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Idealizing Patriarchy: Patterns of Hierarchy and Patriarchal Values in English Household Literature, 1520-1600

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Honor's Thesis

Idealizing Patriarchy:
Patterns of Hierarchy and Patriarchal Values in
English Household Literature, 1520-1600

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December 15, 2016

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Introduction

England in the sixteenth century was a land of change, a land in which change often begot more change. The population was beginning to recover from the demographic upheavals of the fourteenth century, which led to changes in the patterns of agriculture.¹ While the population had been relatively small, cereal agriculture had lapsed and wool had become the major source of revenue for English landholders.² This continued as the population recovered, but revenues from cereal agriculture were also on the rise.³ There was wealth to be made from the English soil, but the cities were becoming wealthier as well. England was, albeit slowly in the sixteenth century, an urbanizing nation, which in turn led to economic diversification. By the end of the century nearly a quarter of the population of England earned their living from trade and proto-industries like brewing and spinning.⁴ This new wealth, concentrated to some extent in the middling ranks, produced a new group of homeowners among the *neuvo riches*.⁵ But it was not only the owners of houses that were changing: houses too were taking on a different form. Many country homes were still built along traditional lines (single roofed buildings centred on a main hall), however new homes were being build separate from agricultural buildings.⁶

¹ David M. Loads, "England Under the Tudors," in *Handbook of European History 1400-1600, Vol. 1: Structures and Assertions*, ed. by Thomas A. Brady, Heiko A. Oberman, James D. Tracy (Leiden: Brill, 1994): 403-05. Richard Smith, "Plagues and Peoples: The Long Demographic Cycle, 1250-1670," in *The Peopling of Britain: The Shaping of a Human Landscape*, ed. Paul Slack and Ryk Ward (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 181-83.

² Smith, "Plagues and People," 188-89.

³ Smith, "Plagues and People," 189.

⁴ Loads, England Under the Tudors," 403-05. Smith, "Plagues and People," 183-84. E. A. Wrigley, "Country and Town: The Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary People of England in the Early Modern Period," in *The Peopling of Britain: The Shaping of a Human Landscape*, edited by Paul Slack and Ryk Ward (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002), 226-27, 238.

⁵ Simon Thurley, *The Building of England: How the History of England Has Shaped Our Buildings* (London: William Collins, 2013), 156.

⁶ Thurley, *Building of England*, 156.

England in the sixteenth century was beset by change, even down to the literal structures of daily life. But what of the English people? Their tastes were changing: hopped beer, for instance, was replacing the traditional ale as the drink of choice among English consumers.⁷ New goods, such as printed books, were available for purchase.⁸ Attitudes, at least among the elite, were shifting as well, and not only in the realm of religion. Opinions on topics as mundane as language were altered by century's end. In 1500 English was considered by many to be a rude or rustic dialect, but by the end of the century it was becoming seen as an essential characteristic of England and her people.⁹ But what of family and domestic relationships? It is perhaps tempting to suggest that in a century that saw a six times married king and an unmarried "virgin queen" that English norms of family and domestic life were experiencing a state of crisis, perhaps brought about by the whirlwind of change sweeping the country. While there can be little doubt that many English of the sixteenth century experienced strains that their forebears did not, the *normative roles* of family and familial relations appear to have remained essentially unchanged throughout this century of remarkable—and at times tumultuous—change. This does not mean that actual roles of family members did not change, only that the cultural ideals of how the family was to function remained the same. If, in fact, actual roles were changing—and it seems they probably were—this consistency would likely have been the result of a societal desire for consistency in the face of a world that was becoming more and more different every day.¹⁰

⁷ Judith M. Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England: Women's Work in a Changing World, 1300-1600* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 79.

⁸ Charles Barber, *Early Modern English* (London: Andre Deutch, 1976), 69.

⁹ Barber, *Early Modern English*, 65.

¹⁰ Claire M. Busse, "Profitable Children: Children as Commodities in Early Modern England," in *Domestic Arrangements in Early Modern England*, ed. Kari Boyd McBride (Pittsburgh, PA: Duquesne University Press, 2002): 209-43. Heather Dubrow, "'The infant of your care': Guardianship in Shakespeare's *Richard III* and Early Modern England," in *Domestic Arrangements in Early Modern England*, 147-68. Jessica Slights, "'The Undividable Incorporate': Householding in *The Comedy of Errors*," in *Domestic Arrangements in Early Modern England*, 74-102. Examples of changes in family practices in early modern England.

The core of this unchanging idealized family was the patriarch, the male head of household who directed the labor and production of a family unit. The role of the patriarch (or householder, or husband, or even *pater familias*) was very consistent in household literature from throughout the sixteenth century. This role, an idealized form of patriarchy, was the closet the middling and upper ranks of society came to articulating a code of masculinity during this period.¹¹ This extreme continuity stood against the seemingly overwhelming current of change that has long dominated the historiography of sixteenth century England.¹² And yet, to historians of gender—who have long made it their business to challenge prevailing historiographies of change—this continuity of the norms of patriarchal masculinity cannot be seen as particularly shocking.¹³ Historians of English masculinity have amassed a considerable body of evidence supporting the homogenous nature of the norms of masculinity throughout the early modern period. This can be seen from the excellent examination carried out by Alexandra Shepard and Karen Harvey into the works of numerous historians from which they concluded that the most salient quality of the cultural construction of masculinity between 1500 and 1700 was continuity.¹⁴ The establishment of so strong a pattern of continuity over so long a period begs

¹¹ Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex, and Subordination in England 1500-1800* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1995), 126.

¹² Edward P. Cheyney, *Social Changes in England in the Sixteenth Century as Reflected in Contemporary Literature* (New York: AMS Press, 1971; originally Boston: n.p. 1895). Loads, England Under the Tudors.” Robert Tombs, *The English and Their History* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2015).

¹³ Joan Kelly, “Did Women Have a Renaissance?” in *Women, History, and Theory: The Essays of Joan Kelly*, ed. Catharine R. Stimpson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 19-50.

¹⁴ Karen Harvey and Alexandra Shepard, “What Have Historians Done With Masculinity? Reflections on Five Centuries of British History, circa 1500-1950,” *The Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 2 (2005), 279. See also: Michèle Cohen, “‘Maners’ Make the Man: Politeness, Chivalry, and the Construction of Masculinity, 1750-1830,” *The Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 2 (2005), 312-29. Karen Harvey, “The History of Masculinity, circa 1650-1800,” *The Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 2 (2005), 296-311. Michael Roper, “Between Manliness and Masculinity: The ‘Ware Generation and the Psychology of Fear in Britain, 1914-1950,” *The Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 2 (2005), 343-62. Alexandra Shepard, “From Anxious Patriarchs to Refined Gentlemen? Manhood in Britain, circa 1500-1700,” *The Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 2 (2005), 281-295. John Tosh, “Masculinities in an Industrializing Society: Britain, 1800-1914,” *The Journal of British Studies* 44, no. 2 (2005), 320-42. Together, these five historians make a compelling argument that the values and patterns of masculinity were consistent between circa 1500 and 1950.

for more detailed studies of masculinity within more specific contexts, the findings of which will contribute to an increased understanding of English gender constructions. This would also provide insight into other regional patterns of masculinity and of gender that evolved, in part, from an English model (such as those of most of colonial and post-colonial North America and Australia). Within their original contexts, these studies allow for far greater understanding of the worldview and the actions of men and women throughout history. In the case of patriarchy, this type of research sheds light onto the influences not only of men from among the social elite who controlled the governments and economies of their societies, but also the thinkers, artists, and creators in many cultures who were themselves elite men produced by the patriarchy. What is more, it allows for a greater understanding of not only the world of these men, but also how it shaped the lives of all the other men and women they lived alongside. With this in mind, the goal of this thesis is to better describe the values and normative patterns of patriarchy in sixteenth-century England. To do this, I have drawn upon a diverse body of normative source materials that I have termed “householder literature.” In addition to better describing patriarchy, this thesis contributes to the understanding that the norms of masculinity were consistent through the early modern period. This thesis also expands upon and supports the work of historians who have argued that the idealized patriarchy of sixteenth-century England was based on a complex, intersecting value structure that by no means advantaged all men over all women.

Historiography, Methodology, and Findings

The importance of studying masculinity is not entirely self-evident, and its validity has often been challenged on the grounds that it is the “old game in a new dress.”¹⁵ Far from being a

¹⁵ Harvey and Shepard, “What Have Historians Done?” 276. Those old games are the elite and inherently male focused narrative of “kings, queens, castles, and battles.” Also: John Tosh, “What Should Historians Do With Masculinity? Reflections on Nineteenth-century Britain,” *History Workshop* no. 38 (1994), 179-83.

retelling of the old, reductive history of kings, castles, and courtiers, the study of masculinity adds meaningful depth and understanding to the past. Just as social history was fundamentally lacking before the active inclusion of women, so too is any attempt at understanding gender that does not include *all* genders.¹⁶ This is not simply because, as Tosh writes, “the history of masculinity cannot be cordoned off [in the way that some historians have dismissed women’s history]. It must be rejected, or incorporated into the traditional heartland.”¹⁷ Rather, the inclusion of the study of masculinity adds meaningful perspective and insight into all genders and their interactions in very much the same way that gender history itself offers meaningful perspective and insight into the past.¹⁸ A key part of this study of masculinity is patriarchy, the systematic means of social and economic control by a small group of elites that women—and many men—have endured in numerous historical contexts and cultures; a system of oppression that continues to this day. As Judith M. Bennett has put it, “the power of patriarchy in our lives today rests, in part, on our failure to understand how it has worked in past times. As long as we refuse to study patriarchy as a historical force, we will fail to understand its workings and we will be subject to its power.”¹⁹ In short, the study of the history of masculinity and patriarchy is essential to understanding both gender and the ways in which gender has been used to delineate power and control, both historically and at present.

As important as gender is, it is only one part of an intersecting web of qualities and attributes that cannot be separated and which combine to form an individual’s social standing

¹⁶ Jeanne Boydston, “Gender as a Question of Historical Analysis,” *Gender & History* 20, no. 3 (2008), 558-83, esp. 559, 563-4, 573, 575-9. R.W. Connell, *Masculinities* (Los Angeles, CA: University of California Press, 1995), 33-34. I do not say “both” because just as male-centric interpretations of history have been discredited, so too is it becoming increasingly clear that rigid binaries of gender found in twentieth and twenty-first century Euro-American cultures are also inadequate for understanding the complexities of gender relations in many historical and cultural contexts.

¹⁷ Tosh, “What Should Historians Do,” 179-80.

¹⁸ Fletcher, *Gender, Sex, and Subordination*, xix.

¹⁹ Bennett, *Ale, Breer, and Brewsters*, 152-53.

and identity. These factors also include race, age, and socio-economic standing (to name only a few).²⁰ Collectively these concepts form and regulate patterns of hierarchy in which some individuals and groups are advantaged over others. In many—indeed most—instances, males (using the term loosely) occupy positions of greater social esteem and authority than females of otherwise equal status. This was recognized by early feminist scholars, some of whom over-emphasized the role of biological sex and described patriarchy as a system in which *all* men “systematically dominated” *all* women.²¹ Many contemporary scholars (such as those cited below) now recognize that a panoply of factors is needed to explain patterns of dominance, and that to suggest that only sex dictates hierarchy marginalizes factors such as age, socio-economic class, race, and disability. To single out any one factor as the basis of a hierarchy is to erect a two-dimensional construction that does not allow and cannot account for significant variation within its layers. There is little room in such a scheme to understand the complex intersection of numerous hierarchies that in reality advantages some women over some men, and some men over women and other men. As stated, many contemporary scholars have moved beyond such a model: Alexandra Shepard, for instance, has demonstrated that an intersectionalist understanding of patriarchy—an understanding that considers influences beyond just gender—better accounts for the social power relationships of English society between 1560 and 1640.²² This understanding is also in better keeping with the opinion of many sixteenth-century moralists, one

²⁰ Boydston, “Gender as a Question of Historical Analysis,” 577. Connell, *Masculinities*, 75-76. Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 1.

²¹ Fletcher, *Gender, Sex, and Subordination*, xvi. Joan Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category of Historical Analysis,” *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986), 1057-58. Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, 3. None of these authors endorse these ideas; on the contrary, Shepard and Fletcher specifically challenge them.

²² Shepard, *Meaning of Manhood*, esp. 3.

of whom advised, “Be not to bolde with men above thee in degree In age, birth, or substaunce.”²³

In the sixteenth century many factors contributed to one’s social standing.

Another development of more recent feminist scholars that has aided in development of understanding the intersectional nature of hierarchies is the theory of “hegemonic masculinity.” This concept, as articulated by the sociologist R.W. Connell, has been invoked by historians of masculinity in order to explain the relationship between the different forms of masculinity that may exist within a society.²⁴ The theory of hegemonic masculinity argues that in any given society at any given moment there is likely to be a number of differing, competing concepts of masculinity, and that one of these is “socially exalted” through its relationship to the ruling class. The adherents of this code strive—both deliberately and passively—to marginalize other forms of masculinity and the men who subscribe to them. This dominant, hegemonic code is upheld by the men who benefit from it, sharing in the socio-economic dominance over women (most importantly to Connell) and over other groups of men.²⁵ In the sources that I have examined—and very likely in the society of sixteenth-century England in general—the hegemonic group was householding males (i.e. men who were the heads of economically independent households). In this context, Connell’s theory accounts for—among other things—why some authors of household literature so often cited the activities of men of both lower and higher classes as examples of poor or inappropriate behaviors. This is especially apparent when these activities were likely to be expressions of masculinity—such as hunting and the playing of sports—that deviated from the patriarchal norms developed within the household books.

²³ Hugh Rhodes, *The Boke of Nurture for Men, Seruantes, and Chyldren with Stans puer ad mensam, newelye corrected, veye [vital] and Necessarye unto all Youth* (London: Thomas Colwell, 1560), Early English Books Online, STC (2nd ed.)/ 20955: 7.

²⁴ Harvey and Shepard, “What Have Historians Done?,” 277. Tosh, “What Should Historians Do?,” 192.

²⁵ Connell, *Masculinities*, 77-85, esp. 77.

