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# Rosalind's Masculine Self: *As You Like It* and Criticism of Male Communities

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William Shakespeare's *As You Like It*, written around 1599, is a pastoral comedy that depicts masculinity in its various forms. The play focuses on Rosalind and her exile in the Forest of Arden due to the deposition of her father Duke Senior. While in the forest, she cross-dresses as a shepherd boy and gains the affection of her love interest, Orlando. By allowing a freer identity for Rosalind in the forest of Arden, the play offers a space in which to explore characters' identities, both those created by themselves and others. Still, rather than focusing solely on the male characters' identities, Rosalind's persona as Ganymede examines social constructs of masculinity from a female, outsider perspective. Though primarily giving her the freedom to explore her own identity and relationship with Orlando, Rosalind's Ganymede persona enables her to express her concerns about a centralized form of masculinity that excludes those who fall outside the limits of acceptable behavior constructed by male communities. Rosalind assumes a disguise that allows her to explore the ways an idealized male community, though presenting ideals of peace and contentment, can maintain an environment verging on hostility. Blurring the lines of masculinity and femininity, Rosalind affirms the idea that personhood goes beyond social constructs of identity and that, even in ideal communities, individual variance is not always welcome.

In his book *Shakespeare and Masculinity*, Bruce R. Smith explores the constructions of masculinity in Shakespeare's plays in general, but, when discussing gender roles in *As You Like It*, he claims that the other male characters also foster spaces that allow for them to assume more "natural" identities. He writes: "Rosalind's disguise as Ganymede may expose masculinity as a performance . . . but the identities of the male protagonists are secured by nature and validated by divinity" (140). Though Rosalind consciously assumes the masculine traits of bravery and confidence in contrast with her true feelings to expose masculinity as a performance, I will argue that this idea of other male characters' masculinities being validated does not fully express the circumstances of the male community in Arden. When Rosalind plans her disguise in the forest, she provides a nuanced description of what she perceives as traditional masculinity and its ability to be parodied:

Were it not better,  
Because that I am more than common tall,  
That I did suit me all points like a man?  
A gallant curtal-ax upon my thigh,  
A boar-spear in my hand, and in my heart  
Lie there what hidden woman's fear there will,  
We'll have a swashing and a martial outside –  
As many other mannish cowards have  
That do outface it with their semblances (Shakespeare 1.3.121-29)

Still, Rosalind's description of concealing her true feelings of fear "[a]s many other mannish cowards have" highlights the disjointed nature of masculinity and the need for a natural version of manhood separate from the accepted constructions of masculine behavior (1.3.128).

Masculinity, then, is represented as a construct that can be cast on or off as the need arises; much like Rosalind's persona, it becomes a disguise established to prevent ill treatment or rejection in a community. Even though Rosalind's disguise allows her to protect herself from the other male characters, the exiled courtiers display a form of masculinity sanctioned by their status in the forest's community and, in so doing, present the potential for hostilities amidst their community. Thus, using her version of masculinity to explore men's use of violence, misogynistic beliefs, and conditional promises in the world of the play, Rosalind explores her own fears about masculinity to visualize a relationship, in particular her marriage with Orlando, in which the male partner does not necessarily have complete authority. Exposing how male communities propagate ideas of dominance, Rosalind/Ganymede applies her criticisms to the ideal male community in the forest, which, though not presenting as much hostility as the court does, constructs similar ideas about what constitutes manhood. Still, revealing these concerns to Orlando and other characters enables, to some extent, a denial of their power.

