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Woman on Top: Interpreting Barthel Beham's

Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes

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Woman on Top: Interpreting Barthel Beham's

Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes

by

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~ Dedication ~

I dedicate this thesis to my mom, my omi, and my sister, the three powerful women who lovingly support me in everything that I do, and to my dad, the extraordinary man who loves and supports us all.

~ Acknowledgements ~

First and foremost, I extend my most sincere and heartfelt thanks to my advisor Jeffrey Chipps Smith for his continued support and enthusiasm for this project. I could not have asked for a more attentive or generous mentor. His insightful and exceptionally prompt feedback on all aspects of my work enriched both this paper and my approach to the field of art history. I am particularly grateful for Professor Smith's endless patience and encouragement, which allowed me the time and freedom to write the thesis I envisioned from the beginning.

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~ Abstract ~

Woman on Top: Interpreting Barthel Beham's

Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes

Kendra Jo Grimmett, M.A.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2014

Supervisor: Jeffrey Chipps Smith

At no point in the apocryphal text does Judith, a wise and beautiful Jewish widow, sit on Holofernes, the Assyrian general laying siege to her city. Yet, in 1525, Barthel Beham, a young artist from Nuremberg, created *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, an engraving in which a voluptuous nude Judith sits atop Holofernes's nude torso. Neither the textual nor the visual traditions explain Beham's choice to perch the chaste woman on top of her slain enemy, so what sources inspired the printmaker? What is the meaning of Judith's provocative position?

The tiny printed image depicts the relationship between a male figure and a female figure. Thus, in order to appreciate the complexity of that relationship, I begin this thesis by reviewing what it meant to be a man and what it meant to be a woman in early sixteenth-century Germany. Because gender roles and the dynamics between the sexes were so complex, I encourage scholars to reevaluate *Weibermacht* (Power of Women) imagery.

The nudity of Beham's Judith and her intimate proximity to Holofernes suggest that *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* is a *Weibermacht* print. In fact, Judith's

pose specifically echoes that of Phyllis riding Aristotle, a popular *Weibermacht* narrative. The combined eroticism of Judith's exposed body and her compromising position would have appealed broadly to male viewers, but Beham likely targeted an erudite audience of well-educated, affluent men when he designed the multivalent print.

Through close visual analysis and careful consideration of which prints circulated in early sixteenth-century Nuremberg, I argue that Beham's Judith resembles witches riding backwards on goats, crouching Venuses, and a woman in the "reverse-cowgirl" sex position. Admittedly, it is impossible to know which sources Beham studied in preparation for *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, but I am inclined to believe that he wanted each of those jocular references to enrich the meaning of his work, providing a witty commentary on the power of women. But regardless of the artist's intentionality, I think visually literate viewers would have recognized and enjoyed decoding the layers of meaning in Beham's odd engraving.

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~ Introduction ~

The Book of Judith, which dates to the second century BC and describes a pious woman's triumph over her foreign enemy, begins with Holofernes, the chief general of King Nebuchadnezzar's army, laying siege to the Israelite town of Bethulia.[1] After thirty-four days of unanswered prayers and drying cisterns, Bethulia's thirsty inhabitants' faith in God wavers, and they consider surrendering to the Assyrians. Judith, a beautiful and devout widow, takes matters into her own hands. First, she prays to God for strength and the success of her plan. Then, Judith removes her widow's garments, dresses in fine clothing and jewelry, and leaves the city with her maid and a bag of kosher food. When Judith enters the Assyrian camp, the soldiers' "eyes [are] amazed," and they "wonder exceedingly at her beauty" before taking her to their leader.[2] Judith explains to Holofernes that she will help him defeat her people. Impressed by her wisdom and enticed by her beauty, Holofernes welcomes Judith to stay. For three days Judith remains in the Assyrian camp, going out into the valley to bathe and pray each night. On the fourth night, with hopes of seducing his alluring guest, Holofernes invites Judith to a private banquet in his tent. Wearing "all her woman's finery," Judith dines with Holofernes, who drinks "a great quantity of wine, much more than he had ever drunk."[3]

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[1] The Book of Judith is one of the seven deuterocanonical books excluded from most non-Catholic Bibles. Wary of its historic veracity, Protestants assigned the Book of Judith to the Apocrypha. Throughout the text I quote passages from the Book of Judith that are available in the Douay-Rheims Bible + Challoner Notes, accessed August 8, 2014, 2014, http://www.drbo.org/chapter/18001.htm, and in *The HarperCollins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version, with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books*, 1st ed. (New York, NY: HarperCollins, 1993). In place of several archaic verses from the Douay Version (DV) Book of Judith, I substituted the more easily comprehensible translations from the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV). The meaning of each quoted chapter and verse is comparable in the two translations, but it is important to note that the numbering in the NRSV does not match the DV.

[2] Judith 10:14 DV. Throughout the narrative, the Assyrians marvel at Judith's beauty and wisdom. For example, Judith 11: 18-19 DV, "And all these words pleased Holofernes, and his servants, and they admired her wisdom, and they said to one another: There is not such another woman upon earth in look, in beauty, and in sense of words."

[3] Judith 12:15, 20 NRSV.

Left alone in the tent with the drunk general "[lying] on his bed, fast asleep," Judith prays to God for the strength she needs to accomplish her bloody task.[4] Retrieving Holofernes's sword from his bedpost, Judith approaches the bed, "take[s] him by the hair of his head," and "strike[s] twice upon his neck, and cut[s] off his head."[5] After rolling Holofernes's body off the bed and covering it with the canopy, she gives his head to her maid, who places it in the food bag. The women leave the camp under the guise of going to pray. When they reach the gates of Bethulia, Judith shows the Jewish people Holofernes's head and proclaims:

> The Lord has struck him down by the hand of a woman. As the Lord lives, who has protected me in the way I went, I swear that it was my face that seduced him to his destruction, and that he committed no sin with me, to defile and shame me.[6]

The Jewish people easily defeat the leaderless Assyrians, and the city honors Judith for the rest of her life.

Although visual representations of Judith's narrative changed over the centuries, the majority of images created before 1500 recall key scenes and elements from the apocryphal text. For example, most artists depict one of three moments: Judith beheading Holofernes (fig. 1), Judith handing the general's head to her maid (fig. 2), or Judith holding Holofernes's head and sword (fig. 3). The setting for these scenes and the presence of Judith's maid vary. Often Judith appears inside Holofernes's tent with her maid right behind her (fig. 4, lower left corner). In other instances, Judith completes her deadly task outdoors without assistance (fig. 5). There are endless variations on the Judith theme, but whether she is raising her arm to swing the fatal blow or leaving behind Holofernes's body after the deed is done, Judith is identified by her attributes: the general's sword and severed head.

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[4] Judith 13:4 DV.
[5] Judith 13: 9-10 DV.
[6] Judith 13: 15-16 NRSV.

Until the turn of the sixteenth century, Judith appeared fully-clothed in artistic depictions.[7] The first images of nude Judiths originated in Italy around 1500. Although it is unclear which artist removed Judith's clothes first, some of the earliest examples are a Paduan bronze statuette (fig. 6) and Nicoletto da Modena's print (fig. 7).[8] But representing the courageous Jewess as a classical nude did not become popular in Italy. Instead, when Michelangelo painted his version of the story on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel (fig. 8), he followed in the tradition of fifteenth-century Italian masters, such as Donatello (fig. 9) and Sandro Botticelli (fig. 10). Michelangelo's rendering of Judith from about 1508-1512, which spread throughout sixteenth-century Europe in prints (fig. 11), shows the heroine in classical garb alongside her maid as she leaves Holofernes's headless body in his tent. Although the Italian artists played with Judith's state of dress—displaying glimpses of her legs, arms, and breasts, the nude Judith did not take hold in Italy.

In contrast to the Italians' treatment of Judith, the sixteenth-century Germans embraced the alluring widow's story as another opportunity to depict the female nude. Conrat Meit's full-length, alabaster statue of *Judith with the Head of Holofernes* (fig. 12), which dates to about 1512-1514 and stands less than a foot tall, is the earliest example of a nude Judith from Germany. A decade or so later, about 1524-1525, Hans Baldung Grien painted a full-length, larger-than-life nude Judith (fig. 13). Yet it was probably a pair of brothers in southern Germany who were most responsible for the spread of the nude Judith motif. Sebald and Barthel Beham, printmakers and painters from

[7] For more on Judith in the textual and visual traditions, see Kevin R. Brine, Elena Ciletti, and Henrike Lähnemann, eds., *The Sword of Judith: Judith Studies Across the Disciplines* (Cambridge U.K.: Open Book Publishers, 2010); Henrike Lähnemann, "Hystoria Judith: deutsche Judithdichtungen vom 12. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert" (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2006); Laura Weigert, "Judith et Holopherne: Images du vice, images de la vertu," in *Judith et Holopherne* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 2003), 83-123; and Jan Białostocki, "Judith: Story, Image, and Symbol. Giorgione's Painting in the Evolution of the Theme," in *The Message of Images: Studies in the History of Art*, Bibliotheca Artibus et Historiae (Vienna: IRSA, 1988), 113-131.

[8] Białostocki, "Judith: Story, Image, and Symbol," 124; for more on the nude Judith, see Susan L. Smith, "A Nude Judith from Padua and the Reception of Donatello's Bronze David," *Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 25, no. 1 (1994): 59-80.

Nuremburg, produced at least four different engravings of Judith *au naturel*.[9] Sebald Beham (1500-1550), the older of the two men, designed two prints of Judith with her maid sometime between 1520 and 1530 (figs. 14-15). Although the maid's body is covered by well-placed heads, a bag, or clothing, Judith's bare body is on display. Barthel Beham (1502-1540) dated his first nude Judith to 1523 (fig. 16). Here, Judith's full breasts and rounded stomach are the center of the composition. Beham covers her legs with clingy drapery that calls attention to her bare limbs underneath the cloth. Judith sits on a ledge with an upright sword in her right hand and Holofernes's upturned head in her left. Her expression seems regretful as she looks down into the face of the man she just slayed. But as striking and different as Beham's 1523 Judith may be, his second nude Judith design is much more puzzling and, I will argue, complex.

Barthel Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* engraving from 1525 (fig. 17) boldly deviates from both the textual account and the visual tradition.[10] Nowhere in the Book of Judith does the text describe the heroine as nude or sitting on Holofernes, yet in this small print, approximately 55 x 37 millimeters, Beham positions a shapely, nude Judith atop Holofernes's headless, nude torso. With the general's sword in her right hand and his head in her left, the beautiful widow turns her head sharply to the left as the breeze blows her untamed curls in the same direction. With a slight scowl and dark, foreboding eyes, Judith gazes down at her prey's bearded head. Holofernes's useless arm rests on the ground, but there is no sign of the general's now equally-useless genitalia. In

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[9] All four nude-Judith engravings by the Beham brothers appear in the catalogue section of Thomas Ulrich Schauerte and Jürgen Müller, *Die gottlosen Maler von Nürnberg: Konvention und Subversion in der Druckgrafik der Beham-Brüder* (Emsdetten, Germany: Edition Imorde, 2011), 249- 252; and the "Heroines and Worthy Women" subsection in H. Diane Russell, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art / Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1990), 66-68.

[10] Barthel Beham, *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, 1525, engraving; Bartsch 3; Pauli 1911, nos. 2-4. This print survives in multiple copies: one belongs to the Art Institute of Chicago (1920.1203, 54 x 36 mm), one belongs to the Museen der Stadt Nürnberg (St.N.464, 56 x 36 mm), one belongs to the Graphische Sammlung der Universität in Erlangen (AK 531, 54 x 37 mm), and two belong to the British Museum (1892,0411.16, 55 x 37 mm; Gg,4I.5, 55 x 38 [Plate-mark, excl. c. 4mm margin]). The British Museum also owns a reverse copy of about 1530 by the Monogrammist R.B. (1875,0508.1658; 63 x 38 mm). Since several impressions of *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* survive, it seems that the image was a popular one or, at least, that collectors carefully stored their copies.

place of the missing penis, Beham substitutes Holofernes's sword—which Judith firmly grasps—near the general's navel. In the background, the artist includes neither the Assyrian camp nor Holofernes's tent. Instead, the two figures appear to be outdoors near long grasses. In this print Beham has not only stripped Judith of her clothing and her narrative, but he has also robbed the widow of her chastity by placing her in such a shockingly intimate and compromised position. What inspired Beham to depict Judith this way?

Neither the apocryphal story nor the visual tradition explains the artist's use of such a lascivious position. Even though other artists removed Judith's fine garments long before Beham, he eroticizes her state of undress in a truly unique manner. Beham's print is the only image I have encountered that places Judith—nude or clothed—sitting on Holofernes. Why did he put the chaste widow's fleshy, exposed bottom in direct contact with the dead general's bare chest? What inspired Beham's break from tradition? How would sixteenth-century viewers have interpreted this image?

In this thesis I employ a combination of historical and visual analysis to answer those questions, placing Beham and his odd print into broader sixteenth-century discourses. Previous scholars have only given this print—and, often, this artist—a passing glance in catalogs, but I believe that this image can enrich our understanding of sixteenth-century gender relations, print culture, and Beham's place in the history of art.[11] Despite its diminutive proportions, *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* is a complex, clever print with layers of meaning for the intrepid viewer to decode.

In the first chapter of this thesis, I propose that Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* is primarily about the relationship between a man and a woman. In order to appreciate the complexity and subtlety of sixteenth-century gender dynamics and roles, I begin by reviewing the history of gender relationships, including biblical precedents and ancient "scientific" treatises. Next, I transition into a discussion of ideal

[11] Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 67; Schauerte and Müller, *Die gottlosen Maler von Nürnberg*, 249-250.

masculinity and femininity as imagined during the early sixteenth century. Following that presentation of exemplary male and female behavior is a "reality check," or an overview of the ways men and women did *not* behave according to the rigorous expectations outlined in the preceding section. Throughout the chapter I employ historical fact, contemporary texts, and various images to support my point that gender roles and relationships were complicated, so much so that scholars should reconsider how they interpret *Weibermacht* (Power of Women) imagery. Depictions of women duping men could be didactic warnings against the power of women, but they could also be humorous and sexually exciting for the sixteenth-century German men who ruled their households and communities without constant fear of women.

Having established that *Weibermacht* imagery merits closer analysis, I argue in my second chapter that Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* is a *Weibermacht* print. Like gender relationships in the early modern period, Judith was a complex, ambivalent figure; therefore, establishing the "face," or type, of Judith in Beham's print is crucial for interpretation. First, I discuss Judith as the Chaste Widow who could represent myriad virtues or the personification of the Virgin Mary or the Church. Following that section is an overview of Judith as the Triumphant Heroine who stands for righteous people seeking victories over any number of foes. Finally, I demonstrate how Beham's Judith is a Femme Fatale who uses her sexuality and cunning to outwit and execute her seemingly-superior male enemy—just like the other wily women of the *Weibermacht* tradition. Throughout this chapter I explain how Holofernes's role changes in relation to Judith, as well as how Beham's Judith could not be the Chaste Widow or the Triumphant Heroine, only the Femme Fatale. Since she is nude and erotically positioned on Holofernes's chest, I insist that Beham created this print for men. As a means of transitioning from chapter 2 to chapter 3, I introduce the elite ideal male audience for whom Beham designed his multivalent print. Those well-educated, well-traveled, affluent men would have enjoyed the intellectual challenge presented by Judith's odd position, perhaps as much as they delighted in her nude body.

I begin chapter 3 with an overview of Barthel Beham's limited biography, but my analysis in the final chapter has little to do with how *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* relates to the artist's life. Instead, I focus more broadly on the historical context of early modern Germany, placing Beham and his print at the heart of the Reformation. The rebellious young printmaker, who was briefly exiled from Nuremberg in 1525, faced a variety of challenges early in his career. First, he lived and worked in the shadow of the internationally renowned German master Albrecht Dürer. Second, he experienced a radical shift in the art market brought on by the Reformation's distrust of religious imagery. Because most patrons no longer commissioned sacred works, artists in the 1520s were forced to invent secular pieces if they wanted to stay in business. While some artists failed to adapt, Barthel and his brother Sebald thrived in the new artistic environment by experimenting with classical and erotic themes.

Much of chapter 3 consists of my close visual analysis of *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*. Since Nuremberg was a trading center, Barthel Beham and his fellow printmakers known as the Little Masters undoubtedly had access to popular German and Italian prints. In my final sections, I identify potential German and Italian sources for Beham's intimately positioned Judith and Holofernes. During the early sixteenth century, artists were encouraged to imitate the works of other masters, especially the Italian masters whose prints journeyed north with merchants and other travelers. Keeping this concept in mind, I propose that Beham may have referenced various prints of witches, Venus, and sex positions in his *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*. Personally, I am inclined to attribute artistic intentionality to Beham; I think he probably meant to quote witches riding backwards on goats, crouching Venuses, and the woman-on-top "reverse cowgirl" sex position in his erotic depiction of Judith and Holofernes. His allusions to other powerful women enrich the meaning of his print. But even if he did not include those references on purpose, I argue that his elite audience—the same group of well-educated, well-traveled men who collected Italian and German prints—could have read those references into Beham's unorthodox depiction of Judith.

