Puppy provides himself with the opportunity to employ lewd terms repeatedly and with

impunity. The scene soon devolves into a farce, in which Puppy says "tail" and "rump" over and over in mock sanctimonious self-congratulation for *not* saying them. Puppy's teasing and repeated use of naughty terms seems as if it could have been designed to taunt Herbert for the king's recent correction of his overzealous excision of so-called "oaths."

Having seen how Jonson is obliquely treating concerns related to censorship in his depiction of the relatively minor character of Lady Tub, we turn to the dramatization of censorship in the main plot of the play. Following folk tradition, on the eve of Valentine's Day, Audrey has drawn by lottery the name of her intended, John Clay. But the local justice of the peace, Richard Preamble, and the foremost aristocratic landowner in the county, Squire Tripoly Tub, both want Audrey for themselves and attempt to intervene in the marriage. Through Preamble's position and Tub's status, both share a certain proximity to the court, and thus have access to the resources and authority to censor. Using their legal authority and privilege, Tub and Preamble each wish to frustrate the other potential grooms and to be the one to marry Audrey. It is important, then, that what they desire is not the cessation of the wedding; each wants the wedding to go on, but with himself as the groom. In this way, Tub and Preamble's actions reflect Jonson's evolving hostility toward legal or political intervention in festivity: unlike the meddlesome censors of *Bartholomew Fair*, Tub and Preamble

pose no threat to the *existence* of the wedding day celebrations, but they pose a vital threat to the nature or essence of the festivities. In a similar vein, Leah Marcus argues that the play critiques the court for its hypocritical endorsement of country pastimes when the court's own artistic tastes eschewed the popular elements and traditions of such pastimes (132-35). Just as the court wanted local festivity not for its own sake but to placate rural dissidents, so Tub and Preamble want the wedding to take place, but in a form significantly altered to their advantage.

Now, in the foregoing, I have tacitly conflated folk festivity, such as Audrey's wedding, with poetry, theater, and other forms of speech which are the subject of censorship. The link between the two is, I hope, at least somewhat intuitive, but it would be useful to take a moment to note the way in which the play itself connects poetry to rural festivity. For Jonson, poetry and festivity are implicitly joined by their shared tension with, or even antipathy to, law. Two worlds are in collision in *A Tale of a Tub*: on the one hand the court, the central government, and royal authority; and on the other, local tradition, neighborliness, and folklore. Julie Sanders argues that, like *Bartholomew Fair*, *A Tale of a Tub* shows a "clash of the official and unofficial sources of both culture and authority" (170). The central question of the play is whether the local community should be ruled by its own traditions or by the legal intrigues of the

privileged. Likewise, Jonson probably anticipated that the play's satirical content would raise the question of whether authorial judgement or legal authority should determine the propriety of personal satire. Tub and Preamble are disorderly forces, whose aim is to usurp traditional ways: "The schemes devised by the gentlemen to carry off Audrey disrupt neighbourliness…the particular form they take is that of the interference of the external world of law into the communal peace of the hundred" (Butler 21). In the hands of corrupt officials and privileged gentry, law can erode the autonomous and spontaneously ordered governance of a local community. Analogously, law can impinge upon the autonomy of an author. Thus, poetry and local festivity are united in facing the same threat of alteration by the unjust application of law.

The tension between law and folklore is anticipated even in the Prologue. Jonson gives us a series of phrases that juxtapose the terms of the two worlds: "old records/ Of antique proverbs…authorities at wakes and ales…country precedents" (Prologue 7-10). Here, legal terms share close proximity with rural terms. While the argument of the Prologue protests that the play will not be about "state affairs" or "any politic club" (1), the language of law ("records," "authorities," "precedents") has invaded the otherwise pastoral description of the setting. The final lines promise that *A Tale of a Tub* will "show what different things/ The cotes [i.e. hovels] of clowns are from the courts of kings" (11-12). On

its face, this is an apparent flattery of the court and king, but the statement is ambiguous: it could imply that the difference between cotes and courts, while it exists, is not so great as the presumptuous court might imagine, or that the difference results from the distance between the out-of-touch ruler and his subjects.[4] Furthermore, if "cotes" and "courts" are meant to be contrasted, the Prologue does not say which is to be portrayed more favorably. It may be that the "cotes" and "courts" are different precisely because the former represents a more authentic and moral community than the latter.

Just as the play comments on the difference, or lack of difference, between law and folklore, it also compares law and poetry, and the comparison is by no means favorable to law. Debora Shuger points out that the traditional legal category of *iniuria*, on which, as we have already seen, English censorship laws were based, made clear that law had certain privileges which were withheld from poetry. Following Cicero and Augustine, contemporary English law against defamation "forbid the poet to usurp the law's role of exposing and punishing individuals" (177).[5] Yet, among his other aims, Jonson wishes to do exactly this in *A Tale of a Tub*—"expose" and ridicule Inigo Jones. As justification for personal satire, Jonson has Puppy declare an equivalence between law and poetry. Clench summarizes:

> ’Annibal Puppy says that law and poetry
> Are both flat cheating. All’s but writing and reading,
> He says, be’t verse or prose. (1.3.4-6)

Thus, poetry and law are not only equivalent, but equivalent in the lowness or meanness of their aims. Rather than deny the dishonor heaped upon the literary arts, Jonson simply chooses to share it equally with the legal profession, which he regards as pompous and deserving of ridicule. Puppy reduces the two opposing arts to their essential activities, “writing and reading,” and finds poetry and law to be the same. Both “cheat”—that is, they present fiction as if it were truth. Cloaking reading and writing in the robes of law to differentiate it from the reading and writing of poets is, according to Puppy, essentially an illusion.

Though Scriben challenges Puppy on the dignity of the two professions, both of which he believes are honorable endeavors, no one challenges Puppy’s assumption that the two have no real difference of method or aim. Turf, who agrees with Puppy, further elaborates on the rife dishonesty of the legal profession in his tirade against lawyers in act 4 scene 1, where he appears before Justice Preamble on trumped up charges. Lawyers are greedy for money, he says, and spend their time concocting ways to bilk their clients of money, instead of providing legitimately helpful counsel. The joke is, of course, that while Turf denounces lawyerly corruption, he fails to see it right in front of him, as Justice Preamble uses the law to rob him of his money and his daughter. Law, then,

because it is practiced by the fallible and corrupt, is not presented by Jonson as worthy of a privileged position above poetry. If it is true that innocent people may be condemned by bad verses, it is just as possible that innocent people may be sentenced by crooked magistrates. By undermining the authority of law over poetry, Jonson destabilizes the prevailing justification for censorship of his day.

