

General Editor's Preface

Helen Ostovich, McMaster University

Performance assumes a string of creative, analytical, and collaborative acts that, in defiance of theatrical ephemerality, live on through records, manuscripts, and printed books. The monographs and essay collections in this series offer original research which addresses theatre histories and performance histories in the context of the sixteenth and seventeenth century life. Of especial interest are studies in which women's activities are a central feature of discussion as financial or technical supporters (patrons, musicians, dancers, seamstresses, wigmakers, or 'gatherers'), if not authors or performers *per se*. Welcome too are critiques of early modern drama that not only take into account the production values of the plays, but also speculate on how intellectual advances or popular culture affect the theatre.

The series logo, selected by my colleague Mary V. Silcox, derives from Thomas Combe's duodecimo volume, *The Theater of Fine Devices* (London, 1592), Emblem VI, sig. B. The emblem of four masks has a verse which makes claims for the increasing complexity of early modern experience, a complexity that makes interpretation difficult. Hence the corresponding perhaps uneasy rise in sophistication:

Masks will be more hereafter in request,
And grow more deare than they did heretofore.

No longer simply signs of performance 'in play and jest', the mask has become the 'double face' worn 'in earnest' even by 'the best' of people, in order to manipulate or profit from the world around them. The books stamped with this design attempt to understand the complications of performance produced on stage and interpreted by the audience, whose experiences outside the theatre may reflect the emblem's argument:

Most men do use some colour'd shift
For to conceal their craftie drift.

Centuries after their first presentations, the possible performance choices and meanings they engender still stir the imaginations of actors, audiences, and readers of early plays. The products of scholarly creativity in this series, I hope, will also stir imaginations to new ways of thinking about performance.



Early Modern Academic Drama

Edited by

Jonathan Walker
Portland State University, USA

and

Paul D. Sirenfert
University of Texas at Tyler, USA

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CHAPTER 6

Fantastical Distempers: The Psychopathology of Early Modern Scholars

Sarah Knight

During the final decades of the sixteenth century, the Universities of Cambridge and Oxford witnessed an unprecedented explosion of satirical drama on college stages. The writers of university comedies relied on in-jokes, on a communal sense of texts enjoyed or endured as part of the academic curriculum, and also, more subtly, on shared professional and epistemological concerns facing both the student and the scholar. These erudite authors used comedy to discuss the effects that learning could have on scholars, drawing on contemporary writing on the humours, particularly those texts which discussed the emotional and intellectual repercussions of study on an individual's temperament. Through the exploration of psychopathology, university comedy and satire—rather than just offering recondite inkhorn entertainment for a college microcosm—deliberated on questions of contemporary epistemological value and on currents of institutional pedagogical reform. Both in these academic plays and in contemporary psychopathological writing, university authors discussed the social problem of graduate overproduction, linking this phenomenon explicitly with the perception that higher education was an inadequate preparation for life on graduation. At the same time, these writers represented the epistemological problem of how learning was thought to induce melancholy and dangerous fantasy. Authors who offered a discussion of such topics include Robert Burton, academic playwright and anatomist of melancholy; Thomas Tomkis, author of the Cambridge comedy *Lingua*; and the anonymous authors of the influential *Parnassus* trilogy, to name but a few.

These plays also reflected contemporary theatrical trends such as the late Elizabethan fashion for “humours” comedy, instigated by commercial London-based dramatists such as Ben Jonson. Taking Hippocratic and Galenic pathology as its foundational conceit, humours comedy rests on the idea that human personality is formed by a preponderance of a particular humour—blood, phlegm, yellow bile, or black bile—which in turn dictates both psychological temperament and physiological constitution, rendering the individual either sanguine, phlegmatic, choleric, or melancholic.¹ From Jonson's *Every Man in his Humour* (1598) onwards, many playwrights used this pathological system as

a framework for dramatic characterisation. Academic drama provided an ideal forum for representing pressing issues facing the contemporary scholar, especially the impact his education had on his intellectual and social formation, as well as his prospects either within the university or upon graduation from it. The picture that emerges from these plays is complex and dark, as college dramatists link the melancholic humour in particular to the fate of scholars, debating at the same time the value and status of higher education at the end of the sixteenth and dawn of the seventeenth centuries.

When we consider psychopathological treatises, college plays, and key educational treatises such as Francis Bacon's *The Advancement of Learning* (1605) alongside each other, we gain insight into how ambivalent and, frequently, how potentially dispiriting for their writers and intended audiences these early modern representations of the epistemological and pedagogical aspects of higher education could be. These depictions of the psychopathological effects of learning engage both with the social problem of overproduction of university graduates and with the epistemological problems criticised by Bacon: according to Bacon's *Advancement*, young minds are especially susceptible to fantasy and melancholy unless effectively trained, a view we see represented in university plays such as Tomkis's *Lingua* (1607) and Barten Holyday's *Technogamia* (1617). The central problem examined in the psychopathological treatises and represented in the plays is that scholars were facing new difficulties and challenges at the turn of the seventeenth century. Consequently, academic writers argued both that psychologically dangerous influences such as the writing of poetry needed to be curbed, and that the higher educational system needed to be changed. They addressed this central problem using different methods of argumentation and representation, such as formal pedagogical critique, as we see in the *Advancement*, and as vivid onstage delineation of the problems students and graduates faced, as we see in several college plays of the 1590s and early seventeenth century, particularly in the *Parnassus* trilogy. For those philosophers and dramatists interested in the status of higher education during the early seventeenth century, the social and the epistemological seemed inextricably linked, and both appeared distinctly problematic.

The Humours on College Stages

Just as humanist academic playwrights earlier in the sixteenth century had adapted Plautus and Terence to a specifically academic setting, so later writers at Oxford and Cambridge mapped the humours onto the university world they knew. The *Parnassus* trilogy, performed at St. John's College, Cambridge, at the turn of the seventeenth century, shows how humours psychology became increasingly important in academic drama. In the Prologue to *The Second Part of the Return from Parnassus* (circa 1601), for instance, the character Defensor explains to the student audience what the play has to offer: "some humors you shall see aymed at,

if not well resembled," acknowledging that academic humours come with a counterpart.² Although not a comedy at the time, the incorporation and subsequent development of pathological theories. Perhaps specifically interested in the affect scholars. Consequently, we see the theatrical representation relevant to the early modern anatomist Robert Burton as to scholars.³ What emerges from increasing anxiety about the men and preparing them for walls. University comedy of on this phenomenon of scholastic adolescent mind. The representation corresponds to the wish both a dearth of jobs and a of their education.

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if not well resembled," acknowledging the debt to the London stage and implying that academic humours comedy will perhaps lack the lustre of its metropolitan counterpart.² Although not necessarily more complex in its characterisation, humours comedy at the universities was certainly more sophisticated in its incorporation and subsequent representation of contemporary psychological and pathological theories. Perhaps unsurprisingly, the authors of these plays were specifically interested in the aspects of humours pathology that were perceived to affect scholars. Consequently, in academic comedy written during this period, we see the theatrical representation of one aspect of humours pathology particularly relevant to the early modern universities: melancholia, described by its Jacobean anatomist Robert Burton as the "common maule" and "inseparable companion" of scholars.³ What emerges from a consideration of these plays is an impression of increasing anxiety about the suitability of the educational system for training young men and preparing them for life, either within university precincts or outside its walls. University comedy offers a particularly interesting and complex perspective on this phenomenon of scholarly melancholia and the effect of learning on the adolescent mind. The representation of these symptoms and their causes on college stages corresponds to the widespread phenomenon of university graduates fearing both a dearth of jobs and a lack of opportunities for the appropriate deployment of their education.

This onstage representation of humours led in turn to a discussion of the problems facing contemporary scholars: a scholar's temperament, such plays suggest, results partly from his essential nature and partly from assimilation to the difficult circumstances many university men faced on graduation from the academic microcosm. The overproduction of university graduates in the late Elizabethan and the Jacobean periods, which has long been identified as an "economic problem of the church,"⁴ was also of course a problem of the higher educational system and was discussed as such both by university graduates and by their contemporaries still ensconced within the academy. Crucial to this discussion was a debate over whether originality and creativity could stand the graduate in as good stead as a traditional education. Some dramatists took a sympathetic view of this phenomenon: in the *Parnassus* trilogy (circa 1598–1601), for instance, the playwrights represent how inadequately an early modern humanist education had prepared graduates for the world outside college precincts. Other dramatists, such as Holyday in his play *Technogamia*, adopt a more conservative stance, representing the imagination in their plays as directly antithetical to learning and genuine scholarship.