What becomes clear in this thesis is that Power of Women imagery, which I broaden in chapter 3 to include "Battle of the Sexes," *Weibermacht*, witches, Venus, and sex position depictions, was very popular in patriarchal sixteenth-century Germany. The empowered men who ran their households and communities may have had performance anxieties or experienced feelings of helplessness when confronted by female beauty, but they seemed to enjoy seeing (if not living with) powerful women—especially powerful, *nude* women. It would be easy to dismiss the power of women as fearsome and unwanted (as much scholarship does), but I propose that the intellectual men for whom Beham designed his print would work beyond a single, obvious interpretation of women's power. Instead, they might consider how such sensuous, sexual power could hurt or please the male recipient of the woman's attention—a line of thinking that surely amused and aroused male viewers, whether they discussed Power of Women imagery in groups or enjoyed it in private. Ultimately, *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* is an image of a nude woman in a risqué position created for the pleasure of visually literate men.

~ Chapter 1 ~

Gender Roles in Early Sixteenth-Century Germany

Stripped of its traditional setting, auxiliary characters, and several significant story elements, Barthel Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* (fig. 17) focuses on the relationship between a female figure and a male figure. The Assyrian camp and the Jewish city are gone. The helpful maid and the bag of kosher food are nowhere in the composition. Judith's clothes are missing, as are Holofernes's tent and armor. What remains is a puzzling portrayal of a dead man and the woman who slayed him. How might a sixteenth-century German audience interpret the relationship between this Judith and this Holofernes?

In order to recognize the multiple potential messages conveyed by Beham's engraving, one must first grasp the complexity and diversity of sixteenth-century gender roles. What did it mean to be a man? What did it mean to be a woman? In this chapter, I begin by reviewing the origins of early modern gender stereotypes. Then I discuss sixteenth-century concepts of ideal masculinity and femininity. In contrast to those exemplars, I turn my attention to the disruptive side of masculinity and the ways in which women took active roles in the work force, in the Reformation, and, sometimes, in the home. As the discussion of gender progresses, early modern gender roles are increasingly complicated, shifting from black-and-white to shades of grey. Finally, I transition into a section on images of gender conflict, specifically "Battle for the Pants" and *Weibermacht* (Power of Women) prints. Supported by extensive historical evidence, I urge scholars to nuance their understanding of *Weibermacht* images through a closer and more critical inspection of gender relationships.

Historians have written entire books on masculinity, femininity, gender relationships, and marriage in sixteenth-century Germany.[1] Art historians have analyzed countless prints of marital violence and women in dominant positions over men.[2] But I have not found a study that satisfactorily combines a subtle analysis of the complexity of early modern gender and the popularity of images pitting men against women.[3] The early modern viewers who encountered images of aggressive or cunning women lived in a patriarchal society that engrained certain ideas about gender roles in their minds. By connecting social and cultural history with contemporary images about gender relationships, I establish both the fertile ground from which Beham created his *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* and the foundation on which I interpret his print in this thesis.

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[1] See, for example: Scott H. Hendrix and Susan C. Karant-Nunn, eds., *Masculinity in the Reformation Era*, vol. 83, Sixteenth-Century Essays and Studies (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2008); Heide Wunder, *"He Is the Sun, She Is the Moon": Women in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998); Joel F. Harrington, *Reordering Marriage and Society in Reformation Germany* (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1995); and Ulinka Rublack, ed., *Gender in Early Modern German History*, Past & Present Publications (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[2] See, for example: Susan Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened: Old Testament Women in Northern Prints*, Harvard University Art Museums Gallery Series 6 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Art Museums, 1993); Keith P. F. Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes and the World Upside Down," in *Peasants, Warriors, and Wives: Popular Imagery in the Reformation* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989), 101-126; H. Diane Russell, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art / Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1990); Diane Wolfthal, "Women's Community and Male Spies: Erhard Schön's *How Seven Women Complain about Their Worthless Husbands*," in *Attending to Early Modern Women*, ed. Susan Dwyer Amussen and Adele F. Seeff, Center for Renaissance and Baroque Studies (Newark, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1998), 117-154.

[3] Bette Talvacchia's *Taking Positions: On the Erotic in Renaissance Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), Linda C. Hults' *The Witch as Muse: Art, Gender, and Power in Early Modern Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2005), and Natalie Zemon Davis' "Women on Top: Symbolic Sexual Inversion and Political Disorder in Early Modern Europe," in *The Reversible World: Symbolic Inversion in Art and Society*, Symbol, Myth, and Ritual Series (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1978), 147–90, most closely resemble the type of scholarship I hope to produce. They each discuss both the subtleties of the historical context and the textual and visual media produced during the early modern period. Yet Talvacchia does not address Germany, Hults does not discuss Judith, and I find parts of Davis' argument problematic. No current scholarship specifically analyzes Barthel Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* using the methods of Talvacchia, Hults, or Davis.

Beyond Eden and Athens: The Ancient Origins of Sixteenth-Century Gender Roles

As the Reformation swept through Germany in the early sixteenth century, reformers sought changes in the church and the Christianization of all aspects of life.[4] Instead of chastity being the most holy bodily state and the (corrupt) church being the moral example for the community, reformers placed marriage and the household at the center of good Christian living. The household, governed by a fair patriarch and maintained by a supportive wife, became the essential unit used to build a moral society. Yet, even with marriage elevated to a new prominence, the reformers did not aim to change traditional gender roles.[5] On the contrary, ancient ideas about gender differences were engrained in the minds of sixteenth-century Germans, including the newlywed Martin Luther and the other leaders of the Reformation. Although the Bible states that men and women are spiritually equal in the eyes of God and can both be saved through faith, the early Church Fathers' writings and the ancient Greek medical treatises describe how men are physically, mentally, and morally superior to women.[6]

Because God created Adam first, early theologians determined that man was a more perfect image of God and had "natural preeminence over Eve."[7] Following this logic, as a weaker, secondary vessel created from Adam's rib, woman was always intended to be man's subservient helpmate.[8] When Eve fell prey to the serpent's

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[4] Wunder, *"He is the Sun, She is the Moon"*, 45.

[5] Sherrin Marshall, "Women in the Reformation Era," in *Becoming Visible: Women in European History*, ed. Renate Bridenthal and Claudia Koonz (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1977), 172.

[6] Merry E. Wiesner, "Nuns, Wives, and Mothers: Women and the Reformation in Germany," in *Women in Reformation and Counter-Reformation Europe: Public and Private Worlds*, ed. Sherrin Marshall (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1989), 12; Heide Wunder, "What Made a Man a Man? : Sixteenth- and Seventeenth-Century Findings," in *Gender in Early Modern German History*, ed. Ulinka Rublack, Past & Present Publications (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 22; Cissie C. Fairchilds, *Women in Early Modern Europe, 1500-1700*, 1st ed., The Longman History of European Women (Harlow, U.K.: Pearson/Longman, 2007), 196.

[7] Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 3; for more on theologians' ideas about women, see Susan L. Smith, *The Power of Women: A Topos in Medieval Art and Literature* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995); Fairchild's chapter, "Inferiors or Equals? Ideas about the Nature of Women," in *Women in Early Modern Europe*; and Russell's introduction in *Eva/Ave*.

[8] Elissa B. Weaver, "Gender," in *A Companion to the Worlds of the Renaissance*, ed. Guido Ruggiero, 1st ed. (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2008), 190; Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 3.

persuasive lies and ate the forbidden fruit, she fatally demonstrated her sex's susceptibility to sin and the "devil's allure."[9] But Eve did not stop at personal disobedience; she encouraged Adam to eat the fruit, too, cementing womankind's role as temptress and the bane of man's existence.[10]

This patristic interpretation of Eve was alive and well in the sixteenth century when, in his "Lectures on Timothy 1" (*Vorlesung über 1. Timotheus*, c. 1527-1528), Martin Luther wrote, "Adam was deceived not by the serpent, but by the woman."[11] In short, Luther, John Calvin, and other proponents of the Reformation believed that Eve, who sinned first, was directly responsible for mankind's expulsion from Paradise, mortality, toil, and sorrow.[12] Therefore, as daughters of Eve, all women were considered naturally rebellious and inherently vulnerable to evil.[13] For their own protection—and the spiritual safety of the men around them, women needed constant supervision and the guiding hand of a man to keep them on the virtuous path. Early modern theologians found support for that concept of necessary supervision in Genesis 3:16, when God places Eve under Adam's rule: "thou shalt be under thy husband's power, and he shall have dominion over thee."[14] Luther, who insisted that men and women were created equally but made unequal after the Fall, interpreted both women's pain in childbirth and their subjection to male authority as God's punishments for Eve's sin.[15] Life after the Fall was a constant battle between virtue and vice—would one's path lead to Heaven or Hell? Left to their own devices, women would inevitably choose the wrong path, so men were tasked with the physical and spiritual well-being of their wives and daughters. All that

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[9] Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 3.

[10] It is no coincidence that medieval images of the Fall often depict the serpent with a woman's head. In fact, it seems quite logical within the history of Power of Women imagery to put a female head on the very first deceiver.

[11] Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 3.

[12] Christa Grössinger, *Picturing Women in Late Medieval and Renaissance Art*, Manchester Medieval Studies (Manchester, U.K. ; New York: Manchester University Press / St. Martin's Press, 1997), 1; Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 3; Wiesner, "Nuns, Wives, and Mothers," 12.

[13] Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 3

[14] Genesis 3:16 DV; Christa Grössinger, *Humour and Folly in Secular and Profane Prints of Northern Europe, 1430-1540* (London: Harvey Miller, 2002), 107-108.

[15] Fairchilds, *Women in Early Modern Europe*, 196; Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 121.

men asked for in return was obedience.[16] But they had to remain vigilant against women's negative influence because, as Lutheran pastor Conrad Sam wrote in 1534, "Women are still Eve. They still hold the apple in their hand."[17] After all, men are sons of Adam, all too easily tempted by Eves.

The early Church Fathers of the fourth and fifth centuries cautioned against the dangers of women, from their disruptive speech to their uncontrollable sexual desires.[18] In his *Against Jovinianus* (*Adversus Jovinianum*, c. 393), which influenced much of medieval thinking, St. Jerome (c. 342-420) wrote that even touching a woman would have "evil consequences" and that the presence of a wife would distract a husband from his prayers.[19] He advocated an ascetic lifestyle isolated from the luxuries and temptations of everyday life, yet "even in the desert [the Church Fathers who fled the world] failed to rid themselves of their erotic fantasies of women."[20] St. Augustine (354-430) wrote *On the Good of Marriage* (*De Bono Coniugali,* c. 400) in defense of women against the extreme opinions of St. Jerome. But he, too, feared the power and uncontrollability of sexual arousal that originated from the Fall.[21] Furthermore, St. Augustine supported the concept of women as the "weaker" sex, naturally subjected to man.[22] The hierarchy of the sexes was deeply rooted in religion.

Renaissance humanists added to sixteenth-century understanding of men and women through the study of ancient Greek medical treatises by Aristotle, Galen, and Hippocrates.[23] The ancient philosophers and physicians bolstered theological interpretations of the genders, insisting that women were "anatomically and physiologically less fully developed than men" and therefore biologically subject to

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[16] Wunder, "What Made a Man a Man?" 21.
[17] Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 3.
[18] Weaver, "Gender," 190.
[19] Grössinger, *Humour and Folly*, 107; Grössinger, *Picturing Women*, 1-2.
[20] Grössinger, *Humour and Folly*, 107.
[21] Grössinger, *Humour and Folly*, 107-108.
[22] Grössinger, *Humour and Folly*, 107-108.
[23] Weaver, "Gender," 190.

them.[24] According to Aristotle, man was the perfect creation of Nature, armed with superior physical and mental abilities that made him highly rational and cautious.[25] Woman, on the other hand, was an imperfect creation with an inferior body that was weak, irrational, emotional, governed by passion, and receptive to evil influences.[26]

Aristotle explained that women's bodies did not produce enough heat to complete the process of forming into men.[27] This was particularly evident in the shape of male and female genitalia. Homologies in the male and female sex organs led people to believe that women's genitals were an internal, earlier version of men's genitals. Women's bodies simply did not have the heat required to push the genitals out of the body. What a woman's body *did* contain was a uterus, which was thought to be responsible for her irrational behavior and lack of control. Her uterus made her violently passionate and vengeful but also more compassionate.[28] If a woman's womb was not "amply fed by sexual intercourse" or reproduction, the organ would wander through the body, "overpowering [the woman's] speech and sense."[29]

Many of the ancient theories about anatomy related to the humors: a man's body was warm and dry, a woman's body was cold and damp. Since heat was the source of energy, and energy fueled the mind and body, men were naturally larger, stronger, more active, and capable of greater reason.[30] Male bodies efficiently produced and utilized heat to maintain their masculine form. Unfortunately, the same heat that constructed the male

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[24] Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 17; Wunder, "What Made a Man a Man?" 21; for more on the ancient philosophers' biological justifications of female inferiority, see: Lesley Dean-Jones, "Excursus--Medicine: The 'Proof' of Anatomy," in *Women in the Classical World*, ed. Elaine Fantham et al. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994), 183-205; Natalie B. Kampen, "Gender Theory in Roman Art," in *I, Claudia: Women in Ancient Rome*, ed. Diana E. E. Kleiner and Susan B. Matheson (New Haven ; Austin: Yale University Art Gallery / University of Texas Press, 1996), 16; and Russell's introduction in *Eva/Ave*, especially 17.

[25] Weaver, "Gender," 190; Wunder, "What Made a Man a Man?" 21; Patricia Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe: A Cultural History*, Cambridge Social and Cultural Histories (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 109.

[26] Wunder, "What Made a Man a Man?" 22; Grössinger, *Picturing Women*, 4.

[27] Weaver, "Gender," 190.

[28] Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 17.

[29] Davis, "Women on Top," 147-148.

[30] Weaver, "Gender," 190.

body also made young men particularly vulnerable to their "inflammable" passions: their desires could easily flame up and consume them.[31] As man's opposite in all things, woman's cold and damp nature meant that she was limp, unsteady, and as changing as the moon.[32] Essentially, women were inferior to men in every way.[33] While men participated in the public realm, provided for the household, and protected the family, women, who were better suited to the domestic realm, guarded the household's "possessions, children, and, through their chastity, its integrity."[34] But women even needed guidance and supervision in the domestic realm.[35] Men were supposed to "watch, protect, guard, and lead women with the power of rational thinking that was, by nature, stronger in them."[36]

Although Galen indicated that both sexes achieved their own perfection, he, too, insisted that the male body was superior.[37] Essentially, ancient medical texts biologically supported biblical concepts of male superiority. This, in turn, "provided the foundation of the sexes in social order: the supremacy of man and the subordination of woman," explains Heide Wunder.[38] In fact, if a man possessed any defects, his deficiencies were thought to stem from nurture rather than nature—for instance, being ignorantly reared by his mother, growing up in a "brutish" peasant environment, or living in poverty could ruin a naturally superior man.[39]

Mr. and Mrs. Cleaver: Ideal Gender Roles in Early Modern Germany

With the Protestant Reformation came the upheaval of the church and sixteenth-century German communities. But reformers not only questioned church practices, they

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[31] Grössinger, *Picturing Women*, 95.
[32] Grössinger, *Picturing Women*, 4.
[33] Weaver, "Gender," 190; Grössinger, *Picturing Women*, 95; Wiesner, "Nuns, Wives, and Mothers," 12.
[34] Weaver, "Gender," 190; Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 17.
[35] Weaver, "Gender," 190.
[36] Grössinger, *Picturing Women*, 4.
[37] Weaver, "Gender," 190.
[38] Wunder, "What Made a Man a Man?" 21.
[39] Davis, "Women on Top," 147.

reevaluated marriage and the household (a social unit consisting of a husband and wife, their children, their servants, and any apprentices or journeymen).[40] The household, founded on the bond of marriage, became the cornerstone of the Protestants' reprioritized social structure.[41] With marriage at the heart of the household, debates about the proper roles of men and women flourished.[42] But the end result of those discussions aligned with traditional views: the husband was responsible for governing the household and the wife was instructed to be a subordinate helpmate.[43] Like well-run households (the building blocks of a moral community), early modern German cities were modeled on the idea of paternal discipline and control. Both municipal fathers on town councils and husbands who headed households were supervisors and "rulers."[44] But marriage (and society as a whole) was imagined as a cooperative relationship. Husbands and wives were (however unequal) partners in the business of maintaining their household, just as the governing council and the community members were supposed to work together for the betterment of the town.[45] God intended for men and women to be united by a common goal and dependent upon one another for the success of their family and business.[46] This cooperative system in which everyone knew his or her place, moral obligations, and social duties extended to children, servants, and workshop employees.[47] Order and moral living were the aims of this highly-regulated society.[48]

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[40] Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 19.
[41] Steven E. Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe*, Studies in Cultural History (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1983), 8; Wiesner, "Nuns, Wives, and Mothers," 9; Alberti's *On the Family*, completed by 1441, also sees the family as the fundamental social unit of an ethical society (Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 18); Fairchilds, *Women in Early Modern Europe*, 199.
[42] Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 19.
[43] Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality, and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (London ; New York: Routledge, 1994), 40; Scott H. Hendrix, "Masculinity and Patriarchy in Reformation Germany," in *Masculinity in the Reformation Era*, ed. Scott H. Hendrix and Susan C. Karant-Nunn (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2008), 71.
[44] B. Ann Tlusty, *Bacchus and Civic Order: The Culture of Drink in Early Modern Germany*, Studies in Early Modern German History (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2001), 116.
[45] Marshall, "Women in the Reformation Era," 173; Hendrix, "Masculinity and Patriarchy," 72.
[46] Marshall, "Women in the Reformation Era," 173; Wunder, "What Made a Man a Man?" 22.
[47] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 148.
[48] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 148.