In drawing attention to the masculinity script of domination and its ever-present status in the play, Rosalind assumes a version of manhood that is intentionally stereotyped, hiding one's true characteristics under a hypermasculine exterior. Presenting misogynistic and anti-love beliefs in addition to the pretense of bravery, Ganymede's masculinity becomes exaggerated almost to the point of disbelief. Even he recognizes this extremity, for when recalling the advice his uncle gave him about women, Ganymede says that "every one fault seem[ed] monstrous till his fellow fault came to match it" (Shakespeare 3.2.361-62). Because this masculinity deliberately exposes the prejudices it constructs and reproduces through interactions within male communities, its obvious artificiality supports its criticism of such forms of manhood. Therefore, even before entering her dialogues with Orlando and Phoebe as Ganymede, Rosalind prefaces that she "will speak to him like a saucy lackey" and will "sauce her with bitter words," respectively (3.2.299-300, 3.5.74). Embodying a form of masculinity known as the "saucy jack," Ganymede identifies himself as the means by which masculine characteristics can be highlighted, explored, and criticized. In Smith's exploration of this masculinity script, he identifies the ways Shakespeare's clowns embody this version of manhood and, in doing so, "play out parodies of serious models of masculinity" (55). Acknowledging the freedom of the saucy jack script to highlight the social constructs that make up masculinity, Rosalind aligns herself with this performance of masculinity to further explore the idea it evokes that "a man is no more but what a man swears he is" (Smith 57). Recognizing a man's sense of self as dependent on his conception of himself in relationship with others, Rosalind/Ganymede raises a concern for the ways men, though able to determine their own masculinity scripts, still assume society's ideas about masculinity. Yet, in understanding the changeable nature of identity with her parodying of the scripts, Rosalind reveals the potential for even a hypermasculine character to change.

Though Rosalind's gender-crossing has traditionally been recognized as starting once she assumes the Ganymede disguise, there are hints that such barriers are crossed even before she transitions into the forest. Cynthia Marshall points to the transgressive nature of Rosalind and Celia's attendance at the wrestling match, which, usually closed off to females, reveals the physicality of male violence in their community (271). As an expression of the hostilities between Orlando and his older brother, Oliver, the match epitomizes the divisive masculinity of courtly society—one constructed solely for the benefit of the individual. With this model as reference for the traits valued by the male community, Rosalind's understanding of masculinity ties in with its support of violence. Linking masculinity further with domination, both Celia and

Rosalind evoke myths of masculinity while participating in the audience of the sport, bringing up ideas about Hercules as well as wishing for “a thunderbolt in mine eye” to connect themselves with Jupiter (Shakespeare 1.2.204, 208). This interaction furthers their envisioning of what constitutes masculinity in the court; while idealized and almost god-like, the prime example of a man is one who can defeat others. While the male community may support such competitions between its members, the one who triumphs represents the epitome of manhood.

Still, Rosalind recognizes the violence of this masculinity as threatening to those members who cannot attain the highest ideal of manhood but also to those outside of its system of values. Duke Frederick banishes Rosalind precisely because she evokes feminine virtues; he claims that “Her very silence, and her patience / Speak to the people, and they pity her” (Shakespeare 1.3.81-82). In a place where compliance is assumed to be subversive, Rosalind recognizes the extent unopposed masculinity can promote division and hostility. Therefore, when transitioning into the forest, Rosalind remarks cautiously about the dangers of rape or assault and proposes that she arm herself in her Ganymede disguise (1.3.114-15). In a place where there seems to be even fewer social constraints, her fears envision masculinity at its most extreme. Even Orlando has a similar reaction upon entering the forest; drawing his sword when he comes across the feasting Duke and his company, he brings violence to a place that does not openly condone hostilities. Still, as John S. Garrison and Kyle Pivetti assert in their analysis of the politics of peace in the forest of Arden, such a nonviolent space only occurs once it “involves setting aside the narratives that had presumed inevitable violence” (8). While they recognize that the Duke calms Orlando’s violent reaction by reminding him “of his noble bloodline” and “that he once knew kindness and laughter, not the violence of the wresting match,” such examples do not remove Rosalind’s expectations for violence (Garrison and Pivetti 7). While Rosalind’s disguise conceals her identity and allows a freer interaction with Orlando, she remains as Ganymede throughout the scenes of the forest for protection. She eventually removes her Ganymede costume once Hymen conducts her to the wedding ceremony in which she is handed over to her father and Orlando, and Rosalind recognizes the constant threat of violence (Shakespeare 5.4.120-21). A man must always be present for protection; though her disguise allows her to live alone with Celia, it cannot be cast off and replaced with a nonviolent outlook on the world until her marriage.