No clear picture emerges from these plays of how a young man's imagination might be either detrimental or valuable, yet this lack of representational clarity reveals a central uncertainty among contemporary writers and thinkers about how best to prepare a young man to enter the world outside the university. Such uncertainty suggests that no obvious solution existed either for the epistemological problem of young men ill-equipped by their education for a useful public life, or for the social problem of an excess of such young men pouring out of the

universities and seeking positions. Bacon's *Advancement* represents one attempt to posit a clear solution, as we shall see, but the majority of other writers tackling the same issue—particularly authors of psychopathological treatises and of college drama—rather lament this socio-epistemological problem, however colourfully and intricately, instead of suggesting constructive and determined ways of solving it.

University playwrights such as Tomkis, Holyday, and the anonymous authors of the *Parnassus* trilogy, then, converted the contemporary commercial theatrical trend for humours comedy into erudite, allusive college plays that sought to explore the individual psychopathologies of students and scholars. Incorporated into these plays are equally significant meditations on epistemology and literary composition, unique to drama fomented in the intellectual and theatrical milieu of the universities. However inconclusive such meditations might be, through a close study of these plays we see how pertinent such questions were both to the dramatists and, we can assume, to the college audience. These university plays were not abstracted, precious entertainments far removed from the world of economic and social exigency but were, instead, vivid and urgent evocations of contemporary problems facing the scholar and, more specifically, the graduate. Dramatic representations of what was popularly thought to be the scholar's governing humour, melancholia, provided both a compelling exploration of an issue particularly pressing for members of the college audience, and an unprecedented means of depicting a fashionable strand in contemporary epistemological and medical theory.

Directly related to such representations of melancholia on the college stage is the debate over the proper role of the fantasy or imagination, which melancholia was commonly believed to fuel: this idea was derived from classical authorities and pillars of the curriculum such as Aristotle (regarding human thought and behaviour) and Quintilian (regarding the proper use of rhetoric) on φαντασία or *phantasia* (literally, in Greek and Latin, a "making visible"). This term also came to mean the mind's power to place objects before itself, or, more simply, the faculty of imagination.⁵ In addition, early modern academic drama demonstrates a certain anxiety about the value of learning and the social significance of intellectual and cognitive functions, which related to the ongoing debate among students and recent graduates about how valuable a university education actually was in preparing its alumni for life in the real world, particularly in terms of finding professional employment. As a result, questions over the relevance of imagination and creativity in a world depicted as pragmatic and avaricious outside the university walls were debated on college stages, and the conclusions reached were frequently ambivalent, especially in the *Parnassus* trilogy, which offers a bleak account of several university students' efforts to find jobs upon graduation as well as a concerted critique of humanist educational methods.

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The Psychopathology of Learning and Imagination

College dramatists drew both on contemporary psychopathological treatises and on the depiction of the humours on the commercial stage so that they could structure and deepen their representations of onstage melancholia. These treatises were the first to link melancholy with excessive fantasy, and the diagnoses of scholarly "weakness" they provide can be helpfully associated with how, in college plays, students and scholars were represented as sharply conscious of their own psychological fragility and social inadequacy. The influence of medical literature on university plays resulted in varying degrees of subtlety and profundity in treatment, and it met with differing kinds of dramatic success. In other media, although not yet in academic drama, by the end of the sixteenth century the equation of dedicated learning with melancholia had become almost commonplace, in pictorial art as well as in medical treatises.⁶ One early example is Thomas Newton's *The Touchstone of Complexions* (1576). A grammar school headmaster,⁷ Newton translated the Dutch physician Levinus Lemnius's *De Habitu et Constitutione Corporis* (*On the Condition and Constitution of the Body*), first published in Antwerp in 1561, and describes vividly in his translation the melancholy that particularly plagues "studentes which at vnseasonable times sit at their Bookes and Studies."⁸ Newton, who had attended both Cambridge and Oxford during the 1560s, offers what would become a typical and much-discussed diagnosis of the detrimental effects of too much study:

For through ouermuch agitation of the mynd, natural heat is extinguished, & the Spyrirts aswell Animall as Vitall, attenuate and vanish away: whereby it cometh to passe, that after their vitall iuyce is exhausted, they fall into a Colde & Drye constitution.⁹

This medical theory of the attenuation of heat and vital spirits through overly zealous applications to one's books became fixed and embodied in the humours-based stereotype of the unworldly scholar, which can be located throughout early modern drama from Shakespeare's pedant Holofernes in *Love's Labour's Lost* (circa 1595) to the numerous complex variations on this theme in university plays. We can trace this character type to contemporary psychopathological treatises written by university scholars and recent graduates such as Newton, and so weigh how early modern academic writers—both in medical treatises and in plays—investigated and represented melancholia and its effects, exploring as a consequence the impact this "common maule" of scholars had on the process of literary composition and the epistemological repercussions of university life.

As well as in Newton's translation of the Latin author Lemnius, for the first time in vernacular treatises too we see a representation of the learned as being particularly prone to an excess of black bile and exhibiting its varied symptoms. A few years after *The Touchstone of Complexions* appeared, two Cambridge scholars published their treatises on a similar subject: Timothy Bright¹⁰ published his *Treatise of Melancholie* (1586), followed by Thomas Walkington's *The*

Opticke Glasse of Humours (1607). This trend culminated in Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), the fullest and most searching discussion of the topic. These works and their authors have much in common: Bright, Walkington, and Burton are all careful to present their findings as the results of personal empirical observations of scholarly behaviour, a form of conduct which they expressly argue can develop within academic settings. Both Walkington and Burton, for instance, explicitly locate their discussions within their college studies, Walkington writing "from my study in Saint Iohns" and Burton "From my Studie in Christ-Church Oxon."¹¹ In such treatises, we can view a richly detailed picture of a kind of melancholia that was of particular relevance to those embedded within institutions of higher education. Burton's *Anatomy* is particularly striking in this regard, since his discussion of one of the main symptoms of melancholy forms an important subsection of the work, "Loue of learning, study in excess, with a digression of the misery of Schollers, and why the Muses are melancholy."¹² It is no coincidence that during the same period we can identify a similar phenomenon of scholarly melancholia represented in university comedy. Scholars, both tutors and students, people early modern university comedy and, in academic humours comedies particularly, the pathologies of melancholy scholars are colourfully and searchingly portrayed.

The authors of these plays sought to turn pathological case studies into compelling characters. As a result, in these plays the more vivid, comic, or intriguingly complex symptoms of melancholia are foregrounded and, as in most college plays of the time, the dramatists use characterisation to examine ontological and epistemological issues of particular relevance to the student audience. It is axiomatic that early modern dramatists tailored their plays to fit their audiences, whether they were writing for a raucous group of spectators at an open-air theatre on the south bank of the Thames or for an ostensibly more refined crowd at one of the indoor theatres.¹³ Similarly, playwrights at the universities included elements in their plays that were of particular significance for the demographic of their spectators. Various late Elizabethan debates about how and what to study, and about how and what to write, fuelled these plays, and, significantly, these debates arose from the meditations of men who had recently emerged from either Oxford or Cambridge, such as Thomas Nashe, George Puttenham, and Sir Philip Sidney.¹⁴ As the relatively novel career of professional writer became an appealing—if precarious—option for university graduates, so the relationship between the training one received as a university student and the skills one needed as a professional writer (whether dramatist, pamphleteer, or poet) gained increasingly pressing importance. And so in university comedy at the turn of the seventeenth century we see these debates represented onstage, where abstract pathological and epistemological concepts became personified as dramatic characters. The representation of melancholia and its concomitant symptoms offered a means of exploring the importance and value of learning before a student audience, encompassing too the onstage opportunity to investigate the suitability of a learned mind to engage in profitable or significant literary production.