Returning to the subject of Audrey's wedding, we shall see that Jonson further associates the festive occasion with literary arts by drawing attention to the textuality and theatricality of both the wedding itself and the interventions perpetrated by Tub and Preamble. In fact, prior to Tub and Preamble's involvement, Audrey's father Turf treats the wedding as a textual event and employs his legal authority as High Constable in an attempt to rewrite the wedding according to his own desires, thus providing a kind of prelude to Tub and Preamble's more dramatic redirections of the wedding. As the groom's party gathers, Turf sneers at Puppy for reporting the maids' opinion on the proper foliage for wedding celebrations: "You take up 'dority [i.e. authority] still to vouch against me./ All the twelve smocks in the house, zure, are your authors" (1.3.24-25). Subsequently, Turf declares his intent to exclude the maids from the wedding entirely. Turf views the women of the house as "authors," whose autonomous control of the text of Audrey's wedding requires his intervention. Like Jones's censorship of the play itself, Turf's alteration of the wedding plans

has its nascent impulse in artistic rivalry. Intent on interrupting the collaborative process of organizing the wedding, Turf seeks to gain control over the occasion through the authority of his constableship. Turf prefigures the later satire of Inigo Jones in the masque-maker In-and-in Medley's demand for exclusive authorship:

> He'll do it alone, sir; he will join will no man,
> Though he be a joiner. In design, he calls it,
> He must be sole inventor. In-and-in
> Draws with no other in's project (5.2.35-38).

Just as Jones gradually eliminated Jonson's involvement in the court masque, Turf tries to eliminate other potential "authors" of the wedding ceremony.

Turf's method of claiming control over the text of Audrey's wedding also dramatizes censorship, in that law provides the basis for his exclusion of female authorship. Turf confuses the authority he ostensibly has over his household with the authority he derives from the state by virtue of his office. The language he uses to direct the wedding procession becomes strangely political:

> TURF Press all noises
> Of Finsbury, in our name. D'ogenes Scriben
> Shall draw a score of warrants vor the business.
> Does any wight parzent Her Majesty's person
> This hundred 'bove the high constable?
> ALL No, no.
> TURF Use our authority then to the utmost on't (1.4.50-55)

In what should be a private affair, Turf behaves as if he were fulfilling a public duty, issuing warrants and claiming to represent the queen. Accordingly, he

attempts to import the restrictions on female enfranchisement in the political sphere into the personal matter of his daughter's wedding. By his decree, the wedding party is to include only "three or vour our wise, choice, honest neighbors,/Upstantial persons, *men that ha' borne office*,/ And mine own family" (2.1.19-21 emphasis added). Thus, the event is to be a male-dominated affair, governed under the same terms that restrict women from public office. Petty Constable Clench affirms Turf's decision, saying, "he has spoken true as a gun, believe it" (2.1.27). The phallic gun here represents the male authority by which women are to be excluded the festivities. But in this play, it is quite a regular pattern that every time someone confidently invokes "truth," as Clench does here, his expectations are soon upset.

It is at this moment that Dame Turf enters, defiantly leading not only the bride, but also six female household servants. This "pride and muster of women" (2.1.29) proceeds to point out the hypocrisy of Turf's having half a dozen men to follow the groom, but allowing no one to attend the bride but her mother. Initially Dame Turf speaks on behalf of the maids, but soon they defiantly choose to speak for themselves:

> JOYCE We will not back,
> And leave our dame.
> MADGE Why should Her Worship lack
> Her tail of maids more than you do of men?
> TURF What, mutinin', Madge?
> JOAN Zend back you c'lons agen,

And we will vollow.
ALL MAIDS Else we'll guard our dame.
TURF I ha' zet the nest of wasps all on a flame. (2.1.38-43)

Here is a remarkable instance of a positive portrayal of a wife refusing to obey her husband, and what is more, maidservants defying their master. The dissent is at once individual and united. Personal declarations of defiance and of the legitimate reasons for defiance lead to a unified expression of a common grievance. It is significant, I think, that in a play so much concerned with names, we are told the names of all six maids in "The Persons That Act," even though only three of them speak individually.[6] Festivity, like poetry, demands by its very nature a relaxation of legal and patriarchal rigidity. Turf's authority (legal and otherwise) is overruled by his wife's generous inclusivity, and the maids are allowed to participate in the wedding march, demonstrating the openness and inclusiveness which, Jonson shows, censorship restricts and restrains.

Turf's failed censorship acts as a kind of foil to the later, more effective interventions of Tub and Preamble. His ostentatious and unsubtle attempt to bar the maidservants from the wedding is reminiscent of Overdo and Busy's attempts to censor Leatherhead's puppet show. Because Turf guilelessly makes his censorious intentions known, he provides the women with the opportunity to protest his decision. He can be prevailed upon, and eventually persuaded, just as Busy is eventually "converted" and Overdo finally comes to "remember [his]

frailty" (*BF* 5.5.91; 5.6.80-81). Turf, Busy, and Overdo practice censorship by openly acting to silence authors. In contrast, Tub and Preamble redirect the action through dramatic deception. Turf, in thinking of the women of his household as authors, apparently conceives of the wedding as a kind of text. Tub and Preamble, however, view the event as a theatrical performance. Their interventions into the wedding are consistently described by the term "device," a word tellingly reused as a synonym for "masque" during the final puppet show.[7] Conceiving of the wedding as theatrical, they use theatrical means ("device[s]") to manipulate the performance. Rather than altering the wedding by decree, they use their legal and social position to stage and act out narratives that disrupt and reorder the festivities.

Jonson emphasizes the theatrical nature of Tub and Preamble's disruptions of the wedding by pointing to their use of their servants as actors and their consistent concern for props and costuming. First we will consider how Hilts and Metaphor, the servants of Tub and Preamble respectively, are treated as actors. Because Audrey's wedding presents itself as theater, Tub and Preamble's method of censorship is to introduce another actor into the performance—an actor under their own authority with specific instructions about how to derail the drama. Hilts is particularly suited to the part. In describing Hilt's "nature" Tub emphasizes his mercurial behavior:

> He'll weep you like all April: but he'ull roar you
> Like middle March afore. He will be as mellow,
> And tipsy too, as October; and as grave
> And bound up like a frost, with the new year,
> In January; as rigid as he is rustic. (1.1.79-84)

The above passage points to Hilts's irascibility, but also to his skill as an actor. That he has the ability to simulate the behaviors of the months with such passion and verisimilitude anticipates his virtuoso performance as the assistant to Captain Thumbs in act 2 scene 2. Without Hilts's convincing bluster, Audrey's wedding could not be interrupted on Tub's behalf. Indeed, it is easy to read the above description as a meta-theatrical compliment to the actor playing Hilts.