Shepard's study of masculinity and patriarchy in late sixteenth-century and early seventeenth-century Cambridge models an excellent research methodology for studying masculinities. She began with a reading of prescriptive literature and followed with an examination of the criminal records from the Cambridge University court, which was the principal judicial body for the town in the period under consideration. This revealed "normative models of manhood" and then provided evidence of these values in practice.²⁶ Her study of patriarchy examined the power relationships between men who held patriarchal status ("householders") and other groups of society such as younger men, women, and children. She also considers the influence of socio-economic factors—"credit provision and worth"—upon patriarchy in practice. In short, she uses the four principal methodologies that she and Harvey later identified as being central to the ongoing study of masculinity: examination of the representation of masculinity, examination of the "psychological experience" of masculinity, consideration of the relations between the sexes, and consideration of the influence of class.²⁷ From these approaches she concludes, "concepts of manhood were not premised simply on a gender hierarchy. This was an estate that was neither equally shared, nor, as a consequence, uniformly defined by all men." She considers age, headship of a household, and "less explicitly" social status to be the other "central axes" of patriarchal manhood.²⁸ I have used a similar approach here. However, given the constraints of this project, the examination of the lived experience of manhood is left for a possible future continuation of this study. Even so, the ideas developed from prescriptive sources do suggest that the representations of manhood from the sixteenth century are consistent with Shepard's analysis of a later period. My findings show a

²⁶ Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, 7-8, 12.

²⁷ Harvey and Shepard, "What Have Historians Done?," 275.

²⁸ Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, 246.

pattern of continuity in normative literature that strongly suggests that patriarchal masculinity extends deeper into the past than Shepard's study provides evidence for. This highlights the need for additional empirical research assessing the continuity of forms of masculinity (patriarchal included) over a longer period of time, extending into the Middle Ages. My findings also provide a vivid description of patriarchal masculinity in sixteenth century advice literature.

The years in question, from roughly 1520 to 1600, have been selected for two principal reasons. First, as Shepard and Harvey have addressed, it is important to overlap such studies chronologically, as this allows for a greater recognition of key themes.²⁹ The second half of my study corresponds the first half of Shepard's study. The second reason for focusing on this roughly eighty years is the great abundance of printed sources that appeared during these years. Beginning in the fifteenth century, the literate population of England had been expanding, and by the early modern period "a substantial part of the population could read."³⁰ This expansion of the literate public coincided with the arrival of the printing press in England.³¹ In other words, there was both an increasing consumer base for written works and an increasing ability to meet that demand. For this reason, the sixteenth century is the earliest period in which a substantial body of normative texts is available and in which historians can be reasonably certain that prescriptive literature was likely to reach an audience beyond just clerics and scholars.³² In spite of the merits mentioned here, some historians—such as Amanda Vickery—leery of building on the so-called "sands of prescription," have challenged the usefulness of cultural sources,

²⁹ Harvey and Shepard, "What Have Historians Done?," 274.

³⁰ Charles Barber, *Early Modern English*, 69. Thomas More even speculated that as much as half of the population of England could read.

³¹ Barber, *Early Modern English*, 69.

³² Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, 70. Shepard contends, probably correctly, that the purchase of these books would likely have been limited to "the better off and the most committed aspirants to godliness." While it does seem probable that this was the case, the ideals discussed in these texts would have likely been transmitted both orally and through practice: from reader to household, from father to son, and so on. For this reason, I do not think it is necessary to assume that exposure to these ideals was limited to a particularly religiously minded group.

suggesting that they are somehow disconnected from reality or actual experience.³³ Such a disconnect, however, seems implausible. As Shepard, writes, prescriptive sources are “a product of reality, rather than somehow separate from and comparable with it.”³⁴ Cultural sources are, then, valuable for understanding the past, particularly how people in the past conceptualized their world.

Sources

The sources I have selected represent two major types of English publications from the sixteenth century. I have included examples of what some historians have called “domestic advice literature,” which are works that discuss the ordering and proper governing of a household free from any discussion of household production. Alongside these I have examined husbandry manuals, which discuss household order as a component of the economic success of a presumably agricultural household. These works represent a variety of domestic arrangements and were written with different focuses, but they are linked by their concern with the household and its wellbeing. I have use the name “household literature” to refer to works of both varieties, which allows for the use of one term for what are usually considered two genres.³⁵

There are several reasons to consider these sources together. First, all of these texts share a common worldview that highlights the importance of many of the same values in different contexts within the same society. A short list of the values these texts champion includes thrift, respectability, and discretion.³⁶ They also share a reverence for industriousness and a belief in

³³ Amanda Vickery, “Golden Age to Separate Spheres? A Review of the Categories and Chronology of English Women’s History,” *The Historical Journal* 36, no. 2 (1993): 383-414, 386.

³⁴ Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, 11.

³⁵ Throughout this thesis I will use “household books (or literature)” when referring to domestic advice literature and the husbandry manuals together. Although, when significant differences do appear between these bodies of prescription, I will refer to the them independently by the names often assigned by other historians.

³⁶ Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, 26. Shepard derived a similar list from her work on later source material.

the power and authority of the male head of household, diversely called husband, householder, and master. Second, these texts were addressed to essentially the same audience: male heads of household, especially young heads of household who were presumed to be in greater need of advice and guidance than their more mature counterparts. John Fitzherbert, for instance, advised every “yong gentyman that intendeth to thrive I advyse hym to gete a copy of this present boke and to rede it from the begyning unto the endyng...”³⁷ The utility of these works was not to cease as one aged however. This is seen in the preface to *A Glasse for Housholders*. The anonymous author explained that he had advice relevant for a man in multiple phases of the life cycle:

fyrst beyng a young man [and] unmarried howe that ye should behave your selfe, after that beyng a married manne and an housholder, how ye shoulde bothe rule your selfe and ordre your housholde, with also an exhortacio[n] and counsell what trade and sorte your occupyenge should bee.³⁸

The social class of the intended audience is also an important consideration, as Harvey and Shepard have suggested: “specific masculinities were becoming increasingly tied to different social groups over time.”³⁹ All of the examples of household literature considered here were addressed to men of the middling ranks. This is clearly seen in the highly class-based condemnations of certain behaviors. Notably activities associated with the nobility, such as hunting and hawking, and others associated with men of lower social standing, such as games and excessive drinking were condemned.⁴⁰

³⁷ Fitzherbert, John. *Boke of Husbondrie* (London, Rycharde Pynson, 1523[?]), Early English Books Online, STC (2nd ed.)/ 10944: 46.

³⁸ Anon., *A Glasse for Householders, Wherin That Maye Se, Bothe Howe to Rule Theim Selfes [and] Order Their Householde Verye Godly and Fuytfull* (London: Richardi Graftoni, 1542), Early English Books Online, STC (2nd ed.)/ 11917: 2.

³⁹ Harvey and Shepard, “What Have Historians Done” 276-77.

⁴⁰ See Chapter 2.

The inclusion of husbandry manuals in a discussion of gender norms merits some explanation. These are not texts just on the care for animals and the maintenance of farms. The authors of husbandry texts described an independent economic unit, consisting not only of crops and livestock, but also the servants and family members that composed the household that worked the farm. Marion Gray has demonstrated the utility of similar works in researching gender norms in early-modern Germany. Gray's work with *Hausväterliterature* (housefather literature) convincingly demonstrates the evolution of normative domestic patterns in German-speaking Europe.⁴¹ The "housefather books" center on the success of the domestic economy, in regard to both agriculture and the ideal relationships between members of the household in order to ensure an effective workforce. This allows for great insight into normative patterns of gendered behavior. The English texts are equally fruitful in this regard. Despite this apparent usefulness, the husbandry manuals have been largely overlooked by historians studying normative patterns of gender, family, and patriarchy in sixteenth-century England. From Arthurian legend to dance manuals, historians of English gender have considered a wide and impressive variety of primary sources, and yet—of those cited here—only Whittle makes more than passing reference to the husbandry manuals.⁴² They are a demonstrably useful source, and given the fact that—despite the tremendous growth of urban centers—some 90% of the English

⁴¹ Marion Gray, *Productive Men, Reproductive Women: The Agrarian Household and the Emergence of Separate Spheres During the German Enlightenment* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2000), esp. 7-17. Andrew McRae, *God Speed the Plough: The Representation of Agrarian England, 1500-1600* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 138. McRae finds the English texts on husbandry and the German tradition of *Hausväterliterature* to be quite comparable.

⁴² Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters in England*. Heidi Breuer, *Crafting the Witch: Gendering Magic in Medieval and Early Modern England* (New York: Routledge, 2009). Busse, "Profitable Children." Dubrow, "The infant of your care'." Fletcher, *Gender, Sex, and Subordination*. Slights, "The 'Undividable Incorporate'." Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*. Emily F. Winerock, "'Performing' Gender and Status on the Dance Floor in Early Modern England," ed. Kim Kippen and Lori Woods (Toronto: Center for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2011): 449-73. Jane Whittle, "Housewives and Servants in Rural England, 1440-1650: Evidence of Women's Work from Probate Documents," *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society* 15 (2005):51-74.

population lived in rural areas, with the vast majority working directly in agriculture, the husbandry manuals represent an especially important and relevant source of information about normative patterns in sixteenth-century England.⁴³

Of importance as well is that in the English of the sixteenth century “husband” had a far more general meaning than now. In this period the word husband could denote a male spouse, but this was only one possibility, and it was common in household books to refer to both the relational and occupational roles of the male head of household when using the term “husband.” The *Oxford English Dictionary* records that in the sixteenth century the word husband could also mean a farmer, the manager of a household, or “the male head of household; the master of the house.” These latter definitions suggest an essentially occupational meaning of the term husband, which connects to the sixteenth-century understanding of “husbandry.” Likewise, while today “husbandry” is synonymous with agriculture, it was not yet a purely agricultural term in the sixteenth century. Thomas Tusser made clear the relationship between husbands and husbandry when he wrote, “The husband is hee, that to labor doth fall,/ the labour of him, I do husbandry call.”⁴⁴ In short, husbands were heads of household who through managing their households practiced husbandry. This broadens the audience of the husbandry manuals to include essentially all men who were heads of household. “Husband” and “householder” were, in essence, synonyms for patriarch.

Beyond genre and audience, I also considered the publication history of individual works. I gave preference to works that appeared in multiple editions, especially those that appeared in

⁴³ Loads, “England Under the Tudors,” 403-05, 408. Smith, “Plagues and Peoples,” 183-84. E.A. Wrigley, “Country and Town”, 226-27, 38.

⁴⁴Thomas Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points of Good Husbandry United To as Many of Good Huswiferie, First Devised [and] Nowe Lately Augmented With Diverse Approved Lessons Concerning Hopps [and] Gardning, and Other Needful Matters, Together With an Abstract Before Every Moneth, Containing the Wholt Effect of the Sayd Moneth with a Table [and] a Pereface in the Beginning Both Necessary to Be Reade, For the Better Understanding of the Booke* (London: Rychard Tottell, 1574), Early English Books Online, STC (2nd ed.)/ 24378: 8.

multiple editions over a greater length of time or that appeared in several editions in a very short period of time. Any connections between texts was considered a strong recommendation for their inclusion in this study. For instance, *Xenophons Treatise of Housholde* was printed in different anthologies, both with Fitzherbert's *Boke of Husbandrie* and with the anonymous *A Glasse for Housholders*.⁴⁵ The intention behind this was to identify works that were likely popular at the time of their publications, with commonly purchased books likely being indicative of widely held beliefs.⁴⁶ In addition to publication history, the origin of the texts was also considered. With the exception of *Xenophons Treatise of Housholde*, all of the works examined in this study originated in England during the sixteenth century. The sources examined here were first printed between 1523 and 1598, making them essentially representative of the period between 1520 and 1600. Throughout the roughly eighty years that separate the earliest text from the latest—despite the great political, economic, and religious upheavals of the century—the basic morals and values of these texts are remarkably consistent.

The oldest text is John Fitzherbert's *Boke of Husbandrie* of 1523, which is considered by historians to be the genesis text of English language works on husbandry and estate management. It was printed at least eighteen additional times before the end of the century.⁴⁷ John Fitzherbert was the older brother of the notable legal writer Sir Anthony Fitzherbert, to whom both the *Boke of Husbandrie* was mistakenly attributed to for many years. Their family was long established in Norbury, Derbyshire, and was quite large: John and Sir Anthony's father Ralph was survived by twelve children. Their father's means seem to have been inadequate to support all of his

⁴⁵ McRae, *God Speed*, 136. Sarah B. Pmeroy, *Xenophon, Oeconomicus: A Social and Historical Commentary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 84.

⁴⁶ McRae, *God Speed*, 5. Elizabeth Tebeaux, "English Agriculture and Estate Management Instructions, 1200-1700: From Orality to Textuality to Modern Instruction," *Technical Communication Quarterly*, 19 no. 4 (2010), 359. Tebeaux writes, "Popularity of works, as shown in number of editions printed, is a critical factor for determining the influence of a work."

⁴⁷ McRae, *God Speed*, 136.

children, as Sir Anthony (the youngest) was supported principally by their mother.⁴⁸ It is clear from his *Boke of Husbandrie* that John Fitzherbert was classically educated, the book is laced with frequent—and often lengthy—Latin quotations, and at least one in French. Fitzherbert wrote from his own experiences as the head of an agricultural household. He described himself as a “horse maister,” that is, someone who buys and sells horses.⁴⁹ According to the postscript of a 1534 printing edition of his *Husbandrye* it is noted that Fitzherbert composed the book “not in his youthe, But after he had exercysed husbandry, with greate experyence.”⁵⁰

The second oldest text is Richard Whitford’s *A Werke for Householders*, originally published in 1530. This text focuses on the religious ordering of the household and was reprinted at least four times before the end of the decade. Richard Whitford was a “professed brother of Syon,” a wealthy Bridgettine abbey located near the Thames in Middlesex.⁵¹ Whitford attended Queen’s College at Cambridge as well as studying at the University of Paris, where he met Erasmus who—along with Sir Thomas Moor—would later praise Whitford’s scholarship. Whitford was a strong advocate of printing and academic integrity. Due to having written in English and ensured widespread printing of his works, he was considered an important devotional and household advice author in his own time, with many of the themes of his works being picked up by later protestant writers.⁵²

⁴⁸ Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. “Fitzherbert, Sir Anthony (c.1470-1538).”

⁴⁹ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrye*, 26.

⁵⁰ Xenophon, *Xenophons Treatise of Household* trans. Gentian Hervet (London: Thomas Berthlet, 1537), Early English Books Online, STC (2nd ed.)/ 26071: 1. This postscript appears on the left side of the first page of the scan of this edition of Xenophon available through Early English Books Online.

⁵¹ Richard Whitford, *A Worke For Householders/ or for Them [That] Have the G[i]d[i]nge or Governauce of Any Company, Ga[th]red [and] Set Forth by a Professed Brother of Syon Richard Whitforde. And Newly Corrected [and] Prynted Agayne [with] an Addicion of Policy for Houshold[i]nge/ Set Forth Also By the Same Brother* (London: Wynkyn de Worde, 1530), Early English Books Online, STC (2nd ed.)/ 25422: 1.