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To see how these playwrights turned medical symptoms into theatrical characters, we need first to consider the pathological context these medical treatises offered for the representation of scholarly melancholia. One of the most problematic manifestations of melancholia was held to be an over-active imagination, "fantasy," one of the three internal senses located in the brain (along with common sense and memory), and particularly responsible for receiving and processing sensory impressions. According to Bright's *Treatise of Melancholie*, fantasy creates "objects" that cause the thinker to act "against reason."¹⁵ Locating the melancholic humour in the spleen, Bright argues that its "vapours anoyeth the harte and [pass] vp to the brayne," where the mind is grievously affected as the humour "counterfetteth terrible obiectes to the fantasie, and polluting both the substance, and spirits of the brayne, causeth it without externall occasion, to forge monstrous fictions, and terrible to the conceite."¹⁶ Bright outlines the psychological symptoms of the condition, offering an intimate portrait of the melancholic's psyche. "Sometimes it falleth out that melancholie men are founde verie wittie," writes Bright, because "their spirits [...] are instruments of sharpnesse."¹⁷ Bright paints a picture of a melancholic whose imagination is both creative and potentially debilitating. Similarly, among his taxonomy of the "conceits of Melancholy," Walkington defines a type of melancholic, "feculent and adust," that is to say, laden with impurities caused by an excess of the humour and dried up with internal heat, whose "minds also are so out of frame and distraught, that they are in bondage to many ridiculous passions, imagining that they see and feele such things, as no man els can either perceiue or touch."¹⁸ In this particular case, Walkington's description recalls Newton's, showing how black bile can attenuate the vital spirits. These writers describe a specific set of psychological symptoms—sharp and discriminating wit, susceptibility to horrific fancies, and paranoia—which provided a theoretical basis for subsequent representations of melancholic subjectivity.

Both writers' identification of the power that fantasy exerts over the melancholic was particularly important. In medical theory, so in literary criticism: fantasy's function was discussed with similar ambivalence by late Elizabethan critics such as George Puttenham, who ruled in his *Arte of English Poesie* (1589) that fantasy was necessary for literary invention but warned that the would-be writer should not be governed by it:

For as the euill and vicious disposition of the braine hinders the sounde iudgement and discourse of man with busie & disordered phantasies, for which cause the Greekes call him φανταστικός [i.e., φανταστικός, phantastikos], so is that part being well affected, not onely nothing disorderly or confused with any monstrous imaginations or conceits, but very formall, and in his much multiformitie *uniforme*, that is well proportioned, and so passing cleare, that by it as by a glasse or mirrour, are represented vnto the soule all manner of bewtiful visions, whereby the inuentiue parte of the mynde is so much holpen, as without it no man could deuise any new or rare thing.¹⁹

Puttenham's description has much in common with Bright's description in his 1586 *Treatise of Melancholie*. Both writers argue that fantasy can be intellectually or creatively inspirational if well-ordered, and actively damaging if uncontrolled. Bright supplies a medical, humour-based explanation for why fantasy can spin out of control, arguing that melancholy produces overly vivid mental images that disorientate the perceiver, mirroring Puttenham's characterisation of an overly "fantastical" individual's thoughts becoming "disorderly or confused."

In the wake of such discussions, both medical (in the treatises of Bright and Walkington) and poetical (in Puttenham's *Arte*), the psychological and social role of an overly active imagination as a symptom of melancholia, and the influence of both of these mental states on scholarly life, became a central concern of university dramatists. The cognitive ideal, in all of these texts, was for the mind to be "uniforme" and "cleare" (to use Puttenham's terms): that is, for thought to be orderly, transparent, and rational, rather than dangerously motivated by unhinged fantasy. Yet it is the exceptions to this ideal that offered more substance for drama: in the medical treatises as in the college plays, scholarly life is represented as offering temptations towards the perilous soaring of the imagination, as a symptom of a specifically scholarly form of melancholy, and as a form of intellectual excess to which young men were prone.

Fantasy and Allegory in University Plays

The academic plays that treat these themes tended to be written within either an allegorical or a satirical mode. Before turning to how melancholia and fantasy were represented in satire, which was a dominant mode in late Elizabethan and Jacobean academic literary production, it is important to consider first why allegory lent itself to the representation of these themes. Allegory of course offers the opportunity for the personification of abstract concepts, and so we see fantasy (in Renaissance medical terms, an abstract cognitive faculty) start to become embodied in allegorically minded university plays. The idea for personifying the imagination arose from a contemporary poetic representation of the cognitive faculties in Book II of Edmund Spenser's epic romance *The Faerie Queene*. Within his allegory of Temperance, Spenser presents the fantasy explicitly as a force of melancholy. At the very top of Alma's House of Temperance, which represents the human body, live the three internal senses—common sense, memory, and fantasy—and the last poses a distinct threat to the "sober government" of the body and mind.²⁰ As several university dramatists went on to do, Spenser personifies the fantasy as "Phantastes." Spenser's character inhabits a kind of phantasmagoria of the particular cognitive faculty he represents, where illusionistic images are painted on the walls of his chamber, "such as in idle fantasies do flit."²¹ Crucially for future representations of the figure Phantastes within the university, Spenser expressly figures him as a young melancholic man sitting among the flies and alarming paintings: "A man of yeares yet fresh, as mote appere, / Of swarth complexion, and

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of crabbed hew, / That him full of melancholy did shew."²² Spenser links fantasy not only to melancholy but also to poetic invention, representing Phantastes as essential for creativity. In his discussion of the importance of fantasy for the poet, Puttenham admits the possibility that he can retain control of his own imagination and the vividness of his ideas, but Spenser's allegory of the creative imagination offers no such safeguard. Spenser's ambivalence in his depiction of the fantasy set a precedent for literary representations of the interconnections between imagination, melancholy, and language.

A few years later, Spenser's representation of the internal senses directly influenced a play staged at Trinity College, Cambridge. In *The Faerie Queene*, after Phantastes and the other mental faculties are described, the House of Temperance is assaulted by the five senses. In the allegorical comedy *LINGUA: Or The Combat of the Tongue, And the five Senses For Superiority* (1607), the Cambridge playwright Thomas Tomkis expands upon Spenser's discussion of the relationship between the body, the senses, and the intellect.²³ Instead of discussing Tomkis's play in terms of humours theory, some critics have preferred to link *Lingua* either with allegories of the higher educational curriculum, with debate on contemporary psychopathology, or with Spenserian allegory.²⁴ Much more persuasively than these earlier readings, Carla Mazzio has argued that Tomkis shows how *Lingua*, the personification of the tongue and consequently of language, "disrupts the symmetries and hierarchies" of the human body.²⁵ Just as the senses assault Spenser's House of Temperance, Tomkis's play charts *Lingua*'s efforts to enter the hierarchy of the senses. To distract attention from her schemes, she initiates a competition between the five external senses, while the internal senses comment on the action and seek to mediate the in-fighting that punctuates the play.

Even the settings for the play and for the epic romance are the same, for just as Alma's House of Temperance represents the human body, so *Lingua* takes place within the corporeal "Microcosmus." Similarly, Tomkis's Phantastes is clearly indebted to Spenser's creation, even in the description of Phantastes's costume and appearance: among Tomkis's characters, the college drama version of Spenser's young man with a "swarth complexion" becomes something of a dandy, making a vivid visual impact on the Jacobean college stage: "PHANTASTES. A swart complexion'd fellow but quicke-ey'd, in a white Satten dublet of one fashion, [...] and in euery place other od complements."²⁶ Flamboyant outfit and "od complements" aside, in Tomkis's allegory Phantastes is a simultaneously creative and disruptive force, one who exerts a subversive influence upon the mind. Throughout the play, Phantastes is linked with the cognitive and creative aspects of literary invention and, significantly, is also represented as a cause of melancholia.