In any case, the play leaves no room for doubt that Hilts is absolutely essential to Tub's meta-dramatic intervention in the wedding, because Tub himself is imaginatively vacuous. His comparison of Hilts to the seasons is an anomaly in his otherwise pedestrian rhetoric. He is imprisoned in dull literalism by a stunted capacity for imaginative experience. His attempt later in the play to create a metaphor hilariously fails to transcend literal description: "We are like men that wander in strange woods,/ And lose ourselves in search of them we seek" (4.2.10-11). But this is exactly what Tub and Hilts are: lost in the woods, unable to find the people they are looking for. The word "like" is superfluous. It is an affectation of art where no art exists. We cannot imagine Tub donning a beard and playing a robbed soldier seeking redress, as Hilts does. It is obvious

that he never could have managed it. Hence, it is necessary for him to depend upon Hilts's acting talent.

Preamble too tries to depend upon his servant, Metaphor, to intrude into the performance as an actor. Preamble intends to wrest Audrey from Tub with the same trick Tub used to get Audrey—by sending his disguised servant to detain Tub on official business. But Metaphor is no Hilts. He cannot manage the pretense alone, and Preamble is forced not only to accompany him to Squire Tub's location, but also to intervene almost immediately on Metaphor's behalf. Everything in Metaphor's behavior points to classic symptoms of stagefright. He "shak[es]" (2.5.1), forgets his lines (2.5.3), and has to be prompted by Preamble (2.5.12-14). But as much as the audience might have laughed at Metaphor's poor playing, it is just as outrageous and humorous that the dense Squire Tub does not realize he is being put upon by a third-rate theatrical act. Tub's credulousness seems even sillier when Hilts appears again, after Preamble has made off with Audrey, and instantly sees through the farce. Jonson lets us know that Hilts's shrewdness here is the product of his acting skill, for he warns Metaphor, "Never halt afore a cripple" (2.6.5). In other words, never try to pass yourself off as an actor in front of a real actor. Thus, throughout the action here, Jonson hints that Metaphor and Hilts both ought to be regarded as players whom

Tub and Preamble insinuate into the dramatic performance of Audrey's wedding, even if Hilts is a far better actor than Metaphor.

That Tub and Preamble think of their "devices" as stagecraft is also apparent from the emphasis they place on props and costumes. As Hilts comes upon the wedding procession, Jonson includes a description of his appearance in the stage direction for his entrance: "[*Enter*] *to them HILTS bearded, booted, and spurred*" (2.2.0SD). The additional details of his costume are further reminders of the theatrical methodology at work in Tub's plan. Puppy calls Hilts "Master Broombeard," suggesting that the beard he wears is exaggeratedly large and was probably a familiar stage prop (2.2.24). Preamble also takes pains with Metaphor's costuming. When the parish priest Chanon Hugh suggests that Metaphor could pass himself off as a royal pursuivant by borrowing a Messenger of the Chamber's badge, Preamble insists that the whole coat must serve: "Borrow his coat, Miles Metaphor, or nothing" (1.5.46). The special attention paid to costumes and props here clearly shows that Tub and Preamble's interventions in the wedding are meant to be understood as meta-theatrical alterations to a dramatic performance.

For a later attempt to steal Audrey away, Preamble employs Chanon Hugh as an actor to play the part of the imaginary robbed soldier, Captain

Thumbs. The Chanon's speech as he enters in his costume consciously invokes the theatricality of his impending intervention in the marriage:

> Thus as a beggar in a king's disguise,
> Or an old cross well sided with a maypole,
> Comes Chanon Hugh, accoutered as you see,
> Disguised soldado-like: mark his device.
> The Chanon is that Captain Thumbs, was robbed;
> These bloody scars upon my face are wounds;
> The scarf upon mine arm shows my late hurts,
> And thus am I to gull the Constable. (3.9.1-8)

Hugh is quite conscious of his role as an actor here. Since actors were often associated with vagrants and masterless men,[8] yet dressed as, and played the part of, royalty on the stage, "a beggar in a king's disguise" would literally fit the manner in which an actor would have been perceived by detractors of the theater. The subsequently mentioned maypole accentuates the affinities between theater and local festivity, which, as we have already shown, Jonson is intent on demonstrating. Again, the word "device" recurs, further anticipating its use as a theatrical term in act 5 scene 10.[9] Additionally, "disguise," which later also serves as another name for "masque," appears twice in Hugh's speech.[10] Hugh's reference to his face makeup and faux bandages calls attention to familiar stage conventions—and also to the way they are being misused here. Finally, Hugh's self-conscious address of the audience further establishes his awareness of the innately theatrical nature of his actions.

We see, then, that in the minds of Tub, Preamble, and their associates, Audrey's wedding is viewed as a dramatic performance with an unsatisfactory trajectory. Tub engages Hilts, and Preamble conscripts Metaphor and Hugh, to insinuate themselves into the drama in order to alter it. It would not be clear from this alone, however, that Jonson intends their actions to mirror the kind of censorship he anticipated meeting for his portrayal of Inigo Jones. For instance, no one that I am aware of construes Bartholomew Cokes's various interruptions and expostulations in the middle of Leatherhead's puppet show as censorship. Similarly, in Beaumont's *The Knight of the Burning Pestle*, we are not inclined to think of the Citizen and his Wife as forces of censorship, despite their significant modifications of *The London Merchant*. What differentiates the censorious meta-dramatic interventions of Overdo, Busy, Tub, and Preamble from the apparently more innocent interventions of Cokes and the Citizen and his Wife?

What aligns Tub and Preamble with Overdo and Busy is that they all appeal to the force of law to effect changes in the performance. Cokes, the Citizen, and the Wife, on the other hand, appear to be depictions of the influence of public opinion and audience taste on the content of drama. As I posited in Chapter One, what unifies the treatment of different sources of censorship (the court, Puritans, rival artists, and hostile audiences) in Jonson's plays is the desire to use law to suppress expression. As my definition of censorship in the first

chapter implies, it is helpful, I think, to limit the definition of censorship to *legal* action that suppresses or alters a text or performance, since we sense intuitively that Cokes, the Citizen, and the Wife's popular interventions on the stage are not censorship. If, however, they had enlisted the power of law in their attempts to alter the performances they are watching, surely it would be a different matter entirely, and we would feel compelled to group them with Overdo and the rest of the censors. Briefly then, to return to the censors, let us consider the way in which Busy, Overdo, Tub, and Preamble appeal to law in their meta-theatrics.