To be clear, the Protestant reforms did not revolutionize gender roles, nor intend to do so; instead, they targeted sexuality.[49] Virginity was considered the most ideal bodily state, but maintaining vows of chastity was nearly impossible for the human race.[50] With original sin came carnal desire, and since only the rarest people could live celibate lives, the reformers decided that marriage was the best way to combat mankind's unavoidable lust.[51] The Protestants were particularly critical of the clergy, a group so well-known for breaking their vows of chastity that the church implemented a tax on priests who kept concubines and prostitutes.[52] Finding the clergy's blatant disobedience offensive in their Christian communities, the reformers demanded that priests marry.[53] Similarly, Protestants verbally attacked and abolished convents—accusing them of being as moral as brothels.[54] By "freeing" women from "inhumane and antisocial" nunneries and placing them at the center of the home and family as wives and mothers, reformers believed they "had liberated [women] from sexual repression" (or, alternately, promiscuity), "cultural deprivation," and the "male-regulated life of a cloister."[55] Essentially, everyone was encouraged to take responsibility for his or her baser urges by joining with a spouse, and marriage was viewed as a solution for bodily desires, as well as the stability of a renewed moral society in Germany.

Ideal Masculinity: Hausvater*, Citizen, Ruler*

As the reformers shifted emphasis onto the importance of the family unit, the proper roles of men and women became central to the running of the household. For example, a married man was supposed to be a good *Hausvater*, or household head, by providing for the welfare of the family, protecting the household, and ruling over the

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[49] Fairchilds, *Women in Early Modern Europe*, 195.
[50] Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 4.
[51] Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 4. See, for instance, Martin Luther's 1522 "On the Estate of Marriage."
[52] Marshall, "Women in the Reformation Era," 172.
[53] Wunder, *"He is the Sun, She is the Moon"*, 45.
[54] Wiesner, "Nuns, Wives, and Mothers," 9.
[55] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 25, 1, 49.

people under his care with a "firm but just hand."[56] According to Viet Dietrich, the preacher at St. Sebald's in Nuremberg from 1535 to 1549, being the "provider" for his wife and children was the punishment for man's original sin, just as woman's punishment was to bear children in pain.[57] But the *Hausvater* was not only responsible for the economic success of the household, he was also "answerable for the honor, souls, and industry" of the people under his care.[58] The household was a microcosm of the Christian world: like God governed the world, the city council fathers judged the moral, religious, and work discipline of its citizens, and so too did the *Hausvater* preside over his wife, children, servants, and workers.[59]

In order to perform ideal masculinity, men also strove to demonstrate self-sufficiency and a host of other desirable male qualities, including intellect, honesty, courage, piety, a good reputation, justice, temperance, steadfastness, and a sense of duty.[60] The male figure in Cornelis Anthonisz's large woodcut *The Wise Man and the Wise Woman* (fig. 18) is symbolically adorned with objects representing his ideal masculinity, such as the helmet, beard, scales, dog, etc.[61] Ulinka Rublack argues that part of idealized masculinity resided in the man's "ability to abstain from unreasonable demands on others, to control passions, and to work for the common good."[62] Of course, a man's masculinity and honor were also connected to his success in business and public life. This differed slightly depending on his social class. For an upper-class man, loyalty and bravery were most important; for the bourgeois and working-class men, honesty, integrity, and craftsmanship were essential to their value as men.[63] According to Scott Hendrix, the pressures and responsibilities of being an early modern man weighed on

[56] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 50; also Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 46.
[57] Hendrix, "Masculinity and Patriarchy," 79.
[58] Tlusty, *Bacchus and Civic Order*, 116-117.
[59] Tlusty, *Bacchus and Civic Order*, 117; Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 46; Weaver, "Gender," 190.
[60] Ilja M. Veldman, "Lessons for Ladies: A Selection of Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century Dutch Prints," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 16, no. 2/3 (January 1, 1986): 113.
[61] Veldman, "Lessons for Ladies," 113.
[62] Ulinka Rublack, "Meanings of Gender in Early Modern German History," in *Gender in Early Modern German History*, Past & Present Publications (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 2-3.
[63] Weaver, "Gender," 190.

those broad sixteenth-century shoulders. To be successful men, husbands had to rule their households, produce enough to support the people in their care, and temper their desires—these tasks were not always easy.[64]

With superior rationality and "manly strength," men were supposed to demonstrate good self-government, control their passions, and therefore merit their dominant position in society and the household. In theory, a man should be a "model of self-control" who is "able to moderate his own appetite and drives," otherwise it was unlikely that he could command and moderate the desires of those around him.[65] Moderation was itself a defining characteristic of Renaissance masculinity.[66] Under the influence of Aristotelian medicine, it was assumed that the male body was biologically moderate: neither too hot, nor too cold.[67] In contrast to men's "biological" inclination toward moderation, women were thought to be inherently immoderate, or to use Todd Reeser's more accurate terminology, "nonmoderate."[68] A good example of moderation comes from Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*: the moderate man should neither rush into battle rashly, nor should he hold back from a necessary battle in fear. He should neither eat/drink/spend too much, nor too little.[69] These rules of moderation applied to virtually every aspect of Renaissance life—and both genders, but "nonmoderation" (mostly excess) was all too common in sixteenth-century society.

Perhaps the strongest evidence that these titans of order and morality struggled with—and fully acknowledged—the burden of some (sexual) impulses is the reformers' persistent concentration on marriage. In 1522, Luther wrote an entire treatise "On the Estate of Marriage" (*Vom ehelichen Leben*), and in 1539, in his "Lectures on Genesis" (*Genesisvorlesung*), he went on to argue: "Marriage is necessary as a remedy for lust, and

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64 Hendrix, "Masculinity and Patriarchy," 71.
65 Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 50.
66 Todd W. Reeser, *Moderating Masculinity in Early Modern Culture*, North Carolina Studies in the Romance Languages and Literatures 283 (Chapel Hill: U.N.C. Dept. of Romance Languages, 2006), 13.
67 Reeser, *Moderating Masculinity*, 19.
68 Reeser, *Moderating Masculinity*, 13, 15. Because moderation is the mean of lack and excess, using immoderate—which often means excessive—is inadequate. Instead, nonmoderate is useful here.
69 Reeser, *Moderating Masculinity*, 14.

through marriage God permits sexual intercourse."[70] Truthfully, one of the reasons that reformers pushed men to marry was to help them moderate their lust—what Luther considered "one of sin's consequences for men"—in as unsinful a way as possible.[71] Without marriage, reformers worried that men, however temperate and just in other areas of life, would succumb to sexual promiscuity.[72] Thus, in order to avoid the sins of the flesh, the Protestant church advocated marriage, citing 1 Corinthians 7:2: "But for fear of fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."[73] For Luther, wives were "an antidote against sin," who not only managed the household but helped contain a man's raging libido.[74] Rather than live like "whoring" Catholic priests, Luther believed it was better to slake one's "excessive desire of the flesh" with one woman: one's wife.[75] Thus, in theory, marriage had a stabilizing function in early modern German society. In fact, marriage was often a "precondition of mastership and full membership of the guild."[76] As Lyndal Roper explains, "What gave one access to the world of brothers was one's mastery of a woman which guaranteed one's sexual status."[77] Essentially, men were not "securely male" if they did not rule over a woman.[78]

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[70] "Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 4.
[71] Merry E. Wiesner-Hanks, "'Lustful Luther': Male Libido in the Writings of the Reformer," in *Masculinity in the Reformation Era*, ed. Scott H. Hendrix and Susan C. Karant-Nunn (Kirksville, MO: Truman State University Press, 2008), 194.
[72] Hendrix, "Masculinity and Patriarchy," 74.
[73] 1 Corinthians 7:2 DV.
[74] Wiesner-Hanks, "Lustful Luther," 195.
[75] Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 4; Wiesner, "Lustful Luther," 195.
[76] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 46.
[77] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 46.
[78] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 46. Unfortunately, writes Roper, "As the economy contracted and guilds made entry more difficult, masterhood was a status which ever fewer sixteenth-century craftsmen could attain." Thus, unmarried journeymen's livelihood *and* masculinity were at risk. Those men could neither prove their manhood through marriage (the mastery of a woman) or through their craft (the mastery of their trade).

Scott Hendrix astutely observes that sexuality was an important part of early modern masculinity.[79] Even the religious men who took their vows seriously recognized that they would not be able to remain chaste. One such man named Andreas Althamer wrote, "It ought to be at least possible that we can keep our vows, but I cannot vow to be chaste any more than I can vow to fly."[80] One way or another, the lay and religious men alike would have sex. Luther wrote in his lectures on Genesis from about 1535-1545, "In our age you hardly find one man among a thousand who refrains from relationship with women until his thirtieth year."[81] Thus, marriage was simply the least sinful way to deal with inevitable desires. This example of men's incontrollable lust is one of many that goes against men's allegedly superior self-control and moderation. Luther describes Old Testament patriarchs who controlled their sex drives (e.g. Noah, Abraham, and Joseph) as possessing "an extraordinary gift of chastity and an almost angelic nature."[82] Notably, in his writings about lust, Luther focuses on the male libido—not women's sexual urges.[83] Still, it is revealing—though unsurprising—that sexual sin, which was so closely associated with women, proved so troublesome for early modern men. Women were a threat to masculinity on all fronts, inciting male lusts and robbing men of their self-control and vigor through sex.

It is possible that men's inability to curb their own sex drives increased their anxiety over women's supposedly insatiable desires. Patricia Simons suggests that men worried about their sexual performance—would it be enough to satisfy their wives and prevent their sexually voracious women from seeking someone else's seed?[84] Some medical authorities thought that "without regular moisturizing with male semen, the uterus would dry up," so women were always seeking sex—if their husbands could not

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[79] Hendrix, "Masculinity and Patriarchy," 78; see also "Lustful Luther" in which Wiesner demonstrates through Martin Luther's writings how lust was at the center of the Reformation.
[80] Hendrix, "Masculinity and Patriarchy," 78.
[81] Wiesner-Hanks, "Lustful Luther," 197.
[82] Wiesner-Hanks, "Lustful Luther," 197.
[83] Wiesner-Hanks, "Lustful Luther," 208-209.
[84] Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, 230.

provide it, they would go elsewhere.[85] Reeser explains that men had "an underlying male anxiety [that] women's sexuality could not be contained and that male power was insufficient to control women in the household."[86] A connection between sex and power—both in the bedroom and in the household—emerges in the discourse on gender relations. If a man could not control his wife, then he not only risked losing his honor and masculinity, but, writes Reeser, "the malady of feminine excess repeatedly threaten[ed] to cross over into the male body and *infect masculinity*…The 'danger' of immoderate male desire for women…would suggest a similarity between the sexually excessive man and the woman when he desires her."[87] If the husband or wife strayed from his or her gender roles through nonmoderation or sin, the balance was thrown off and the spouse could become more or less masculine or feminine.

Ideal Femininity: The Chaste, Silent, and Obedient Wife

According to Ecclesiasticus 26:1, "Happy is the husband of a good wife," but what type of woman was a "good wife" in sixteenth-century Germany?[88] Early modern conduct books and prints made it quite clear that chastity was the "queen of virtues in a woman."[89] While the "rules of conduct for men are numerous…," wrote Juan Luis Vives, a Spanish humanist and educational theorist, "a woman's only care is chastity."[90] In Vives' widely published conduct book *The Instruction of a Christien Woman* (*De Institutione Feminae Christianae*, 1523), which was available throughout Europe in

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[85] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 11.
[86] Reeser, *Moderating Masculinity*, 30. This relates back to medical treatises and the humors. In *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, Patricia Simons describes how intercourse was considered a medical remedy for balancing women's humors. A man's hot fluids warmed a naturally cold woman, but robbed the man of some of his energy. Thus, too much sex could ruin a man, draining him of his essential life force—the heat that made him masculine. Russell also writes about this balance/completion through intercourse in her introduction to *Eva/Ave*, specifically 17.
[87] Reeser, *Moderating Masculinity*, 25 (my italics).
[88] Ecclesiasticus 26:1 DV.
[89] Nancy Weitz Miller, "Metaphor and the Mystification of Chastity in Vive's *Instruction of a Christien Woman*," in *Menacing Virgins: Representing Virginity in the Middle Ages and Renaissance* (Newark, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1999), 135.
[90] Weaver, "Gender," 188.

thirty-six translations, he explained that men should be wise, eloquent, strong, charitable, and have a good memory, "but for a woman, these male virtues do not apply; for her, only chastity is essential."[91] Here, chastity referred not only to a young girl's virginal state, but also the modest, virtuous, and retiring way a proper woman lived.[92] Women were expected to guard their chastity both before and during marriage, and if a woman "lost" her chastity through voluntary (or involuntary) sex, she became "utterly dishonorable," a worthless commodity.[93] Married women maintained their chastity through unconditional fidelity to their husbands and through limited, passionless intercourse conducted solely for procreation.[94]

In addition to chastity, early modern society valued womanly virtues essential for preserving chastity: modesty, humility, steadfastness, and moderation.[95] As the descendants of Eve, women were in constant danger of losing control of their insatiable sexual natures and irresistible beauty.[96] Moreover, Vives noted that their faces could "inflame young men's minds unto foul and unlawful lusts," endangering the souls of men who looked at the lovely women.[97] To "defend against the heat of lust inspired by viewing the physical body," Vives recommended shamefastness, or the presentation of "the image of cold chastity"—whatever that means.[98] Overall, Vives gave women an unreasonable amount of agency. He insisted, as Nancy Miller describes it, that women could "entice or repel any man, as if she were in complete control of all men's desires as well as her own."[99] For Vives, "It is an evil keeper that cannot keep one thing well committed to her keeping…and especially which no man will take from her against her

[91] Miller, "Metaphor and the Mystification of Chastity," 133; Veldman, "Lessons for Ladies," 119; Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 19.
[92] Yvonne Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout: Biblical Women as Patterns of Female Virtue in Netherlandish and German Graphic Art, Ca. 1500-1750," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 28, no. 4 (January 1, 2000): 220.
[93] Veldman, "Lessons for Ladies," 119; Miller, "Metaphor and the Mystification of Chastity," 137.
[94] Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout," 220; Veldman, "Lessons for Ladies," 119.
[95] Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout," 220.
[96] Gloria Kaufman, "Juan Luis Vives on the Education of Women," *Signs* 3, no. 4 (July 1, 1978): 895.
[97] Miller, "Metaphor and the Mystification of Chastity," 141.
[98] Miller, "Metaphor and the Mystification of Chastity," 142.
[99] Miller, "Metaphor and the Mystification of Chastity," 142.

will, nor touch it, except she be willing herself."[100] Therefore, according to Vives' estimation, rape is impossible because women control all desire. "A woman who cannot repel sexual assault is clearly not chaste," writes Miller on Vives.[101] Thus, without the guidance, supervision, and moral education that their male family members provided, women could easily lose their chastity.