Tomkis's Phantastes constantly complains that he is being asked for conceits and inventions. In this comedy tailored for student consumption, Tomkis makes explicit the link between the faculty of fantasy and student literary composition, that is, the kind of writing young university men might be supposed to engage in. In an oddly metatheatrical moment, Phantastes tells the other internal senses

that a "Sophister"—an undergraduate in his second or third year of study—has visited him, asking "to borrow a faire sute of conceites [...] to apparreile a shewe he had in hand."²⁷ By including such an obvious nod to his audience and their institutional context, Tomkis invites the student spectators to consider the role of the imagination, the "fantastical" part of the mind, within their own educational and epistemological experience. Tomkis continues to emphasise the link between Phantastes and creativity throughout the drama, as his character bemoans how all kinds of people constantly beset him, particularly poets, writers of ballads, and "Sonnet-mungers":

PHA: Oh heauens, how haue I beene troubled these latter times with Women, Fooles, Babes, Taylers, Poets, Swaggers, Gulls, Ballad-makers, they haue almost disrobed me of all the toyes and trifles I can deuise, were it not that I pittie the poore multitude of Printers, these Sonnet-mungers should starue for conceits, for all *Phantastes*.²⁸

Phantastes represents himself as a nurse of creativity, exhausted by his altruistic efforts to encourage the literary community. Through his ambivalent representation of Phantastes, however, Tomkis encourages his audience and readers to consider whether this dispenser of "Deuices, dreames"²⁹ (in Spenser's words) is really such a beneficial intellectual influence, which might cause us to question the impact of how such a potentially unsettling character, symbolic of a specific mental faculty, might affect young men. In Tomkis's play, fantasy is a dangerous but also an inspirational quality: Phantastes is a figure outside the university, but within the play there is a constant traffic between him and students wanting to borrow conceits. Tomkis's representation of the imagination is more sympathetic than that of many other early modern academic dramatists: he shows that imagination might be marginal to university study itself, but is nonetheless desired by students, and is strongly linked to academic experience.

In *Lingua*, two characters explicitly attribute to Phantastes the ability to cause vivid delusions and mental distress. Towards the end of act 1, the two senses Tactus (Touch) and Olfactus (Smell) argue: Tactus hopes to convince Olfactus that he (Touch) is no longer a threat in the combat of the senses, thereby lulling him into a false sense of security, and so Tactus says that he has become a melancholic, blaming Phantastes for his ailment. One of the play's gulls, Olfactus believes Tactus's story. Indebted to contemporary treatises on melancholia, Tomkis turns Tactus's performance of melancholia into a satirical burlesque of the humour's conventional symptoms. Olfactus notes "how melancholly he lookes."³⁰ Tactus, meanwhile, pretends to meditate upon human fragility and transformation: "Mans life is wondrous brittle," he says, "And many haue beene metamorphosed, / To stranger matters and more vncloth formes."³¹ In a Hamlet-like rhetorical maneuver, Tactus moves in his speech from the general condition of humankind to his own specific case, passing quickly from "What a piece of work is man"-type considerations to a "Man delights not me" assertion, or, in Tactus's case, as a feigned melancholic, nothing in life delights him.³² He locates the origin of

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his mental turmoil: "Lately I came from fine *Phantastes* house," and proceeds to describe the horrific delusions that have since plagued him. Tactus pretends to be convinced that he is made of glass: "when I beheld my fingers: / I sawe my fingers neere transform'd to glasse."³³ From Galen onwards, an overwhelming sense of physical fragility had been seen as one of the primary symptoms of melancholia.³⁴ Walkington details a similar hallucination: "Ther was one possessed with this humour, that tooke a strong conceit, that he was changed into an earthen vessell."³⁵

In these treatises on the melancholic humour, imagined physical frailty signifies a sense of psychological vulnerability often experienced by young men in the academic plays, whether artificially (as in Tactus's charade), or more genuinely. In *Lingua*, through Tactus's cynical pastiche of melancholic symptoms, Tomkis represents at an allegorical level the damaging side-effects of an overactive mind. Olfactus identifies the negative aspects of melancholy and, perhaps most importantly, he singles out the power of the humour to detach its sufferer's thought from reality:

See the strange working of dull mellanchollie,
Whose drossy drying the feeble Braine,
Corrupts the sense, deludes the Intellect.
And in the soules faire table falsly graues,
Whole squadrons of phantasticall *Chimeras*
And thousand vaine immaginations [...]³⁶

Through Olfactus, Tomkis demonstrates an impressive grasp of Galenic pathology, filtered perhaps through contemporary vernacular treatises on the humours, using his knowledge to create a lively comic set-piece.

Yet the psychological implications of this piece of farcical pretence are more disturbing than the comedy might at first appear. *Lingua* offers a representation of how, in the melancholic's mind, "phantasticall *Chimeras*" replace accurate sense-perception and delude the intellect. Tactus's text-book melancholia is only a performance, yet following its Spenserian model, *Lingua* offers an unsettling treatment of the relationship between fantasy and the workings of the intellect. While showing fantasy in many ways as a positive force, Tomkis nonetheless chooses to preserve Spenser's ambivalence by making his *Phantastes* a force both of creation and of confusion. The character's proximity to the academy is emphasised, but his position is not stable, and he becomes a disruptive rather than a helpful influence on the young men and writers he advises. Through *Phantastes*'s encounters with students and writers, Tomkis compels his audience and readers to consider the relationship between scholarship and invention in early modern epistemology. The play offers no comforting conclusions about this relationship, however, and by the end one is uncertain precisely how helpful an active fantasy and store of borrowed conceits acquired by the student writer are intended to seem.

Although ambivalent in its treatment of both learning and imagination, *Lingua* offers perhaps the most nuanced treatment of the character Phantastes that we see on college stages of the period. Later university comedies such as the anonymous Latin play *Susenbrotus*, first performed in 1615/16 by the students of Trinity College, Cambridge, offer a more cartoonish treatment of the personification of fantasy. *Susenbrotus* and the later play *Technogamia* are more conservative in their epistemological arguments, allowing no room for imagination within their view of the traditional academic curriculum, as Tomkis does. Following the tradition of earlier Cambridge plays, *Susenbrotus* contains many elements from Roman New Comedy: the clever slave, love-struck young men, and somewhat opportunistic women.³⁷ Alongside a conventional love plot, the play also charts the efforts of the pedantic grammarian Susenbrotus to produce a play. In the *dramatis personae*, Phantastes is explicitly described as "Poeta," and he is first introduced through the words of another character as one who "speaks poetically, sways poetically, and walks poetically."³⁸ When he finally appears at the beginning of act 3, Phantastes's first words are a quotation from Virgil, attesting to his learning while undermining his claim to originality.

We see a similar behaviour in the third part of the *Parnassus* trilogy when the character Phantasma can only quote Latin tags rather than invent any poetry of his own, whether in Latin or English. Phantastes's function in *Susenbrotus* seems merely to offer inappropriately fulsome quotations from Virgil and Ovid, and to behave as a caricature of a poet: sighing, languishing, scattering words over an indifferent beloved. He is no more ridiculous than most other characters in the play, but compared with Tomkis's unsettling, creative force, this later Phantastes seems flattened and more crudely drawn. Poetic invention in *Susenbrotus* is seen as a subject for mockery, not as a potentially destabilising force that is nonetheless intellectually desirable. As the seventeenth century progresses, the function of fantasy is increasingly represented on the academic stage as both damaging to intellectual endeavour, and as detrimental to the person motivated by it. Plays such as *Susenbrotus* emphasise the creative imagination as a thoroughly unstable force.

The Oxford playwright and translator Barten Holyday offers a personification of fantasy comparable to the Phantastes of *Susenbrotus*. Holyday also presents to his reader a reaction against extra-academic justifications of free-minded poetic invention. Holyday's *TEXNOGAMIA: or The Marriages of the Arts* was first performed at Christ Church in 1617. Like the author of *Susenbrotus*, Holyday relies on masque conventions and departs from the allegorical physical setting of Spenser's House of Temperance and the "Microcosmus" of *Lingua*. By moving from the human body as a setting to the mythic "Insula Fortunata," the blessed island, Holyday shifts the play's emphasis from human psychology and physiology to a more remote and abstract place. In *Technogamia*, too, humours-based characterisation is not employed to such complex effect as it had been in Tomkis's earlier play, and the personification of the inner and external senses is not as carefully rooted in contemporary psychopathological theory. Holyday reduces the character Phantastes to a gaudy fop, whose dramatic purpose is to act merely

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as a foil to Common Sense, and whose representation offers very little in the way of psychological and intellectual ambivalence, as Tomkis's Phantastes had. Holyday's version wears what appears to have become the character's standard elaborate costume, in his

branch'd velvet Jerkin with hanging sleeves button'd and loop'd, a short paire of Breeches, a greene Cloke with siluer lace, lin'd through with velvet, red-silke Stockings, party-colour'd Garter, a low-crownd Hat with broad brims, with a Peacocks feather in it, in a yellow Band, Gloues, and red Pumps.³⁹