While Busy's attack on the puppet show has its roots in Puritan religious sentiment, he demonstrates a desire to use the law as the basis for his censorious purposes. Denouncing the puppet show, Busy threatens to take the law into his own hands, since he and the Puritan forces he represents have not been able to bring "destruction" on the theater "by suit" (i.e. by legal means), since the theater has been protected from censorship by "instruments of no mean countenance"—presumably meaning court patronage (*BF* 5.5.10,17-18). He condemns the puppet Dionysius for not having a "lawful calling," again appealing to a legal technicality for his excuse for wanting to close down the show (5.5.42). Finally, when Busy looks to the Scriptures for a defense of his position, he turns, significantly, to the Levitical law (5.5.77-79). Although Busy notes earlier that the Puritans have been "vexed" with accusations of "Judaism," since they seem to

privilege the Old Testament over the New (1.6.75-78), in looking to Leviticus for the justification of his anti-theatricality, Busy only confirms the stereotypical portrayal of Puritans as overemphasizers of Law and demonstrates that he is at odds with the play's New Testament emphasis on grace and clemency.[11]

The legal basis for Justice Overdo's attempt to silence the puppet show is, of course, more obvious. As he demands the attention of the theatergoers, he identifies himself by accolades derived from his office: "the Example of Justice and Mirror of Magistrates, the true top of formality and scourge of enormity" (5.6.27-28). For Justice Overdo, Leatherhead's booth has become a courtroom in which he feels free to "charge" criminals with their various crimes (5.5.97). His repeated imperative, "stand," not only arranges the crowd before him, but suggests that each person is about to *stand trial* before him (5.6.16,19,31,47,54). In fact, Overdo makes himself not only prosecutor and judge, but also insinuates his intent to inflict punishment—to "take enormity by the forehead, and brand it" (5.5.100). Therefore, Overdo's intervention in the play, like Busy's, counts as censorship, because his denouncement of the puppet show is not an expression of the public audience's judgement, but instead personally invokes the force of law against the theater.

Likewise, in *A Tale of a Tub*, when Hilts disrupts Audrey's wedding march, he does so by appealing to the legal requirements of Turf's office.

Pretending to be part of a group of soldiers raided by country ruffians, Hilts puts a legally binding obligation on Turf to abandon control of the wedding: "I am to charge you in Her Majesty's name,/…By the length and breadth of your office" (2.2.92,96). As constable, Turf finds himself caught between the genuine matter of his daughter's wedding and the illusory requirements of law invoked by Hilts's spurious report of a crime. Hilts urges Turf to value his legal responsibilities over his responsibilities to family and neighbors by threatening him with legal repercussions. He buttresses the authority of his fallacious story and his officious instructions by browbeating Turf with legal language:

> I charge him [John Clay] with a felony, and charge you [Turf]
> To carry him back forthwith to Paddington
> Unto my captain, who stays my return there.
> I am to go to the next justice of the peace,
> To get a warrant to raise hue and cry (2.2.160-64).

The play on "charge" in the first line above implies an equivalence between the accused suspect, John Clay, and Turf himself. Like a common criminal, Constable Turf is made a prisoner of the law, so that the performance of Audrey's wedding will be thrown into confusion, and Tub will be able to enter into the performance and control the stage.[12]

As the local justice of the peace, Preamble perpetrates even greater abuse of his legal privileges in his attempts to reorder the performance of the wedding. His method of overtaking the drama relies on the rest of the citizens cowing

before his authority. To persuade his subjects, he overawes them with his legal acumen. When he dresses Metaphor as a pursuivant and has him arrest Tub, the Squire wants to know, "Where's your warrant?" (2.5.7). The justice avoids having to exhibit a warrant by touting his connections to the court as a reason for dispensing with due process: "The warrant is directed here to me,/ From the whole table/…It is a warrant/ In special from the Council" (2.5.8-9,16-17). Preamble's rather ludicrous claim, that the Privy Council has chosen to summon Tub with a warrant he is not permitted to see, is only believable because of the justice's legal authority and position of trust in the community. Similarly, Preamble is able to convince Turf to settle out of court with the fictional Captain Thumbs, because Turf is baffled by the niceties of law. He admits, "I ha' no craft/ I'your law quiblins" (4.1.130). In both cases, Tub and Turf relinquish (if grudgingly) control over Audrey's wedding to Preamble because they abandon their legal rights in the face of the justice's legal expertise.

We can see, then, that like Busy and Overdo, Tub and Preamble should also be construed as censors, since they use law to perpetrate unwanted alterations in the theatrical performance of Audrey's wedding. If censorship, as I have defined it, entails an appeal to law in its attempt to alter dramatic performance, we have a clear understanding of why Busy, Overdo, Tub, and Preamble should be grouped together as forces of censorship. But though Tub

and Preamble's censorious interferences have a greater duration than Busy's and Overdo's, they too are ultimately unsuccessful. Neither Tub nor Preamble is able to rewrite the wedding in such a way as to claim the role of groom. Why do they fail?

To answer the question at hand, we should first consider who really ought to have primary control over Audrey's wedding. In the dispute over which man will be the groom, the bride is progressively marginalized. Yet it is by her initiative and cunning that the wedding finally occurs. Audrey is the true author who ought to have control, or at least be able to delegate control, of the text of her own wedding. Martin Butler defends the general critical consensus that Audrey is dim-witted and vapid.[13] If we focus on her singular purpose—to get married to someone, anyone really—then Butler's assessment seems fair. But if we observe the rhetorical strategy she employs to accomplish her goal, to regain the rights of authorship, and to accomplish the eventual performance of the ceremony without interference, we can come to a decidedly different conclusion about her intelligence. In both her acting and her authorship, Audrey proves to be the resilient force of local festivity and dramatic liberty in the play.

At crucial points in the play, Audrey engages in a kind of re-narration of the events that have happened to her. Her re-narration provides a kind of reassertion of her authority over the text. Even though events have not

transpired according to her preferences, re-narrating the plot of the play, as it has been presented to the audience so far, presents a claim of at least some degree of authorship. If Audrey cannot control the festive performance of her wedding day, at least she can use her voice to describe her misfortunes in her own words:

> I went to church to have been wed to Clay;
> Then Squire Tub he seized me on the way
> And thought to ha' had me, but he missed his aim;
> And Justice Bramble, nearest of the three,
> Was well-nigh married to me, when by chance
> In rushed my father and broke off that dance. (3.6.30-35)

Note that, like Tub and Preamble, Audrey meta-theatrically treats her wedding as performance. For her, blocking action melds with "dance" in a manner reminiscent of the court masque.[14] Audrey sees her wedding as a theatrical event, but a theatrical event in which a plethora of interventions has stymied the progress of the plot and robbed her of her desired conclusion to the performance.