Fathers, husbands, and brothers were responsible for shaping and controlling the bodies and minds of their female family members.[102] Women, who were always at risk for slipping into sin, were trained to be modest and humble—their education was intentionally selective, lest their minds become undisciplined and their imaginations and tongues loosened.[103] Beginning with St. Augustine, the care and maintenance of the female character involved a "series of corrective measures to which the female soul should be subjected," and that discipline and moderation extended to the woman's body.[104] A variety of texts addressed the proper posture of women.[105] Both Vives and Sebastian Brant, the early modern German humanist and satirist, recommend that women keep their eyes downcast. Brant wrote, "A wife who would be modest found / Should cast her eyes upon the ground / and not coquet whene'er she can / And not make eyes at every man."[106] Leonardo da Vinci describes the ideal female posture more fully in the margin of one of his studies of female heads, "Women should be represented with demure actions, their legs tightly closed together, their arms held together, their heads lowered and inclined to one side."[107] The motionless female figure in Anton Woensam's *A Wise Woman* (c. 1525, fig. 19) visually represents the ideal womanly posture: she shows no sign of agitation or abrupt gestures, her eyes are downcast, her clothing is

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[100] Miller, "Metaphor and the Mystification of Chastity," 143.
[101] Miller, "Metaphor and the Mystification of Chastity," 143.
[102] Weaver, "Gender," 195.
[103] Davis, "Women on Top," 148-149.
[104] Paolo Berdini, "Women Under the Gaze: A Renaissance Genealogy," *Art History* 21, no. 4 (1998): 576.
[105] Berdini, "Women Under the Gaze," 567.
[106] Berdini, "Women Under the Gaze," 568.
[107] Berdini, "Women Under the Gaze," 567.

modest, and her emotions are in check.[108] As Paolo Berdini points out, women's bodies were "locked into a formula" that restricted their bodily actions and transformed them into objects of the male gaze.[109]

But for women's moral and physical safety—and the integrity of the man's household, men preferred for women to stay out of the public eye, inside the home. Leon Battista Alberti explained in Book II of his *On the Family* (*Della famiglia*, c. 1432-1434) that women are timid, soft, and slow creatures who are better suited to sitting and watching over things. For Alberti, the ideal early modern woman was "silent, obedient, chaste, and *enclosed*."[110] Luther goes on to reinforce this idea by writing that a wife "is like a nail, driven into the wall…[she] should stay at home and look after the affairs of the household."[111] Thus, women were considered biologically designed for indoor lives and physically and spiritually safeguarded from themselves and others when enclosed. This circular argument for a woman's role as the perfect housewife was also based on economic concerns. In a sixteenth-century patriarchal society, a man's titles and property passed to his legitimate descendants, but if his wife was unchaste, then the system failed and put the family fortune in peril.[112]

Truly, all female virtues were related to the correct attitude a woman should assume towards her husband. Good women were obedient to God and husband.[113] They were silent and pious, diligent and courteous, prudent and wise—to the benefit and support of their husbands' households.[114] Reading material for German girls encouraged silence, as did German and Netherlandish prints.[115] For example both Anthonisz's (fig. 18) and Woensam's (fig. 19) "wise women" promote the ideal of the silent wife: the

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108 Grössinger, *Picturing Women*, 45.
109 Berdini, "Women Under the Gaze," 568.
110 Weaver, "Gender," 191 (my italics).
111 Wolfthal, "Women's Community and Male Spies," 147.
112 Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout," 220; Veldman, "Lessons for Ladies," 120.
113 Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout," 220; Veldman, "Lessons for Ladies," 113.
114 Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout," 220.
115 Wolfthal, "Women's Community and Male Spies," 129.

female figures literally wear padlocks on their mouths. Woesam's *A Wise Woman* symbolically demonstrates many more desirable virtues—in addition to chastity and silence—that a woman should possess. Her falcon-like eyes keep her clear of shameful behavior; the key in her ear indicates that she is willing to listen to God's word; the lock on her mouth prevents her from using bad language, talking unnecessarily, and gossiping; the mirror wards off pride; the turtle-dove on her breast illustrates that she will let no other man but her husband near her; the snake at her waist means that she will speak to no one but her husband; the jug represents charity toward the poor; and the horses' hooves stand for her unshakeable chastity.[116] The ideal woman is the subordinate representative of her husband's household and honor: bodily, spiritually, mentally.

Yet even the most ideal women and happy marriages were largely justified by their essential role in procreation. In fact, the only use that Isidore of Seville (c. 560-636) found for women *was* motherhood.[117] Thomas Aquinas (c. 1225-1274) agreed in his mid-thirteenth-century *Summa Theologiae* that Woman was created to help Man with procreation, "not indeed to help him in any other work, as some have maintained, because where most work is concerned man can get help more conveniently from another man than from a woman."[118] Protestants encouraged both men and women to marry and have families, but marriage and motherhood were a woman's highest calling, not only her living arrangement.[119] Moreover, the pain of childbirth was Woman's punishment for the Fall; women were granted salvation through their useful role in regeneration. As Luther summarized in his "Lectures on Timothy 1" from the late 1520s, "You will be saved if you have subjected yourselves and bear your children with pain."[120] If the union of a man and his wife did not produce children, infertility was grounds for divorce.[121] Although sex seems to sit in direct conflict with ideas of chastity, Aquinas taught that married

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116 Grössinger, *Picturing Women*, 43-44; Grössinger, *Humour and Folly*, 107; Veldman, "Lessons for Ladies," 113.
117 Grössinger, *Picturing Women*, 4.
118 Grössinger, *Picturing Women*, 4.
119 Wiesner, "Nuns, Wives, and Mothers," 13.
120 Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 5.
121 Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 6.

women "could be virtuous as long as [they] had sexual relationships with [their husbands] for the sole purpose of procreation and kept [their] minds chaste."[122]

From the information available on ideal femininity and masculinity, it seems that men were understood to be naturally better capable of performing proper masculine roles than women were of performing proper feminine roles. Men had rationality, strength, and balanced humors on their side, but women struggled with their sexual urges and weak minds and bodies. While women needed male guidance and supervision to live morally, men were capable of moderating their own desires. Though proper masculinity required lists of virtues, responsibility for other people, and private and public honor, in theory it should have been easier for a man to obtain due to his superior nature. Proper femininity, though easily reduced to chastity, silence, and obedience, was thus less easily obtained by a woman because of her weaker overall nature. But it is crucial to remember that these ideals do not take into account the lived reality of household dynamics in sixteenth-century Germany. These exemplars correspond to biblical and biological theories, but how closely did living people follow these recommendations for male and female gender roles? One could argue that conduct books, prints, and sermons—the rules and regulations circulated in society—more accurately reflect *desired* behaviors, rather than the norms of everyday life. After all, communities and law-makers generally write rules and expectations when people fail to live up to them on their own.

Reality Check: The Other Side of Masculinity and the (Brief) Empowerment of Women

Regardless of how stridently religious and government leaders urged sixteenth-century Germans to behave according to the ideals of masculinity and femininity, men and women who lived during the tumultuous pre-Reformation and Reformation eras did not always perform their gender roles as specified in the previous section. In some

[122] Grössinger, *Picturing Women*, 4.

aspects, it is striking how much reality diverged from the ideal.[123] This rebuff of ideal gender roles is partially accounted for by the contradictory expectations placed upon men.

On one hand, in the household and in cooperation with his wife, a sixteenth-century German man was supposed to be a pillar of moral guidance and exemplar of self-control and moderation. On the other hand, in all-male groups, such as guilds, trade associations, military units, and political corporations, men had to publically defend and validate their honor by testing the boundaries of their control through drinking and fisticuffs.[124] In truth, beyond the influence of reformers trying to Christianize society, masculinity and male honor were primarily related to membership and participation in all-male groups rather than to households and marriage.[125] Being a member of various brotherhoods gave men a sense of political belonging and reaffirmed their "consciousness of being [men]."[126]

But defending the guild's honor and one's place in the group often came at the expense of a stable household. The drunken violence of men who wasted their money on alcohol and gambling likely necessitated that women take a more active leadership role in household affairs. At this same point in history, women participated in the Reformation alongside their male counterparts, only to be pushed back into their subordinate roles when things settled down. By examining how men and women's lives diverged from the ideals in the previous section, the complexity of gender roles becomes even more apparent, demonstrating why a nuanced reading of Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*—and other images of women exerting power—is imperative.

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[123] Weaver, "Gender," 189.
[124] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 108.
[125] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 108.
[126] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 108.

Disruptive Masculinity

Although preachers, pamphlets, and prints encouraged self-control and moderation, "few men were controlled at all times," writes Rublack, "Nor did they want to be, for another code of masculinity required them to play with the limits of self-control."[127] In truth, sixteenth-century codes of masculinity were contradictory: a man needed to demonstrate self-control and moderation but also to test the boundaries of his control through (near) excess. It is this reckless, darker side of masculinity that Lyndal Roper deems "disruptive" to the early modern town.[128] Instead of supporting the patriarchal system of civic order, "men posed a serious public-order problem."[129] Young men fought in the streets at night; drunken husbands beat their wives nearly to death; and guilds fostered brotherhoods that could incite political unrest through violent competition and conflicting loyalties. Councils tried to control the disorder and misrule, but, as Roper says, "the male world was repeatedly the locale for fights, insults, drunkenness, and excessive behavior."[130]

Alcohol consumption was a central part of male bonding, legal proceedings, guild celebrations, and other important occasions in male social culture. Like the right to bear arms, participation in social drinking rituals was a sign of masculinity. Therefore, if a man let his drinking habits get in the way of running his household, the town council could ban him from the tavern for a year.[131] This emasculating "honor punishment" effectively banned him from normal male society.[132] In his sixteenth-century discourse *Of Honour*, Robert Ashley noted, "the honour of the Germans in particular was contingent on the trait of generosity, expressed through the provision of food and drink."[133] Therefore, it is unsurprising that the Augsburg merchant Hans Jakob Fugger, who hated

[127] Rublack, "Meanings of Gender," 5.
[128] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 107.
[129] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 107.
[130] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 111.
[131] Tlusty, *Bacchus and Civic Order*, 118.
[132] Tlusty, *Bacchus and Civic Order*, 118.
[133] Tlusty, *Bacchus and Civic Order*, 122-123.

wine, earned the derogatory nickname *Wasserman* ("water man" or Aquarius), for serving watered-down beverages to his guests.[134] Fugger's fellow men mocked him for his *faux pas*, and, in all likelihood, called his manhood into question by naming him after Ganymede, the homosexual cup-bearer of Zeus who is the inspiration for the constellation Aquarius. Like men today, ribbing a fellow man about his masculinity and calling attention to foul-play could be done in fun or provocation.

Drunkenness was not the goal of the drinking practices so interwoven into German culture—but it was often the disruptive, messy, and evil result.[135] When they could afford the alcohol, sixteenth-century Germans drank in excess and with relish.[136] The "immoderate drinking habits of the Germans" led contemporary critics to complain that "the god of wine was replacing the god of war as the symbol of German manhood."[137] German men were no longer proving their prowess in battle, they were being "knighted" as the "heaviest drinker."[138] In his pamphlet entitled "On the Horrible Vice of Drunkenness" (*Von dem greüwlichen laster der trunkenheyt*, c. 1531), Sebastian Franck, Barthel Beham's brother-in-law, details how excessive drinking damages the body, soul, honor, and one's possessions.[139] Franck and others compare drunkards to animals: they smell bad, fall into filth too horrible for pigs, behave violently, disregard God, "growl like dogs, grumble like bears, and vomit and crawl into stalls with pigs."[140] As illustrated in Erhard Schön's *The Four Effects of Wine* (fig. 20), alcohol could transform moderate *Hausväter* into violent, aggressive tyrants (into lions or bears); playful, gambling fools (apes); quiet, amorous dolts (lambs); or a dirty gluttons without control over their bodily functions or fluids (pigs or dogs).[141]

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[134] Tlusty, *Bacchus and Civic Order*, 123.
[135] Alison G. Stewart, *Before Bruegel: Sebald Beham and the Origins of Peasant Festival Imagery* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2008), 87.
[136] Stewart, *Before Bruegel*, 93.
[137] Tlusty, *Bacchus and Civic Order*, 125.
[138] Tlusty, *Bacchus and Civic Order*, 125.
[139] Stewart, *Before Bruegel*, 73.
[140] Stewart, *Before Bruegel*, 73.
[141] Stewart, *Before Bruegel*, 76-78.

Drunkenness—"one of the greatest sins attacked from the pulpit"—was the cause of the most severe public and private problems.[142] In the early sixteenth-century, the Nuremberg town council tried to stymie those ill effects (which included blasphemy, drunkenness, anger, lust, adultery, strife, manslaughter, brawls, and other public vices) by limiting the number of feast days (a.k.a. opportunities to drink excessively) celebrated every year.[143] Additionally, numerous times between 1496 and 1548, the same council forbade "toasting," or "pledging healths," which required men to drink heavily to demonstrate respect and honor.[144] Moralizing against the Demon Drink, an Augsburg Ordinance calls upon experience and reason to discourage drunkenness:

> Even if excessive wining and drunkenness had not been so greatly accursed in both divine and heathen writings, and everyone had not already been warned against it, daily experience of what misery and disorder, such as the transformation of noble reason into animal insensibility, destruction of soul, body, and life, honor and good visibly follows from it, should justly teach us to utterly avoid it.[145]

But it is fairly obvious that temperance was not a high priority for sixteenth-century German men who enjoyed drinking with their brothers.

Violence was another way men bonded, proved their manhood, and established or defended their honor. Fisticuffs in the streets, at processions, during weddings or dances, and at guild meetings were common. In fact, tournaments, such as the jousts in Nuremberg's Hauptmarkt, were organized to showcase publicly masculine violence.[146] According to Simons, the chivalric contests were not only exhibitions of masculinity and public displays of honor and control, but the breaking of the lance had an ejaculatory quality. For Simons in *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, masculinity is the capacity of projection. From external genitals (and beards) forced out by the male body's greater

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[142] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 110; Grössinger, *Humour and Folly*, 70.
[143] Stewart, *Before Bruegel*, 43.
[144] Stewart, *Before Bruegel*, 87.
[145] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 111.
[146] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 113. Many thanks to Jeffrey Chipps Smith for his insight on the jousts in Nuremberg.

heat, to the expelling of bodily fluids (including urine, semen, and vomit), men—with their aggressively, expansively, and publicly assertive behaviors and symbols—are projective.[147] Similarly, Roper compares men to volcanoes with "drives and fluids which constantly threaten to erupt, spilling outwards to dirty [their] environment through ejaculation, bloodshed, vomiting, defecation."[148] This projectile, eruptive nature of men is well-illustrated in a contemporary image by Sebald Beham; here, a man spews vomit and defecates (fig. 21). For Roper, male bodies break boundaries and dirty themselves and others through projectile behaviors; in contrast, female bodies are constantly threatened by invasion—a penetrative process that dirties and destroys their honor.[149]

Unfortunately, women often experienced men's explosive, projective natures firsthand. The household could be a place of violent marital fights where a drunk and lazy husband abused his power, failing to exercise moderation—or mercy.[150] The complaints raised by the aggrieved wives in Schön's 1531 woodcut *Seven Wives Complaining about their Husbands* (fig. 22) indicate the types of offenses sixteenth-century German men probably committed. Here, the wives describe their husbands as gamblers, drunkards, inadequate providers, lazy incompetents, wife beaters, or all of the above.[151] In a contemporary pamphlet from the early 1520s, another fictional wife laments the poverty and disrepair of her household. Instead of being a good provider, her husband spends their money at the pub, comes home late at night and "raises hell," gets up in the morning with complaints and demands, and promptly slinks back to the tavern.[152] According to Diane Wolfthal, the grievances that Schön's fabricated women raise would have been legitimate complaints in the day—there were court proceedings that document similar cases.[153] But, in his treatise "Women's Business" (*Der Weiber geschäft*, 1533), Wolfgang

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[147] Patricia Simons argues throughout *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe* that men are projective.
[148] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 112.
[149] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 112-113.
[150] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 154.
[151] Wolfthal, "Women's Community and Male Spies," 131.
[152] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 50-51.
[153] Wolfthal, "Women's Community and Male Spies," 133.

Russ insists that a good wife did not perceive her husband's faults—or if she did, she ignored them.[154]

Unfortunately, the severity of some offenses could not be ignored. Truly brutish husbands resorted to punching, kicking, or biting to discipline their disobedient wives.[155] While husbands were legally permitted to dole out a moderate degree of corporeal punishment, when women were too harshly beaten, they could (and did) take their complaints to the authorities.[156] In fact, it was often at the insistence of an "unfairly" beaten wife that town councils intervened in the domestic sphere—checking for violence, drunkenness, and other disruptive sins.[157] Town councils realized that male authorities within many households were not acting as "good governors," but to completely deny men the right to punish their wives would emasculate them and undermine their "proper marital relationship."[158] Still, Protestants generally disapproved of wife-beating.[159] Nuremberg preacher Veit Dietrich held that violence was not manly, that husbands were still men when they refrained from hitting their wives.[160] After all, Steven Ozment writes, "paternal authority in Reformation Europe did not necessarily mean that a man was free to dominate his household as he pleased."[161] In reality, town councils and religious leaders put "enormous moral and legal pressure" on men who "flagrantly abused their mandate."[162] In efforts to regulate marital conflicts, Protestant secular authorities "expand[ed] the traditional scope of their prosecuting authority."[163] Perhaps ironically, by

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[154] Wolfthal, "Women's Community and Male Spies," 129.
[155] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 46.
[156] Grössinger, *Humour and Folly*, 120; Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 109; Harrington*, Reordering Marriage and Society*, 267.
[157] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 46, 154.
[158] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 46-47; Harrington, *Reordering Marriage and Society*, 267.
[159] Fairchilds, *Women in Early Modern Europe*, 202.
[160] Hendrix, "Masculinity and Patriarchy," 79.
[161] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 51.
[162] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 51.
[163] Harrington, *Reordering Marriage and Society*, 247.

policing the morals within individual households, the heads of the community undermined the same patriarchal governance that they claimed to uphold.[164]

Doubtless, the ideal *Hausväter* described in the previous section and the drunk, violent tyrants introduced in this section are extreme examples on either end of the spectrum of sixteenth-century German masculinity. Thinking of all early modern men as vicious brutes—or living saints—would be misleading and, frankly, a disservice to the complex, varied men of the Reformation era. Scott Hendrix reminds us, "In that century, too, men were different in many respects from one another," so behaviors that one class or group of men found masculine might offend another.[165] Whereas most scholarship on early modern masculinity presents the extremes—the strong, dominant patriarch or the vulgar, abusive asshole, Hendrix provides a more sympathetic and human view of sixteenth-century men, a perspective I find convincing and worthwhile to consider here. For Hendrix, and the Protestant preachers on whose views he bases his research, the men in question were "neither supermen nor weaklings."[166] They needed emotional and domestic support from their wives, as well as sexual fulfillment. They were burdened by the demands of their household and the community.[167] When they failed to uphold the high standards placed upon them, they received little sympathy, but "quick blame." In short, they were human partners and providers who were "susceptible to temptation and vulnerable to failure."[168]

My purpose for focusing on the complexity of sixteenth-century masculinity is twofold: to establish a common set of experiences or ideals carried internally by early modern men and to provide a more realistic, human picture of them. I agree with Hendrix: sixteenth-century German men were not all the same. But they lived in a community with certain expectations of self-control *and* raucous male camaraderie.