By 1617, of course, fabulous costume was a theatrical convention associated with the court masque, and Holyday's use of masque conventions was pronounced in other ways: his play begins with a static *tableau* of "a Heauen, and all the Pure Artes sitting on two semi-circular benches, one aboue another."⁴⁰ Masques, too, tended to end with an imposition of order, and Holyday's adherence to masque convention—in terms both of stagecraft and of harmonious thematic resolution—creates a somewhat more heavily didactic comedy, which perhaps explains why *Technogamia* was disdainfully received by Holyday's contemporaries.⁴¹

Holyday personifies the imaginative faculty to set up fantasy as a rival to the liberal arts and the rigours of the university curriculum; in *Lingua*, Phantastes is associated with intellectual activity and the academy through his involvement with the "Sophister" and the composition of college plays, whereas in *Technogamia*, Phantastes is presented as a subversive element who is *responsible* for contemporary scholarly degradation. He encourages scholars to dress in extravagant clothing and even persuades them to smoke.⁴² To emphasise the point, and to associate the imaginative faculty both with a dubious profession and with a debilitating pathology, Phantastes is accompanied by the two characters Poeta and Melancholico. These three are opposed to the more scholarly characters within *Technogamia* representing the trivium and quadrivium: Logicus, Grammaticus, Rhetorica, and so on. Instead of the imagination being a potentially fertile intellectual function, in both Holyday's play and in *Susenbrotus*, imagination is set in direct opposition to educational values represented as both traditional and edifying. The fantasy, personified as Phantastes, directly urges students towards bad behaviour, such as smoking, considered particularly nefarious at a time when the king himself had inveighed against "the manifold abuses of this vile custome of Tobacco taking."⁴³ Holyday, therefore, expressly identifies fantasy with subversive behaviour, conducted even after royal denunciation of such practices. Apart from *Technogamia*, Holyday devoted himself to translating the classical poetry of Anacreon and Juvenal as well as to sermonising. Considering his own literary habits, based more on imitation and on the use of biblical and classical models rather than on the exercise of creativity, it is perhaps not surprising that Holyday was less sympathetic to the value the imagination could potentially hold for a scholar.

While Tomkis's play explores a complicated relationship between fantasy, melancholia, and creativity, *Technogamia* reduces the melancholic to a one-dimensional type and Phantastes to a dandy. Through the description of the House of Temperance and the personification of the abstract senses respectively, Spenser and Tomkis both demonstrate that the use of an allegorical mode to explore contemporary psychopathological theory need not be reductive, but Holyday's play by contrast is full of episodes that render explicit the playwright's wish to represent learning and the imagination as starkly antithetical. In the first act, for instance, Poeta and Grammaticus physically fight, as do Melancholico and Logicus.⁴⁴ Tomkis represents the power of imagination within the *individual* self and, by extension, within the human mind, while Holyday's play deals only with generalized *social* functions of melancholy and fantasy. *Technogamia*'s resolution implies that fantasy is base compared to the more noble pursuit of the arts: in the play's Epilogue, the speaker suggests that the fantasy only yields a cheap trick, or "a nimble thing / To raise an Ignorant laugh." Addressing his "Ivicious Hearers," the Epilogue imagines being challenged for having used such gimmicks:

If any yet shall aske why he does bring
A Hobby-horse, or such a nimble thing
To raise an Ignorant laugh: It was his Art
That said, This will expresse *Phantastes* part.⁴⁵

Holyday's play debases the function of fantasy that writers such as Puttenham proposed as being able to provide "bewtifull visions" and devise "new and rare" subjects, and so *Technogamia* expressly negates the personification of the stimulating and inspiring imagination we find—albeit with some qualifications—in Spenser and Tomkis. Holyday's representation of Phantastes reflects an increasingly negative portrayal within academic drama of the value of imagination. In its place, new intellectual characteristics came to be prized, based more firmly on the other cognitive faculties, common sense and memory. Fantasy, by contrast, started to become represented as an affliction, a disease.

We can set these allegorical and obliquely satirical representations of fantasy on college stages against the psychopathological treatises from which many of their features of thought and conduct are derived; the representations of fantasy in university drama can also be usefully compared with contemporary epistemological works, such as Bacon's *Advancement of Learning*. These diverse, yet associated, forms of writing offer a multiplicity of contemporary perspectives on how early modern scholars should behave and think, and there is no clearly defined and consistent picture that emerges. This inconsistency is itself significant, stemming perhaps from a pivotal uncertainty in the psychopathological treatises in particular about whether melancholy and consequently fantasy are the signs of an active, questing intellect, or instead dangerous symptoms to be treated and eradicated. Such an uncertainty leads to a mimetic ambiguity on college stages, centring on the question of whether "Phantastes" is a disruptive force (as in *Technogamia*), a

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source of creativity (as in *Lingua*), or a spent force (as in *The Second Part of the Return from Parnassus*).

Satire, Scholars, and Melancholia

Allegory was popular on university stages at the time, but within drama and verse, an unprecedented number of English poets turned to satire during the 1590s to describe the academic milieu and, in particular, the effect that learning was often perceived to have on the minds of young men. Perhaps the most distinctive and flamboyant presentation of these themes can be found in the poems of the Oxford graduate John Marston, resident at the Inns of Court in London when he came to write his highly influential formal satires, the *Certaine Satyres* and *The Scourge of Villanie*, both published in 1598. Marston's poems provided valuable subject-matter for the Cambridge *Parnassus* playwrights, who represent with relentless pessimism the gradual debasement of the university graduate's mental faculties, including his skill as a writer and his ability to think creatively. Marston's personae in these two satirical works are based on careful self-fashioning as restless, intellectually brilliant melancholics: exaggerated fantasies, devouring anxieties, and an overwhelming sense of the futility of unimaginative learning pervade the poems, which are characterised by their speakers' conflicting attitudes towards the world around them, a world of shifting social surfaces. Marston transforms the conventional symptoms of a young man's melancholia into something quite new. His speakers cannot escape their governing melancholic humour.

Three years after Marston's two volumes of formal satire appeared, his satirical personae were dissected in *The Second Part of the Return from Parnassus*, a play which offers a fascinating perspective on the late Elizabethan world of letters. Just as Aristophanes satirically criticises his fellow dramatists throughout *The Frogs*, so the *Parnassus* playwrights mock their contemporaries and thereby conduct a subtle investigation into their writing. *The Second Part of the Return* mocks Marston's excesses even while it takes seriously his exploration of the relationship between scholarship and inventiveness. Consequently, two Marstons are presented in *The Second Part of the Return*: the malcontent "Monsier Kinsayder" and the swiftly corrupted "Furor Poeticus." Through these two types, the *Parnassus* playwrights respond to Marston's formal satires and comment upon his particular kind of literary melancholia. Literary satire in the *Parnassus* plays operates within several registers, ranging from crude to careful. At one point in *The Second Part of the Return*, the two university wits, Ingenioso and Iudicio, characterise Marston as a pissing dog: "What, Monsier Kinsayder, lifting vp your legge and pissing against the world? Put vp, man, put vp for shame."⁴⁶ Here, the playwrights present the more strident elements of Marston's malcontent personae in a deliberately reductive way; yet later in the play they attempt a more complicated critique of Marston's form of satire. In the first act, Furor Poeticus (poetic "inspiration" or "madness") is introduced as being "*rapt within contemplation*." If Monsier Kinsayder represents

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Marston the snarling satirist, then Furor Poeticus symbolises the Marston who insists on "free-bred" poetic inventiveness. As we have seen, *The Second Part of the Return* has "aimed at, if not well resembled" a representation of the humours. Although the playwrights often neglect their declared theme, the character of Furor Poeticus is their most concerted treatment of humorous behavior.