In Audrey's next re-narration of the plot, we see an even greater assertion of her authority to take back control of the text from the intrusive forces who want to redirect her wedding. Speaking to Pol-Marten, Audrey again goes through the litany of the day's frustrated bridegrooms. But now she pretends that she has been *rejecting* her thwarted suitors. Let us consider her descriptions of them one by one. First, her lottery Valentine: "John Clay would ha' me, but he hath too hard hands;/ I like not him; besides, he is a thief" (4.5. 86-87). Audrey acts as if she repudiated Clay, when in fact he ran away and hid for fear of the

hue and cry that was supposed to be raised against him. Next she considers her near miss with the justice of the peace: "And Justice Bramble, he fain would ha' catched me" (4.5.88). Here Audrey implies a chase when there was none. She went quite willingly with Preamble to the church and was even partway through the ceremony when Turf and the Finsbury Council broke in and carried her off. Audrey reads back into the events of the day a kind of coyness on her part, in contradiction of well-established fact.

Then Audrey considers her most recent suitor, Squire Tub, whom she rejects rather subtly, turning his own words against him:

> But the young Squire, he, rather than his life,
> Would ha' me yet and make me a lady, he says,
> And be my knight to do me true knight's service,
> Before his lady mother. (4.5.89-92)

Audrey sarcastically reviews Tub's love-promises to show her scorn for them. We can tell the lines are meant to be taken as sarcasm, because she begins by calling the squire "young," even though she had previously complained about him being too old (cf. 4.5.4-5). In the next line, the interjected "he says" further distances Audrey from Tub's overtures. Though she reports them, she wishes to emphasize her lack of assent, as well as the gap between Tub's promises and actions. Earlier she criticized Tub to his face for having plenty of "words" but no "deeds" (2.4.68), and the same point seems to be made in the speech above. Audrey's exaggerated and sardonic evocation of herself as a noble lady and of

the squire as a knight-errant hero of the romance genre stands in humorous contrast to the reality of the situation, because Tub has just toddled off obediently after his imperious mother, leaving Audrey behind. Now we learn, through Audrey, that Tub's whispered wooing in the previous scene was intended to reassure Audrey that she, not his mother, would hold sway over him. His "service" to her—so he promised—would be "Before his lady mother." Thus Audrey's account of Tub's wooing presents a wistful picture of their idealized romance only for the purpose of deploring and mocking Tub's slavishness to his mother, which has caused yet another delay for Audrey's wedding. By retroactively rejecting her suitors, she is rewriting the text of the wedding in a way that reasserts her authorship.

Audrey's final triumph, shared partially with Pol-Marten, is in the sphere of acting. A tremendously persuasive performance is required to effect the actual wedding ceremony, since the priest is in league with Justice Preamble. Audrey and Pol-Marten must play the part of a great lady and her gentleman suitor to such a tee that Chanon Hugh will marry them despite their familiar names and faces. Amazingly, they carry it off, though we are told of it retrospectively from the priest's point of view. Here is his attempt to excuse the blunder, which particularly emphasizes Audrey's marvelous stage-presence and playacting:

> She was so brave, I knew her not, I swear;
> And yet I married her by her own name.

> But she was so disguised, so ladylike,
> I think she did not know herself the while! (5.4.21-24)

Hugh projects onto Audrey the very deception she has played upon him. He imagines her immersed in her role, because he was so fully immersed as a spectator that he unwittingly became a participant in the playact. It is important too that Hugh describes her as "disguised," since Clench has informed the rest of the Finsbury Council that "disguise…/Is the true word" for what has come to be called a masque (5.2.30-31). The original term for a masque was indeed a disguise (OED, defn. 6), and Audrey and Pol-Marten's discreet offstage marriage, with its dazzling costumes and hidden identities, is the true masque within the play. Tub's follow-up is merely a travesty.

It is to Tub's masque and the implied censorship within it that we now turn. John Dryden famously criticized the plot of Jonson's *Volpone* for concluding prematurely, so that the fifth act seems superfluous.[15] If *A Tale of a Tub* had attracted Dryden's attention, I have little doubt he would have made the same judgement regarding the final four scenes of its fifth act.[16] At the close of act 5 scene 6 the play should be over. Two marriages have been performed, and everyone appears to be agreeable and reconciled, now that the competition for Audrey's hand has ended. *Bartholomew Fair* concludes with Justice Overdo's inviting everyone to his house for dinner. Strangely, in *A Tale of a Tub*, after Lady Tub offers a nearly identical invitation, we follow the characters to her manor

and observe the festivities. Why does Tub keep the play going after it should be finished? Unwilling to allow Pol-Marten and Audrey to have the last word of fiction-making and performance in the play, Tub subjects the rest of the characters to a revised version of the events of the play. Tub becomes a representation of the court and its authority to censor. As the guests gather to view the masque, the name of Tub's manor is actually changed from "Totten Hall" to Totten "Court," further insinuating an analogy between his actions and those of the real court (5.10.1-2). Tub insists this is still his story, even though he was not the one to get the girl. He wants the whole play retold, but in a way that exaggerates his importance. Significantly, it is the town joiner, In-and-in Medley, whose name, vocation, speech, and mannerisms patently satirize Jones, whom Tub recruits to fashion his self-serving masque.[17]

The end of the play leaves us with the question of which or whose narratives will prevail. Will the right to memorialize the day's events be shared in wider society through the means of folk tradition, or will it be determined by the fiat of certain privileged people? In the Prologue, Jonson calls *A Tale of a Tub* "our tale" (2). The theater offers a shared, inclusive experience. But the Epilogue, spoken by Tub, calls the play, "This tale of me" (1). His insistence on this point reflects not only his desire to be the central character of the play, but also his

wish to direct the perceptions of the audience by reworking the script into a simplified shadow show sanitized of all references to his faults or failures.