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[164] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 46.
[165] Hendrix, "Masculinity and Patriarchy," 87.
[166] Hendrix, "Masculinity and Patriarchy," 87.
[167] Hendrix, "Masculinity and Patriarchy," 74.
[168] Hendrix, "Masculinity and Patriarchy," 88.

Ribald joking and mockery could (and surely did) occur within guilds, town councils, and other all-male groups. Patricia Simons argues that men in those environments used and encountered "an endless profusion of word plays and metaphors" typically associated with sexual imagery.[169] It is precisely from within this male realm of "sexual jokes, visual puns, and misogynist raillery" that viewers interpreted and enjoyed Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* and its many layers of meaning.[170]

Rebellious Women

Unlike sixteenth-century masculinity with its striking duality, early modern femininity did not possess an acceptable or desired antithesis. Women who practiced ideal femininity through chastity, silence, and obedience were deemed "pious women," meaning they were "honorable, God-fearing, and brave."[171] Women whose actions transgressed the limits of acceptable female behavior were considered "rebellious women" by their husbands and "uppity" or unruly [*ungezogene*] women by the authorities.[172] Since female "disorderliness" originated with Eve's disobedience, it was *not* equated across gender lines with disruptive masculinity.[173] No one encouraged women to test their self-control or moderation—primarily because women were believed to have such a tenuous hold on their desires and bodies to begin with!

As one would expect, prints, pamphlets, and other documents describe the myriad ways women misbehaved. For example, an anonymous vernacular pamphlet from the early 1520s describes (in rhyming couplets) spousal grievances.[174] According to an unhappy husband, his wife is stubborn, cross, quick to contradict him, and ready to curse him "if he dared to scold" her."[175] If the man tries to beat her with a strap, his unruly wife

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[169] Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, 77.
[170] Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, 170.
[171] Wunder, *"He is the Sun, She is the Moon"*, 174.
[172] Wunder, *"He is the Sun, She is the Moon"*, 174.
[173] Davis, "Women on Top," 147.
[174] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 50-51.
[175] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 51.

picks up a brick; if the man makes a fist, the wife prepares to fight him with a club.[176] As punishment for not letting her get her own way, the husband goes without meals and sleeps alone—and on top of all that, the wife falsely accuses him of infidelity and snubs him when he makes less money or loses his job![177] That undesirable wife is comparable to the wives described in Schön's *Seven Men Complaining about their Wives* (1531, fig. 23; the companion sheet to his *Seven Wives Complaining about their Husbands*). Seven dissatisfied husbands accuse their spouses of various sinful and abhorrent behaviors, including being "poor housekeepers, drunkards, spendthrifts, harridans, and shrews."[178] One old wife is too bossy; one young wife is too vain and flirtatious. One man has a lazy wife who will not clean the house. Another man's wife is a drunkard who spends all their money. Yet another wife scolds her husband and argues with him; even when he beats her, she comes and drags him home from the pub.[179] Typically, spouses (of both sexes) raised grievances about sexual misconduct, violence, the unfair division of labor, and the unjust control of money—complaints they felt would be "judged as legitimate."[180]

Like virtue, sin and discipline were gendered. According to Roper, "While women were primarily prosecuted for their sexual misconduct and evil tongues, men were disciplined for rowdy behavior, drunkenness, gambling, and blasphemy."[181] As is documented in Hans Sachs's text accompanying Schön's image of complaining husbands, early modern women sometimes drank and fought, but the discipline ordinances dealt with them differently than their male counterparts. For example, when a woman was fined for fighting, the cost was half that of a man's fine for the same offense—presumably because men were more likely to fight or draw weapons.[182] Similarly, despite the gender neutral language of discipline ordinances, certain slips

[176] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 51.
[177] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 51.
[178] Wolfthal, "Women's Community and Male Spies," 131.
[179] Grössinger, *Picturing Women*, 124.
[180] Wolfthal, "Women's Community and Male Spies," 133.
[181] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 153.
[182] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 40-41.

reveal that the town councils' project of discipline targeted men and women differently. In a section describing the sins of drinking and gambling, damages to "wife and child" are mentioned—not damages to "husband and child."[183] Sections about adultery, fornication, and procuring tend to address women—even though men were also punished for sexual misbehavior.[184] For instance, when caught, prostitutes *and* their clients were fined.[185] While it seems probable that sixteenth-century men and women caused different types of trouble for their governing councils, the laws and corresponding punishments go out of their way to pinpoint and amplify concepts of ideal gender roles. In fact, the sections on sexual misconduct praise marriage and describe the proper roles of husbands and wives; thus, gender roles appear *in the laws*.[186]

Following John Calvin's argument that sexually unsatisfied women "were prone to lewd and hysterical behaviors," it could have been women's uncontrollable sex drives—exponentially greater than men's—that put them at odds with the law and led them into prostitution.[187] In sixteenth-century Germany, women who did not have their sexual desires met were considered *dangerous*—"a threat to the virtue and order of society!"[188] But they were also a threat to (oh-so-easily) tempted men who could not resist the corrupting influence of female sexuality.[189] Women, those historic seductresses, could cleverly manipulate any man into a sinful dalliance.[190] Unmarried women were particularly suspect, both 1) because they had no husband and thus did not fulfill their proper gender role, and 2) because they had no husband and thus could not temper their burning lusts in the marital bed.[191] Moreover, in the sixteenth century, "40 percent of all

[183] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 40-41.
[184] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 153.
[185] Fairchilds, *Women in Early Modern Europe*, 205.
[186] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 153.
[187] Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 9; Wiesner, "Nuns, Wives, and Mothers," 13
[188] Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 9.
[189] Berdini, "Women Under the Gaze," 577.
[190] Grössinger, *Humour and Folly*, 107.
[191] Wiesner, "Nuns, Wives, and Mothers," 13.

women were single (an estimated 20 percent spinsters, 10-20 percent widows)."[192] The demographic background also indicates that women "heavily outnumbered men" in a population receiving a surge of women "freed" from convents.[193] Before the Protestants closed brothels, unsuspecting men could easily identify prostitutes by their distinctive clothing and the fact that they lived on the outskirts of town. But as the reformers tried (unsuccessfully) to abolish prostitution and adultery, unmarried and unmarked women could all potentially be wantons, ready to lure men into sin.[194]

Prostitution was not the only type of work women performed. And while a wife's first priority was the maintenance of her household, which entailed "cooking, laundering, gardening, sewing, child care, and doctoring," as long as everything was kept in good order, she could volunteer to do charitable work or provide additional income through her own labor.[195] In fact, women of all marital statuses worked in a variety of occupations. Unmarried single women were "nurses, midwives, maids, barmaids, prostitutes, small shopkeepers, bearers of water, stone, and coal, weavers, flax workers, street sweepers, and guild assistant."[196] Some women even belonged to guilds and continued working in their trade after marriage.[197] Married women helped manage their husband's shops or sold their wares. According to Steven Ozment, "some [married women] were engaged in international trade, and could be described as true business partners with their husbands."[198] Apparently female workers labored in "virtually every craft," and many single and married ladies produced piece work for the textile, food, and drink industries from home.[199] But a strained economy put women and men in direct competition for work. To the benefit of the male laborers, as the sixteenth century progressed, a slow "professionalization" began to exclude women from the work force; the new regulations

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[192] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 1.
[193] Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 124-125.
[194] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 47; Fairchilds, *Women in Early Modern Europe*, 204.
[195] Marshall, "Women in the Reformation Era," 167; Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 13, 68.
[196] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 13.
[197] Half the membership of certain guilds consisted of women; Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 124.
[198] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 13.
[199] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 13.

barred women from taking the highest-paying positions, forcing them into the less desirable low-pay-low-status jobs.[200]

The work place was not the only realm where tensions between the sexes existed. As evidenced from the numerous complaints leveled at their spouses, within their own marriages men and women sometimes struggled to get along. Keith Moxey suggests that the ages of early modern married couples may have added to the psychological stressfulness of married life.[201] Unlike in the Middle Ages when significantly older men married pubescent girls, over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, men and women married later.[202] Modern demographers suggest that women married when they were twenty to twenty-four years old; men, slightly older than their wives, became husbands when they were between twenty-four and thirty.[203] Gone were the easily impressionable, "trainable" young girls who married vastly older authority figures; in their place were more mature women who brought their well-established personal and social views into the marriage. It is highly unlikely that the opinions and world views of women in their early to mid-twenties perfectly aligned with their husband's. Moxey proposes that, "As a consequence of [the married couple's] maturity" and the close proximity of their ages, "the potential for conflict must have increased."[204]

Compounding men's anxiety about losing control in the household and the job market were the active, public roles women took during the early years of the Reformation. The ideas of the Reformation circulated in pamphlets and broadsheets, in sermons from the pulpit, and from the mouths of traveling preachers, but most sixteenth-century women were first introduced to the movement by the male members of their families.[205] Both single and married women enthusiastically joined the "priesthood of all

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[200] Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 124.
[201] Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 125.
[202] Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 125; Veldman, "Lessons for Ladies," 120.
[203] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 58.
[204] Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 125.
[205] Wiesner, "Nuns, Wives, and Mothers," 11-12.

believers" and began preaching the doctrine of salvation through faith alone.[206] With so much social and religious upheaval, women had the opportunity to step beyond their traditional gender roles and support a reformed religion that wanted to reassess women's roles in the household and church.[207] Typically, men disapproved of women participating in social and political issues that could distract them from their household duties, but for the success of the Reformation, men needed women to help lead sieges, participate in iconoclastic violence, and defend their homes and cities in battle.[208] In the heat of the religious struggle, women were encouraged to preach, to proselytize, and even to become martyrs for the cause.[209] Lower-class women attacked churches, marched through town singing hymns, and fought Catholic women in the streets; queens and noblewomen raised armies and brokered treatises on behalf of the Protestants.[210]

But once the Protestants gained political and social recognition and the Reformation was firmly established, the need for women's participation diminished—as did men's tolerance for their infiltration of the male sphere of activity.[211] Women were encouraged to return to their proper roles in the household where they could teach their children the new doctrine; too much direct involvement in the cause "distracted women from their primary responsibilities to husband, children, and home."[212] Substantial participation by women is fairly characteristic of the beginnings of religious movements, but once the movement is settled and institutionalized, a time of "retrenchment" follows.[213] Women's broadened, more active roles are a temporary evil of religious reevaluation. Thus, the "progressive elements" of the Reformation that allowed for greater possibilities for women were "expunged" as women were pushed back into their

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206 Wiesner, "Nuns, Wives, and Mothers," 15; Wunder, *"He is the Sun, She is the Moon"*, 181.
207 Wunder, *"He is the Sun, She is the Moon"*, 181; Marshall, "Women in the Reformation Era," 167.
208 Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 68; Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 2, 6-7; Fairchilds, *Women in Early Modern Europe*, 210.
209 Weaver, "Gender," 202.
210 Fairchilds, *Women in Early Modern Europe*, 210, 213.
211 Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 7-8; Weaver, "Gender," 203.
212 Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 8; Weaver, "Gender," 203; Fairchilds, *Women in Early Modern Europe*, 216.
213 Wunder, *"He is the Sun, She is the Moon"*, 182; Marshall, "Women in the Reformation Era," 187.

homes.[214] However helpful women were in the thick of the battle, men still considered women morally and intellectually weak, so any prolonged female participation in "theological speculation or preaching" was considered "disorderly" and unsuitable for their sex.[215]

Faced with a flagging economy that increased job competition, marriages taking place between people of nearer-equal age, and a religious movement open to female participation, sixteenth-century German men had ample reasons for feeling uneasy about the stability of gender roles. The new assertiveness of women who married later and actively supported the Reformation likely inspired feelings of anxiety regarding social hierarchy in their male counterparts.[216] Witnessing women's ability to successfully stand alongside their men on the frontlines of the Reformation, on the job market, and in the home may have unsettled some patriarchs, leading them to believe that confining women to the home would eliminate female competition in multiple arenas.[217] Moxey suggests that it is out of this uneasy environment that prints and broadsheets depicting themes of marital rebellion flourished.[218] I find Moxey's combination of visual and historical evidence convincing; therefore, in the following section, I expand on his theory and include *Weibermacht* (Power of Women) imagery in the discussion. With the subtleties of gender roles and power dynamics of sixteenth-century Germany in mind, I argue that Power of Women imagery deserves a much closer and more critical analysis against the backdrop of its social context. Traditional, one-dimensional interpretations fall short; this category of image is packed with multiple (sometimes contradictory) meanings.

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[214] Marshall, "Women in the Reformation Era," 187; Wunder, *"He is the Sun, She is the Moon"*, 182.
[215] Davis, "Women on Top," 148.
[216] Weaver, "Gender," 203.
[217] Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 126.
[218] Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 125; Grössinger, *Picturing Women*, 127.

Mocking Men and Women: Battle of the Sexes and *Weibermacht* Imagery

Convincing sixteenth-century men—and women, for that matter—to marry was no easy task. In 1522, only a few years into the Reformation, Martin Luther complained in his treatise "On the Estate of Marriage" that "marriage [had] fallen into awful disrepute."[219] After years of hearing misogynistic, anti-marriage teachings, especially from the pro-celibacy Catholic Church, members of both sexes were reluctant to enter into the state of holy matrimony. According to an observer in 1534, marriage had become a "weak, despised, and rejected estate" in Augsburg.[220] While marriage was the Protestants' solution for a Christianized society, unmarried men did not want to be hen-pecked or cuckolded, and unmarried women did not want to die in childbirth or experience the loss of a child.[221] Men likely encountered Sebastian Franck's collection of popular German proverbs (1541), in which Franck pairs St. Jerome's misogynist proverb: "If you find things going too well, take a wife," with another anti-marriage sentiment: "If you take a wife, you get a devil on your back."[222] In virtually all media, men were taught about the "depravity of womankind and the unhappiness of the estate of marriage," so it is really no wonder that they wished to avoid the altar.[223] But with the Protestants insisting that everyone marry (and closing down the brothels), men became husbands and women became wives anyway.

Images of Marital Misconduct

Marriage was a theme addressed in virtually all media in sixteenth-century Germany, including mystery plays, pamphlets, sermons, and prints.[224] Like Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, a large number of woodcuts about marriage and

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219 Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 3.
220 Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 4.
221 Infant and child mortality rates were very high in the sixteenth century. Steven Ozment notes that somewhere between one-third to one-half of all children died by age five (*When Fathers Ruled*, 1).
222 Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 3.
223 Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 3.
224 Wunder, *"He is the Sun, She is the Moon"*, 50; Grössinger, *Picturing Women*, 98.

the battle of the sexes were produced in Nuremberg in the first half of the sixteenth century.[225] Broadsheets depicting topsy-turvy gender relations with women ruling over or beating their husbands were often accompanied by Hans Sachs's texts, which warned men against their wives' "usurpation of authority."[226] For example, in a broadsheet entitled *There is No Greater Treasure on Earth than an Obedient Wife who Covets Honor* (fig. 24), Erhard Schön's woodcut is paired with words written by Hans Sachs, a poet, playwright and shoemaker native to Nuremberg. The image depicts, from left to right, a man on all fours pulling a cart loaded with a barrel of unwashed clothing, perhaps diapers. Standing over the man is his wife, who raises one arm to strike her husband with a whip and holds his purse, pants, and sword (objects representing his masculine authority) in her other arm. Following the degraded car-pulling man and his dominatrix wife are an unmarried man, an unmarried woman, a foolish woman, and a wise man.

Each of the six figures participates in the dialogue written by Sachs.[227] The poor husband laments taking a wife who is hostile and never has a kind word for him. He wishes he had never married, never let a "shrewish scold" enter his household, but he acknowledges that he shares his fate with many men. "If you want a beautiful and devout wife," replies the whip-wielding woman, "then stay at home…and stop carousing about." She was unable to "maintain her wifely dignity" because her husband would not work or provide for her. As a result of his own failings, his wife is forcing him to wash, spin, pull the cart, and be beaten. When the unmarried man asks the unmarried woman if she would rob him of his authority (beating him, injuring him with sharp words, and forcing him to do women's work), the unmarried woman answers that she has "no desire for such power" and will be a model wife. The foolish woman warns the unmarried man that marriage "is more properly called Pain," and with it comes lifelong anxiety, worry, and want; therefore it is better to pay women for their company. The wise man concludes the

[225] Grössinger, *Humour and Folly*, 119.
[226] Grössinger, *Humour and Folly*, 119.
[227] In this paragraph I rely on Steven Ozment's translation of Hans Sachs's text, found on pp. 52-53 in *When Fathers Ruled*.

exchange by advising the unmarried man to avoid the "wiles of whores, who are always there to deceive you." Instead, the unmarried man should take a wife, provide for her, and be patient, "stay[ing] with her in love and suffering."