At the start of the play, Furor Poeticus believes he walks among the gods, talking familiarly with the Muses and addressing Apollo as his teacher, calling him "Pedant" and "Don."⁴⁷ He is accompanied throughout the play by one "Phantasma" ("vision" or "dream"), a cognate term of "Phantasia," who quotes Latin; however, unlike the Phantastes characters in Spenser's poem and Tomkis's play, Phantasma is not a creative force, for the character cites the Latin of other authors, anticipating the Virgil- and Ovid-spouting Phantastes in *Susentrotus*. It is typical of the cynicism of *The Second Part of the Return* that a figure which conventionally symbolises imaginative force can only quote Latin tags. Instead of encouraging Furor Poeticus in his contemplation and interaction with the Muses, moreover, Phantasma can only offer him raucous company in a disreputable area of London, Cheapside. And so when we next meet Furor Poeticus, he and the worldly Ingenioso are getting drunk. Somewhat unsteadily, Furor Poeticus quotes Marston, claiming that "that caelestiall fier within [his] brayne / That giues a liuing genius to [his] lines" along with his "intellectuall," have all become "dulled."⁴⁸ The recurrent narrative trajectory in the *Parnassus* trilogy describes the scholar's gradual moral decay and the ultimate prostitution of his learning, a pattern which Furor Poeticus follows. Ingenioso involves him in a plot to extract money from one Sir Raderick, an idiot gentleman. Poetry becomes nothing more than a means of earning: "let vs march on like aduenturous knights," says Ingenioso, "and discharge a hundredth poetical spiritts vpon them."⁴⁹

Unlike the settings Tomkis and Holyday would go on to employ, the world of *The Second Part of the Return* is not an allegorical microcosm, and Furor Poeticus must make a living within the vicissitudes of late Elizabethan London. By the end of the trilogy, he has become completely corrupted and his language in the final scene is a degraded form of how he had spoken when we first encountered him, when he crammed his boastful speech full of references to the Muses, to Apollo, and to Mercury. His failure to find gainful employment as either a writer or an extortionist erupts in blasphemous slanders on the gods. Physically as well as intellectually tainted, Furor Poeticus describes a louse on his sleeve as "six footed Mercury": he initially wanted to write the story of the moon-goddess Cynthia and her lover Endymion, but now "siluer Cinthia" has become "my sluttish la[u]ndresse Cinthia," and Endymion her "squirting boy."⁵⁰ Slyly alluding yet again to a Marstonian conceit, the playwrights then present a debate over Furor Poeticus's fallen situation. "Is not here a true dogge that dares barke so boldly at the Mooone [*sic*]?" asks Ingenioso.⁵¹ Philomusus, one of the scholar-protagonists in the play, diagnoses Furor Poeticus's condition, attributing the satirist's anger to poverty: "Exclayming want and needy care and carke / Would make the mildest spright to bite and barke."⁵² Furor Poeticus has suffered the same fate as the other

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university graduates in the trilogy. Overeducated and undervalued, his initial idealism has become corrupted by exposure to the exigencies of life outside the academy. At the end of the play, the young students all fail in their hopes and expectations. Their retrospective attitudes towards their present situation are best embodied in Ingenioso's couplet: "For had not Cambridge bin to me vnkinde, / I had not turn'd to gall a milkye minde."⁵³

Whether they choose an allegorical or a satirical mode, and despite the various conclusions they offer, many poets and playwrights connected with the institutions of learning at the turn of the century share a pessimism and a cynicism towards contemporary education. In *Lingua*, Tomkis identifies the importance of the imagination for the writer, but he also counsels against its potentially damaging effects, while Holyday's *Technogamia* offers a somewhat more simplistic version of a young scholar's tussles with melancholy and fantasy. The *Parnassus* playwrights, in contrast, chart the fortunes of scholars who ultimately fail in the dizzying array of careers they attempt after leaving the universities. From the 1590s onwards, literary evidence for academic disenchantment accumulates. University writers and recent graduates use a variety of genres to articulate intellectual frustration and occupational anxieties. The authors under scrutiny concentrate particularly on the figure of the intelligent young man and his response to the education he has undergone. By the first decade of the seventeenth century, their cumulative representation of academic experience seems shadowy and bleak.

Francis Bacon and the "fantastical distemper"

It was not just in satire and comedy that these grave repercussions of the early modern curriculum were critically considered. In *The Advancement of Learning* (1605), the Cambridge graduate Francis Bacon articulates similar concerns and presents an anatomy of the contemporary state of higher education, offering a theoretical discussion of many of the questions and problems that his peers had sought to examine in dramatic form. We have considered how contemporary satirists linked melancholia, learning, and illness, often in shifting, inconclusive, and ambiguous ways. Bacon was the first to resolve this particular ambiguity in terms of educational theory by outlining a new epistemological system that embeds the student or scholar firmly within a pedagogical framework intended to cure such dangerous "distempers of learning." Within the Baconian epistemological system, the causes of scholarly melancholy and excessive fantasy are eradicated, and simultaneously a persuasive argument is constructed for a new social system that values the truly learned rather than the imperfectly learned plagued by such "distempers." For Bacon, the epistemological problem—that university-taught logic, for instance, does not have any practical value—is directly related to the social problem that higher education does not carry much weight within (or is, at best, a poor preparation for) wider contemporary society.

Bacon, then, uses a medical metaphor to describe the problems he sees in the contemporary educational system, identifying at the start of the first book of the *Advancement* three "distempers of learning": the first, crucially, is described as "fantastical" learning, while the other two are characterised as "contentious" and "delicate."⁵⁴ "Fantastical" learning, for Bacon, arises from excessive credulity, rather than from the desirable alternative of rational and empirical comprehension. Bacon argues that young men are particularly prone to such intellectual ailments, and proceeds to offer an epistemological corrective to scholarly bad habits. Bacon goes on to ascribe "delicate" learning to an excessive love of *copia* and a privileging of words over matter, linking this with humanist rhetorical excess and arguing that such learning was fostered at the universities, so that the consequences have been grave. It was the humanists' mistake, Bacon avers, "almost [to] deify Cicero and Demosthenes" and the result has been that men "hunt more after words than matter."⁵⁵ Bacon's second distemper, "altercations" learning, is caused partly by outmoded scholastic dialectics at the universities and partly by ill-advised exposure of the youth to logic before he can process it meaningfully. Bacon diagnoses as a curricular problem—the preponderance at the universities of ineffective scholastic and humanistic educational methods—that which college dramatists mainly represent as a social problem, and so Bacon offers epistemological and pedagogical explanations for why in his view learning needed to be advanced from its turn-of-the-century point of stasis.

Bacon compares logicians to spiders, writing that they rely on "infinite agitation of wit" to "spin out unto those laborious webs of learning."⁵⁶ This metaphor seems to have become conventional to describe the effects of learning on the academic mind: by the late 1620s, the young John Milton would figuratively chide a student embroiled in curricular intricacies for worrying too much about them. In his Third Prolusion, "An Attack on the Scholastic Philosophy," Milton states:

the supreme result of all this earnest labour is to make you a more finished fool and cleverer contriver of conceits, and to endow you with a more expert ignorance: and no wonder, since all these problems at which you have been working in such torment and anxiety have no existence in reality at all, but like unreal ghosts and phantoms without substance obsess minds already disordered and empty of all true wisdom.⁵⁷

To some extent, the scenario Milton creates is firmly embedded within a familiar humanistic criticism of scholastic method but, as the comedic and satirical examples previously discussed might suggest, it is no surprise that Milton the Cambridge student reaches the same conclusions that Francis Bacon does: namely, that demanding yet strangely "unreal" learning takes its toll on the academic mind, creating "torment and anxiety," causing melancholia and the detachment of the mind from reality, pushing it towards the realm of fantasy. For Bacon, writing a couple of decades earlier than the student Milton, the third "fantastical" distemper of learning is the worst of all since the empiricist has no time for the deceptive if bewitching power of the imagination. Consequently, he demonizes the fantasy

as a kind of lying, which "co-foulest."⁵⁸ *The Advancement of Learning*, and its author uses a contemporary college dramatist:

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The Advancement of Learning between the railing satires of last decades of Elizabeth's re like plays produced at the Jac answers to the questions cont raised. Bacon characterises humours that formed disease equate intellectual flaws with its concomitant symptoms of activity.⁶⁰ As a corrective to scholarship, Bacon offers his "small world" of Tomkis's *M* setting.⁶¹

The Advancement of Learning malaise, those institutions of their students and graduates, fancifulness of young men, a for the epistemological me humours" and "distempers of themes on the university as psychopathological treatises Bright and Walkington offer study can adversely affect the can lead to the manifestation such as an overly stimulate and for proper study, and Bacon's identification of false suggestion of possible intel to the representation of simi

as a kind of lying, which "concerneth deceit or untruth, it is of all the rest the foulest."⁵⁸ *The Advancement of Learning* directly addresses problems in academic learning, and its author uses remarkably similar terminology to that favoured by contemporary college dramatists.