⁵² Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. “Whitford, Richard (d. 1543?).”

Roughly concurrent with Whitford's *Werke* was Gentian Hervet's translation of Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*, which was first published in English in 1532 as *Xenophons Treatise of Houshold* and describes a highly organized urban household supported by a farm outside of the city. This translation was printed a further five times before 1573.⁵³ The inclusions of *Xenophons Treatise of Houshold*—a translation of a classical Greek text—may seem to be an anomaly. However, this text's historical significance and its connection to other texts than merits its inclusion here. Foremost, given the revival of classical texts at the heart of intellectual humanism in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, *Xenophons Treatise of Household* fits in well with intellectual patterns of the time. The appearance of Xenophon's work was also a significant moment in English intellectual history. It was perhaps the first work to be translated directly from Greek into English, and represents the introduction into the vernacular of an author already well respected by English humanists.⁵⁴ It is a significant work in the history of English thought, even if it itself is not a distinctly English work. Hervet's translation of the *Oeconomicus* was commissioned by Sir Geoffrey Pole. The dedication at the beginning of the work states that the translation was commissioned "for the wealthe of this realme."⁵⁵ Before going into exile Pole managed an estate at Lordington, Sussex, that his wife had inherited from her father. During his time running the estate he had several lawsuits brought against him for forcible eviction of a tenant and for enclosing land. He was a known Catholic and supporter of Mary Tudor, and eventually fled England in 1548 after a failed Catholic conspiracy.⁵⁶

Thomas Tusser's poetic and highly successful *Five Hundreth Points of Good Husbandry* is considered as well. Entirely in rhyming verse, this work describes the organization and

⁵³ Pomeroy, *Oeconomicus*, 84.

⁵⁴ Pomeroy, *Oeconomicus*, 76-77.

⁵⁵ Xenophon, *Treatise of Household*, 1.

⁵⁶ Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Pole, Sir Geoffrey (d. 1558)."

operation of an estate; both in its agricultural and in household aspects. Originally published in 1557 as *A Hundreth Points*, Tusser greatly expanded the work, adding various points of advice and a number of shorter poems of moral instruction, and eventually a full length poetic treatise on housewifery which was addressed to men.⁵⁷ Andrew McRae describes this work as a “market leader” going through twenty-three editions in eighty-one years.⁵⁸ Thomas Tusser gave, by far, the most autobiographical information of any of the authors examined in this thesis. The 1574 edition of his *Five Hundreth Points* concludes with a forty-stanza poem in which he told the story of his life. He began with his birth, “It came to pas, that borne I was,/ of linnage good, of gentle blood,” continues through his early education, “From Powles I went, to [Eton] sent,/ To learn straight wayes, the Latine phraise,/ where fiftie three, stripes given to mee, at once I had:/ For fault but small, or none at all.”⁵⁹ After he studied at Cambridge and then went to court where he met and came into the service of Lord Paget of Beaudesert, to whose son he ultimately dedicated his verses on husbandry.⁶⁰ He then tells of how he came to be a householder in his own right, “Then tooke I wife, and led my life,/ In Suffoke soil:/ There was I faine, my self to traine,/ To learne to long, the [farmer’s] song.”⁶¹ In short, Tusser’s life was in many ways typical of the cyclical pattern of service that has been identified by modern historians in which a young man of respectable household entered service before eventually going on to head his own household.⁶²

⁵⁷ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 68.

⁵⁸ McRae, *God Speed*, 5, 146.

⁵⁹ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Pointes*, 97.

⁶⁰ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Pointes*, 3, 71, 98. The verses on housewifery were dedicated to Lady Paget.

⁶¹ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Pointes*, 98.

⁶² Antoinette Fauve-Chamboux, “Servants in Preindustrial Europe: Gender Differences,” *Historical Social Research* 23, no. 1 (1998), 116. R.C. Richardson, *Household Servants in Early Modern England* (New York: Manchester University Press, 2010), 64.

A Glasse for Housholders appeared in at least two editions with the first being 1542, but it is its connection to other sources that merits its inclusion here. In addition to having been printed with *Xenophons Treatise of Household*, the author included a translation of a short treatise written by St. Bernard on the subject of household order; the same was included in Whitford's *A Werke*. The appearance of St. Bernard's short treatise on the household in both texts illustrates the common well of tradition from which English moralists drew their inspirations, perhaps contributing to the consistency among the household books. *The Boke of Nurture for Men, Servauntes, and Chyldren* was written by Hugh Rhodes and first published in 1545. At least seven other editions were printed before the end of the century. This work focuses on the training of servants and includes advice directed to both master and servants. These two styles of advice allow for the exploration of patriarchal ideals from two different perspectives: the way masters were to behave toward servants, and the way in which servants were to behave toward their masters. Little is known of Hugh Rhodes, aside from his authorship of *The Boke of Nurture*, and he "remains a shadowy figure."⁶³ Robert Cleaver wrote *A Godlie Forme of Household Government* with fellow non-conforming clergyman John Dod in 1598. Many historians credit Dod with the principal authorship of the work; yet the first edition is attributed only to "R.C." For this reason, I refer only to Cleaver as the author throughout this thesis. This work appeared in 1598 and was reprinted at least nine times before 1640.⁶⁴ Far lengthier than any of the other works considered, Cleaver's guide to household order is essentially a series of heavily annotated lists describing who is obligated to whom and why. The inclusion of Cleaver's text establishes continuity between the period of 1520 to 1600 and the better studied seventeenth century.

⁶³ Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, s.v. "Rhodes, Hugh (fl. 1545?)."

⁶⁴ Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, 70.

The first and second chapters of this thesis discuss the ways in which this selection of prescriptive literature directly and indirectly defines ideas of patriarchy, manhood, and masculinity. The first chapter considers the economic aspects of these standards and how even the minimal requirements would have been unobtainable to many men, excluding them from the status of householder and from full social manhood. Chapter two examines the ideal moral virtues of householders and the ways in which the moralist authors warned against certain class-specific activities as deviations from these standards. The development of a system of *in loco parentis* that would have denied the full social adulthood of many members of these idealized households is also examined in this section.

The third chapter looks beyond householders and examines the idea of patriarchal masculinity in relation to other members of the household, such as wives and servants. This chapter examines the authority assigned to wives and considers that in light of the ideals of economic mutuality between husbands and wives. Significantly, this represents a context in which *some* women held greater social and domestic esteem and standing than many other members of society: both men and women. The value of educating women, as discussed in the prescriptive literature, is evaluated in light of this conclusion. Finally, this chapter compares the generally positive construction about wives present in household literature with the very different and negative beliefs held about servants. This is presented as evidence of a hierarchy in which wives outranked and held greater esteem than other members of the household, most significantly the male servants.

Patriarchy, the values of which were consistent throughout the sixteenth century, was not an ideology that advantaged all men over all women. The system described in prescriptive texts would have benefited some men far more than others, and some women more than some men. The chief arbiters of hierarchical standing within the household was not biological sex, but rather the lauded status of “householder” or one’s relationship to this office of authority. Masculinity, at least in its patriarchal expressions, was a power structure defined by “systematic domination” carried out by a select group of men. There were men excluded from social standing and respectability by this system of patriarchy, just as there was a select group of women who held greater domestic standing in this system. Within this system, advantage was conveyed by class and social standing with gender and sex delineating power within these groups. Patriarchal masculinity was above all about power; but it was power that led to patriarchal masculinity, rather than that power being derived from being male.

I: Access to and Command of Labor and Capital

Manhood in sixteenth-century England—at least in its idealized, patriarchal forms—was not defined by biological or sexual characteristics alone. Rather, prescriptive authors described a manhood founded and evaluated upon a set of traits, attributes, and virtues.⁶⁵ This chapter, along with the following, examines some of the most salient qualities expressed in advice literature. In this chapter, the human and material resources required for “good husbands” in prescriptive sources is considered. This chapter also discusses the ways in which these values may have actually affected men.

Command of Labor

Access to labor, along with the ability to effectively direct both the work of others and oneself was an important aspect of householder status as defined in many household advice books. All of the texts examined emphasized this. The ultimate authority in the control of labor was the head of the household, the householder or the husband, (depending on the text), who directed the work of wives, children, apprentices, servants, and other workers. Some texts also stressed the importance of time management, which may be seen as the importance of effectively directing one’s own labor and productive potential. The prevalence of this theme suggests that the control of labor was not only essential for economic reasons, but also important in both the obtaining of and in the demonstrating of patriarchal masculinity.

The complex agrarian estates described by Fitzherbert and Tusser could not have functioned without a substantial work force. The number of tasks was too great; the economy of the household was too diverse. In addition to the intense seasonal cycle of farm work, the tasks to be carried out inside of the house itself seems to have been too intensive to have been

⁶⁵ Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, 26.

completed effectively without the labor of more than one person. These domestic duties included a wide range of tasks: spinning, cleaning, meal preparation, and so on. Many of these chores were of equal importance for urban or agrarian households. The need for labor was not, therefore, unique to the agricultural estate, but was a concern for all households of any size or engaged in any form of production.

“Labor,” as collectively identified in these sources was a complex term. It consisted of servants, workmen, wives, children, and certainly not least of all the householder himself. Servants were the most commonly mentioned form of labor, and their presence within the home was simply assumed by the English authors. Only Xenophon, writing for ancient Greek readers, directly informed the reader “he that will be a good husband man, he must get him good lusty worke men, and willing to do after hym and obeye hym.” Xenophon compared this to the need of a military commander for good fighting men.⁶⁶ The imperative nature of this statement suggests that this was more than a simple suggestion: for one to be a “good husband man” by this standard, it was essential to command the labor of others, particularly workmen and servants. The work of servants no doubt varied tremendously from house to house, along with changing with the seasons. The extremely diverse nature of servant work was described in one seventeenth-century source as “the doing of the thinges, that must indeed be donne.”⁶⁷ Some tasks were commonly repeated, and these can be assumed to have been common tasks carried out by very many servants in very many households. Female servants were to be employed in the

⁶⁶ Xenophon, *Xenophons Treatise of Housholde*, 18. Originally, Xenophon intended for the reader to have slaves. This is reflected in Pomeroy’s modern translation. However, in Hervet’s sixteenth-century translation, “servant” is used instead. There is certainly significance to this, but it is sufficient for the purpose of this thesis to simply acknowledge that for the sixteenth-century reader, the word was servant. Since this thesis only considers the *Oeconomicus/ Xenophons Treatise of Housholde* in a sixteenth-century context, only the implications of non-slave laborers will be considered, as this was the most common arrangement in England at that time.

⁶⁷ Whittle, “Housewives and Servants,” 62.

dairy and in the brewery.⁶⁸ Servants, both male and female, were also instructed to feed animals.⁶⁹ Inside of the house servants were employed as waiters, cooks, and maids.⁷⁰ In addition to these year-round tasks, some of the sources suggest, workers—presumably male—would be hired seasonally for agricultural work.⁷¹ In addition to manual laborers, reference was also made to “bailiffs of husbandry,” servants who were put in charge of overseeing the work of other agricultural workers.⁷² Certainly, the ideal was for servants to make significant contributions to the household economy. It is also true that servants would have been significant consumers within the household as well. This is made clear by the warnings of the author of *A Glasse* who urged his readers to only employ as many servants as they had work for:

As concerning the other parte of your housholde or governau[n]ce thereof (I meane your servau[n]tes) I wold you had no mo[re] servau[n]tes in your house, the[n] ye maye kepe occupied, and [that] none eat their bread in [i]dlenes, but that they have labour with meate, and meate with labour. For as it is a crueltie to cause servauntes to labour with out meate, so it is veraye noyfull or hurtefull to geve servauntes meate without labour.⁷³

To do so would make them incurably idle. Once a homeostasis was reached in the household, the presence of servants was a symbol of an efficient and prosperous householder. It may also have been the case that servants, given their conflation with children in household literature (see chapter two), were also symbolic children, suggesting the virility and paternal qualities of the husband. Access to the labor of an appropriate number of servants was essential to the

⁶⁸ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 49, 74.

⁶⁹ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 75.

⁷⁰ Rhodes, *The Boke of Nurture*, 2-3. Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 77-78.

⁷¹ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrye*, 16. Michael Roberts, “Sickles and Scythes: Women’s Work and Men’s Work at Harvest Time,” *History Workshop* no. 7 (1979), 16. Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 56. There is some ambiguity as to what female members of the household may be doing this, but—as also noted by Roberts—Fitzherbert suggested that a man or woman may follow the mower to gather the harvest.

⁷² Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrye*, 53-54. Xenophon, *Treatise of Housholde*, 40-44.

⁷³ Anon, *A Glasse*, 50.

subsistence of large households and was an important part of the way in which householder status was implicitly defined by household authors.

The authors did not assume that all masters, “husbands,” and young men reading their works would have wives. This is also seen in the anonymous *A Glasse*:

Also my dere beloved frende whether you bee maryed, as yet I can not tell redeleye, but consydeyng your age, compleccion or bodily state and worldlye substaunce, I perceiue that ye maye well mayntetne a wyfe, wherfore I do advyse you (yf your ghostly strengthe be not greater than[the] infyrme [and] nyce desyre of fleshly appetites) to take a wife [...].⁷⁴

The fact that the authors did not take the presence of a wife for granted is likely due both to the young age of the intended audience, and also the importance of the contributions of wives to the success of the household. The importance of wives will be explored more fully in chapter three. It is enough to note for now that wives were considered to be the second highest ranking person in the household hierarchy, and that many of the authors agreed that nothing gave greater “commoditie and profit” to the household than a good wife, who was to be her husband’s companion and to be more devoted to their house than any servant.⁷⁵

No matter if the authors believed their readers would already be married or not, the majority of the texts provided lengthy advice on what a wife ought to do. Spinning was perhaps the most common job assigned to the wife.⁷⁶ Fitzherbert suggested that wives should work both with flax and (more importantly) with wool. This was for both domestic consumption and for the market economy: “if she have no wole of her owne: she may take wole to spyn[n]e of clothe makers/ and by that means she may have a conveyant lyving: [and] many tymes to do other

⁷⁴ Anon, *A Glasse*, 19.

⁷⁵ Robert Cleaver, *A Godly Forme of Household Government: For the Ordering of Private Families According to the Direction of Gods Word* (London: Felix Kingston, 1598), Early English Books Online, STC (2nd ed.)/ 5383: 155.