In these final scenes, Jonson suggests that the masque genre has the potential to present a judicious critique of the court but can as well be reduced to mere propaganda. He himself and a writer in the play called Scriben present the now excluded potential for veiled criticism within court performance, whereas, through Medley, Inigo Jones is portrayed as merely the fabricator of visual representations of the settled notions of the court. When Medley claims to be "the author" of the masque, Tub quickly puts him in his place: "The workman, sir! The artificer," (5.7.21-22). In the discussion over who should have greater control over the production—the artist who creates the show or the aristocrat who finances it and whose exploits it celebrates (no doubt, a tension with which Jonson had some familiarity)—Scriben speaks for the critical potential of the masque. When To-Pan the tinker advises Medley to defer to Tub, suggesting cynically that art is no match for money, Scriben interjects with a concise proverbial summary of the kind of response to authority that will allow for artistic freedom even under the constraints of court patronage:

> TO-PAN [*to Medley*] Do not dispute with him; he still will win
> That pays for all.
> SCRIBEN Are you revised [i.e. sure] o' that?
> A man may have wit, and yet put off his hat. (5.7.27-29)

To-Pan believes the rich and powerful will always prevail in matters of artistic choice. But Scriben, who has been excluded from the creation of the masque because of Medley's (read Jones's) refusal to work with anybody else, and who, as the chief writer of the community, is obviously a stand-in for Jonson himself, slyly suggests that "wit" and deference are not mutually exclusive. Ostensible obedience does not require actual obedience and may in fact free the subjected artist to engage in unauthorized behavior. Scriben gives us what I would argue is an encapsulation of Jonson's perspective on writing for the court: outward signs of submission to authority, like baring one's head before one's betters, does not preclude the use of "wit" to effect more indirect forms of resistance.

The kind of indirect resistance to which Scriben alludes is apparent in the textual and performance history of *A Tale of a Tub* itself, which, even in its revised form, ruffled feathers at its court performance.[18] Required by Henry Herbert to remove the concluding masque parody and the character Vitruvius Hoop, because of the transparent satire aimed at Inigo Jones, Jonson obeyed, but found three other roundabout ways of satirizing his former masque collaborator. First, Vitruvius was not so much eliminated as replaced by another obvious satire of Jones, In-and-in Medley. Second, the name Vitruvius survives in the text of the play at 5.2.73, where Tub suggests a London cooper by that name who could assist in the production of his masque. Third, the printed text of the play contains

not only the final masque (altered perhaps from its original form, but there nonetheless), but also a "Scene Interloping," an unauthorized addition not approved by the Master of the Revels, in which Medley delivers inane and ridiculous lectures on architecture and mathematics, two areas of Jones's expertise (Burt 6). Medley also indirectly advertises his nominal proximity to Inigo Jones in the first lines of The Scene Interloping:

> Indeed there is a woundy luck in names, sirs,
> And a main mystery, an' a man knew where
> To vind it.
> …
> But I am truly
> *Architectonicus professor*, rather,
> That is, as one would zay, an architect (1-3,9-11).

In-and-in tells the audience to look closely at names, thus encouraging them to notice the similarity between his own first name and "Inigo." He also shares Jones's claim to be an "architect," a term which Jonson thought a pretentious misuse of a classical term.[19] Thus, Jonson's edits to the play make the satire of Jones more explicit, not less. By acquiescing to the literal demands of the Master of the Revels, Jonson provided himself with the opportunity to reassert his satire by alternative means.

Tub's masque mirrors the production dilemmas of the traditional drama that precedes it. The pressures on Jonson to rescind his satire of Jones parallel Tub's interference in the masque he is funding. Before the masque is performed,

Tub insists on certain “alterations” (5.6.23). One verse, he later tells us, he changed for “*euphonia gratia* [sic]”—for the purpose of enhancing the poetic sound of the language (5.10.98). The other changes, we may presume, give the masque its obvious pro-Tub stance. The show purports to be an account of “this Tub and’s deeds,” as if he were the protagonist (5.10.17). He is consistently given the epithet “bold” (5.10.16,39), whereas those who would cross him are given pejorative adjectives, as in “sly Justice and his clerk profane” (5.10.40). Preamble’s trick to steal Audrey away is called a “plot” and a “winding device” (5.10.58,60), but in the description of Tub’s nearly identical subterfuge, Audrey just happens to “fall” “into the hands…/ Of the Bold Squire” (5.10.38-39). The masque also falsely claims that the “hundred pound” Turf agreed to pay Captain Thumbs in recompense for letting fall the hue and cry had to be extracted “Like his teeth from him” (5.10.74). This is simply not true—Turf quite obligingly offered to pay without pursuing the matter further in court. Tub’s masque is full of such belittling falsehoods. In a wonderful ironic moment during the performance, Tub interrupts Medley’s narration just as Medley is in the middle of a platitude about how “truth will break out and show” (5.10.43). The whole scene calls this proverb into question, as Tub’s masque silences or perverts any truth that fails to conform to the self-centered narrative he is imposing on the day’s events.

Scriben's—and Jonson's—exclusion from the masque limits the art to its merely technical components. David Riggs argues that the deemphasizing of poetry and the promoting of the visual aspects of the masque insulated the court from critical opinion: "Within the enclosed sphere of the Caroline masque, Jones's machines created an image of nature that was perfectly subservient to the royal will" (336). As in the Caroline court, Jonson suggests, in Tub's domain there is no more opportunity for veiled criticism within the masque genre. Medley only serves as Tub's propagandist, a detail which Jonson surely meant to be yet another satiric criticism of Jones. Jonson's masques played the part of deference (or, as Scriben calls it, "put[ting] off [one's] hat") but subtly worked in principled messages and implications. In contrast, as the scene seems to argue, the post-Jonsonian masque servilely conforms to the interests of the court without any kind of ulterior critical perspective.

Like Medley the masque-maker, Hilts the actor also subjects himself to Tub's interests. Hilts's role during the production is to silence the audience at the beginning of each new scene of the masque. He ensures that no voice competes with that of the propagandist mouthpiece, Medley. Hilts gives willing assent to Tub's whitewashed version of the story, because the show passes over his cowardly behavior at Turf's barn, when he refused to investigate the report of spirits in the hay. He speaks to Tub of his gratitude to Medley for obscuring the

truth: “Oh, how I am beholden to the inventor,/ That would not, on record against me, enter/ My slackness here to enter in the barn!” (5.10.85-87). Ironically, his desire to have his cowardice concealed is itself an act of cowardice. Fear of shame prompts Hilts to endorse his master’s false account of the day’s events. Jonson perhaps registers Hilts’s servility by allusion in the masque’s second motion, where it is said that when Hilts first interrupts the wedding party wearing a beard, he “troubles all” (5.10.37). In a play with so many connections to *Bartholomew Fair*, it is likely no flattery that the description of the long-bearded, disguised Hilts should verbally recall the fair’s insanely slavish and ridiculously deferential Troubleall.