Bacon's epistemological agenda offers little flexibility about the incorporation of imaginative mental activity into his program of learning. Puttenham had written about what fantasy might offer the mind—"as by a glasse or mirrour, are represented vnto the soule all manner of bewtifull visions"—while Bacon distorts the same metaphor in order to describe a mind cursed rather than inspired by the "fantastical distemper." The "mind of Man," Bacon writes, is

far from the Nature of a cleare and equall glasse, wherein the beames of things should reflect according to their true incidence; Nay, it is rather like an inchaunted glasse, full of superstition and Imposture, if it been not deliuered and reduced.⁵⁹

The Advancement of Learning was published at a significant intermediate point between the railing satires penned by students and recent graduates during the last decades of Elizabeth's reign and the more allegorically fashioned, masque-like plays produced at the Jacobean universities. To some extent, Bacon provides answers to the questions contemporary early modern academic comedy and satire raised. Bacon characterises faults within contemporary education as "peccant humours that formed diseases," echoing the tendency of his contemporaries to equate intellectual flaws with governing humours, particularly melancholia, and its concomitant symptoms of an overactive imagination and unhealthy mental activity.⁶⁰ As a corrective for the "peccant humours" that beset contemporary scholarship, Bacon offers his "small globe of the intellectual world," evoking the "small world" of Tomkis's *Microcosmus*, the human body, which is also *Lingua*'s setting.⁶¹

The Advancement of Learning attacks the source of contemporary educational malaise, those institutions of learning that generated satirical criticism from their students and graduates, but Bacon also acknowledges the vulnerability and fancifulness of young men, and this, he argues, should make educators responsible for the epistemological methods they impart. Bacon's diagnosis of "peccant humours" and "distempers of learning" is in keeping with an exploration of similar themes on the university stage. Taking his argument further than contemporary psychopathological treatises do, Bacon presents as a given what writers such as Bright and Walkington offer only as a possibility: that excessive or misdirected study can adversely affect the mind. He examines how particular forms of learning can lead to the manifestation of unwanted cognitive and behavioural symptoms, such as an overly stimulated imagination, which limits the capacity for reason and for proper study, and transforms the mind into an "inchaunted glasse." Bacon's identification of faults within his contemporary academy as well as his suggestion of possible intellectual and curricular correctives directly correspond to the representation of similar themes in allegorical and satirical plays performed

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For Bacon, writing a fantastical" distemper ime for the deceptive demonizes the fantasy

on contemporary university stages. Although the literary medium Bacon chooses is sharply distanced from both college comedy and formal satire, many of his conclusions mirror those represented in these other texts.

Brian Vickers has argued that Bacon "dramatises intellectual enquiry."² It seems equally apparent that playwrights such as Tomkis, Holyday, and the authors of the *Parnassus* trilogy literally dramatise currents of thought that we find in Bacon's theories of knowledge and of higher education, exploring through comedy and satire how contemporary humours theory could be applied to the academy, and representing in complex and unprecedented ways the relationship between psychopathology and learning. Through these representations, both epistemological commentators on the early modern academy and university dramatists articulated a growing concern that a traditional humanist education was not fulfilling the demands that a changing world placed on the university graduate. Central to this concern is the vacillation we see throughout these texts over the value of the imagination: the college plays in particular repeatedly pose the question of whether imagination and creativity will help the young man on his emergence from higher education.

Imagination or fantasy did not figure within the traditional university curriculum, and the debate over its worth was new. Apart from Bacon's direct criticism of fantasy as a "distemper" in *The Advancement of Learning*, few early modern authors on scholarship provide a clear answer to the debate over fantasy. By using humours theory as a starting point for discussing the psychopathological symptoms and rigors of learning, of immersion in university life, these writers attempted to embed a late Elizabethan and Jacobean social problem—the overproduction of graduates—within an intellectual and pedagogical framework, and to relate this problem to an educational corollary, the inefficacy of contemporary pedagogy. These problems are represented on college stages in terms of the effect of education on the individual, as either a critique (as in the *Parnassus* trilogy) or a defense (as in *Technogamia*) of humanist educational methods. Representations of the humours on college stages, particularly melancholia and its impact on the scholar and student, constitute a nuanced contribution to this early modern debate over higher education, its pedagogical causes, and its social and economic effects.

Notes

I would like to thank my doctoral supervisors, Lawrence Manley and David Quint, for their advice and guidance given when this essay was in its earlier incarnation as a chapter of my PhD thesis. I am also indebted to Jayne Elisabeth Archer for many illuminating discussions of early modern psychopathological theories, and to Philip Shaw for his keen-eyed reading and invaluable suggestions.

- 1 See Lawrence Babb, *The Elizabethan Malady: A study of melancholia in English literature from 1580 to 1642* (East Lansing: Michigan State College Press, 1951), Chapter 1, "The Physiology and Psychology of the Renaissance,"

especially 2-3.

English univers
see Gillian Lew
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- 2 *The Second Pa*
quotations from
Parnassus Play
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- 3 Robert Burton,
15 (p. 302), *Ur*
of *Melancholy*,
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- 4 See Christopher
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- 5 For discussions
see Hendrik Lor
(Oxford: Clarend
the *Rhetoric: La*
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- 6 See Rudolf Wi
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- 7 Gordon Braden
National Biograp
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- 8 See Lemnius, *De*
Simonem, 1561
anni temporibus
obnoxia, praeser
lucubrationibus
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Oxford, see Mori
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University Press

- 9 Thomas Newtor
1576), sig. 136v.
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- 10 Bright (circa 15
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- especially 2–3. For a discussion of the medical curriculum at the early modern English universities, and the reading and teaching of Hippocrates and Galen, see Gillian Lewis, "The Faculty of Medicine," in *The Collegiate University*, ed. James McConica (Oxford: Clarendon, 1986), 213–56, vol. 3 of *The History of the University of Oxford*, 8 vols., 1984–97.
- 2 *The Second Part of the Return from Parnassus*, Prologue, ll. 32–3. All quotations from the *Parnassus* trilogy are to through-line numbers in *The Three Parnassus Plays (1598–1601)*, ed. J.B. Leishman (London: Ivor Nicholson & Watson Ltd., 1949).
- 3 Robert Burton, *Anatomy of Melancholy*, Part 1, Section 2, Mem. 3, Subs. 15 (p. 302). Unless stated otherwise, citations are taken from *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 6 vols., ed. Thomas C. Faulkner, Nicholas K. Kiessling, and Rhonda L. Blair, intro. J.B. Bamforth (Oxford: Clarendon, 1989–2000).
- 4 See Christopher Hill, *Economic Problems of the Church: From Archbishop Whitgift to the Long Parliament* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1956).
- 5 For discussions of *phantasia* in Platonic and Aristotelian philosophies of mind, see Hendrik Lorenz, *The Brute Within: Appetitive Desire in Plato and Aristotle* (Oxford: Clarendon, 2006); and Ned O'Gorman, "Aristotle's Phantasia in the *Rhetoric*: Lexis, Appearance, and the Epideictic Function of Discourse," *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 38 (2005): 16–40. See also Charles B. Schmitt, *John Case and Aristotelianism in Renaissance England* (Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1983).
- 6 See Rudolf Wittkower and Margot Wittkower, *Born Under Saturn: The Character and Conduct of Artists* (New York: Norton, 1969), 98–132, especially 102–108.
- 7 Gordon Braden, "Newton, Thomas (1544/5–1607)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/20069>>.
- 8 See Lemnius, *De Habitu et Constitutione Corporis* (Antwerp: Apud Guiljelmum Simonem, 1561): "Est enim maxima hominum ineunte vere & autumno, quibus anni temporibus is humor redundat atque effunditur, melancholicis affectibus obnoxia, praesertim qui rebus politicis aut studiis literarum atque intempestivis lucubrationibus sunt addicti" (sigs. 127v–128r). For ownership of Lemnius's works in individual scholars' libraries at sixteenth-century Cambridge and Oxford, see Mordechai Feingold, *The mathematicians' apprenticeship: Science, universities and society in England, 1560–1640* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 116–18.
- 9 Thomas Newton, *The Touchstone of Complexions* (London: by Thomas Marsh, 1576), sig. 136v. See Lemnius, *De Habitu et Constitutione Corporis*: "Siquidem ex immoderata mentis agitatione natiuus calore extinguitur, ac spiritus quum animalis, tum vitales attenuati euanescent, quo fit vt exhausto vitali succo ad frigidum siccumque habitum deuergant" (sig. 128r).
- 10 Bright (circa 1551–1615) matriculated at Trinity College in 1561, took his B.A. in 1568, his M.B. in 1574, and his M.D. in 1576. He lectured in Cambridge