Although Mark Bracher emphasizes the ways the masculinity of the play shifts from presenting a hostile male community to one that promotes equal relationships and more “natural” forms of masculinity, such an analysis denies the ways the Duke’s forest court excludes certain members of the male community. Despite facing the same issues of a limited food supply and the possibility of starvation as Orlando, Ganymede does not establish himself in the Duke’s forest court to gain community or support. Rather, while continually in the company of male characters excluded from the forest court (such as Touchstone, Jaques, who excludes himself, and the shepherds Corin and Silvius), Ganymede establishes his place amongst the outsiders of the forest, a group apart from the centralized male community headed by Duke Senior. In his discussion of the utopic elements of the forest of Arden, Ryan Farrar recognizes the exclusion of the overtly critical characters, Touchstone with his satirical remarks (367) and Jaques with his discontent (370), as part of the community’s failure to enact the utopic ideals they theoretically express (369). Similarly, in his analysis of Touchstone’s debate with Corin concerning the benefits of courtly and country life, Farrar argues that Corin, by engaging in such wordplay with the satirical comic, “in a utopian way, undermines the nobility’s belief that it serves as a paragon for all human behavior” (377). Thus, his analysis exposes the fact that constructions of gender in

male communities intersect with class identities as well. Whether displayed in the forest or in the court, the version of masculinity the central male community supports becomes, instead of more “natural,” a semblance of unified personhood.

Rather than presenting a completely peaceful community, then, the forest's court evokes similar ideas of hostility and violence the court does, though in less obvious ways. When the audience is first introduced to the community of the Duke and his courtiers in exile through a conversation between Oliver and Charles before the wrestling match, Charles hints at the potential violence of that idealized community; he depicts them as “liv[ing] like the old Robin Hood of England” (Shakespeare 1.1.114-15). Though his association of the community with “the golden world” evokes a peaceful time (1.1.117-18), the fact that their community is described using legends, hazy tales from long ago, establishes the characters' muddled perspectives about the ideal male community. Also, the reference to Robin Hood, particularly his skill with the bow and arrow, associates the community with an underlying sense of violence. However, these hints of violence become even more apparent once that male characters in that community are introduced. As soon as the scene transitions to the forest, Duke Senior explains that, amidst the wintry weather in the forest, he and his fellow exiles hunt deer. He even offers some pity for the slain deer, saying that “it irks me the poor dappled fools” should “[h]ave their round haunches gored” (2.1.22, 25). Still, his concerns may not be solely for the deer but also for the ways such a kill would reflect the hunter's skill. According to A. Stuart Daley, a fatal shot in the deer's “haunches,” or rear, would make the animal die a slow, painful death (83). Therefore, Duke Senior's description, much like Jaques' empathetic reaction, evokes his sympathy for the animal's plight. However, such a shot might also result in the animal escaping the hunter and, presenting the possibility of a failed hunt, would reflect negatively on the hunter's skills (Daley 83). Duke Senior's commentary, then, in addition to evoking sympathy for the deer, returns the conversation to his and his community's abilities to enact an ideal masculinity and embody the Robin Hood legend with which they are associated. Therefore, when confronted with Jaques' extreme sympathy for the deer in which he associates the creature with himself by giving it human characteristics, Duke Senior does not take Jaques' portrayal of the deer seriously and sees it as a starting point for light-hearted debate and personal entertainment (Shakespeare 2.2.71-72). Still, Jaques' commentary, though disregarded lightly by the courtiers, calls into further question the role the exiled courtiers assume. He labels them as “usurpers, tyrants” and rails against the ways they kill animals “In their assigned and native dwelling place” (2.2.63-64, 66). This male community evokes a masculinity of dominance, and Jaques, recognizing that the deer are not the only ones under threat in the forest, reveals his similar lowered position. Although the exiled courtiers may present some sympathy to those they dominate, the male community's concerns reflect their own interests.

Nevertheless, some elements of the exiled courtiers' focus on hunting allow for a more egalitarian reading of their community. Daley asserts this perspective when noting that, faced with the possibility of starvation by being in the forest during the winter, the courtiers need to hunt to survive (84). Though he notes that hunting, in its traditional sense with hounds and a chase, would be seen as a noble pastime and enable a man to prepare for future combat, the hunting the exiled lords employ, in killing for food, would have been associated with “crass utilitarianism” (Daley 78, 80). King James VI of Scotland, who would later become King James I of England, also wrote in *Basilikon Doron* (1599) that “it is a thievish forme of hunting to shoote with gunnes and bowes” (Daley 80). Even if exhibiting a degradation from the noble version of the sport, the description of the exiled courtiers spending their days hunting evokes the