But Hilts’s servility is not at all laughable like Troubleall’s. Instead, we should be struck by how reasonable Hilts’s course is: in return for serving Tub, Hilts is rewarded with the assurance that nothing in the masque will offend or embarrass him. Inigo Jones, through the Master of the Revels, sought to enjoy the same privileges in regard to Jonson’s art. The masque also provides a new household position for Hilts. He becomes, in his own phrase, “half lord chamberlain” and puts on airs before his fellow servant Jack the butler, insisting that Jack “wait on” him (5.8.12-13).[20] Hilts’s comfortable servility in the position of Tub’s chamberlain provides a stark satiric picture of the problematic power dynamics of court theater, insinuating that the court trades favors with artists

who further its aims, but marginalizes principled artists like Jonson, who speak freely and sometimes critically.

We see, then, that in contrast to *Bartholomew Fair*, *A Tale of a Tub* presents its audience with a subtler form of censorship—the sort of censorship that alters literary and performative arts to be more amenable to the interests of the privileged. Jonson recognized that the pressures of the Caroline court posed difficulties to artistic expression, even if those difficulties were not identical to the challenges of anti-theatricality demonstrated by Busy and Overdo. In *A Tale of a Tub*, the central event of the play, Audrey's wedding, is dramatized as a theatrical event or text in which privileged censors repeatedly use law and status to intervene. The force of law focuses not upon eliminating the theater, but upon the potential to control theater for private ends. Likewise, in the concluding masque of *A Tale of a Tub*, the ostentatious interruptions of censors are no longer present as they were in the concluding masque of *Bartholomew Fair*. Instead the censorship occurs behind the scenes and before the production, as Tub finds it more useful to manipulate the artists than to silence them. *A Tale of a Tub* strikingly evokes Jonson's disillusionment with the politics of court theater and communicates a contrast between artists like himself, who cunningly negotiated the boundaries between deference and criticism, and those artists, like Inigo Jones, who found preferment by hewing closely to the court's ideals.

Notes

Chapter One: Introduction

[1] All citations of Jonson's works are from *The Cambridge Edition of the Works of Ben Jonson*. Where clarification is needed, citations of *Bartholomew Fair* are labeled with the abbreviation "*BF*" and those of *A Tale of a Tub* with the abbreviation "*ATT*."

[2] All citations of this letter are taken from Jonson, *Letter 9, to Robert Cecil, First Earl of Salisbury* 656.

[3] All citations of the *Informations to William Drummond* are taken from *Cambridge Edition* 5:359-91 and are cited according to line number.

[4] See, for instance, *Informations* 194-97.

[5] The question posed here originates in Richard Dutton, "Ben Jonson and the Master of the Revels" 57.

[6] See note 9 below.

[7] For further evidence of Jonson's continued interest in Tacitus, observe the many references to him in the *Informations to William Drummond*. He recommended Tacitus "to [Drummond's] reading" (8). Tacitus is named along with Petronius and Pliny the Younger as those authors who "speak the best Latin" (97). "Tacitus, he said, wrote the secrets of the council and senate" (104). Jonson claimed, "Essex wrote that epistle or preface before the translation of the last part of Tacitus, which is A.B." He also said Essex "durst not translate" the final book because of "the evil it contains of the Jews" (285-87). Jonson went on to boast that "In his *Sejanus* he hath translated a whole oration of Tacitus" and asserted that "[t]he first four books of Tacitus [were] ignorantly done in English" (481-82). The only person mentioned in the *Informations* more often than Tacitus is John Donne. Yet his sojourn at Hawthornden occurred in 1619, at least three years after Patterson claims Jonson had grown disillusioned with Tacitus (56).

[8] See *Volpone* 5.12.50-51,83.

[9] Even if we exclude Jonson's other legal fiascos, the list of Jonson's brushes with the law over matters of censorship is quite extensive:

- For *The Isle of Dogs* (1597), Jonson was imprisoned, interrogated, and possibly tortured (Donaldson 120).
- He was compelled to change the ending of *Every Man Out of His Humor* (1599) because of an "impersonation of the Queen" (Dutton, "Ben Jonson and the Master of the Revels" 57-58).
- During the performance run of *Poetaster* (1601), he was brought before Chief Justice Popham on suspicion of seditious intent in the play, though he was ably defended by his friend Richard Martin (Donaldson 170-71). The Master of the Revels ordered the "Apologetical Dialogue" and other offending passages to be cut from printed version of 1602; later Jonson restored the excised material in the 1616 folio (Burt 6).
- The Earl of Northampton called Jonson before the Privy Council on charges of "popery and treason" for his 1603 play, *Sejanus, His Fall* (Jonson, *Informations* 252).
- In 1605, Jonson was imprisoned along with George Chapman for *Eastward Ho!*, a play jointly authored by Jonson, Chapman, and John Marston. For impersonating the king on the stage, and in particular for insulting his Scottish heritage and his favoritism toward Scottish courtiers, Jonson and Chapman were told they would have "their ears cut and noses" (Riggs 124; Jonson, *Informations* 207-215).
- Lady Arabella Stuart had *Epicene* (1609) "suppressed," although it is unclear what the nature of the suppression was or whether it was successful. There are no early quarto editions of *Epicene*, which may be the result of Lady Arabella's influence (Riggs 156).
- Jonson's play *The Devil is an Ass* (1616) made too obvious reference to the land-grabbing schemes of court favorite, Sir Robert Carr (Riggs 244). Jonson reported that King James "desired him to conceal" the allusion (Jonson, *Informations* 323).
- The performance of *Neptune's Triumph*, a 1624 court masque, was delayed and eventually cancelled at King James's command, because of a complaint from the Spanish ambassador regarding Jonson's satirical portrayal of Spanish characters (Donaldson 392-93).
- In 1628, the Privy Council examined Jonson for verses written in connection with Lord Buckingham's death (Riggs 301).
- For an incendiary court performance of *The Magnetic Lady* in 1632, Jonson was called before the Court of High Commission. He and the Master of the Revels persuaded the court that the offensive material

was the result of the actors' interpolations and was not a part of the original licensed playbook (Dutton, "Ben Jonson and the Master of the Revels" 82).

- At the insistence of the Lord Chamberlain, the Master of the Revels ordered Jonson to cut from *A Tale of a Tub* both the character, Vitruvius Hoop, who was an obvious satirical portrayal of Inigo Jones, and a scene depicting "a tub in motion, a parody of Jones's masque technology" (Burt 6).

Censorship, then, appears to have been a radical concern of Jonson's career from beginning to end. As David Riggs remarks, "This man appears to have spent the better part of his adult life courting disaster" (141).

Chapter Two: *Bartholomew Fair* and the King's Authority to Censor

[1] Jonson warns again in the Induction against trying to find references in the play to particular persons. Critics are generally skeptical of Jonson's insistence on this point. Leah S. Marcus notes: "Jonson's pious caveats against politic picklocking have the effect of whetting our curiosity for precisely the activity he warns us against" (39). Annabel Patterson likewise remarks: "Disclaimers of topical intention are not to be trusted, and are more likely to be entry codes to precisely that kind of reading they protest against" (57).