- until 1584, when he took up residence in Ipswich. See Page Life, "Bright, Timothy (1549/50–1615)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004), <<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/3424>>.
- 11 Timothy Bright, *Treatise of Melancholie* (London: by Thomas Vautrollier, 1586), sig. *vv; Thomas Walkington, *The Optick Glasse of Humours* (London: by Iohn Windet for Martin Clerke, 1607), sig. ¶6r; Robert Burton, *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (Oxford: by Iohn Lichfield and Iames Short, for Henry Cripps, 1621) sig. Ddd 3v.
 - 12 For a discussion of this section of the *Anatomy*, see Sarah Knight, "He is indeed a kind of Scholler-Mountebank": Academic Liars in Jacobean Satire," in *Shell Games: Studies in Scams, Frauds, and Deceits (1300–1650)*, ed. Mark Crane, Richard Raiswell, and Margaret Reeves (Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 2004), 75–8.
 - 13 See Andrew Gurr, *Playgoing in Shakespeare's London*, 2d edn. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 60–80.
 - 14 Key works that address such questions are Philip Sidney, *The Defence of Poesy* (written circa 1582–83); Thomas Nashe's preface, "To the Gentlemen Students of Both Universities," affixed to Robert Greene's *Menaphon* (1589); and George Puttenham's *The Arte of English Poesie* (1589).
 - 15 Bright, *Treatise*, 102.
 - 16 Bright, *Treatise*, 126.
 - 17 Bright, *Treatise*, 126.
 - 18 Walkington, *Optick Glasse*, 69.
 - 19 George Puttenham, *The Arte of English Poesie. Contrived into three Bookes: The first of Poets and Poesie, the second of Proportion, the third of Ornament* (London: by Richard Field, 1589), sig. Diiijv.
 - 20 Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, ed. Thomas P. Roche, Jr. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1987), II.ix.1.
 - 21 Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, II.ix.49.
 - 22 Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, II.ix.52. Compare Newton, *The Touchstone of Complexions*, sig. 69r, in which the melancholic is described as "swarte."
 - 23 Thomas Tomkis entered Trinity College, Cambridge, in 1597 and received his B.A. in 1600, becoming a minor Fellow in 1602, and an M.A. and major Fellow in 1604.
 - 24 See G.C. Moore Smith, *College Plays Performed in the University of Cambridge* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1923), 8: "In the first twenty years of the seventeenth century there was a curious revival of the morality-type play, in which the characters were abstract conceptions."
 - 25 Carla Mazzio, "Sins of the Tongue," in *The Body in Parts: Fantasies of Corporeality in Early Modern Europe*, ed. David Hillman and Carla Mazzio (New York: Routledge, 1997), 53–80, especially 65. See also the forthcoming critical edition of *Lingua* edited by Carla Mazzio and Anne Lake Prescott.
 - 26 Thomas Tomkis, *LINGVA: Or The Combat of the Tongue, And the five Senses For Superiority* (London: by G. Eld, for Simon Waterson, 1607), sigs. Dv–D2r.

- 27 Tomkis, *LINGVA*
- 28 Tomkis, *LINGVA*
- 29 Spenser, *Faerie Queene*
- 30 Tomkis, *LINGVA*
- 31 Tomkis, *LINGVA*
- 32 See Hamlet
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- 33 Tomkis, *LINGVA*
- 34 See Babb, *English*
- 35 Walkington,
- 36 Tomkis, *LINGVA*
- 37 See "Introducti
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- 38 Susenbrotus
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39 Barten Holy
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eds., *Records
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- 40 Holyday, *Te*
- 41 See REED:
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4 vols., ed. J
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- 42 See Holyday
- 43 James VI and
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- 44 Holyday, *Te*
- 45 Holyday, *Te*
- 46 *Second Part*
- 47 *Second Part*

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- 27 Tomkis, *LINGVA*, sig. D4v.
- 28 Tomkis, *LINGVA*, sig. D2v.
- 29 Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, II.ix.51.
- 30 Tomkis, *LINGVA*, sig. B3v.
- 31 Tomkis, *LINGVA*, sig. B3v.
- 32 See Hamlet's speech to Rosencrantz and Guildenstern, *Hamlet*, ed. Ann Thompson and Neil Taylor (London: Arden Shakespeare, 2006), 2.2.261-76, in which he explains the reasons for his loss of mirth.
- 33 Tomkis, *LINGVA*, sig. B4r.
- 34 See Babb, *Elizabethan Malady*, 43.
- 35 Walkington, *Optick Glasse*, sig. 69v.
- 36 Tomkis, *LINGVA*, sig. B4r.
- 37 See "Introduction," in *A Comedy Called Susenbrotus*, ed. and trans. Connie McQuillen (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 22-3; for discussions of the influence of Roman New Comedy on early modern academic drama, see Frederick S. Boas, *University Drama in the Tudor Age* (New York: Benjamin Blom, 1971), 15-21, 108; and Bruce R. Smith, *Ancient Scripts and Modern Experience on the English Stage 1500-1700* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988), 157-77.
- 38 *Susenbrotus*, 1.3 (72): because McQuillen's translation lacks line numbers, I have supplied the page number after act and scene. FORTUNIA: "Alter Phantastes poeta est qui poetice loquitur: nutat poetice et poetice ambulat."
- 39 Barten Holyday, *TEXNOGAMIA: or the Marriages of the Arts* (London: by William Stansby for Iohn Parker, 1618). All quotations from *Technogamia* are to through-line numbers in Barten Holyday, *Technogamia: or the Marriages of the Arts*, ed. Sister M. Jean Carmel Cavanaugh (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1942), II. 15-20. See John R. Elliott, Jr., and Alan H. Nelson (University), Alexandra F. Johnston and Diana Wyatt (City), eds., *Records of Early English Drama: Oxford*, 2 vols. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 2.823 for performance details (hereafter cited as *REED: Oxford*).
- 40 Holyday, *Technogamia*, Prologue, marginal s.d.
- 41 See *REED: Oxford*, "Appendix 2," 2.772-89, for contemporary satirical responses to Holyday's play; see also Anthony à Wood's *Athenæ Oxonienses*, 4 vols., ed. Philip Bliss (London: for F.C. and J. Rivington, 1813-20), 3.522: Wood describes the play as "too grave for the king, and too scholastic for the auditory."
- 42 See Holyday, *Technogamia*, II. 474-5, 445-7.
- 43 James VI and I, *A Counterblaste to Tobacco* (London: by R.B., 1604), sig. B1r.
- 44 Holyday, *Technogamia*, I. 550 ff.
- 45 Holyday, *Technogamia*, Epilogue, II. 10-13.
- 46 *Second Part of the Return*, II. 267-8.
- 47 *Second Part of the Return*, II. 450, 464.

- 48 *Second Part of the Return*, ll. 1301–3.
- 49 *Second Part of the Return*, ll. 1377–9.
- 50 *Second Part of the Return*, ll. 2078, 459, 2135, 2137.
- 51 *Second Part of the Return*, ll. 2141–2.
- 52 *Second Part of the Return*, ll. 2143–4.
- 53 *Second Part of the Return*, ll. 2180–81.
- 54 Francis Bacon, *The Advancement of Learning*, ed. Michael Kiernan (Oxford: Clarendon, 2000), 23.
- 55 Bacon, *Advancement*, 24.
- 56 Bacon, *Advancement*, 28.
- 57 John Milton, "An Attack on the Scholastic Philosophy," in *Complete Prose Works*, 8 vols., ed. Don M. Wolfe et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953–82), 1.245.
- 58 Bacon, *Advancement*, 28.
- 59 Bacon, *Advancement*, 116.
- 60 Bacon, *Advancement*, 31.
- 61 Bacon, *Advancement*, 221.
- 62 Brian Vickers, *Francis Bacon and Renaissance Prose* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 200.

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John Ricketts's *Byrsa Ba* (circa 1633) is a Latin Ca period, possibly never pro footnote since it was trans play's startling imposition subject raises questions ab at the universities. In part play takes up issues that of to the university, making interpenetrate with the pr the play takes as its mode machinations, and anxieti insurers. A Prologue, Inter of both linguistic and man Mercury's temple is the Ex he makes frequent allusion life in the university: "inge ["learning should be condu

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