earlier focus on the wrestling match. Much like the form of hunting the exiles employ, wrestling was seen as a sport associated with the peasantry in Early Modern England (Marshall 274). Though performing activities beneath their social classes in both cases, Orlando and the exiled courtiers use these activities to display their masculinity and dominate other men. The sports themselves were also associated with improving one's performance in other activities deemed nobler, such as warfare. Baldassare Castiglione's *The Book of the Courtier*, a conduct manual for noblemen first published in 1528 (decades before *As You Like It* was supposedly written in 1599), recommends wrestling as a sport from which to gain skills with weapons, presumably for future combat (29). Similar ideas in Early Modern England express hunting as "a mimic war" and "a duty in fact, for princes and noblemen" (Daley 78). Both forms of male communal action, wrestling and hunting, reflect the expectation at that time for men to perform a version of masculinity based on violence. Therefore, when Jaques imagines a dying deer with human qualities, the correlation becomes even more direct; he connects hunting in the forest with the killing animals but also, potentially, with the killing of other men. Even if mainly focused on obtaining food, the exiled courtiers do not forsake their associations with courtly ideas completely. Once his brother renounces his power, Duke Senior's swift transition at the end of the play into assuming the role of duke reveals the forest community's temporary nature (Shakespeare 5.4.178-80). Thus, the noblemen exiles, making room for such a quick shift back into the world of the court, enter the forest with a mindset to maintain the traits of noble masculinity rather than reform them.

Just as Jaques' dissent reveals the ways male communal activities set up potential hostilities between men, Rosalind's disguise as Ganymede exposes the possibilities for the noble, male community to mistreat women. When Celia notes that she spotted Orlando "furnished like a hunter," Rosalind replies, "O, ominous! He comes to kill my heart" (Shakespeare 3.2.249-50). Though, of course, using love metaphors involving violence do not necessarily translate to actual violence, Rosalind's descriptions continue to revolve around the male partner's dominance in these relationships. Evoking the issue raised earlier by Jaques about the deer killed in its native habitat, Rosalind, as Ganymede, tells Orlando that she is "As the cony [rabbit] that you see dwell where she is kindled" (3.2.345-46). Like Jaques' self-association with the wounded deer, Rosalind uses this technique to place herself as a victimized and helpless animal. Using this same metaphor to describe the relationship with Phoebe, Ganymede explains that "Her love is not the hare that I do hunt" (4.3.19). Though these metaphors recognized the lowered positions of the female partner in being subjected to the violence of her male counterpart, Rosalind's initial imagining of her disguise recognizes her need for protection against this form of domination. She announces that she will wear symbols of violence, not only for self-protection but also for sport: "A gallant curtal-ax upon my thigh, / a boar-spear in my hand" (1.3.124-25). Ganymede's boar spear, associated with the costume of "a stripling soldier . . . or a boyish hunter," also evokes "the virgin goddess of hunting, Diana" who wields the spear in the defense of her chastity (Daley 72-73). Representing the pursuit of war and sport as a man as well as the protection of her chastity as a woman, Rosalind/Ganymede creates a simultaneously masculine/feminine self that recreates the dynamics of male dominance in these relationships. Acknowledging the female's need for protection against the male's violent acts, Rosalind forms an identity in which she can do both the hunting and protecting.

Even the environment in which Rosalind and Celia choose to live in their disguises protects them from the male community. Vin Nardizzi discusses the ways pastoral literature and the pastoral landscape allow Rosalind and Celia to criticize the society around them and, in doing