While all six figures in *There is No Greater Treasure* represent valid perspectives on married life, most prints focused specifically on the struggle for power within marriages. It was believed that "the lower ruled the higher" in every woman, so if a woman had her way, she would inevitably try to assert her inferior power and rule over the men above her.[228] Some of the more popular representations of women seeking masculine authority were so-called "Battle for the Pants" images, in which husbands and wives fought to "wear the pants" and thus assume the dominant role within the marriage. In Israhel van Meckenem's 1502 *Battle for the Pants* engraving (fig. 25), a crazed wife, accompanied by a devil, prepares to strike her kneeling husband with a distaff; the coveted pants lie in the foreground, waiting to be taken by the victor of the fight. A wife is already wearing her husband's pants, complete with codpiece, in Monogrammist M.T.'s engraving *A Mistreated Husband* of about 1540-1550 (fig. 26), but she continues to beat her husband with a stick. As described in *There is no Greater Treasure*, once the wife strips her husband of his trousers, she lords over him and forces him to do women's work, inverting the normal patriarchal hierarchy. Hans Schäuffelin depicts this (un)natural progression in his woodcut *Diaper Washer* from about 1536 (fig. 27). Here, an imposing woman, armed with a rod, supervises her husband as he washes dirty diapers, beating them with a washing beetle. While she neither wears nor carries pants, it is clear that she has taken control within the household because she sports a fat purse and keys (symbols of power) around her waist.[229] Notably, *Windelwascher* ("diaper washer") was a derogatory name for a henpecked husband in early modern Germany.[230]

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[228] Davis, "Women on Top," 148.
[229] Grössinger, *Humour and Folly*, 118.
[230] Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 106.

According to Todd Reeser, early modern men "constantly fear[ed]" losing their power, so they "constantly guard[ed] against the threat of disempowerment."[231] Malcolm Jones writes that if a man's patriarchal control slipped, he risked unbearable humiliation and the loss of masculinity.[232] The historical evidence throughout this chapter supports Reeser and Jones's assertions: sixteenth-century German men worried about controlling their wives and themselves, anxious to prove their masculinity and retain their authority. How, then, should art historians interpret the popularity of prints featuring women in power? While it is likely that economic instability, increased marriage ages, and the complexities of gender roles in Reformation Germany amplified tensions between the sexes, did men truly "fear" the power of women?[233] I am unconvinced that *serious* fears about women's power to dominant or mislead men fueled print production.

Marriage was a burden. Wives could be nagging harpies. But the social realities of sixteenth-century Germany, a patriarchal society engrained with misogynistic skepticism about women, do not support "an obsessive fear of women." Remember, this is a society that considered men superior to women in every way, allowed men to legally beat their wives, and compared men's rule within their household to both the municipal fathers' governance and *God's dominion* over all creation! While I agree that images of marital conflict in which women gain the upper hand sometimes carry moralizing or didactic messages that reinforce the importance of male dominion, I believe they are also—and perhaps foremost—intended to be funny. Images of women's power were a visual expression of men's deep-seated anxieties at a time of religious and social upheaval, but one defense against psychological turmoil and vulnerability is laughter.[234] Women wearing or putting on trousers, beating their husbands, or forcing men to wash

[231] Reeser, *Moderating Masculinity*, 30.
[232] Malcolm Jones, "Who Wears the Trousers: Gender Relations," in *The Secret Middle Ages* (Westport, CT: Praeger, 2002), 228.
[233] Todd Reeser (*Moderating Masculinity*, 30), Christa Grössinger (*Humour and Folly*, 126), and Malcolm Jones ("Who Wears the Trousers," 240, 242) all use the word "fear" when referring to men's feelings about the power of women.
[234] Humor and mockery through inversion or gender-swapping is also an effective political and social tool. Perhaps the same viewers who laughed at images of marital conflict also laughed at images lampooning and ridiculing the Catholic Church. It would seem that early modern Germans appreciated a good laugh.

diapers were total inversions of the natural order; thus, because they were unrealistic, they were also ridiculous—sometimes downright absurd. In his engraving of a mock coat-of-arms, the Housebook Master equates women in power with a world completely upside down (fig. 28). Here a wife sits on her husband's back as she works with her distaff; below the inverted couple, a peasant facing away from the viewer stands on his head. A woman in power was just as outlandish as a man who stands on his head.

But that misogynistic humor could take a much darker turn. In a more realistic image of spousal abuse, Barthel Beham depicts a man beating his unruly wife (fig. 29). The image, which was printed with Sachs's *The Nine Hides of an Angry Wife*, a well-dressed man brandishes a stool, preparing to strike the woman at his feet. She struggles on the ground, trying to defend herself with a distaff. According to Sachs's text, when the man returned from a night of drinking with his friends, his wife refused to speak to him. Aggravated by her "insubordination," the husband proceeds to beat words out of her. With each strike the woman is compared to a different type of animal. Initially, her skin feels like a codfish; with the first hit, she rages like a bear; the third blow makes her hiss like a goose; and the fourth has her barking like a dog.[235] She finally transforms back into a woman with the ninth blow and asks for her husband's forgiveness, "promising to never question his authority" again.[236] Such a violent "misogynist fantasy," as Moxey accurately describes it, is abhorrent to modern readers, but comparing women to different types of animals was just another humorous inversion for the enjoyment of early modern men. In fact, it is possible that the men encountering the broadsheet sympathized with the fictional husband—all too familiar with terse, angry wives who met them at the door after a night of drinking. It is worth noting here that the town councils did not always rule in abused women's favors. When a woman in Nuremberg sued her husband for being "too

[235] Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 116.
[236] Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 116.

rough" in bed, the all-male council had her imprisoned to set an example for all wives who questioned their husbands' authority.[237]

Jokes and Gender Relations at Carnivals

Mockery of gender relations, especially marital misconduct, was a common practice during festivals and carnivals in sixteenth-century Germany. On many such occasions, satirical "licenses" were granted to the women of the town. One outlandish proclamation from Nuremberg gave every woman with "a wretched dissolute husband" the right to deny him freedom and beat him until "his asshole was roaring."[238] Natalie Zemon Davis describes another:

> Foeminarius, the Hereditary Steward of Quarrel and Dispute Valley, gave three years of privileges to the suffering Company of Wives so that they might rule their husbands: they could bear arms, elect their own mayor, and go out and entertain as they wished, while their spouses could buy nothing and drink no wine or beer without the wives' permission. And of course the men did all the housework and welcomed any bastards that the wives might bear.[239]

The prospect of women actually running the government and controlling their husbands was an on-going joke shared by the community and reiterated in all forms of popular culture. Men may have needed disciplining, but it was preposterous to think that women should rule their husbands—let alone the government!

Sometimes towns paraded effigies of tyrannical wives and their weakling husbands through the streets.[240] In fact, the "village scold or domineering wife" could be muzzled and pulled through the streets or ducked into the pond.[241] Men who allowed themselves to be beaten and dominated by their wives also faced their community's disdain and their neighbors' jeers. A mistreated husband—a disgrace to his sex—was

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237 Harrington, *Reordering Marriage and Society*, 267.
238 Davis, "Women on Top," 171.
239 Davis, "Women on Top," 171.
240 Davis, "Women on Top," 168.
241 Davis, "Women on Top," 168.

sometimes forced to ride a horse or donkey backwards through town.[242] Creative festival organizers constructed floats to display the violence of disobedient wives: "the wives were shown hitting their husbands with distaffs, tripe, sticks, trenchers, and water pots, throwing stones at them, pulling their beards, or kicking them in the genitalia."[243] Printed images, written proclamations, and public processions point to the absurdity of such a topsy-turvy world—and surely encouraged laughter from viewers or witnesses. But calling attention to unruly wives and their pathetic husbands provided more than fodder for laughter; the printed images and public processions clearly indicated which bad behaviors and topsy-turvy relationships would not be tolerated, deserved derision, and necessitated correction.

Inversions of all kinds were popular at annual carnivals. "Women played men, men played women, [and] men played women who were playing men," writes Davis.[244] Similarly, Moxey notes, "The ritual substitution of humans for beasts of burden was a traditional means of symbolizing inversion of social order in German carnival celebrations."[245] Both anthropologists and scholars of festive inversions consider the swapping of clothes and roles to be part of a ritual renewal of the traditional patriarchal system—of the "natural order" of the world.[246] Temporary role reversals act as a safety valve for tensions within the society, but once the festivities are concluded, order and stability are restored and proper gender roles are resumed. "A world turned upside down

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[242] Davis, "Women on Top," 168; Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 114. Sometimes a neighbor would play the part of the husband and ride through down backwards.

[243] Davis, "Women on Top," 168.

[244] Davis, "Women on Top," 152. In her classic essay, which I encountered after titling my thesis, Davis speculates that the ambiguous presence of violent, domineering wives in popular early modern culture may have "made the unruly option a more conceivable one." Davis goes on, suggesting that images of disorderly women could "operate to widen behavioral options for women within and even outside marriage." But I completely disagree with this interpretation. The historical evidence simply does not support her speculation. Sixteenth-century German society was *not* encouraging women to explore masculine roles—that contradicts ideal femininity as well as women's roles as wives and mothers, subordinates in the household. Davis also asserts that urban carnivals sent mixed messages: hen-pecked husbands should take control of their wives *and* women on top should keep up the fight; the evidence Davis presents in her own article (such as the citations I make in this paper) works against her interpretations.

[245] Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 101.

[246] Davis, "Women on Top," 153-154.

can only be righted, not changed."[247] Like the shaming of unruly women and their spineless husbands, certain carnival practices shined a very public light on people who failed to perform their "social duties," like getting married or being a good spouse—expecting them to change their undesirable behavior.[248] At carnivals during the Reformation, women who had no suitors, old unmarried women, and monks were mocked for not having spouses. They were sometimes forced to pull a plow through or around the village, trading places with lowly animals.[249] Inversions called attention to problem members of society and strongly suggested they get with the program. In contrast to Moxey's interpretation of the cart-pulling husband in *There is No Greater Treasure* (fig. 24), which assumes the husband is mocked for having gotten married, I propose that the husband is mocked, like the unmarried women and monks, for his failure to assume the proper mantle of his gender.[250]

Like Davis, I want to speculate about an alternate reading of prints featuring women in dominant positions. In her essay Davis focuses on a female audience's hypothetical response, arguing that "the image of the disorderly woman did not always function to keep women in their place" but encouraged women to act outside their gender roles, to behave badly.[251] My interpretation is the exact opposite of Davis' unsupported hypothesis. In my opinion, women were not the target audience for such prints, so it is a non-issue whether or not they kept women "in their place." Instead, I propose that images of women in power were meant to be didactic and, most intriguingly, entertaining for male viewers. They carry both a corrective and a humorous message, perhaps to temper the blow. As I have demonstrated with the historical evidence, it was a man's responsibility to govern his household; he was considered biologically and intellectually

[247] Davis, "Women on Top," 154.
[248] Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 101.
[249] Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 101.
[250] Moxey, "The Battle of the Sexes," 103.
[251] Davis, "Women on Top," 154. Davis's attempt to interpret prints from the perspective of early modern women is admirable and interesting, but there is little to no evidence to substantiate an investigation focused on women's responses. Furthermore, the historical evidence I have assembled in this paper does not support her hypotheses.

superior to his female counterpart in every way, so it should not have been that difficult. Yet, sixteenth-century society both knew that men lost control of themselves through alcohol consumption, lust, and violence—*and* regularly encouraged men to test the boundaries of their self-control.

It is a logical next step, in a society filled with derision for failure in social roles, to think that bad husbands were mocked in prints of gender conflict. On one hand, the man is a sympathetic figure whom male viewers would pity and possibly relate with through their own experiences in marriage. But on the other hand, hen-pecked husbands *should* be mocked for not performing their masculinity. According to Hans Sachs's 1533 carnival play *The Angry Wife*, it was up to the mistreated husband to take back control and start acting "like a man." Through the character of a neighbor, Sachs advised husbands of quarrelsome wives to right the inverted relationship (fix the system) and assume their proper gender role. The neighbor instructs the husband:

> Go ahead and act like a man!
> Otherwise she'll end up riding you,
> And before long she'll
> Deprive you of your pants, your purse, and your sword,
> Which will make us all ashamed of you.
> Do not give her too much reign,
> But rather take an oak cudgel
> And beat her soundly between the ears![252]

Here, a man ridden by a woman was not only robbed of his authority in the household, but he also lost social status among men: he "[made] us all ashamed of [him]." Early modern society thought of the "division of power between the sexes…as a zero-sum game," if one spouse gained power, then the other lost power.[253] Therefore, if a husband wanted to regain power and authority within his marriage—and among men, he had to take power away from his wife.

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[252] Hans Sachs's *The Angry Wife* (1533) as provided by Moxey in "The Battle of the Sexes," 117.
[253] Wunder, "What Made a Man a Man?" 22.

In sixteenth-century society there are several examples of men mocking men for losing or not performing their masculinity. Melchoir Ambach, the editor of biblical, patristic, and contemporary rants against whoring and adultery, specifically hated that people took sexual misconduct so lightly, writing:

> …indeed, adultery and whoring are treated as very minor sins, even as no sins at all. *One jokes about them!* How many cuckolded husbands are there? How many wives justifiably enraged at unfaithful husbands? How many respectable young girls go about with their bellies swollen by unroasted bratwursts?[254]

Similarly, in 1524, Wittenberg's new marriage service emphasized that marriage was "a far different thing than what the world presently jokes about and insults."[255] In groups over a drink or at home over a book, I propose that men took pleasure in images of a topsy-turvy world, using laughter as a way to cope with the harsh realities of the real world. Prints, carnival practices, and popular texts demonstrated the chaos and evils of the world upside down, reminding men why they were in charge and justifying the patriarchal hierarchy.

Of course, prints with dominant female characters and men who couldn't control them—or their own desires, could prove enjoyable in a variety of ways. I have already mentioned how humor was most certainly present, as was the moralizing or didactic angle. In addition to those readings of men under duress in their marriages, I suggest an additional pleasure available in *Weibermacht* (Power of Women) images. Like the battle of the sexes imagery, *Weibermacht* prints carried a didactic narrative warning men against the evils of seductive women and their wiles, but many of those print show exotic, semi-(or completely) nude women in intimate relation to (un)lucky men. Is the failure to perform one's masculinity and the following doom and humiliation worth the time spent in the arms of sexually powerful women?

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[254] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 56 (my italics).
[255] Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled*, 8.

The Charms of Weibermacht *Women*

Scholarship has defined the *Weibermacht* (Power of Women) *topos* as "a group of themes, in literature and the fine arts, that focused on women who used their feminine wiles to triumph over men."[256] This broad definition can sometimes include images of marital conflict or the power of love. But "traditional" *Weibermacht* images depict irresistible—and consequently dangerous—women from biblical stories, history, and romances as they humiliate, ruin, and/or kill their male counterparts. For example, Eve, Salome, Delilah, Phyllis, and Guinevere are included in this collection of women. Notably, the Power of Women *topos* "singles out the most celebrated men of the past," demonstrating how all men—no matter how strong, smart, or moral—are equally susceptible to women's wiles (a.k.a. sexual power).[257]

Countless late medieval and early modern texts—from moralizing sermons to comic carnival plays—and images reference the *Weibermacht* narratives.[258] Visual representations of these cunning, beautiful women first appeared in the margins of illuminated manuscripts in the late thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.[259] As their popularity grew, *Weibermacht* women covered the surfaces of an array of public and private objects: architectural façades, stained glass, wall paintings, tapestries, bed hangings, table linens, drinking goblets, salt cellars, writing tablets, musical instruments, jewelry, combs, and caskets.[260] At the end of the fifteenth century, printmakers started using the Power of Women *topos* in their woodcuts and engravings, but it was during the first half of the sixteenth century that *Weibermacht* imagery reached the pinnacle of its

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[256] Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 147; for more art historical discussions about the Power of Women *topos*, see: Russell, *Eva/Ave*; Smith, *The Power of Women*; Jones, "Who Wears the Trousers"; Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased, & Chastened*; Grössinger's "Women," in *Humor and Folly*, 107-129; Martin Knauer, *Dürers unfolgsame Erben: Bildstrategien in den Kupferstichen der deutschen Kleinmeister*, Studien zur Internationalen Architektur- und Kunstgeschichte 101 (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2013), 34-35.
[257] Smith, *The Power of Women*, 2.
[258] Smith, *The Power of Women*, 2.
[259] Smith, *The Power of Women*, 16.
[260] Smith, *The Power of Women*, 16, 192-193.

popularity.[261] Northern European printmakers, including Hans Burgkmair, Hans Baldung Grien, Lucas van Leyden, and the Little Masters, designed numerous Power of Women depictions, usually in the form of sets or series.[262]

Moreover, in 1520, when the municipal council of Nuremberg commissioned Albrecht Dürer to redesign their town hall, Dürer incorporated *Weibermacht* images into his concept for the window-lined south wall.[263] Dürer's design was never realized, but a surviving preparatory drawing shows that the spandrel between each pair of windows would have contained a roundel featuring a scene of the triumph of womanhood (fig. 30).[264] Here, from left to right, the narrative medallions depict David watching Bathsheba bathe, Delilah cutting Samson's hair, and Phyllis riding Aristotle. Thus, Nuremberg's most celebrated artist intended to include *Weibermacht* imagery in an important public space used for conferences, celebrations, and legal proceedings.[265] H. Diane Russell suggests, "The murals must have been intended to entertain or amuse both men and women."[266] The *Weibermacht* scenes could have reminded the influential men within the hall that they, too, were "subject to beguilement by women," and the women attending dances in the space may have been pleased to "have their power acknowledged in the decorations."[267] In both public and private spaces, sixteenth-century Germans encountered *Weibermacht* images, a constant reminder of the fluid power dynamics between men and women.