⁷⁶ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbondrye*, 52. Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 75. Xenophon, *Treatise of Housholde*, 18.

workes.”⁷⁷ “Convenient” as this may have been, both Xenophon and Tusser acknowledged the concern that it might not be enough for the wife to be able to spin.⁷⁸ Even if this was the case and the wife was unable to contribute significantly to household thrift and productivity through spinning, the prescriptive texts assigned her many other tasks that would make her a productive member of the household. Wives were to tend to animals, tidy the house, keep a garden, brew beer, and to make cheese.⁷⁹ Like the labor of servants, the work of the wife extended beyond manual labor as well. In the *Treatise of Housholde* the wife was compared to a “maistress bee,” responsible for the overseeing of servants (primarily female domestics) and the proper maintenance and storage of the products of her husband’s labors.⁸⁰ This view was shared by some in the sixteenth century, notably Fitzherbert, who directed that,

[I]n tyme of nede [it is the wife’s “occupation”] to helpe her husband to fyll the [muck wagon] or dong cart/ drive the plough/ to lode hey/ corne/ and suche other. Also to go or ryde to the markety: to sell butter/ chese/ mylke/ egges/ chickens/ capons/ hens/ pygges/ gees/ and all maner of cornes. And also to bye all manner of necessarie thyngs/ belongyng to householde...⁸¹

In addition to their hands-on labor and their acting in a supervisory role, wives were tasked with another, essential category of work that men alone could not do: reproduction. These labors included childbirth, nursing, and the raising of children. Several of the authors noted that men and women were obligated to procreate: “all persons which have not received the gift of abstinence, but of procreation, are called and commanded to marrie.”⁸² Nursing took on a special significance as well. The author of *A Glasse* was extremely committed to this, with almost a fifth of his work discussing the importance mothers nursing their own children, rather

⁷⁷ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbondrye*, 52.

⁷⁸ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 69. Xenophon, *Treatise of Housholde*, 18.

⁷⁹ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbondrye*, 49-52. Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 76-77.

⁸⁰ Xenophon, *Treatise of Housholde*, 20-29, esp. 26.

⁸¹ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrie*, [50].

⁸² Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 129-30.

than sending them away to wet nurses.⁸³ The stated purpose of this commitment was to develop love and affection between fathers and their children, something that the author believed was sadly lacking in England at the time.⁸⁴ Specifics are not given on the daily care of children, but the mother was meant to ensure that children were brought up in a godly way. This speaks to the importance of another potential source of labor: children. There are a number of examples in the agricultural texts about how children may be employed, including the removal of stones from fields and the sowing of seeds.⁸⁵ The labor of wives—and the children they might produce—was an important contribution to the householder’s workforce that in addition to her productive, and reproductive, capabilities was a factor in increasing the thrift of her household. The authors of household literature strongly advocated for marriage and praised the benefits and fruitfulness of wives. Even so, their advice never went so far as to require that a man be married in order to hold householder status. As was the case for servants, the presence of a wife and children would have symbolized the success and virility of a householder, but there was no indication in these texts that either was considered essential to the role or status of the patriarch. It does seem likely, however, that—given the importance placed on the role of the wife in the household—that the absence of a wife, both as helper in and as a symbol of a well-ordered household, would have been socially detrimental to the householder.

Between servants, wives, children (or some combination of these) a husband or householder in an ideal household would have had access to a diverse, substantial, and complex workforce. There is an important addition to this list however: the householder himself. Labor

⁸³ Anon, *A Glasse*, 28-38. This is in spite of the fact that he did not want to bother the reader with the details of women’s work because he felt it was to “tedious.”

⁸⁴ Anon, *A Glasse*, 31. According to the author, the father would become more attached to his child if he saw his wife nursing it.

⁸⁵ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrye*, 29. Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 21, 52.

was such an important aspect of being a husband that Tusser defined the term: “The husband is hee, that to labor doth fall.”⁸⁶ While some tasks—such as plowing and the direction of labor—were assigned to the householder directly, there is another important consideration in assessing the importance placed upon the householder’s personal contribution to the household workforce by these authors: the frequent admonishment to be industrious without cease. These texts rarely stated the actual work of the husband; Fitzherbert seems to have suggested that the husband himself should plow his fields and be directly involved in the care of large animals such as sheep, cows, and horses, but he was often ambiguous when delegating who should do what tasks.⁸⁷ The role of the husband as a supervisor of labor is implicit in the very nature of many of these texts and was only occasionally articulated and even then indirectly, such as the oft cited proverb: “The slepe of [the] husba[n]de: maketh a fatte dong hyll. And the eye of the mayster: a fast hors. That is to mean/ that [the] presence of the mayster: in every corner: is moche profytable.”⁸⁸ This common advice reinforces the normally implicit role of the master at the head of the house and supervisor of labor.

Common wisdom among household authors held that idleness was a sin, one that husbands and householders were strongly advised to avoid. This is typified by a passage from Whitford’s *A Werke for Housholders*. He advised that one should “appoint your selfe (by a continuall course) unto some certayne occupacion that may be p[ro]fytable/ and ever to avoyde ydlenes,” which he described as “the mother and nurse of all synne and evyll.” Labor and occupation, he asserted, were the natural order of things since the beginning.⁸⁹ Cleaver advised

⁸⁶ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 8.

⁸⁷ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbondrye*, 10-14, 23-24, 28-30, 37-38.

⁸⁸ Anon., *A Glasse*, 53. Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 87. Whitford, *A Werke*, 29. Xenophon, *Treatise of Housholde*, 42. Whitford’s words are used here. In that text they are attributed to Aristotle, although in both Whitford’s text and in *A Glasse* the proverb appears in a supplementary text attributed to St. Bernard.

⁸⁹ Whitford, *A Werke*, 3.

that a “calling” (an occupation) was essential for every man, and was to the benefit of himself, his family, and “human society.”⁹⁰ Having an occupation would help one avoid idleness, which was essential because, “an [i]dle mans braine becometh quickly the shoppe of the divell.”⁹¹ Once one found one’s “calling,” it was critical to manage time effectively. This was important both for avoiding idleness and over burdening oneself. Fitzherbert emphasized this importance by advising his readers to rise early and to focus on individual tasks, ensuring that one did the correct tasks at the correct time of the year.⁹² This focus on time management was combined with thrift when Fitzherbert advised,

[I]n wintertime whan thou syttest by the fyre and have souped: to consider in thy mynded/ whyder the warke that though/ thy wyfe and thy servants shall do/ be more avantage to the[e]/ than the fyre and candlelight that they shall spend: And if it be more avangage than sytte still: and if it be nat/ than go to thy bedde [and] slepe/ and be up betyme and breke thy faste before day/ that [thou] may be all short wynters day about the thy busyness...⁹³

The importance of the householder’s own labor seems clear. The most significant means of expressing this contribution was for him to direct the labor of others. To do this, he had to shun all idleness himself. This was, no doubt, both to serve as a role model to others and to ensure that he completed the tasks that he himself needed to do. The effective use of time, both seasonally and daily, signified the unending labor that these prescriptive authors expected him to contribute to the collective household work force.

In all of the texts, no matter their exact focus, the expectation that the reader would be in command of the labor of others (as well as that of himself) was evident. To be successful as a head of household—especially an agrarian household—one had to command labor. Beyond this

⁹⁰ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 62.

⁹¹ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 328.

⁹² Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbondrye*, 12, 50.

⁹³ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrie*, 53.

need, however, it seems to have been an expectation that householders simply *would* command the labor of others. But where does this leave men who did not command the labor of others? Surely by the standard outlined in these sources, they would not have measured up to the full level of patriarchal manhood. The presence of servants, though assumed by prescriptive authors, was not universal: only about 40% of households employed servants.⁹⁴ The remaining 60% of heads of household were certainly deemed less worthy in a system that judged them by their access to the labor of others.⁹⁵ Still, many male heads of household who did not have servants were likely able to call upon the labor of their wives and children in addition to their own productive capabilities. This may have afforded them a degree of respect in this system of patriarchy. But what of those who did not even measure up to this standard? Servants, apprentices, and young men still under the direct authority of their fathers could not have been seen as fully in control of their own labor. After all, Cleaver defined a servant as “he that hath a master, and is not his own, or els he is at the beck and command of an other.”⁹⁶ This standard placed these men at the bottom of a hierarchy evaluated upon one’s access to and control of labor.

Command of Capital

Nearly as obvious in the agricultural sources as the importance of the command of labor is the need to command significant amounts of capital in the form of land, livestock, tools, and equipment. Indeed, these two themes were closely related, as many of the tasks that a “good husbandman” needed so much labor to complete required special tools and access to raw

⁹⁴ Richardson, *Household Servants*, 63. Whittle, “Housewives and Servants,” 60. Of these, many households only had a single servant, with a slightly greater number of these households having only a single female servant.

⁹⁵ I use this form here to distinguish “head of household,” from the socially elevated rank of “householder.”

⁹⁶ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 378.

materials as well. The domestic advice authors did not specify any capital required to succeed, but this is likely because they addressed an audience not defined by a single occupation in the way that the audience of the husbandry manuals was imagined to be. Rather, their lack of specific economic requirements seems more suggestive that ideas of economic viability in England were too complex and too varied to be defined by a single ideal set of capital possession equally suited to all readers.⁹⁷ In any case, the agrarian writers emphasized the importance of capital, and the amount of it which they prescribed as being needed was often exclusionary in its scope, being so costly or difficult to obtain.

Some of the most basic capital that a “good husband” was instructed to have were those things that he would have found needful for the subsistence of himself and his household. Many of these items are not specifically enumerated, but the instruction to perform certain tasks—such as brewing, cheese making, and spinning—would have necessitated having access to various tools and resources for production.⁹⁸ It is important to note that while these basic items were also needed for the daily subsistence of the household, the recommendation or expectation present in some of these sources makes these items a form of capital in a market economy that extended well beyond the household.⁹⁹ Dairy, and specifically cheese production, required equipment which is not mentioned, even though Tusser went to great lengths to ensure the quality of cheese.¹⁰⁰ Similarly, there is no reference to the equipment needed to brew beer or ale, even though it is clear that brewing was to take place in the house. Spinning too is mentioned

⁹⁷ Loads, “England Under the Tudors,” 403-05, 408. Smith, “Plagues and Peoples,” 183-84. Wrigley, “Country and Town,” 226-27, 38. While England was still a primarily rural society throughout the sixteenth century, it was decreasingly dependent on direct participation in agriculture. By 1600 roughly a quarter of the population of England relied on occupations outside of agriculture for the subsistence, which for many meant finding work in the manufacture and sale of wool and cloth.

⁹⁸ Whittle, “Housewives and Servants,” 68.

⁹⁹ For instance: Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrye*, 50. Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 45-46.

¹⁰⁰ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 45-46.

repeatedly, but there are very few references to the tools needed for fiber production. This is most likely because these tasks were all typically assigned to women, either wives or female servants. This gendered aspect of production may account for some of the omissions on behalf of the male authors. Fitzherbert, for instance, claimed that he was not an expert on women's work and could only offer limited instructions on what should be done and said very little about *how* it should be done.¹⁰¹ This is supported by the fact that both he and Tusser went into fairly exacting detail concerning the equipment and other forms of capital—plows, carts, storehouses, and so on—that were needed for the male oriented tasks of cereal agriculture and animal husbandry.¹⁰²

While these tools of production received limited attention, the raw materials that were needed to produce products such as cheese, beer, and cloth are mentioned in abundance. The agricultural authors frequently mentioned cattle, hop yards, cereal agriculture, and fiber agriculture (wool, hemp, and flax).¹⁰³ Especially in the case of animals, these were not to be had in small quantities. Throughout his *Husbandrie*, Fitzherbert gave suggestions as to the number of each animal one should have. If his recommendations were followed to the letter, the reader would have had in excess of one hundred animals—mostly sheep—not counting poultry (for which Fitzherbert did not give a suggested number).¹⁰⁴ There can be no doubt that this would have been economically significant and extremely difficult to amass early in life, if indeed ever, without inheritance. The inclusion of both draft animals (oxen and horses) and animals which were meant specifically for the sale of their offspring and other products (sheep, pigs, cows,

¹⁰¹ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrye*, 50, 52.

¹⁰² Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrye*, esp. 2-4. Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 15-16, 51-52. These are only some of the best examples, tools are mentioned frequently in other sections related to “man’s work.”

¹⁰³ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrie*, 25, 30-32, 37-39. Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 21, 34-36, 51-52.

¹⁰⁴ Fitzherbert, *The Boke of Husbandrie*, 25, 30-32, 37-39.

poultry) clearly defines these animals as a form of capital, rather than just a means of subsistence. Likewise, it was commonly advised that one should be able to produce a wide range of goods raised the bar further, requiring even more capital in order to achieve the status of “good husbandman.” This belief is best exemplified in Fitzherbert’s statements that husbands needed to have both tillage and livestock and “nat the one w[ith]out the other.”¹⁰⁵ Later he expanded upon this: “These husbendes and they shall well thrive: they must have both [cows]/ oxen/ horses/ mares/ and young cattell” with bees, pigs, and sheep added later to the list of needed animals.¹⁰⁶

The need to produce such a wide variety of products at home implies and necessitates that the access to and the ability to direct significant quantities of capital was a normative aspect of what was required to be a good householder and effective husbandman. While the domestic authors do not mention any forms of capital as requisite of an ideal household, an idea of what they may have considered capital is hinted at in *Xenophons Treatise of Household*. The text provides a description of “goods” that is almost entirely synonymous with the modern term “capital.” Goods were: “those thynges [...] that be profitable.” This included all that a man possessed that did not harm him: house, field, material objects, and even one’s enemies if used correctly.¹⁰⁷ Later in the *Treatise of Household*, it is stated, “he that is mayster, he hath al, and maye use every thing at his owne pleasure.”¹⁰⁸ Given the definition of “goods,” it is clear that householder status was meant to convey with it absolute authority over all of the capital in the household. Importantly, this somewhat vague description of capital “goods” would have been no

¹⁰⁵ Fitzherbert, *The Boke of Husbandrie*, 1; also, 21.

¹⁰⁶ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrie*, 26, 38.

¹⁰⁷ Pomeroy, *Oeconomicus*, 221. Pomeroy states that it was a “traditional Greek idea” to harm enemies by making profit at their expense.