so, allows an exploration of the possibilities for their protection from the male community in this space. Nardizzi points out that the cottage in which Ganymede and Aliena, Celia's shepherdess persona, reside is described as "purlieu" land (576). Exploring the implications of the "purlieu" in legal terms, he notes that such property lay outside the boundaries of English forest law and that those holding these lands could "hunt deer, so long as they did not impede the deer's safe return back into forested lands from the transitional space of the purlieu" (Nardizzi 577). Marked as a place of temporary non-violence and sport without brutality or killing, the land on which Ganymede and Aliena reside protects them from any intrusion of the male community through hunting but also from the metaphorical disturbances of a man pursuing a female love. While Nardizzi recognizes that, in the world of the play in France, forest laws would not have been enacted at the time, the term "purlieu" would nevertheless hold significance to the audience (577). Rosalind and Celia's negotiations with the shepherd Corin for this purchase as well as their dependence on him for their food supply also highlight the necessity of their separation from the other exiles. Primarily framed as a means to keep their identities concealed, their withdrawal to lives as shepherd and shepherdess, respectively, prevent Rosalind and Celia from experiencing the drawbacks of a dominating, noble masculinity on which the courtly forest community centers. Their sole dependence on lower-class male characters in the form of the shepherd Corin for their survival also directly contrasts with the exiled courtiers, who, though a co-dependent male community, hunt for their food and, in displaying their skills and triumphs in the process, maintain a class association with the nobility. By dissociating themselves with these noble hunters and thus denying their own nobility, Rosalind and Celia further strengthen their disguises as lower-class shepherds.

In much the same way that Rosalind and Celia disguise themselves to prevent being raped in the forest, their avowal to be with each other as brother and sister protects them from other male exploits. Julie Crawford reads this relationship of mutual support as an example of the female bond of chastity that was highly regarded in the Early Modern period (109). Recognizing in this relationship a means by which women could intervene and obtain more equal marriages for each other, she examines this alongside Ganymede's discussion of "the importance of jointure, the set of property rights given to a woman as part of a marital contract" (Crawford 119, 118). Marriage, then, becomes an essential part of Ganymede's criticisms, when, for Orlando's sake, he assumes the persona of Rosalind. Allowing a more direct association of the ways male partners exploit women in marriage, Ganymede-as-Rosalind confronts the legal side of marriage and recognizes the oaths made between the partners as essential to securing their relationship. Therefore, after this conversation between Ganymede-as-Rosalind and Orlando, Celia addresses these concerns directly to Rosalind. Celia criticizes Orlando: "O, that's a brave man. He writes brave verses, speaks brave words, swears brave oaths, and breaks them bravely" (Shakespeare 3.4.38-40). Associating oath-making and breaking with a purely masculine enterprise, Celia's conception of bonds keeps marriage as an ever-present possibility in the play and alters the way Rosalind arranges bonds as Ganymede.

The act of promise-keeping also became a rising issue during Shakespeare's time, as Tim Stretton notes in his analysis of conditional bonds in Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice*, a play believed to have been written around the same time as *As You Like It*. Discussing the increased anxieties about a person keeping his or her word in sixteenth-century England, he recognizes that making conditional promises became one of the preferred solutions to this difficulty by enabling a promise-keeping that gave a freer sense to how much these promises had to be enacted (Stretton 75). Therefore, specifically when interacting with Phoebe, the

shepherdess who falls in love with the hypercritical Ganymede, Rosalind/Ganymede addresses the issue of male oath-making and breaking by using the conditional form for her/his promises. When receiving the love letter from Phoebe, Rosalind/Ganymede tells Silvius a series of promises to deliver back to her, namely “that if she love me, I charge her to love thee; if she will not, I will never have her unless thou entreat for her” (Shakespeare 4.3.74-76). In this series of conditional statements, Rosalind/Ganymede acknowledges the impossibility of Phoebe’s love for her/him, and in each case, Rosalind/Ganymede gets the upper hand. Thus, once s/he makes the later marriage arrangements, Rosalind/Ganymede tells Phoebe, “I will marry you if ever I marry woman, and I’ll be married tomorrow” (5.3.118-20). In this promise, one s/he intends on breaking, Rosalind/Ganymede acts much like the masculine lovers she and Celia envision earlier, ones who, in keeping their interests as priorities, neglect their sworn oaths.