[2] The sense of oppression felt by Win-wife and Quarlous was indeed a feature of Jonson's age, as Susan Wells explains: "[T]he metaphorical arena of the marketplace, the arena of openness and play, outside the scrutiny of the church and the direct concern of the crown, was becoming compromised…first by becoming simply the location of exchange and profit rather than a gathering place, a common space; second by being circumscribed more tightly by the 'official order', by losing its 'extraterritorial status' and becoming integrated with the central apparatus of the government" (38).

[3] See *Poetaster* 3.5.65-70.

[4] In addition to Manning and Sanders, see Leah Marcus: "in *Bartholomew Fair* the author's ambivalence, or at least some of it, is channeled into defense of the king" (198). A page later, Marcus makes her case more emphatically: "Beneath its surface of folly and obfuscation, *Bartholomew Fair* is a lucid and elegant defense of royal prerogative, particularly the king's power to 'license'

plays and pastimes" (199). Cantor calls Marcus's thesis "brilliant," but ultimately unconvincing because of its "unquestioning support for the royal authority of James I" (64).

[5] Troubleall has often been interpreted as a character with striking political implications: See Cantor: "Troubleall provides the *reductio ad absurdum* of the regulatory idea. In a total command economy, people would insanely and slavishly refuse to do anything without explicit government approval" (41), and Alexander Leggatt: Troubleall is a "citizen of an authoritarian state…a figure Kafka might have invented" (150-51).

[6] W. David Kay, on the other hand, argues that, because the title page of the 1631 folio dedicates the play to James posthumously, it must not have "displeased the king" (149). I prefer Gillian Manning's more cautious assessment that the dedication "may indicate that the author viewed the comedy as, in some respects, peculiarly appropriate to its dedicatee" (342). The dedication may simply draw attention to the fact that the play has a message or moral "peculiarly appropriate" to James.

Chapter Three: Court Censorship in *A Tale of a Tub*

[1] For more on this point, see Evans 285-86.

[2] See Donaldson 117-22 and Nicholl 247-49.

[3] A similar scene occurs in *The Devil is an Ass*, when Merecraft whispers the name of a title and estate which he suggests Fitzdottrel could claim for his own:

MERECRAFT What say you to this, then?
He whispers him of a place.
FITZDOTTREL No, a noble house
Pretends to that. I will do no man wrong. (2.4.15-16)

The implication here is that some real-life aristocrat's lands and title come close to being bought and sold on the stage by a con man and his gull and that if the audience could hear well enough, they could discern the name of the lord in question. The audience is thus led to believe that an illicit personal satire of some powerful person is occurring right before their eyes, but playgoers would not have been able to determine the identity of the object of the satire with any degree of certainty.

[4] Julie Sanders offers two possible interpretations of the lines, both unflattering to the king: "This assertion has the potential to suggest either its exact antithesis—that the 'cotes' and the 'courts' are in as much proximity as their all too possible aural slippage might imply—or conversely that there is a vast difference between these two entities, thus indicating how far removed from the reality of provincial life the monarch's experiment with so-called 'personal rule' in the 1630s truly was" (164-65).

[5] For the importance of the opinions of Cicero and Augustine on this question, see Shuger 85.

[6] See Jonson, *Cambridge Edition* 6:557.

[7] The word "device" is used to describe Tub's plotting at 1.1.64,89; 2.3.36; and 4.5.45. Preamble's deceptions are also called by the word "device" at 2.6.39; 3.7.76; 3.9.4; 4.3.11; and 5.10.60. Lady Tub calls the puppet show "my son's device" at 5.10.5. In the very next line, Tub calls it "my masque" (5.10.6).

[8] For the ways in which the Vagabond Acts issued by Elizabeth and James affected players and theater companies, see Ota 55, 68-69. According to Ota, some provisions of these laws restricted common players, whereas others were designed to protect them. In either case, however, the conflation, or at least association, of players with vagabonds is apparent.

[9] See note 7 above.

[10] See 5.2.30-31 for the use of "disguise" as a synonym for "masque."

[11] For the New Testament morality of the conclusion of *Bartholomew Fair*, see Cave, who argues that the play centers on Christ's injunction, "Judge not, lest ye be judged" (97).

[12] One of the most humorous effects of the scene is the way in which Hilts's authoritative legal language devolves and eventually becomes muddled with his colloquialisms:

look to 'hun, I charge you,
As you'll answer for it. Take heed; the business
If you defer, may predjudicial you
More than you think for. Zay I told you so. (2.2.166-68)

[13] "Turf's daughter Audrey, the goal of the play's amorous initiatives, is possibly the least considerable romantic heroine in all Renaissance drama and is a passive object in the universal pursuit of appetite" (Butler 13).

[14] For Audrey's dance metaphor and its connection to folk dancing, see Williams 164.

[15] "I was going to have named *The Fox*, but that the unity of design seems not exactly observed in it. For there appear to be two actions in the play,--the first naturally ending with the fourth act, the second forced from it in the fifth, which yet is the less to be condemned in him, because the disguise of Volpone—though it suited not with his character as a crafty or covetous person—agreed well enough with that of a voluptuary, and by it the poet gained the end he aimed at, the punishment of vice and reward of virtue, which that disguise produced" (Dryden 105-6).

[16] Jonson's 19th century editor, William Gifford, suggests the original performance script of *A Tale of a Tub* might have ended at the conclusion of act 5 scene 6 (Jonson, *Cambridge Edition* 6:646).

[17] The name "In-and-in" connects to Jones in three ways: first, in that it sounds similar to "Inigo"; second, in being reminiscent of the motion of a shuttle through a loom, thus glancing at Jones's father, who was a weaver; third, by suggesting the practice of inlaying wooden boards, as Jones would have done in his early years as a carpenter (Jonson, *A Tale of a Tub* 557n).

[18] Henry Herbert reported that the play was "not likte" at its January 14th performance before the king and queen (Adams 54).

[19] See Peter Happé's note: "Aristotle originally used the term 'architectonike' (*Nichomachean Ethics* 1.1) to denote the end to which all knowledge is directed, that is virtuous action—hence it designates the most superior art. Jonson is scornful about the recent introduction of the term to describe Jones's occupation, and the ethical and intellectual claims it projects" (Jonson, *A Tale of a Tub* 621n).

[20] Could Hilts's new status as "half lord chamberlain" be a joke at the expense of the real Lord Chamberlain, at whose request the Master of the Revels required revisions to the play?

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