¹⁰⁸ Xenophon, *Treatise of Houshold*, 33.

less applicable in the household of a farmer far removed from any large towns or in the household of a merchant in the heart of London. From this, it can be assumed that the command of and unfettered access to capital was an essential attribute of householder status—and thus idealized patriarchal masculinity—no matter the context, even when not specifically enumerated. An additional and undeniably essential form of capital for any householder striving to provide independently his own subsistence was access to land. The importance of land as a form of capital was of increased importance in England during the sixteenth century. This is made very clear by the strong praise of land enclosure and prioritization found in Tusser and Fitzherbert’s husbandry manuals. The praise of enclosure is taken to an extreme by Tusser, who stated enclosure would “rayse profit to thee or thy sonne,” and concluded his verses on husbandry with a lengthy poem championing enclosure. He wrote,

[1] The country enclosed I prayse,
 the tother deligheth not me,
 for nothing the wealth it doth rayse,
 to such as infeior be.
 Because of them both I do know:
 I mind thereof somewhat to show. [...]

[5] Example by Leycester shire,
 what soyle can be better than that,
 For any thing hart can desire,
 and yet doth it want ye see what,
 Mast, covert, close pasture, and wood:
 and other things nedefull as good,

[6] All these doth enclosure bring,
 experience teacheth no lesse,
 I speak not to boast of the thing.
 but onely a [truth] to express,
 Example (if doubt ye do make)
 by Suffolk and Essex go take.

[7] More plentie of Mutton and biefe,
 corne butter, and cheese of the best,
 More wealth any where (to be briefe)

more people, more handsome and prest.
Where finde ye: (go search any coste)
than there, where enclosure is moste.

[8] More worke for the laboring man,
as well in the towne as the field.
Or thereof (devise if ye can)
more profit, what countreys do yeeld:
More seldome, where see ye the poore
go begging from doore unto doore. [...]

[11] The flocks, of the Lords of the soyle,
do yerely the winter corne wrong,
The same in a manner they spoyle;
with feeding so lowe and so long.
And therefore, that champion field:
doth seldome good winter corne yeeld.

[12] More profite is quieter found
(where pastures in severall bee)
Of one silly acre of ground,
Then Champion maketh of three,
Againe what a [j]oye is it knowne:
when men may be bold of their owne. [...]

[15] [Unenclosed land], barefoote [and] ragged doth go,
and ready in winter to sterue,
when [enclosed land], ye see doth not so,
but hat that is needfull to serve [...]

[19] The poore, at enclosing do grutch
because of abuses that fall.
Least som man should have but to much.
and some againe nothing at all. [...]¹⁰⁹

In these several verses Tusser attacked traditional manorial agriculture (11), promoted the economic advantages of enclosing land (5-8, 12), and dismissed almost out of hand the objections of “the poore” to enclosure (19). Further, verse 12 (“when men may be bold of their owne”) implies land enclosure and privatization of property. Taken all together, Tusser clearly

¹⁰⁹ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 59-61. “Champion” here refers to open fields [common land], while “several” (meaning divided) refers to enclosed land.

argued that, for a “good husband,” land was a means of personal gain that should be held privately. Fitzherbert was more mild in his praise of enclosure, citing the long-term savings of enclosed land.¹¹⁰ Fitzherbert also championed the privatization and reorganization of land in order to use the land more efficiently.¹¹¹ Changes to the patterns of landownership resulting from economic development and the closure of monastic institutions was one of the most significant changes to occur in England during the sixteenth century.¹¹² The fact that Tusser and Fitzherbert praise this change while at the same time maintaining generally consistent models of patriarchal masculinity (both with each other and with the other writers) is compelling evidence that the normative patterns of patriarchy were not significantly affected by the enormous societal upheavals occurring around them.

It is also significant that, in these texts, money was not a form of capital. On the contrary, money was viewed with great negativity in nearly all contexts. Xenophon referred to money as “poyson;” while Cleaver and the author of *A Glasse* invoked the name of the demon “Mamon” when discussing the negative or evil qualities of money and the pursuit of wealth, while attributing much evil and suffering to men who honored him through their love of money.¹¹³ Indeed, Cleaver wrote that men who seek wealth turn their houses into “temples of Mamon and riches.”¹¹⁴ The author of *A Glasse* probably went the farthest in his rebuke of money,

Thynke that whosoever be ta[n]gled muche with this world or worldly riches
hateth the varaye smell and taste of vertue. And whosoever seteth his mynde
upon golde, and hath his affecion and desire therunto hateth all honest scie[n]ces,

¹¹⁰ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrye*, 36-39.

¹¹¹ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrye*, 40.

¹¹² Loads, “England Under the Tudors,” 403-05.

¹¹³ Anon., *A Glasse*, 4. David Landreth, *The Face of Mammon: The Matter of Money in English Renaissance Literature* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 3. Xenophon, *Treatise of Housholde*, 3-4.

¹¹⁴ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 19.

his herte shall never be quieted with it, but always in trouble, upon hope to get,
or feere to lese.¹¹⁵

As can be clearly seen, while the need of a husband and a householder to command and have access to capital was well established, on the other hand, it was very clear that money could not serve as a substitute for real, productive forms of capital.

The access to capital and ability to use it well was thus a significant aspect of what was understood to constitute a “good husband,” with the obvious implication that men who could not amass this level of capital were not good husbands and were bad or perhaps even failed husbands. The number of animals recommended was inherently exclusionary in its scope, and the extensive inventory of tools would certainly have taken considerable time and fortune to amass, excluding young and poor men from this title as well. Perhaps more significant, the implementation of enclosure—itself highly exclusionary in terms of labor and land requirement—significantly disrupted the lives of those who found themselves on the outside, perhaps marginalized, and cut off from land once held in common, with much agitation and violence directed both against and in defense of hedges.¹¹⁶

The ideal patriarch was one who had access to labor and capital and the ability to direct them effectively. There were relatively few universal requirements, though it was essential that a man control his own labor and have some means to support himself and those that populated his house. Agriculture was one route, but this required the greatest amount of resources, both human and material. Crafts and commerce were other options, and it seem probable that a married craftsman, the father of well-fed children, who employed servants or apprentices would have

¹¹⁵ Anon., *A Glasse*, 4-8, esp. 4-5.

¹¹⁶ Nicholas Blomley, “Making Private Property: Enclosure, Common Right and the Work of Hedges,” *Rural History* 18, no. 1 (2007), esp. 9-10, 13-16. Briony McDonagh, “Negotiating Enclosure and Common Rights in Sixteenth-Century England,” *History Workshop* no. 76. (2013), esp. 32, 35, 37-39, 44-50. McRae, *God Speed*, 164.

been every bit as worthy of the titles of husband, patriarch, and householder as a farmer of similar conditions. This second option, however, ran a greater risk of becoming ensnarled in money and the associated evils of wealth and luxury. Men who did not have access to these resources were excluded from patriarchal status as defined in the household books. If a man was unable to have workers at his beck and call, if he had no independent means to support himself and his dependents, he was not—he could not have been—a patriarch. These resource requirements then, serve to define patriarchal masculinity as a class-based code, obtainable only to the middling ranks and above. There were no doubt gradients to one's worth by this system of evaluation: the holder of a large estate that employed dozens was certainly judged to be a higher ranked member of this hegemonic class than a small craftsman with only one or two apprentices. Still, both of these types of men would have benefited from the power and prestige attached to their rank as status as householders. Even so, it was not enough to have access to resources, or even to use them productively. There were moral requirements to idealized patriarchal masculinity as well.

II: Moral Virtues and Obligations of Householders and Masters

In addition to the economic requirements of capital and labor dictated by the prescriptive authors for “good husbandmen” there were also a number of idealized virtues and moral obligations that householders and masters were advised to live up to. These values were held as core tenets of the hegemonic, patriarchal class and became a vocabulary to evaluate or condemn the patriarchal standing and manhood of other men. The household books agree on many key virtues which correspond with the “patriarchal attributes” that Shepard recognized in her study of normative source material dating to the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. These include thrift, respectability, and discretion.¹¹⁷ In addition to advising their readers to embody these virtues (both for their own good and as an example to others) the authors of household advice books often recommended that their readers oversee the moral education of the various members of their households, regardless of age or rank. As will be seen, this would have fostered a domestic culture of *in loco parentis* that was a challenge to the full social adulthood of many members of the household community.

Virtues of Householders and Patriarchs

Thrift was an important virtue to all of the authors, even when—as in the case of Fitzherbert’s *Husbandrie*—the word did not appear in the original publication.¹¹⁸ Fitzherbert stressed the importance of living within one’s own means, eating “within thy te[th]are,” and avoiding superfluous or “delycious” food and drink.¹¹⁹ The former advice was repeated sixty years later in Robert Cleaver’s *Godlie Forme of Household Government*.¹²⁰ Above nearly all

¹¹⁷ Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, 26.

¹¹⁸ McRae, *God Speed*, 144. McRae confirms this observation about the 1523 edition of Fitzherbert’s *Boke of Husbandrye*.

¹¹⁹ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrie*, 50-54.

¹²⁰ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 74.

else, Fitzherbert warned his reader that one should avoid becoming a “byer/ a borrower/ a beggar,” with these three almost always being combined in this fashion.¹²¹ Thrift also factored considerably in Tusser’s *Five Hundreth Points*, which included a thirty-four stanza poem entitled “The Ladder to Thrift,” which championed the virtues of thrift and described how one might obtain thrift, which was both a path and a goal unto itself:

To take thy calling thankfully,
And shonne the path to beggery. [...]

To get by honest practicy.
And keepe thy gettings covertly. [...]

To get good plot to occupy,
And store and use it husbandly. [...]

To wed good wife for company,
And live in wedlock honestly. [...]

To suffer none live idely,
For feare of idle knavery. [...]

To bridle wild oats fantazie,
To spend thee naught unthriftely [...]

These be the steppes unfainedly
To climb to thrift by husbandry.

These steppes both reach,
And teach thee shall,
To come by thrift,
To shift with al.¹²²

In these verses Tusser urged his readers to shun no labor, to avoid sin, to live modestly within their means, and to practice husbandry with diligence and forethought. The anonymous author of *A Glasse*, for example, warned the reader to, “be not like the toad, whiche hath nothyng els

¹²¹ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrye*, 20, 25, 54. Rhodes, *The Boke of Nurture*, 11. Rhodes too combined the ideas of begging and borrowing.

¹²² Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 8-10.

under hym but earth, and yet he frayeth to spende of it.”¹²³ Thrift, mentioned by name or not, was an important and commonly held value in these works.

The authors of household literature also advised their readers to be discrete. In many works, discretion took the form of knowing when and where to say what and to whom. Rhodes advised, “Bable not much yf thou wylt be called wyse, To speake much is takin for vyce.”¹²⁴ Fitzherbert was the greatest and most overt advocate of discretion. Early in his work—before even beginning many of the agricultural instructions that were central to his work—he informed his readers of a so-called “Sede of Discressyon” which “[i]f a husbände have of that sede and mingle it amo[n]g his other cornes they wyll growe moch the better.” This seed was, he wrote, “wysdom [and] reason.” Unfortunately, some may find themselves lacking this seed, be they young or old. This was of little worry however, discretion was easy to obtain. All that one lacking in discretion had to do was “borroew of his neyghboures,” which would make it grow all the more.¹²⁵

Respectability was another common virtue shared by the authors of household books; however—unlike thrift and discretion—respectability appears to have been directly related to the hegemonic class of the patriarchs, perhaps even to the point of becoming synonymous with elitism. While many factors contributed to one’s respectability, clothing provides an excellent example of the way these sources address the subject. Since clothing serves as a visual identifier of class, occupation, and other attributes, it was as a common theme, being touched on in nearly every one of the examined household books. An important part of the discussions around clothing was the belief that all members of society should wear clothing appropriate for their

¹²³ Anon., *A Glasse*, 8.

¹²⁴ Rhodes, *The Boke of Nurture*, 11.

¹²⁵ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrie*, 7. Unlike money, it was apparently okay in Fitzherbert’s worldview to “borrow” discretion.

“state” or “degree.” Fitzherbert, for example, wrote that it was a show of unthrifty behavior for masters to clothe their servants in fine clothing, because it would inspire jealousy among the “simple” people who he believed would, upon seeing their peers dressed in finery, spend more than they could afford to on clothing, and thus become unthrift in their own living.¹²⁶ The viability of clothing as a visual marker of class identity is reinforced by the author of *A Glasse* who advised that men should avoid dressing their wives either like the wife of “some poore labouryng man” or like a “marchauntes wyfe.” It was important, he suggested, to ensure that wives had clothing appropriate for their “estate.”¹²⁷ Rhodes also advised the importance of clothing matching its wearer’s “degree.”¹²⁸ Further affirmation of the importance of clothing in determining class (and thus visual cues of respectability) comes from the writing of St. Bernard, as cited by both the author of *A Glasse* and by Whitford. The passage they reference condemns the wearing of clothing “above one’s state,” which was a sign of little “lightness.” Or, in Whitford’s rendering, “a costly garment byhond or above the state and degree of the person: is a sygne and token of lytle wytt.”¹²⁹ Thrift too can be seen as an important value here, but only so far as one is already being seen straying from the appropriate and respectable behavior for one’s class.

Authors of household books frequently gave examples of negative behaviors in order to steer their readers down the path to virtue. Most prevalent among these are the admonishments to avoid drunkenness and alehouses and the strong rebuke of idleness, which has already been discussed in the previous chapter as part of the discussion of the importance placed upon

¹²⁶ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrye*, 53. Richardson, *Household Servants*, 103. This concern of Fitzherbert speaks to the idea of servants as “cultural amphibians” who transmit tastes and styles from their upper-class employers to their lower-class peers. Servants, Richardson suggests, moved between social classes like amphibians between water and air.

¹²⁷ Anon., *A Glasse*, 26-27.

¹²⁸ Rhodes, *The Boke of Nurture*, 5, 7.

¹²⁹ Anon., *A Glasse*, 55. Whitford, *A Werke*, 29.

effective use of one's own labor in developing patriarchal masculinity. Idleness, in this context, was considered to be any activity—such as sports and games—that was not productive or that in no way contributed to the labor or thrift of the household. These vices were key threats to the main patriarchal values. Both drunkenness and idleness can quickly eat away at thrift. While there was no call to avoid all alcohol altogether, alehouses and excessive consumption were sharply condemned.¹³⁰ Respectability could also be challenged by the activities of idle sporting and excessive drinking, since both of these activities—especially sports and games—could involve close, interclass contact. Drunkenness could quickly undermine discretion, which was strongly premised on careful and calculated words and actions, and challenge one's claim to manhood by this standard.