However, tellingly, with this conditional promise-making, the oaths Ganymede swears to the other male characters, including Orlando and Silvius, and those addressing himself are enacted exactly how these male characters wish. Thus, complying with the male characters’ desires, this series of promise-making highlights the significance of an assertive female character, Phoebe, who instead of submitting to love, pursues Ganymede much like Orlando does Rosalind, by writing love letters and love poetry. Rejecting the idea that only men can pursue women in love, Phoebe does not resign herself to be subjected to her male counterpart. Even though Linda Woodbridge remarks on the conventional reading of pastoral literature as objectifying female love interests (194), the shepherdess here does not become another facet of the pastoral landscape by becoming the subject of love poetry. Rather, in writing her own poetry, Phoebe comes closer to Woodbridge’s reading of pastoral literature as giving greater significance to the female voice by recognizing that “pastoral’s opting out of the world of power and public life is effeminizing, emasculating” (204). Though Phoebe does not ultimately get much of a say in her marriage, Phoebe’s act of writing love verses to Ganymede as well as the fact that her perspective is at least included when arranging the matches at the end introduce her presence as an essential part of arranging perspectives past those validated by the male communities.

Just as Ganymede’s conditional promises about marriage arrangements prioritize male desires, they also highlight the importance of these hypothetical vows in creating male communities of support in the play. In particular, when Touchstone gives the example of using “if” statements to tell a courtier he does not like his beard, he understands that any conflict that potentially arises can be avoided “with an ‘if’” (Shakespeare 5.4.101). Using conditional statements to enable peaceful relationships, Touchstone enacts a similar definition of men’s use of such promises as Rosalind/Ganymede does in including Phoebe’s perspective by asserting that, ideally, each individual’s desires will be heard and enacted to benefit the collective. While, as with Jaques’ firm opposition to deer hunting, this ideal does not always happen in the forest’s noble, male community, the other, more disjointed male community, in which Ganymede interacts with Orlando, Touchstone, Jaques, Silvius, and Corin, reimagines the male community as one in which individuality does not become suppressed. This community, through its use of “if” statements, creates an environment enabling multiple modes of masculinity. Garrison and Pivetti offer a similar analysis with their understanding of the hypothetical statement as presenting a compromise that allows both sides “to save face” (6). Thus, in enabling a community that allows for each person, even those holding opposite views, to enact what he or she promises, the values of the male community can contain all forms of individuality. Paul Joseph Zajac also explores this potential in his analysis of the play’s goal to form a community



based on the characters' contentment. Therefore, Zajac asserts that Ganymede's arrangement with Phoebe enables a consensual marriage with Silvius by acknowledging her view and input (333). Yet, the conditional statements presented to Phoebe give her only one obvious option; between marrying Rosalind or Silvius, she must choose the male partner. Not allowing further exploration of her desires beyond those arranged for her, the shepherdess must marry the shepherd.

Though Rosalind/Ganymede makes several promises, including conditional ones, to Orlando, Rosalind arranges a firmer bond for their relationship from the beginning. Giving him "*a chain from her neck*" as a love token soon after they meet, Rosalind tells Orlando to "[w]ear this for me" (Shakespeare 1.2.243 [stage direction], 244). Stretton recognizes the action of bestowing a token as denoting an oral promise, one that becomes firmer because of its more tangible nature (82). Unlike the unstable conditional promises, Rosalind's oath-making through token-giving secures a solid expression of identity amidst the ever-changing notions of gender and sexuality. Seeing the chain becomes a source of reassurance of Orlando's faithfulness; before Rosalind even confronts Orlando as Ganymede, Celia remarks on the chain Orlando wears (Shakespeare 3.2.185). Much of the reasoning behind this promise-making, however, comes from Rosalind's remembrance that "[her] father loved Sir Rowland as his soul" (1.2.231). In her understanding that such a firm male community will enable her to enact her desires, Rosalind then grants Orlando the token of her affections—one she knows she will be able to keep because her father supports Orlando's father. In fact, Stretton recognizes "another legal instrument, her father's will," enacted in *The Merchant of Venice* as essential to assure one's commitment to a promise (81). Applying this reading to Rosalind's situation, then, her recognition of her father's approval gives her even more authority in arranging the bond. Rather than having conditional promises be made for and about her, as Ganymede later does with Phoebe, such a direct agreement arranged by Rosalind herself introduces the running theme of her ability to set up promises between characters throughout the play as Ganymede.