Of course, some stories were more frequently represented than others. From the long list of outwitted and outmaneuvered men, Samson, Solomon, David, and Aristotle were particularly popular.[268] Samson's amazing physical strength was no match for

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[261] Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 148, 13.
[262] Jane Campbell Hutchison, "The Housebook Master and the Folly of the Wise Man," *The Art Bulletin* 48, no. 1 (March 1, 1966): 73.
[263] Jochen Sander et al., eds., *Albrecht Dürer: His Art in Context* (Munich: Prestel, 2013), 288.
[264] Sander, et. al., *Albrecht Dürer*, 288.
[265] Sander, et. al., *Albrecht Dürer*, 288.
[266] Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 150.
[267] Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 150.
[268] Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 147.

Delilah's pretty face—or her nagging and perseverance.[269] The Philistines offered to pay Delilah if she told them how to defeat Samson, so she asked Samson to reveal the source of his strength. When Samson told Delilah that being tied with fresh bowstrings would make him weak, she tied him up and called for the Philistines. But Samson easily broke through them. When Samson told Delilah that being tied with new ropes would rob him of his strength, she tied him up and called for the Philistines. But the ropes did not hold him either. When Samson told Delilah that weaving his hair into the fabric on a loom would weaken him, she worked his hair into the fabric and called for the Philistines. But, again, that did not weaken him. Delilah complained that Samson was making a fool out of her because he would not tell her his secret. How, she reasoned, could Samson love her if he did not confide in her? Sick of her prodding, Samson—who obviously did not possess superior mental strength—confessed that shaving off his hair would leave him powerless. While Samson slept on her lap, Delilah cut his hair and *called for the Philistines*. Delilah's betrayal set events in motion that led to Samson's blinding, arrest, and death.

In an early engraving by Master E.S., a small, dozing Samson rests his head on Delilah's lap (fig. 31). Delilah, a much larger figure, confronts the viewer with her dark gaze and coy smile—perhaps the same coquettish expression that enticed Samson. Hans Burgkmair designed four woodcuts on the "Follies of Love" (*Liebestorheiten*, c. 1519), including *Samson and Delilah*, *Solomon's Idolatry*, *David and Bathsheba*, and *Phyllis Riding Aristotle*. Burgkmair's Samson is older and more powerfully built than Master E.S's figure, and his Delilah is even more sumptuously dressed in a beautiful gown and jewelry (fig. 32). Here, Delilah has sheared away half of her sleeping lover's long tresses. The presence of wine in the lower left corner suggests that alcohol kept Samson asleep throughout his haircut. If only Samson had not confided in Delilah!

[269] For the story of Samson and Delilah, see Judges 16.

King Solomon's divinely-given wisdom did not stand a chance against the exotic temptation of foreign women.[270] Despite God's instruction that the people of Israel never intermarry with foreign women, for "they will most certainly turn away your heart to follow their gods," Solomon married hundreds of them—700 princesses—and kept 300 concubines.[271] He loved them "most ardent[ly]."[272] And, as God predicted, Solomon's foreign wives tempted him to follow other gods.[273] Heavily influenced by his many pagan consorts, Solomon stopped worshiping God with his whole heart; instead, he burnt incenses and offered sacrifices to his wives' gods.[274] Lucas van Leyden, who created both large and small *Weibermacht* series, shows Solomon kneeling at an altar dedicated to a nude male god with untamed hair and pointed ears (fig. 33).[275] The standing female figure who directs Solomon's worship wears a cap with large, wild feathers—an indicator of her exotic origin. In Master MZ's engraving of this theme (fig. 34), a giant, authoritative woman urges a small, kneeling Solomon to worship a statue of a nude female goddess. The base of the statue consists of architectural niches filled with additional nude women. In this example the Power of Women theme is particularly strong. Solomon no longer worships God; guided by the hands of a woman, Solomon worships women and the seductive female form. In Burgkmair's version of Solomon's idolatry (fig. 35), the female statue that Solomon worships is nearly identical to the woman standing behind him with her hand on his shoulder. Both the woman and the idol wear gowns and elaborate headdresses. Here, the power of a woman is strong enough to turn a pious man from God—redirecting his adoration to contemporary beauties! Solomon's lust for exotic women made him vulnerable and open to blasphemy. If only Solomon had not married pagan women!

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[270] For the story of Solomon's idolatry, see 1 Kings 11.
[271] 1 Kings 11: 2-3 DV.
[272] 1 Kings 11: 2 DV.
[273] 1 Kings 11:4.
[274] 1 Kings 11:8.
[275] Russell (*Eva/Ave*, 163) mentions that Solomon's Idolatry was a popular anti-model for Protestants who opposed image worship. The iconoclasts compared Solomon's idolatry to iconophiles' adoration of images of saints, the Virgin Mary, and Christ.

David's impressive morality could not hold out against Bathsheba's beautiful body.[276] King David stayed in Jerusalem, "at the time when kings go forth to war," and sent his army to fight without him.[277] One night, while walking on the roof of his palace, he spotted a woman bathing. Captivated by her beauty, David asked about her and learned that her name was Bathsheba—and she was married to Uriah, a soldier. Despite that discovery, the lusty king sent for Bathsheba, slept with her, and got her pregnant. First, David tried to cover his sin by sending Uriah home to sleep with his wife. But Uriah refused to enjoy the pleasures of his marriage bed while his fellow men slept in tents, so David ordered his death. Upon the king's request, Bathsheba's unsuspecting husband was sent to the frontlines to die. When her mourning period was over, David "brought [Bathsheba] into his house, and she became his wife and bore him a son: and this thing which David had done, was displeasing to the Lord."[278] Despite her passive role in this narrative, Bathsheba is often blamed for leading David to sin. Perhaps if she had veiled herself in shamefastness, like Juan Luis Vives recommends for all women, the king would not have desired her—but that seems doubtful.

Because Bathsheba was bathing when David saw her, artists used the story as an excuse to depict the female nude. Georg Pencz, one of Barthel Beham's colleagues, shows most of Bathsheba's unclothed body in profile (fig. 36). King David, identified by his harp, looks out at her from a balcony in the background. Bathsheba's maid extends a hand to shield her mistress as she washes her leg, but Bathsheba's gaze seems to meet that of her suitor. Is Pencz blaming Bathsheba here? It is unclear. Hans Burgkmair also includes David and Bathsheba in his *Weiberlisten* (Women's Wiles) series (fig. 37). King David is barely visible looking out a window in the upper-right corner. Positioned in the foreground, Bathsheba sits on the edge of a fountain with her back to the viewer. The drapery around her shoulders surely shields her front from David's prying eyes, but the entire length of her back and right buttock are exposed to the viewer's gaze. Burgkmair

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[276] For the story of David and Bathsheba, see 2 Samuel 11.
[277] 2 Samuel 11: 1 DV.
[278] 2 Samuel 11: 27 DV.

gives his audience a privileged view. Whoever spends time looking at the engraving takes on a voyeuristic role similar to the sinful king. One reading of this unique viewing experience could be didactic: a reminder of the dangers of looking at female beauty. But Bathsheba's nude back combined with the phallic spouts pouring water into the deep, dark fountain suggests a different purpose for this work: this is an erotic visual indulgence veiled in a moralizing Old Testament story. If only David had been with his army and never seen Bathsheba!

Aristotle's legendary intellect crumbled at Phyllis' dainty, feminine feet. The story of Phyllis and Aristotle, which has no connection to the historical Aristotle and actually "originated as a piece of medieval libel," exists in different versions, but the outcome is always the same: the humiliation of Aristotle.[279] Jacques de Vitry, a medieval cleric vehemently opposed to the reading of classical philosophy, first told the tale as an attack on Aristotle.[280] According to Jacques who wrote about 1229-1240, Aristotle thought that his pupil Alexander the Great was neglecting his duties and spending too much time with his (unnamed) wife. When Aristotle tried to separate them, she "resolved to get revenge."[281] The woman made Aristotle fall in love with her by showing him her legs; before she would assuage his lust, she insisted that Aristotle give her a piggy-back ride. When he agreed to her conditions, the woman told Alexander, who came to witness his teacher's foolish behavior. In the thirteenth-century Norman poem by Henry d'Andely and the middle high German poem *Aristotle and Phyllis* (*Aristoteles und Fillis*) it inspired, the woman is not Alexander's wife, but his mistress. Furthermore, the seduction is immediately followed by the woman riding Aristotle, whom she saddles and bridles! Instead of taking place indoors, the great philosopher's humiliation occurs in a garden—where the Phyllis in the German poem uses a branch from a flowering rosebush to whip Aristotle's back.[282] A fifteenth-century German *Fastnachtspiel* entitled *A Play of*

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[279] Hutchison, "The Housebook Master," 75.
[280] Hutchison, "The Housebook Master," 75.
[281] Hutchison, "The Housebook Master," 75.
[282] Hutchison, "The Housebook Master," 76.

Master Aristotle (*Ain Spil von Maister Aristotiles*) tells a slightly different story. It begins with an unnamed king praising Aristotle for "his complete indifference to beautiful women."[283] Unconvinced, the queen sets off to conquer Aristotle. The besotted philosopher, unschooled in wooing, offers to teach her grammar, philosophy, and rhetoric, but the queen asks for a piggy-back ride instead. The play ends with the king deriding Aristotle for "allow[ing] himself to be out-witted by a woman" and debased to the level of a lowly beast.[284] What began as a critique of Aristotelianism became an extremely successful criticism of the power of women.[285]

Visual representations of Phyllis riding Aristotle were among the most popular from the *Weibermacht* series.[286] In Master M.Z.'s engraving (fig. 38), the lovely Phyllis with flowing curls and a half-lidded, sultry expression raises a whip to strike her "horse." Aristotle turns his bridled head, gazing with adoring eyes at her pale, exposed flesh. Phyllis, whose large breasts threaten to spill out of her dress, presents a fine figure topped by an expensive, feathered hat. On the left, two observers witness Aristotle's humiliation. The small, nude female statue standing in the architectural niche above the two men probably represents Eve, the first woman whose wiles brought misery to mankind. Both Master M.Z. and the Housebook Master's *Phyllis Riding Aristotle* prints show Aristotle's public humiliation taking place in a garden. In the Housebook Master's engraving (fig. 39), two men watch from over a wall as Phyllis rides sidesaddle on the duped philosopher's back. This Phyllis demurely looks down at her beast of burden, gently grasping the reins and whip. Framed with dark, furrowed brows, Aristotle's angry gaze confronts the viewer. Is he unhappy that Phyllis is abusing him? Or is he more upset that there are witnesses to his foolishness? How easily the beautiful woman overpowered the usually rational philosopher! If only Aristotle had used his wits!

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[283] Hutchison, "The Housebook Master," 76.
[284] Hutchison, "The Housebook Master," 76.
[285] Hutchison, "The Housebook Master," 75.
[286] Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 149.

Susan Smith argues that, while the selection of bad women and the combinations of their cautionary narratives varied, the purpose of the Power of Women *topos* was always the same: "to bring to bear the authority of history on the issue of women and power."[287] I agree that biblical, historical, and legendary narratives about women deceiving and dominating men likely lent authority to misogynistic claims against women and their sexual power. Certainly *Weibermacht* imagery could—like the representations of marital conflict described in the previous section—convey a moralizing message about the evil effects of women's power. But this limited reading of Power of Women series does not fully account for their content or their popularity. Because most of the scholarship on these images dates back to the nineties and third-wave feminism, unsurprisingly, the authors read *Weibermacht* prints as vehicles of misogyny—which they are, but those scholars have not pushed beyond that first layer of meaning. Yes, Power of Women prints reinforce anxieties about women's sexuality and encourage men to keep them under control, but those same images depict men failing to assert their authority, failing to combat feminine wiles with superior masculine rationale and moderation. After all, there are two essential characters in each *Weibermacht* narrative: a dominant, powerful woman and a submissive, "powerless" man. For example, Delilah nagged Samson until he divulged his secret; he failed to "act like a man" and control his woman. Furthermore, the inclusion of wine in Burgkmair's print may also suggest that Samson drank too much alcohol. If Power of Women images show a topsy-turvy world in which women step beyond the boundaries of proper feminine behavior, then, conversely, they must also depict men failing to perform proper masculinity. These are the rules of the zero-sum power dynamic of early modern society.

Weakness is an implicit trait of men who cannot control their desires, who *allow* women to top them. True, sixteenth-century German society blamed women for leading men astray, but they also called attention to men who overindulged or lost control. "Indeed, male overindulgence was as much a concern as female cunning," writes Julia

[287] Smith, *The Power of Women*, 2.

Nurse, "Young women were often depicted with lascivious or debauched men to accentuate the stupidity of such behavior."[288] Hen-pecked husbands were mocked during carnivals; drunkards were an acknowledged social ill; and abusive husbands were (often) punished by town councils. Building on my logic in the previous section: since the failings of average husbands were the butt of jokes, simultaneously spurring mockery and urging self-correction, then the failings of exemplary men (like Samson, Solomon, David, and Aristotle) were surely that much funnier and more thought-provoking. The humor of the situation is increased exponentially by the superior quality of the men who falter in the presence of women. Even the manliest men—with the greatest strength, wisdom, morals, and rationality—lost control on occasion, and it was due, in part, to their revered status that their follies were so comical.[289]

Men who chuckled at the absurdity of the Housebook Master's satirical coat-of-arms, which compared an upside-down peasant to a woman sitting on her husband's back (fig. 28), could just as easily appreciate the humor of the Housebook Master's depiction of Phyllis riding Aristotle (fig. 39). The difference between the husband's and the philosopher's humiliation was that Aristotle failed to resist Phyllis despite his legendary intellectual power. Sixteenth-century German men—with libidos so rampant that Luther expressed concerns about controlling them—were acquainted with the irresistible magnetism of women. Having experienced strong sexual desires and either becoming fools over women or witnessing their comrades behave ridiculously for the fairer sex, the men viewing *Weibermacht* prints could mock the men for losing control, chuckle sympathetically about an all-too-familiar situation, or laugh at/with a friend whose love life too closely resembled that of the man on the printed page. Men struggling with the

[288] Julia Nurse, "She-Devils, Harlots, and Harridans in Northern Renaissance Prints," *History Today* 48, no. 7 (July 1998): 47.
[289] Hutchison, "The Housebook Master," 78. Hutchison reads humor in the Housebook Master's pair of tondo prints *Solomon Worshiping a Strange God* and *Aristotle Ridden by Phyllis*. "They are depictions, first and foremost," she writes, "of the follies of two men who were revered in Antiquity for their wisdom—one a Biblical sage, the other a pagan scholar." Because the "exquisite joke" mocks neo-Thomist Via Antiqua, she argues that it was likely amusing to a rival group (Via Moderna) who thought following the Ancients' examples too closely was dangerous.

demands of their own masculinity might find the failings of the high-and-mighty exemplars of manhood amusing.

Power of Women images could be fodder for the amusement of men in more ways than one. In addition to laughing about the foolish behavior of the duped men or, perhaps, sitting in a tavern joking about each other's experiences with women, early modern men may have privately enjoyed certain *Weibermacht* prints for their portrayals of semi- or completely nude beauties—a privileged perspective less available in more public genres.[290] In contrast to most of the modestly-clothed, crazed wives in "Battle of the Sexes" prints (figs. 24-25), *Weibermacht* women were sometimes extravagantly dressed with plunging necklines (fig. 38) or conveniently uncovered (fig. 37) for the enjoyment of the viewer.[291] Recall the privileged view of Bathsheba's bare back that Burgkmair created for his audience!

While some Power of Women narratives logically included female nudity (i.e. David and Bathsheba), a few artists took the liberty of stripping away other women's clothing, providing visual feasts for hungry male eyes. For example, in his *Phyllis Riding Aristotle* (fig. 40), Hans Baldung Grien presents both Phyllis and Aristotle in the buff, leaving no room for doubt about their sexual relationship. Obviously, Baldung and other artists used *Weibermacht* scenes as opportunities to depict female nudes. The moralizing biblical or mythological Power of Women narratives counteracted the lascivious displays of feminine flesh, which artists included to pique their patrons' interest. A man could justify his purchase—and close study—of such an image by referring to its warning against women's charms and its message of moderation. As they looked at the appealing female forms, perhaps male viewers could sympathize with the men who fell for them.