The household books are filled with vicious attacks on excessive alcohol consumption and on alehouses and taverns. These were seen as threats to the masculine and patriarchal attributes of thrift and discretion and likely respectability as well, should one be seen rubbing shoulders with one's social inferiors. There can be little doubt that this is related to the changing nature of alcohol consumption at the time. Consumption was moving away from the home, into alehouses and public spaces.¹³¹ At the same time, beer was surpassing ale as the drink of choice, with the former generally having a higher alcohol content than the latter.¹³² The most vocal voice in the attacks on alehouse among the household authors was Whitford, who conceived of alehouses and taverns as places of unthrifty and blasphemous behavior. His recounting of the story of a sinful and blasphemous man, “mayster Baryngton,” being struck

¹³⁰ Jessica Warner, “The Sanctuary of Sobriety: The Emergence of Temperance as a Feminine Virtue in Tudor and Stuart England,” *Addition* 92, no. 1 (1997), 99, 101. Whitford, *A Werke*, 5. Modern ideas of *full* temperance did not yet exist. Whitford, a clear opponent of excessive drinking, even included drinking as one of the main meals of the day.

¹³¹ Warner, “Sanctuary of Sobriety,” esp. 105.

¹³² Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters*, esp. 77.

down in an alehouse is an especially memorable episode: “And in a whyle after in swearynge so/ he bledde at the nose/ [...] tyll at [the] last he fell ferther to blede at the eares/ at the eyes/ at his wrestes/ [and] all the [j]oyntes of his handes [...]”¹³³ Assuming blasphemy was a violation of discretion, alehouses—in addition to being unthrifty—were sources of indiscretion as well. Rhodes also extolled the relationship between alcohol and unthrifty behavior. He commented, “Temper thy self with drinke, [...] Foure at a meale is thre[e] to many in such I think waste.”¹³⁴ Drinking, he suggested, is normal; excessive drinking, however, is unthrifty. In this sense, alcohol itself was not a means of undoing thrift, but rather the *indiscrete* consumption of alcohol. An important note here as well is that the social access to alcohol was somewhat restricted along age divisions. Both Whitford and the author of *A Glasse* cite St. Bernard in stating, “The knowledge and [j]ugment of wyne: doth nothyng become a yonge p[er]son.”¹³⁵ Alcohol consumption was used in these ways as an example of a behavior that could compromise both one’s claims to thrift and to discretion.

Along with excessive alcohol consumption, the moralist authors also warned their readers against the dangers of being idle, by which they meant any activity that did not directly contribute to the thrift or the productivity of the household. Many of the household authors condemned sports as an idle and unthrifty pastime. Whitford denounced “all maner of unlawful game/ [and] such dysportes as done drawe people rather to vyce than to virtue whiche more properly may be called lose tymes tha[n] pastimes.”¹³⁶ These activities, he warned, were

¹³³ Whitford, *A Werke*, 12-13.

¹³⁴ Rhodes, *The Boke of Nurture*, 6.

¹³⁵ Anon., *A Glasse*, 51. Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood*, 21-38, esp. 23-25. Whitford, *A Werke*, 27. While the wording is similar in both sources, Whitford’s phrasing is used here. This connection of age and acceptability of behavior is well established by Shepard as an example of “full” manhood being restricted to a select group of men, limited by age.

¹³⁶ P.J.P. Goldberge, “Master and Men in Late Medieval England,” in *Masculinity in Medieval Europe* ed. D.M. Hadley (New York: Addison Wesley Longman, 1999), 64. Richard Holt, *Sports and the British: A Modern History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 29. Whitford, *A Werke*, 3, 15. Sports were a particularly

especially sinful on Sundays, with the aforementioned parable of Maister Baryngton said to be “a good monicion [and] warning for such persons that done misuse the holy day in hawkyng/ huntyng/ and such other frutyles occupacions or pastymes.”¹³⁷ Hawking and hunting were both specific target of the moralists. Once again, both citing St. Bernard, Whitford and the anonymous author of *A Glasse* advised that hawks and hounds were fine for the gentry and nobility but not for “husbandes and mere householders.”¹³⁸ This, along with the suggestion in *A Glasse* that sports and games were good for young boys, restricts certain activities to certain groups of males and in a respect challenges the full, adult ideas of patriarchal manhood of those men who did participate in these activities, but who did not meet the age or class requirements to participate in them. There is further reason why authors concerned with intra-class standards of respectability would be opposed to sports: the fear that boys or young men of different classes might mix on the playing fields. Rhodes, for example, suggested that “If thou play and sporte with one of simple byrth, Use gentle pastimes, men wil commende your myrth.”¹³⁹ It seems likely that sports were a common form of inter-class contact, something that a moralist author trying to define respectability in class related terms would want to limit. Just as the middling readers of household literature were advised to avoid the blood sports of the nobility, so too were they advised to shun the games of the lower classes. This is consistent with the trend, discussed in chapter three, of many of the household authors having expressed concerned about the likelihood of servants corrupting or being a bad influence upon the children of the household.

popular expression of masculinity among the common people of England in the sixteenth-century, and were ostensibly attacked as a source of idleness and were a frequent target of prohibitory laws in the sixteenth century. The list of “losetymes” includes bearbaiting, bullbaiting, football, tennis, bowling, cards, dice, and “suche other unthrifty pastymes,” which was a common list used in moralist condemnations of recreational activities, with many of them being specifically outlawed by acts of Parliament.

¹³⁷ Whitford, *A Werke*, 11, 15.

¹³⁸ Anon., *A Glasse*, 55. Whitford, *A Werke*, 30.

¹³⁹ Rhodes, *The Boke of Nurture*, 11-12.

These virtues extolled by household authors had important implications for the ways in which the manhood and patriarchal standing of men was evaluated. Thrift became a way for the dominant, hegemonic class of men to evaluate their poorer or less fortunate neighbors. Instead of poverty being conceived as having developed from unequal distribution of wealth or uneven access to resources, it could be explained as a lack of due diligence on the part of men of lower socio-economic rank. Thrift offered a standard to evaluate the successes and failures of husbands and householders. If a man thrived, it was not necessarily his good fortune, but his skill at using thrift; if he failed it was not misfortune, but rather the inability to practice thrift. If only the unsuccessful were thriftier, they too could succeed and then be worthy of patriarchal standing. In other words, thrift was an ideal that allowed for the challenging of men's claims to patriarchal manhood as it was understood through the lens of household patriarch: a status defined in large part by access to and ability to direct resources. As a concept, thrift allowed for the marginalization of less prosperous men.

Thrift was also a platform from which to criticize the activities associated with youthful excess, such as drunkenness, idleness, and sports. By this standard, men of hegemonic social standing could alienate other men and devalue their expressions of masculinity in a way that also enhanced the claims of the dominant group to the economic control that was so central to the idea of patriarchy as a form of manhood. Discretion and respectability were helpful in this regard as well. While they could not, by themselves, present challenges to the economic rights and abilities of men outside of the hegemonic group, these values did aid in the singling out of activities that were considered "unthrifty." They also provided models of behaviors that were considered indicative of the patriarchal class. Deviation from these norms was grounds for

marginalization and exclusion from the economic control wielded by the idealized patriarchs of the household books.

Moral Education and In Loco Parentis

It was not enough for a householder to just live up to these standards themselves. He had to be a role model and an instructor of moral behavior and of the tenets of the Christian religion—all of those traits indicative of the householding, hegemonic class—to all of those under his authority. This included the children of the household, as well as its the adult members: his wife and their servants. The importance of moral education is clear from the fact that while only two of the texts mention practical education or training for servants, almost all of them—including those that mention practical instruction—discuss moral education at length. The suggestion that adults needed moral instruction at the hands of their employers (or husbands), along with the further suggestions that they in some respects be treated like children, created a prescribed domestic culture of *in loco parentis* in which the adult male head of household was to preside over the other adult members of the household in much the same way he was directed to preside over his own children. This was a direct challenge to the full social adulthood of all the other members of the household in general, and the full social manhood of the other adult male members of the household in particular.

One of the most significant features of a moral individual according to the authors of household literature was his or her ability to provide a positive example of faith and virtue to those in need of such a role model. According to the anonymous author of *A Glasse*, the householder, in his capacity as a husband and a father, had enormous potential to positively influence his family. Wives could be taught faith and piety only through his example, words

alone would be insufficient.¹⁴⁰ Similarly, when sons were at home, they were to be kept in his instructive presence. This was better, he suggested, than their spending too much time around servants and learning poor manners from them.¹⁴¹ Whitford also was concerned with the potential for servants to be poor examples to the children of the house and urged parents to be careful in their selection of who worked for them, in order to avoid negative role models.¹⁴² It was not only children and wives who could benefit from positive role models. Rhodes advised all young men in service to “Aquaint your selfe with honest men that are in auctoritie, Of them maye ye learne in youth, to avoid all [necesssry].”¹⁴³ The capacity of the husband as a role model was so important that Cleaver listed it among the principal duties that he owed to his children and his servants.¹⁴⁴

Further, according to Cleaver, it was one of the main duties of the householder to ensure that the members of his household were instructed in Christianity. In unmistakable terms he wrote: “The head of the household must bring up those under him in the faith.”¹⁴⁵ This advice was meant to include servants as well as children: “And for servants, seeing they spend their strength, [and] wearie out their bodies, and bestow their dayes and yeeres in seeking their profit and ease: ought not thou then to seeke the salvatio[n] of their soules?”¹⁴⁶ Whitford too held strict beliefs on this subject. He recommended that a householder should take time to hear every member of the household recite several common prayers—including the Lord’s Prayer and the Hail Marry—at least once a week and that a householder should, “let none escape [him]/ olde nor yonge.” For those who did not (or could not) learn their prayers Whitford recommended

¹⁴⁰ Anon., *A Glasse*, 24.

¹⁴¹ Anon., *A Glasse*, 38.

¹⁴² Whitford, *A Werke*, 6.

¹⁴³ Rhodes, *The Boke of Nurture*, 7.

¹⁴⁴ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 246, 364.

¹⁴⁵ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 46-47.

¹⁴⁶ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 47.

that, “under payne of punysshment/ hat they say it every daye thre tymes at [the] leest...”¹⁴⁷ It is significant to note that this advice is given both by a Catholic (Whitford) and again later in the century by a Protestant (Cleaver). It shows the consistence of household literature on the duties of householders through this period, even throughout the religious shifts of the mid-sixteenth century.

The idea that children and servants were meant to receive similar treatment is not always clear. Sometimes this can be inferred, however, from passages where children and servants are discussed together, such as when Tusser advised the housewife to “make childe to be civell, keep servants in awe.”¹⁴⁸ While there is no direct mixing of the status of children and servants in this passage, it is clear that both children and servants were similarly subordinated to the authority of the housewife. While many of the texts remained somewhat ambiguous, Cleaver leaves no doubt that the status of children and servants is similar within the household. It is noted in the margin at the beginning of the section discussing the duties owed by the master and mistress to their servants: “The householder is called *Pater familias*: that is, a father of a familie, because hee should have a fatherly care over his servants, as if they were his children.”¹⁴⁹ This arrangement, in which adult servants were grouped with children, below the authority of the male head of household would have no doubt crated a domestic culture of *in loco parentis* in which the full social adulthood of many of the members of the household would have been denied.

The role of moral educator was a clearly important part of the function of the idealized patriarch. The householder was given almost unlimited moral authority to challenge the morality and even the adulthood of all who lived under him. This authority was derived almost

¹⁴⁷ Whitford, *A Werke*, 8.

¹⁴⁸ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 73.

¹⁴⁹ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 364.

exclusively from his status as the head of a household. The means through which a householder was meant to instill thrift, discretion, respectability, and Christianity could also serve as a venue for vilifying activities that were believed to be outside of the purview of patriarchal masculinity. This is seen directly in works like Whitford's where the author—acting as an instructor of morality—condemns behaviors such as drunkenness and idleness in order to advance the cause of virtue.¹⁵⁰ At the same time, these lessons would have instilled not only a sense of the moral superiority of the householder and of his hegemonic class, but it would have also served to develop a sense of moral inferiority of both the householder's personal subordinates and of the non-hegemonic classes as well: both among the poor and the nobility. Further, because the moral authority of the patriarch stemmed from householder status and because he was meant to model thriftiness as part and parcel of his success, the instructions in morality would have also contributed to a sense of economic inferiority among the dependent members of the household. This also would have served to reinforce the foundations upon which the economic power of the hegemonic householding class rested. If this sense of inferiority or subordination permeated deeply enough into the psyches of those under the husband's authority, it would have both furthered the development of an *in loco parentis* relationship in which adults were made dependent upon the moral authority of the householder; and this sense of inferiority would have likely served to strengthen the authority of the patriarch within his household.

There may be a temptation here to label this pattern as a form of psychological abuse or control. This is far too harsh. While these lessons likely did serve to maintain household order, and did present a challenge to the full social adulthood of many members of the household, it must also be considered that the nature of service was often cyclical. Many servants eventually

¹⁵⁰ For instance, see the above mentioned example of "mayster Baryngton" from Whitford's *A Worke*.

went on to run their own households or be the wives of householders; many apprentices went on to become masters.¹⁵¹ This is something that the household authors were certainly well aware of; Tusser, at least, knew it from first-hand experience. Taken in context, this form of moral education was a way to prepare the next generation for the responsibilities they may one day encounter.

Conformity with prescriptive ideals of manhood required one to command significant resources, both in terms of labor and capital, in order to be a “good husband.” The obvious implication of this is that men who did not have access to these resources were unable to achieve full patriarchal manhood. Even if one had resources at one’s command, it was still not enough; for one had to also be a moral individual. The idealized role of the householder as a teacher of morality combined with notion that adult servants should be treated as children. This excluded—by implication or by design—many adults from full social adult standing, denying them access to the social status of full manhood or full womanhood. The virtues extolled and the vices denounced created a single set of values that some could not conform to and that others likely had no desire to conform to. These values were remarkably consistent in the prescriptive literature from throughout this century of rapid change. What is more, they seem to be very consistent with the values of the early modern period as a whole. Most importantly, it can be seen from this that there was far more to being a patriarch in this period than simply being a man.

¹⁵¹ Fauve-Chamboux, “Servants in Preindustrial Europe”, 116. Richardson, *Household Servants*, 64.

III: Wives and Servants in Household Hierarchies

When discussing household hierarchies in sixteenth-century England, it is essential to acknowledge that the patriarchy cannot be seen exclusively as a system that placed all men over all women. An intersectional understanding is needed. In a system of hierarchy largely based and evaluated upon the control and access to labor and capital, the idealized housewife—who was routinely directed in household literature to oversee domestic labor and production—outranked most male members of the household, who neither controlled labor (their own, or anyone else’s), nor directed capital. The suggestion by some authors that wives were to aid in both the moral and practical instruction of children and servants would have also elevated housewives above servants and children, the former of which were often seen as examples of immorality. Further, it is clear that wives—even though they were clearly the subordinates of their husbands—were considered to be of far greater worth within the household than servants, who were considered to be of dubious value, perhaps almost as likely to be dangerous than beneficial. This chapter examines the drastic differences between the ways that household authors discussed wives and the ways in which they discussed servants and the respective merits and contributions of these persons within the household.