While gaining a fair amount of autonomy through her Ganymede disguise, Rosalind assumes a sense of personhood that also understands the nature of the society in which she lives and, in preparing for a return to that society as a woman rather than a boy, must make compromises in arranging her own goals. Just as Rosalind recognizes that her and Phoebe's marriages must be given male approval, Rosalind's disguise as Ganymede also complies with some of the same ideas men promote in their relationships with women. Douglas E. Green introduces a similar understanding in analyzing Rosalind's role as a projection of the masculine self, for he writes that "a man often loves his beloved insofar as she reflects himself" (42). Regardless, Rosalind's persona as Ganymede is not wholly conceived within the world of the play as a man's imaginings. Instead, Rosalind/Ganymede draws attention to the ways male communities limit their support for men, their relationships with women, and their approval of those who do not fit their conceptions of masculinity. Even from the point of first assuming the disguise, Ganymede enacts a script that epitomizes ideals about communal manhood. Ganymede notes that his misogynistic advice to Orlando comes from his "old religious uncle" (Shakespeare 3.2.350). Exposing the ways male communities, in their interactions, transfer dominance, Rosalind/Ganymede also acknowledges these relationships as those from which, almost like an inheritance, men garner information about life and love. Orlando evokes this idea when he first introduces his resolve to regain his gentlemanly status, for he tells Adam, the long-time servant of his father, that "the spirit of my father, which I think is within me, begins to mutiny against this servitude" (1.1.21-23). Even the idealized communities in the play enact this, for, as Farrar

asserts, the Duke's forest court similarly values a "continued deferential behavior toward authority" (367). Unable to present a model in which male friendship enacts complete equality, Ganymede's parody creates the sense that male communities exist primarily in mentor-mentee or master-servant relationships, reproducing associations of masculinity with dominance through these relationships.

Still, Rosalind, in recognizing this view, understands ways to replace these hierarchical male communities, specifically through her emphasis on a marriage of partnership. In Smith's analysis of the ways Shakespeare's plays deal with boys coming into manhood, he discusses the conflicts explored between a "classically sanctioned valuation of male-male friendship" and the "Protestant ideal of companionate marriage." According to his discussion, while the model focusing on male friendship supports a man's dominance over his wife, the model of companionship becomes less focused on those domineering values (88). Through her Ganymede persona, Rosalind addresses these concerns directly by exploring some of the same ideas about the hostile relationship between male communities and marriage. In early modern England, the Ganymede myth became a cultural shorthand for same-sex desire; Rosalind's choice of the name for her male alter ego seems a deliberate invocation of these ideas. Tracing the origins of the Ganymede myth back to classical mythology's ideas about homosexuality, Stephen Orgel understands homoeroticism, particularly in the form of Ganymede, as "a perpetual affront to women and to marriage, even the marriage of the queen of heaven" (146). Especially with the fact that hostilities between Juno (wife of Jupiter) and Ganymede (Jupiter's lover) were explored by Shakespeare's contemporaries (Orgel 156-57), the idea that marriage and male community are put at odds with each other in *As You Like It* helps explain some of Rosalind's goals in assuming the Ganymede disguise.

Exploring the threats male-male communities pose to heterosexual marriage and women, Rosalind's disguise as Ganymede becomes a way that she can assure her place in their marriage will not be lowered because of Orlando's reliance on the male communities that promote man's domination. Thus, when Celia refers to the relationship between Rosalind and herself early in the play as "like Juno's swans / Still we went coupled and inseparable," her reference associates them with another facet of the Ganymede myth (Shakespeare 1.3.78-79). Specifically, though, her analogy also aligns them with heterosexual marriage and women, which were traditionally Juno's domain. When the wedding scene occurs at the end, then, Hymen, the god of marriage, does not serve as much as a representative of the restoration of patriarchal authority but as the means to replace the model of male community that enables men's dominance over women. Crawford's analysis of this scene also supports this argument. She recognizes the ways, much like Ganymede's earlier comments about jointure, Hymen uses a "language of evenness" to refer to the marriages between the couples (122). Epitomizing a marriage of companionship, then, Hymen triumphs over the male community and its vision of manhood. In fact, the enactment of this scene might also evoke the earlier image of the two women as "Juno's swans." Accompanying the god of marriage himself this time, Rosalind and Celia no longer have to affirm their places in their marriages next to their male partners; their bonds are secure. Ganymede's conditional promise-making to Phoebe also reflects this arrangement. Instead of completely denying Phoebe a say in her marriage, Ganymede presents Phoebe's goals for her future alongside Silvius' wishes. Recognizing that their desires will not necessarily align, Ganymede's inclusion of both partners' perspectives recognizes that a partnership, even one of equality, requires compromises.