Mutuality of Husbands and Wives

Wives were commonly believed to be the partners and helpers of their husbands. Fitzherbert considered wives capable of representing their husbands in the interactions between the household and the market. He advised wives to “make a trew rekenyng and accompt to her husbände/ what she hath recyved and what she hath payed.” Husbands were given the same advice: “And if the husbände go to the market to bye or to sell as they oft do: he than to shew his wyfe in lyke maner/ for if one of them should use to disceyve the other: he disceyveth himself

and he is nat likely to thrive and therefore thei must be true eyther to other.”¹⁵² The mutual accountability that Fitzherbert recommends is a clear indication of a financial partnership. The fact that Fitzherbert extended this responsibility only to wives and not to servants is evidence that he considered wives to be more trustworthy, which made them more useful in the management of the household. Xenophon’s text also stressed the importance of wives and the value of mutuality in a household. The wife, who is compared to a queen bee (“maistress bee”), is responsible for overseeing domestic servants and ordering of the house and household goods.¹⁵³ The role of the wife is seen as being so important that to be wifeless is to labor in vain without her to “kepeth and bestoweth” the fruits of the husband’s labor. In the *Treatise of Houshold* the wife is described as the most trustworthy member of the household, occupying a position of authority greater than all of the servants.¹⁵⁴ As essential as the role of the wife was to the survival of the household, her role was still dependent on the labors of her husband: without his work she would have little to either keep or bestow. This arrangement was dependent on both of their labors; they were mutually responsible for the survival of the household: they were partners.

Tusser agreed that there was a clear union between husbandry and housewifery.¹⁵⁵ Even

¹⁵² Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrie*, 50.

¹⁵³ Eva Crane, *The World History of Beekeeping and Honey Hunting* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 569, 590. It has been noted that, so far as rhetoric was concerned, Ancient Greek writers cared little if the large bee that seemed to direct the hive was actually male or female. Xenophon, in particular, described the head of the hive as both male and female in different writings. It seems likely that in the *Oeconomicus* Xenophon was projecting his belief in the importance of the wife onto bees to create a metaphor. In other words, Xenophon believed that the wife was the ruler within the home, and thus he imagined it was the same for bees. Sixteenth century English readers may have understood this metaphor in these terms, as there was clearly an extant tradition of literature in which the wife was idealized as the director of household labor and production. However, on a biological level, this metaphor would have fallen equally short for both Ancient Greek and early-modern English readers. Until 1586 (when Luis Mendez de Torres first suggested that the large bee was female and the mother of all the bees in the colony) Aristotle—who proposed a male head of the hive—remained unchallenged in European apiology.

¹⁵⁴ Xenophon, *Treatise of Houshold*, 11, 20-29.

¹⁵⁵ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 4, 6, 75.

though the labors of the husband and the wife were separate, they were both essential, and it was the duty of a “good husband” to provide those things that the wife needed to contribute to the household.¹⁵⁶ Even though they were separate, they were not isolated. The wife, along with the husband, was to have some say in what animals (cows or goats) were to be kept in the dairy. For their contributions to the household, Tusser advised, wives should receive one tenth “for needeful things.” This was a separate portion from the tenth to go to “Thy selfe and chylde.”¹⁵⁷ The implication here is that the contribution of the wife to the household was equal to that of the householder, or at least equally deserving of sharing in the fruits of the household’s labor.¹⁵⁸ Beyond this, servants and workmen together were to share a single tenth, which is to say that the wife’s contribution was roughly valued, by Tusser, as the same as that of all of the servants and workmen employed. Even in a single servant household, this would have been a meaningful value attached to the labor of the wife.

The importance of mutuality was stressed far more strongly in the husbandry manuals than in the other domestic advice texts; and in fact, wives are seldom mentioned by Whitford and the anonymous author of *A Glasse* (neither of whom wrote for agricultural households), with the latter author stressing only the separation between the role of the husband and that of the wife:

Also, the charge of the governau[n]ce of [the] house, ye maye in maner geve wholly to your wyfe, [and] as ye would [that] she should not muche entermedle in your marchau[n]dise or bysnes which is done out of the house or out of her roome. . . . So it is not semyng that you greatly busye your selfe in thynges of the house [be]longyng to [her] charge as many woma[n]ly men do, whiche wyllynglye withoute cumelynes come under the sub[j]eccio[n] of theyr wyves.¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁶ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 45, 50.

¹⁵⁷ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 56. One tenth was to go to each of the following: 1) rent, 2) seed, 3) church tithes, 4) “for harvest sicke an sycht,” 5) “ploughwrite, cartwrite, knacker, smith,” 6) plow animals, 7) “servants and workemans wagis,” 8) “for filbelly, day by day,” 9) “thy wife for needful things doth crave,” and 10) “thy selfe and chylde.”

¹⁵⁸ Or perhaps more, since the householder’s share was directed also to the maintenance of his children as well.

¹⁵⁹ Anon., *A Glasse*, 27.

He said that there was more that could be said, but to do so would be “tedious.” Cleaver too adhered to a firmly “separate spheres” distinction between the labors of the husbands and wives: “It beseemeth not the mistresse to be master, no more than it becommeth the master to be mistresse: but both must saile with their owne winde, and both keepe their standing.”¹⁶⁰ Nevertheless, Cleaver clearly elevated the role of the wife over that of the servant and emphasized the importance of her contributions. She was the vice-governor (“gouvernesse”) of the household and there was nothing that could add grater “commoditie and profit” to the household than a good wife.¹⁶¹

It is significant that there is a clear distinction between the husbandry manuals and the other household books on the importance of mutuality in a marriage. Why this should be is not entirely evident. It likely results from the greater need of the agricultural household to store and preserve food. Tasks of this nature—such as baking, brewing, and cheese making—were the labors of wives and the female servants they oversaw. The importance of these tasks is self-evident and readily affirmed in the literature: “Where brewing is nedefull, be brewer thy selfe,/ what filleth the roofe, will helpe furnish the shelve./ [...] One bushell wel brewed, out lasteth some twaine,/ two troubles for nothing, is cost to no gaine.”¹⁶² Cleaver, though not author of a husbandry manual, still emphasized that the maintenance of a household was an essentially mutual process: “The care and burthen to maintaine their familie is common to them both: yet so, as properly the husband is to get it, and to bring it in, and the wife order and dispose of it.”¹⁶³ In a household that did not produce its own food—such as that of an urban merchant or tradesman—this function of the wife would have been eliminated or greatly reduced. Without

¹⁶⁰ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 223.

¹⁶¹ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 15, 155.

¹⁶² Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, (77).

¹⁶³ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 186.

this important contribution to the household, the perceived value of the wife was diminished and her status—based on mutual need—would have likewise been minimized. The wife was generally seen as a partner of her husband, but this was not the case for servants. In only one instance in the examined household books did an author suggest that servants were to be partners in their master’s labors. This is found in the anonymous *A Glasse*, which is also the text that most strongly marginalized the role of the wife in the household.¹⁶⁴

Education and “The Wives Know”

The education of wives had a different purpose and character from that of servants. As discussed in the previous chapter, the education of servants was essentially limited to morality. The education of wives included the same basic moralities, but there was more to their education than just this: there was also a practical dimension to their education. Beyond this, there was even the idea that they may bring to the household their own set of knowledge and skills. The extra attention paid to the training of wives speaks to the importance of the economic role of wives within the household. By articulating these ideas, the authors of household books believed that the education of wives was too important to be left to common knowledge or custom.

Whitford’s advice that every member of the household should be instructed in prayer applied no less to wives than to the children and servants of the household.¹⁶⁵ The role of the husband in the religious instruction of the wife is emphasized further in *A Glasse*, where the issue is addressed directly. The author of *A Glasse* advised the reader to ensure that his wife—the mother of his children—loved God, which the author believed would be difficult at first. However, if the reader provided a good enough example (words were insufficient) a woman

¹⁶⁴ Anon., *A Glasse*, 14.

¹⁶⁵ Whitford, *A Werke*, 8.

would be able to follow it.¹⁶⁶ While this all seems very similar to the role of the master in educating servants, it differed in purpose. The main concern with the moral education of children and servants was to keep them from sin and to ensure that they were productive members of society. The moral education of wives, on the other hand, was important so that she could be a moral instructor in her own right. For the author of *A Glasse* the wife was, above all else, the mother of the householder's children.¹⁶⁷ The suggestion that children were to be "induced" to love God in the same way as one induces a wife (by example) indicates that the moral instruction of the wife was very significant in the long-run, as it directly influenced the moral upbringing of their children. For Cleaver, it was a duty of the wife to teach "good things" and to instruct the children and young people of the household in basic morality.¹⁶⁸

Practical education played a major role in *Xenophons Treatise of Houshold*; not only the education of wives but the instructing of servants to hold high rank also.¹⁶⁹ The importance of training servants, especially "bailiffs of husbandry" can be seen in the passage, "For he that can teache men howe to rule [supervise], he can make them maisters, and he that can make them maisters, can make the[m] princelyke and able to be kings."¹⁷⁰ While this credits the instruction of servants with a greater importance than do the other texts, it must still be considered in relation to the importance afforded to the education of wives. As mentioned previously, Xenophon believed that wives were to be as queen bees in the household, directing the labor of

¹⁶⁶ Anon., *A Glasse*, 23.

¹⁶⁷ Anon., *A Glasse*, 23.

¹⁶⁸ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 60.

¹⁶⁹ Pomeroy, *Oeconomicus*, 171-77; also 81 on the updating of Xenophon's text. Unlike in most instances throughout the work where Pomeroy uses "slaves" while Hervet used "servants" there is no indication from Pomeroy's translation that the men who were to be trained as bailiffs ("foremen" in Pomeroy) were slaves. That these seem to have been free men in the original *Oeconomicus* seems to be a subtlety neglected by Hervet. Thus, even though a reader of the *Oeconomicus* may assume that bailiffs or foremen were to come from a higher social rank than servants (slaves), the *Treatise of Houshold* should not be seen as implying this.

¹⁷⁰ Xenophon, *Treatise of Household*, 38, 40-44, esp. 43.

domestic servants and in charge of keeping and bestowing the fruits of the householder's labor. Be that as it may, wives were not seen as entering into marriage with these skills. In a dialog between Socrates and the "good man" Isomachus, Socrates asked him if his wife had known how to maintain their household when they were married. Isomachus answered,

Howe coude she have ben so, whan she was but fiftene yere olde, wha[n] I maryed her? And afore she hadde ben so negligently brought up [and had no worldly experience]. And I [trust] ye would not thynke it sufficente in her, if she coude do nothyng but spin and carde, and sette the hande maydens to worke.¹⁷¹

Thus, Isomachus himself had to teach his wife how she could "increase" their house.¹⁷² Just as it was for Xenophon, the responsibility of the husband to instruct the wife, it was his fault if she should "destroy utterly the hous," due to his failure to teach her. If, however, he did teach her and she was the cause of ruin, it was to be seen as her fault.¹⁷³ While there are some issues of contextualization here—English women of the sixteenth century did not typically marry this young—the text still clearly relates that wives must be taught, and that teaching them is an absolute imperative for successful householders.¹⁷⁴ Unlike both Xenophon and the sixteenth-century English moralists, the authors of husbandry manuals did not stress moral education or practical training in any significant way. This was true for wives as well as for servants. In spite of this lack of attention to education, some authors connected wives to important skills that they themselves claimed not to have. Fitzherbert, for example, connected wives and practical knowledge in a way that the domestic moralists did not. Before beginning his instructions to wives, he claimed that he lacked the experience to provide detailed instructions, and later, when

¹⁷¹ Pomeroy, *Oeconomicus*, 139. Xenophon, *Treatise of Houshold*, 21. Pomeroy's translation suggests that the wife was sheltered in her parent's house, rather than neglected.

¹⁷² Xenophon, *Treatise of Houshold*, 18, 21, 23. Importantly, it was not enough for her to be able to spin and card, the wife needed to be more than just a producer. She need also to be able to order a household, and this—rather than production—was her principle economic function.

¹⁷³ Xenophon, *Treatise of Houshold*, 11.

¹⁷⁴ Loads, "England Under the Tudors," 403. On marriage patterns.

discussing the preparation of flax, wrote, “the wyves know howe.”¹⁷⁵ Owing to his professed lack of experience Fitzherbert wrote not *how* women should work, only *what* they should be doing.¹⁷⁶ It is evidence first that Fitzherbert—who clearly considered himself an expert on the subject of agriculture—was not by extension an expert on housework; and second of all it is a clear statement that there is practical knowledge that is known to wives, but seemingly unknown to husbands. This independence of knowledge suggests an implicit or innate value in the labor and role of wives for possessing skills that husbands simply do not, hence why a man cannot thrive without a wife.

Wives were valuable members of the household, perhaps even the keepers of essential skills known to few, if any, men. This did not mean that wives were the equals of their husbands, and it certainly was not the case that women were the equals of men, even of the same socio-economic group.¹⁷⁷ Cleaver held that wives were the second in command of the household and reminded readers that the wife was both “the crowne of her husband,” and a “free citizen” of the house.¹⁷⁸ On the other hand, the first and second duties that a wife owed to her husband were to “reverence” him and to “submit herselfe and bee obedient unto him.”¹⁷⁹ This suggests a mindset similar to that of the anonymous author of *A Glasse*, who placed his advice on wives under the heading, “The government of your servants and inferiors.” Wives, then, were subordinates of their husbands. This was not a two-tiered hierarchy, however, and even though wives were to be under their husbands, servants were very clearly below the housewife, who was

¹⁷⁵ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrie*, 50.

¹⁷⁶ Whittle, “Housewives and Servants,” 64. Whittle describes Fitzherbert’s advice as “lists.” In general, Whittle’s article provides excellent commentary on the likely disparity between Fitzherbert’s advice to women and the reality of what women of the period actually did.

¹⁷⁷ Bennett, *Ale, Beer, and Brewsters*, 153.

¹⁷⁸ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 215-16.

¹⁷⁹ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 218. The third (and final) duty is that she wear “sober” apparel appropriate to her degree. This is in keeping with the discussion in chapter two about respectability being conveyed through correct clothing.

the “maistresse bee” overseeing the work of those within the house and presumably reporting back to her husband. This was a hierarchy in which some women (wives) outranked most other adults (servants and apprentices) in the household. While wives outranked servants, it is important to remember that this did not imply that women were, as a broad category, privileged. This is evident in the household books, with a crystal clear example coming from *A Glasse*: “[daughters] woulde be brought up in all feare and drede, [with] litle favour shewed them untill they bee of a perfyte age and understanding.”¹⁸⁰ This because, in the same way that the lack of fear in boys would produce ideal characteristics in adulthood, fear would ensure proper timidity in women.¹⁸¹ This is in contrast with the education of sons, something the household books suggest was becoming more important as the century progressed. Sons were to be placed under the guidance of a good master in order to better learn in youth and in order to—perhaps—one day attend university, after which they would be better able to serve the common wealth.¹⁸²

Wives were more valuable in the structure and functioning of the household than were servants, and because of this, held a higher rank in the domestic hierarchy than servants: both male and female. Fitzherbert’s idea that wives already have practical knowledge outside of that possessed by a skilled husbandman directly credits wives with knowledge that they were unlikely to learn from their husbands. Further, the importance and authority of the wife in most of the household books indicates that, even if women were “inferiors,” they were the first among the subordinates in the household. The attention given to the education of wives is not out of a concern for their greater need for instruction stemming from a belief in an inferior female

¹⁸⁰ Anon., *A Glasse*, 40.

¹⁸¹ Anon., *A Glasse*, 40.

¹⁸² Anon., *A Glasse*, 37-41. Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 253, 258, 275. Rhodes, *The Boke of Nurture*, 1, 11. Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 84, 86. Tusser’s comments on education are found in a later edition to his work, further suggesting that the importance of education was increasing as the century passed.

intellect, but rather a further acknowledgment of the value of wives in the household. Likewise, the lack of comparable attention to the education and to the skills of servants in the majority of these texts strongly suggest the value of servants within the household was believed to be less than that of wives.

Servants as a Threat to the Household

The wife was an essential member of the household with great potential to maintain, improve, and increase her house. She was to be a partner in the labors of her husband and his lieutenant in overseeing the workforce that ideals of patriarchy dictated he should have. With one notable exception, this was not the case with servants. Within household books, servants are depicted as being nearly as likely to undo their master's work as to increase it. Servants, in nearly every instance, were subordinates and dependents; they were to receive compensation rather than the due proceeds of a partnership.

For Fitzherbert servants were a source of potential mischief, which is very nearly all that he wrote about servants.¹⁸³ Given that so little is said of servants—or of people in general—by Fitzherbert it is no doubt significant that he chose to warn the reader that servants may be a source of trouble.¹⁸⁴ Tusser warned that servants might abuse animals or steal, and the fear of theft was most pronounced when dealing with cereal agriculture and milling.¹⁸⁵ He also advised the reader to see that workers were not “loitering.”¹⁸⁶ Dairy maids in particular were seen as a potential source of loss. Tusser believed they were superfluous, as a “good huswife” should know how to make cheese, and one who had to rely on another to make it would see half of the cheese lost before ever it was made. In a strongly worded verse (“Rough Esau was hearie, from

¹⁸³ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrie*, [48].

¹⁸⁴ McRae, *God Speed*, 143. McRae also notes the lack of people in Fitzherbert's work.

¹⁸⁵ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 24, 53, 73, 88.

¹⁸⁶ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 34, 55, 73.

top to the foot:/ if cheese so appeareth, call Cisley a slut [slob].”) Tusser described how cheese should not be, with advice to chastise or punish the dairy maid if cheese was undesirable.¹⁸⁷ Tusser concluded that bad cheese was “Of market abhorred, to houshold, a grieffe: to master and mistresse as ill as a thiefe.”¹⁸⁸ Cleaver, too, warned of the potential for servants to harm the household if not diligently supervised. He wrote: “Except you have rare servants, and such as truly feare God, and have good consciences, trust not further then you see, except necessitie drive you.”¹⁸⁹ Citing the work of St. Bernard, Whitford and the author of *A Glasse* advised masters to “have therefore a good eye/ and garde unto the diligence of your servants/ for under them your goods may soone [diminished]/ [and] be wasted.”¹⁹⁰ The fear of economic losses related to servants is easily understood, given that household production was not merely a source of income, but rather the principle means of survival: a bad servant, one who could not be trusted to work independently, was not simply a source of lost revenue, but a source of potential famine or financial ruin.

The authors of household books considered servants to be a threat to the moral, as well as financial, well-being of the household. For Whitford, the greatest potential harm servants could do was to corrupt the children of the householder: “above all thynges/ take hede and care in what co[m]pany your chylder be[n] nourysshed [and] brought up.”¹⁹¹ While this obviously extends beyond servants, it does seem to have a special relevance for servants, especially those who would have had close interactions with the children. This concern was shared by Cleaver. The

¹⁸⁷ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 46. While “slut” *could* have a sexual connotation in the sixteenth century, this was not an essential aspect of the word. In the sixteenth century “slut” often meant “A woman of dirty, slovenly, or untidy habits or appearance.” (*Oxford English Dictionary*). Tusser may have meant to evoke moral shortcomings, but more likely he was using a convenient rhyme for a careless or sloppy person. This line is only one of a short poem on the subject of cheese quality.

¹⁸⁸ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 46.

¹⁸⁹ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 87.

¹⁹⁰ Anon., *A Glasse*, 53. Whitford, *A Werke*, 29. Whitford’s wording is used here.

¹⁹¹ Whitford, *A Werke*, 5.

third duty that he believed servants owed their masters was to, “not corrupt the wife, sons, or daughters or fellow servants.”¹⁹² The author of *A Glasse* also worried about the corrupting influences of servants upon the sons of householders. Sons, he advised, should accompany their fathers while at home to learn from their example, rather than spending time with servants and following their example.¹⁹³ The author also advised readers that it only took one bad servant to “corrupte al the houshold,”¹⁹⁴ It is not clear in the majority of these sources what exactly it was that household authors feared would come of the influence of servants on children. Even *A Glasse* is vague, only proffering that children may learn “manners” from servants rather than from their fathers. At first this seems to be an element of classism. Class seems unlikely to be the sole consideration however, considering that a substantial number servants (such as Thomas Tusser) were themselves from respectable households. It seems more likely that these authors were concerned with age specific behaviors. As is mentioned above, several of the authors of household literature feared that vices such as gambling and drinking were more prevalent—or at least more destructive—among youths. The fear of the corruption of youth by servants was then a fear of a prolonged youth: a fear that the householder’s children (most importantly his sons) would become idle and not become full, patriarchal men. Sexual corruption is not mentioned directly in any of the sources, but is likely alluded to by Cleaver, “not corrupt the wife... or daughters.” If there was a male servant “sexually corrupting” the wife, daughters, or female servants, it would have been a direct threat to the patriarchal standing of the householder—not merely as a husband and father—but also a challenge to the dominant masculinity of the

¹⁹² Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 378.

¹⁹³ Anon., *A Glasse*, 38.

¹⁹⁴ Anon., *A Glasse*, 49.

household as the only male in the household who was, ideally, to have sexual privileges in the household.

Within these examples of household literature servants were considered a potential threat to the economic viability and especially the moral well-being of the household. There are rare admissions that not all servants were a threat, Fitzherbert wrote: “And he that hath two true servaunts: a man servaunt/ and another woman servaunt he hath a great treasure: for a true servaunt woll do [j]ustly himself/ and if he se his felowes do a mysse/ he woll shew his maister therof.”¹⁹⁵ And the anonymous author of *A Glasse*, who warned against so many dangers of servants, wrote “If ye have a true servaunte [and] a faythfull, love hym as youre sonne, let hym knowe your favoure that he may bee an example to his felowes.”¹⁹⁶ However, aside from the rare acknowledgement of the value of a “true servant,” it is clear that these authors did not think that there were many servants who were trustworthy or “true” enough to actually benefit the household, they believed many were more likely to steal from or in other ways harm the household. So why have them then? Aside from the need for labor addressed above, one must also consider the obligation of householders to provide for the moral education of their servants. If the householder successfully tended to (or believed he was tending to) the moral education of an especially deviant group, it would have no doubt enhanced his standing (at least as far as he was concerned), as measured by the ability and willingness to instruct his household in morality. In other words, by villifying servants, the authors of domestic advice literature were offering an easier route to patriarchal manhood by singling out a group that was most in need of moral education, the successful moral education of which would have reflected very well upon their masters. Aside from this, it is important to not totally overlook the simple cautionary value of

¹⁹⁵ Fitzherbert, *Boke of Husbandrie*, 48.

¹⁹⁶ Anon., *A Glasse*, 49.

such statements. Even if these were overstatements of the dangers of servants, they did warn readers of real perils and perhaps encouraged vigilance through fear.

Wives occupied a place of significance in the ideal household of most of the authors examined. A wife could be a partner in her husband's labors and second only to him in terms of household authority, as well as in access and control over labor and capital. On the other hand, wives were sometimes seen as intellectual children who needed much instruction to achieve this standing. Nevertheless, their value in the household was clear. A majority of the texts examined expounded on the importance of a good wife who could help to increase the house. Wives outranked servants in the household hierarchy, even the male servants. Such a system is a strong challenge to the notion that *all* men benefited more from patriarchy than *all* women. Rather, wives were honored above and received greater benefit from the power structure of this patriarchy than some—if not many—men.

Conclusion: Patriarchy in Review and Continuity in the Face of Change

The patriarchal codes of manhood developed by the authors of household books were a system of hierarchical relationships that evaluated individuals on far more than just gendered grounds. Men were the ultimate benefactors in this system. The absolute highest station in this hierarchy was the husband, the *paterfamilias* who was to reign in his household with “more authoritie than a king in his kingdome.”¹⁹⁷ Not all men were able to hold this power however. There were highly restrictive requirements that many, perhaps most, men would never have been able to meet in their lifetimes. Above all, to be a patriarch, a man had to be economically independent. There were relatively few universal guidelines to what this meant, but in general a man had to have a means to support himself and his dependents. Additionally—both as an outward display of his economic viability and as an essential means to secure it—a man had to have access to subordinate laborers: servants, workers, children, a wife. Beyond this even, he had to embrace a set of moral virtues that were indicative of patriarchal manhood. It was not enough, however, that he lived by these standards: he had to compel others to do the same. Certainly, not all men could live up these standards; surely not all men wanted to. For those who either could not or would not conform, there would have been no shortage of ways for other, more patriarchal men to challenge their moral standing, their manhood, and their access to the economic dominion of the hegemonic class of patriarchal men. Nonconforming men were eligible to be denounced as unthrifty or unrespectable; their precarious or simply dependent economic condition would have served to justify these critiques.

In this system of patriarchy, the second most highly honored member of the household was the wife, who was to act as the chief lieutenant under her husband, directing labor and

¹⁹⁷ Cleaver, *Godlie Forme*, 176.

managing the goods of the household. Her morality was suspect on the grounds of her sex, but even so, she was believed to be a teacher of morality, not a source of moral decay or corruption. Within the realm of household literature and the code of patriarchy expounded by its authors, the housewife was the economic and moral superior of many men. This does not mean that this code of patriarchy benefited women, at least not as a group. On the contrary, while some male servants could have hoped to one day be husbands and householders in their own right, women reached the apex of their power by accepting a role as the first among the subordinates of the household. A female servant could hope to improve her condition through marriage, but not to the same extent of her male peers.

From the beginning to the end of this period, the core values of patriarchy seen in household literature remained consistent. The group of sources considered in this thesis represents the works of Catholics and Protestants written both before and after of the Reformation. Despite this, the way in which these authors conceptualized both patriarchy and the idealized patriarch (i.e. patriarchal masculinity) was hardly any different in 1598 than it had been in 1523. That is not to say that changes are not evident in these sources. On the contrary, these sources provide ample evidence to changes occurring in England as well as the tastes and attitudes of the English people in the sixteenth century. Urbanization and economic diversification are evidenced by the fact that the household could not be universally conceptualized as an agricultural entity. Changes to rural architecture (houses separated from agricultural buildings) is seen in Tusser's recommendation that a "good husband" have sheds and barns.¹⁹⁸ Similarly, the addition of hops to Tusser's work only in 1573 (over twenty years after

¹⁹⁸ Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points*, 51.

original publication) is evidence of increased beer production and consumption.¹⁹⁹ Changes in attitudes towards the English language can even be seen. Writing in 1523, Fitzherbert peppered his writing with lengthy Latin quotations followed by English translations. By the end of the century, Latin was almost completely absent from the household books. Cleaver's *Godly Forme* has only, at most, a handful of Latin words and phrases (notably *paterfamilias*).

Thus, while England and the English people changed, English patriarchy remained generally consistent throughout the sixteenth century. This is in keeping with the findings of other historians who have examined a far lengthier historical period.²⁰⁰ Given the establishment of a pattern of continuation and consistency in the nature and quality of English masculinities throughout the early modern period, it is highly likely that the values seen in the household books of Fitzherbert, Tusser, Whitford, Cleaver, and others are indicative of patterns of continuity in the values of patriarchal masculinity in both the centuries following and in the centuries preceding the sixteenth century. Should this be the case—if patterns of masculinity were consistent throughout the medieval and early modern periods—it would raise questions about the hard line that is sometimes seen to exist between the medieval and early modern worlds. It would also invite questions about the continuity of patterns of masculinity (and of gender in general) for an even greater period. The similarities observed in this thesis between the very accessible ideals of several sixteenth-century English moralists and Xenophon—an ancient Greek philosopher—observed in this thesis are at the heart of these questions: Is the continuity

¹⁹⁹ Thomas Tusser, *Five Hundreth Points of Good Husbandry United To as Many of Good Huswiferie, First Devised [and] Nowe Lately Augmented With Diverse Approved Lessons Concerning Hopps [and] gardning, and Other Needful Matters, Together With an Abstract Before Every Moneth, Containing the Wholt Effect of the Sayd Moneth with a Table [and] a Pereface in the Beginning Both Necessary to Be Reade, For the Better Understanding of the Booke*. (London: Rychard Tottell, 1573. Early English Books Online. STC (2nd ed.)/ 24377. Throughout this thesis I have used the 1574 edition (STC 24377), however the 1573 edition is the earliest that I have seen with hops mentioned in the title.

²⁰⁰ Harvey and Shepard, "What Have Historians Done?" 279.

observed in these sources the product of a deliberate attempt to emulate older models? Over how great a period does this continuity exist? Were these patterns maintained in the nearly two millennia between Xenophon and the English authors examined here, or were they—like so much ancient thought—rediscovered in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries? These questions merit serious examination and their answers are important not only for the history of masculinity and of gender, but for understanding how ideas are developed and maintained throughout history.

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