Still, this reasoning, focused on the marriage itself, does not take into account Rosalind's submission to Orlando and her father at the wedding ceremony. When she comes up to them, after coming in with Hymen and Celia, Rosalind says, first to her father, then to Orlando, "To you I give myself, for I am yours" (Shakespeare 5.4.120-21). Rosalind's unquestioning submission here becomes almost too submissive. Not only does it contradict Hymen's portrayal of "evenness," but her lines are phrased in such a way that they call attention to the scene as a performance. In its deliberateness, this scene of stilted submission, instead, enacts a version of marriage that enables a later change in their relationship's dynamics. Contextualizing *As You Like It* beside Early Modern England's varying perspectives on lovesickness and marriage, Carol Thomas Neely notes the "highly formalized and ritualized" elements of the weddings in this scene and asserts "that this is just yet another donning of roles" (127). Rosalind's ability to transition between characters, to enact scripts of masculinity and femininity, displays the ways she is highly conscious of the society in which she lives. Even if she conforms to some of her expected roles as a woman, her deliberate contradiction of these roles when assuming the guise of Ganymede as well as her strict adherence to femininity at select moments expose her perceptiveness. Thus, in continuing to transition between these roles, even in the epilogue when she steps out of her role as Rosalind and becomes the boy actor on the stage, she presents her personhood as unrestricted by society. Rejecting the constraints of these scripts by freely taking on and casting them off, Rosalind transcends the male community's promotion of centralized masculinity and the idea of marriage as women's submission to men. Ganymede's statement, when play-acting as Rosalind for Orlando, proves true: "Maids are May when they are maids, but the sky changes when they are wives" (Shakespeare 4.1.155-57). Thus, evoking Ganymede's previous warnings about women's changeability, Rosalind's ability to switch between characters expresses the ways men, in criticizing women for their individuality, are taught to only support the primary, sanctioned model of manhood. Rosalind's fluid identity, then, becomes part of her multifaceted character, one which contests the ideas promoted by the central male community of the play.

By becoming the outsider in the play, Rosalind establishes her sense of self through a perspective that recognizes the society in which she lives allows only a limited amount of individuality. Still, the way Rosalind displays herself in not being confined to scripts of femininity or masculinity draws attention to the ways society devalues such displays of diversity. Although other characters, like the male characters excluded from the forest court and Phoebe, can assert their senses of self to a certain extent, Rosalind is better able to explore her personhood once she transgresses gender boundaries and, in parodying societal constructions, rejects the assumption that these behaviors are "natural." Regardless, her self-expression allows her to present her true identity to others. Though Rosalind adds to the criticisms other male characters make about their societies through her disguise, her interactions as Ganymede mainly focus on granting her individual desires and expressing her identity. Though the play shifts away from focusing on same-sex communal interactions to heterosexual marriage by the end of the play, Rosalind's choice to not speak to Celia at the marriage ceremony at the end—as well as her decision to marry Phoebe off to Silvius to solve her dilemma as Ganymede—exposes the ways Rosalind maintains a firm view of the world in which she lives as dominated by male communities. As she makes concessions to attempt to create the best situation for herself, Rosalind's relative silence and submission in the final scene becomes a way for her, through becoming deferential to male authorities, to make room for her individuality in circumstances less ceremonious.

Presenting individuality as the key to gaining personal autonomy, Rosalind fights for herself, not in a world of her own making, but in one she recognizes as having little, but at least some, potential to change. Rosalind's commitment to her own needs perhaps arises from her wariness of the collective politics displayed by the male communities of the play, a centralizing notion that erases the self. Therefore, in her pursuit of more equality in a society she recognizes as limiting the expression of one's identity, Rosalind asserts the need for a person to fight for him or herself. Rosalind's goals in disguising as Ganymede are perhaps not completely ideal, yet, in fighting for her personal freedoms, she recognizes the ways an ideal society should look. As a realist who knows the world she lives in and attempts to make her place in it, Rosalind creates a space for herself where she actively engages with her identity as Rosalind, Ganymede, or even boy actor.

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