[290] Knauer, *Dürers unfolgsame Erben*, 34.
[291] Some "Battle of the Sexes" prints, like fig. 26, include partial nudity, but that is uncommon. In Monogrammist M.T.'s *A Mistreated Husband*, the artist specifically draws attention to the woman's feminine beauty. In addition to exposing her breasts and letting her long hair fly untamed over her shoulder, by dressing the woman in pants, the artist also shows the dip-in at her waist and the flaring out around her buttocks and hips. Furthermore, the short pants expose the angry wife's delicate ankle, turned in a graceful, dance-like pose. Similarly, her shapely calves are exposed to the male print collector in a manner unseen in real life. But this is not the standard iconography for "Battle of the Sexes" prints.

Depending on the woman's beauty, early modern men may have even envied the fools who spent time in those warm arms. Was she worth it? If Samson, Solomon, David, or Aristotle could do it all again, would they face ridicule, sin, and death for sexual pleasure? Perhaps sixteenth-century German men could think back fondly on moments when they acted foolishly for lust or love—or temporary gratification.

Like the gender relationships they address, Power of Women images are too complex to reduce to a single meaning or purpose. To be clear, I am not arguing that previous scholarship is wrong but that *Weibermacht* images have many potential meanings. These images mock female power and male weakness while villainizing female sexuality and objectifying women. Because they are such rich images, I propose that *Weibermacht* prints can be both outlets for male anxieties about women and amusing collectibles that could inspire laughter and/or lust. Laughter might temper anxieties raised by seeing women dominating men—whether in reality or fiction. Transforming *Weibermacht* women into sex objects by adjusting or removing their clothes might neutralize the power of the dominant female figure, using a man's lust to remind him that men possess and control women—both the living and printed ones. Whatever power real women had in sixteenth-century Germany—in the household, through their work, or during the Reformation, it was limited and regulated by men.

Conclusion

In this careful study of gender roles and relations, I have revealed many of the intricacies and contradictions of sixteenth-century masculinity and femininity. The extensive historical and visual information analyzed in the preceding pages establishes the gendered context within which Barthel Beham created *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, and it provides the foundation on which I interpret the engraving in the remaining chapters of this thesis. With a nuanced appreciation for the ideal and lived relationships between the sexes, the pressures placed on men and women, and the mockery and criticism they faced if they failed to perform proper masculinity or

femininity, in the next chapter I begin my multivalent interpretation of Beham's work. Like the "Battle of the Sexes" and *Weibermacht* prints that play with themes of morality, didacticism, humor, and sexuality, Beham's small, clever engraving depicts an intriguing relationship between a woman and a man. As I have demonstrated at length, both lived and visually rendered gender relationships are far too complex to generalize. This leads me to ask: in the minds of sixteenth-century Germans, what kind of woman was Judith? And what kind of man was Holofernes? Furthermore, how might an early modern viewer interpret the intimate physical interaction of their nude bodies in Beham's image? Interpreting Judith as a woman and Holofernes as a man aids in our overall understanding of their sexually-charged relationship.

~ Chapter 2 ~

The Three Faces of Judith and their Audience

According to the Apocrypha, Judith was a chaste widow who outwitted and killed a powerful man on behalf of God and her people. She prevented her loathsome enemy Holofernes, a heathen general, from destroying her city and the Chosen People living there. Thus, it would seem that the roles of hero and villain were clear-cut, yet the methods that Judith employed in her triumph complicate matters. After all, Judith used her beauty and womanly wiles to dominate a male adversary. On one hand she was a faithful instrument of God who slayed an evil man. On the other, Judith stepped beyond her subordinate role as a woman and employed her feminine charms to deceive a hyper-masculine military leader. Therefore, the nature of Judith's actions tainted her victory, especially for late medieval and early modern audiences.

Much like sixteenth-century German women, Judith could alternately stand for ideal femininity or the destructive power of female cunning and sexuality. Was she a pious, chaste servant of God, like the Virgin Mary? Or were her actions more in line with Eve's fatal disobedience? Margarita Stocker writes, "Exceptionally amongst the biblical sirens, Judith was a polyvalent image that the observer could perceive either way [as a shrew or heroine]."[1] In truth, the textual accounts and visual representations of Judith were subtler and more complicated than a binary of good and evil. I have found that Judith frequently appears as an exemplary Christian woman, a fearsome hero, a cunning femme fatale, or some combination of those types.[2] As her counterpart in an

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[1] Margarita Stocker, *Judith: Sexual Warrior, Women and Power in Western Culture* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998), 52.

[2] My tripartite division of "Judiths" resembles that of Henrike Lähnemann's in her "Hystoria Judith: deutsche Judithdichtungen vom 12. bis zum 16. Jahrhundert" (Berlin: De Gruyter, 2006), 416-442. Since I developed my Judith-types without previous knowledge of Lähnemann's, our divisions are neither identical nor contradictory. Laura Weigert's Judith categories in her "Judith et Holopherne: Images du vice, images de la vertu," in *Judith et Holopherne* (Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 2003) were helpful in shaping my divisions.

ambivalently-received narrative, Holofernes was often portrayed as the abhorrent enemy of God or the representative of tyrannical authorities, but at other times he became an outwitted fool. For instance, when Judith took on the mantle of deceptive woman, Holofernes could become a more sympathetic character—at least in the eyes of early modern men. So where exactly on the spectrum of good and evil did Beham's figures of Judith and Holofernes fall?

In order to determine the character of Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, I review three "faces," or types, of Judiths that coexisted in the late medieval and early modern periods. Although Judith could personify virtues or heroism, she could just as easily stand for dangerous female sexuality and the power of women. Throughout my discussion of Judith's textual and visual reception, I argue that Beham's 1525 Judith is intended to be understood as a cunning femme fatale—and his Holofernes a defeated, ridiculous man. While the Nuremberg printmaker embraces the complexity of Judith and her relationship to Holofernes, ultimately, Beham gives his figures the appearance and body positions befitting the *Weibermacht* (Power of Women) tradition. Very much like Phyllis riding Aristotle, Judith sits astride Holofernes.

Each "face" of Judith served a distinctly different purpose and targeted a specific audience. The Chaste Widow functioned as an exemplar for women's behavior. The Triumphant Heroine rallied righteous groups together to stand against their tyrannical foes. And, as I argued in chapter 1, the Femme Fatale both warned and amused male audiences. Because *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* is a Femme Fatale, I argue that Beham specifically created his voluptuous nude for male viewers. In the final section of this chapter, I describe the wealthy, educated, and visually literate merchants, patricians, and artists who would have surely enjoyed seeing the female nude, but also recognized and appreciated the complexity of Beham's design.

The Chaste Widow and the Heathen

In his influential, fourth-century preface to the Book of Judith, St. Jerome wrote, "Receive the widow Judith, a paradigm of chastity, and with triumphant laud make her known in perpetual praises."[3] He and other early Church Fathers considered Judith a model of chastity for both women and men. They placed great emphasis on her pious motivations; vehemently insisted that she was not sexually "polluted" during her encounter with Holofernes; and "nervously glossed over" the seductive means by which she overcame the Assyrian general.[4] Remarkably, St. Jerome sharpened his positive interpretation of Judith's virtuousness by adding an additional phrase—of his own invention—to the end of the Book of Judith; he wrote, "And chastity was joined to her virtue."[5] For St. Ambrose (c. 337-397), one of St. Jerome's contemporaries, Judith's chastity and temperance were foils for Holofernes's lust and drunkenness.[6] Similarly, in his early fifth-century allegory the *Psychomachia* (*Battle of Spirits*), the Late Antique Latin poet Prudentius praised "the unbending Judith" for:

> …spurning the lecherous captain's jeweled couch, check[ing] his unclean passion with the sword, and woman as she was, winn[ing] a famous victory over the foe with no trembling hand, [but] with boldness heaven-inspired.[7]

[3] See translation of St. Jerome's entire preface to the Book of Judith in Elena Ciletti and Henrike Lähnemann, "Judith in the Christian Tradition," in *The Sword of Judith: Judith Studies across the Disciplines* (Cambridge, U.K.: OpenBook Publishers, 2010), 42-43.

[4] Elena Ciletti, "Patriarchal Ideology in the Renaissance Iconography of Judith," in *Refiguring Woman: Perspectives on Gender and the Italian Renaissance*, ed. Marilyn Migiel and Juliana Schiesari (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1991), 41; Ciletti and Lähnemann, "Judith in the Christian Tradition," 57.

[5] Ciletti, "Patriarchal Ideology," 42.

[6] Weigert, "Judith et Holopherne," 94.

[7] Elizabeth Bailey, "Judith, Jael, and Humilitas in the Speculum Virginum," in *The Sword of Judith: Judith Studies across the Disciplines*, ed. Elena Ciletti and Henrike Lähnemann (Cambridge, U.K.: OpenBook Publishers, 2010), 283.

Prudentius described Judith as a model of feminine virtues. In addition to possessing chastity, Judith was often associated with Humility, Piety, Fortitude, Temperance, Justice, Wisdom, Magnanimity, and Eloquence.[8]

For each virtue Judith personified, Holofernes embodied a corresponding vice. A visual example of this motif appears in the earliest extant *Mirror of Virgins* (*Speculum Virginum*), a manuscript filled with moral lessons for women.[9] Here, the beautiful *Humilitas* (Humility) stands over the mannish figure of *Superbia* (Pride) as she slays her (fig. 41). The twelfth-century artist follows the tradition of the *Psychomachia*, which describes victorious Virtues standing over fallen Vices. Both Judith and Jael, the labeled figures flanking Humility, assume the triumphant position of Virtue standing over Vice (represented by their dead enemies Holofernes and Sisera). Like Judith, Jael killed a pagan military commander who oppressed the Israelites. Jael, depicted on the left, welcomed Sisera into her tent with hospitality and promised to hide him from his enemies, but when he fell asleep, she hammered a tent peg into his temple. In this image Sisera's head bleeds from the spike embedded in his skull, but, perhaps for symmetry with Sisera, Holofernes's head is still attached to his body. In her catalogue entry for Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, Russell notes that "a female standing or sitting over the body of a male might suggest the medieval psychomachia tradition where virtue conquers vice" but that Beham's Judith possesses a "more sinister air."[10] Like Russell, I am unconvinced that *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* is primarily concerned with Virtue and Vice. Beham may be playing with the theme, but his use of nudity suggests something less wholesome.

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[8] Ciletti and Lähnemann, "Judith in the Christian Tradition," 46; Weigert, "Judith et Holopherne," 94; Jan Białostocki, "Judith: Story, Image, and Symbol," in *The Message of Images: Studies in the History of Art*, Bibliotheca Artibus et Historiae (Vienna: IRSA, 1988), 119.
[9] Bailey, "Judith, Jael, and Humilitas," 277; Lähnemann, "Hystoria Judith," 432.
[10] H. Diane Russell, *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints* (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art / Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1990), 67.

Judith's exemplary chastity, humility, and overall virtuousness made it possible for the Catholic Church to view her as a prefiguration of the Virgin Mary.[11] Both women were chaste victors over Satan. First, Judith chastely defeated "the devil's emissary, the lewd, proud, and idolatrous Antichrist, Holofernes" and saved her people.[12] Then, Mary triumphed over Satan through her chaste conception of Christ, "who broke the reign of the devil on earth" and offered the people of the world new life.[13] Notably, key phrases from the Book of Judith were incorporated into the liturgy of Mary's feast days, and both theologians and artists referenced the typological relationship between the Queen of Heaven and the Old Testament widow.[14] Images pairing the two pure and holy women appeared as early as the tenth century.[15] In Chapter Thirty of the *Mirror of Human Salvation* (*Speculum Humanae Salvationis*), an image of Mary's victory is typically depicted on the same page or near an image of Judith killing Holofernes.[16] A colorful, early fourteenth-century example shows the Virgin Mary plunging a spear through the devil's gaping mouth while Judith holds both Holofernes's bloody sword and severed head aloft (fig. 42). Here, Mary's weapons are the *Arma Christi* and Judith's are beauty, fine garments, and Holofernes's sword. As instruments of Divine Will who conquered the devil and sin, both women were also considered personifications of the Church (*Ecclesia*), triumphant over the infidels.[17]

In the sixteenth century, when Martin Luther translated the Book of Judith into German, he argued that the story was a "Divine Allegory."[18] In his preface, Luther explained that "Judith," which means "Jewess," represents the pious and faithful Jewish

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[11] Weigert, "Judith et Holopherne," 92; Ciletti, "Patriarchal Ideology," 42; Bailey, "Judith, Jael, and Humilitas," 288; and Lähnemann, "Hystoria Judith," 419-424.
[12] Ciletti, "Patriarchal Ideology," 43; Lähnemann, "Hystoria Judith," 420.
[13] Ciletti, "Patriarchal Ideology," 43.
[14] Ciletti, "Patriarchal Ideology," 43.
[15] Ciletti, "Patriarchal Ideology," 43.
[16] Białostocki, "Judith: Story, Image, and Symbol," 119; Weigert, "Judith et Holopherne," 92.
[17] Ciletti and Lähnemann, "Judith in the Christian Tradition," 45-46; Białostocki, "Judith: Story, Image, and Symbol," 118
[18] Adelheid Straten, *Das Judith-Thema in Deutschland im 16. Jahrhundert: Studien zur Ikonographie—Materialien und Beiträge* (Munich: Minerva, 1983), 10, 27.

people who remained pure, even during times of great turmoil. "Holofernes," which Luther translated as "pagan, ungodly, or unchristian Lord or Prince," represents the threat of atheism and heathens.[19] Even the Jewish city Bethulia, a city unknown on any map, carried symbolic meaning: "Bethulia" means "virgin," so Luther compared the good Jews to pure virgins since they lived without idolatry or disbelief.[20] Because no historical evidence supported the existence of a real Judith, Holofernes, or Bethulia, Luther believed it should be excluded from the Bible. Yet he described Judith's narrative as "a fine, good, holy, useful book," which Christians should read for its moral lessons.[21]

Although it was ultimately omitted from the official canon, the wise and beautiful widow's shocking story circulated throughout Europe in vernacular translations like Luther's. Judith's triumph over Holofernes became a very popular theme. Early modern audiences encountered her in virtually all written and visual media: from sermons, plays, poems, and literature to paintings, prints, tapestries, and sculpture.[22] Judith flooded the market as decoration on ceramics, metalware, seals, furniture, mirrors, screens, fireplaces, jewelry boxes, and pen cases.[23] Stocker writes, "In the Renaissance Judiths did furnish a room."[24]

But Judith was not the only Old Testament woman whose popularity grew during the Reformation Era. As reformers protested the idolatrous worship of saints and the blasphemous prominence of the Virgin Mary in the Church, they looked for new role models in the Old Testament—a text made more readily available and widely known

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[19] Stranten, *Das Judith-Thema*, 27.
[20] Stranten, *Das Judith-Thema*, 10.
[21] Weigert, "Judith et Holopherne," 100. My translation of Martin Luther's German ("ein fein, gut, heilig, nutzlich Buch"; LW 35: 388) given in Weigert's "Judith et Holopherne."
[22] Stranten, *Das Judith-Thema*, 19; Ciletti and Lähnemann, "Judith in the Christian Tradition," 57; Stocker, *Judith*, 46.
[23] Stocker, *Judith*, 46.
[24] Stocker, *Judith*, 46.

through vernacular translations.[25] In her article Yvonne Bleyerveld explains how in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, "biblical women served as patterns of feminine virtues," such as chastity, moderation, and piety, for both Protestant and Catholic audiences.[26] While printed images of "ideal biblical virgins, wives and widows" were looked at and collected by male audiences, they were considered a particularly "appropriate tool in the moral education of women as obedient, chaste and retiring daughters, wives and mothers."[27]

In both the literary and the pictorial tradition, "sets" of biblical women were described as exemplars of proper feminine behavior and presented as "mirrors" of ideal womanly conduct.[28] Generally, authors ascribed a specific virtue to each virgin, wife, or widow. For example, Juan Luis Vives praised Judith for her piety in his *Instruction of a Christien Woman*. [29] But for Erasmus, who lists Judith first among seven exemplary widows in his "On the Christian Widow" (*De vidua christiana*, 1529), Judith "embodies all the virtues of a Christian widow, but above all restraint and moderation."[30] In the poem "The Mirror of Honor of Twelve Women from the Old Testament" (*Der ehren Spiegel der zwölf durchleuchtigen Frawen dess Alten Testaments*, 1530), in which Hans Sachs assigns each woman a different virtue, he lauds Judith for her moderation.[31] It is

[25] The reformers agreed that the Virgin Mary should be honored as the Mother of God, but they did not think she deserved to be worshipped like God. As an example of piety, chastity, and good Christian behavior, Mary remained a role model for both women and men.

[26] Yvonne Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout: Biblical Women as Patterns of Female Virtue in Netherlandish and German Graphic Art, Ca. 1500-1750," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 28, no. 4 (January 1, 2000): 250.

[27] Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout," 220, 237, 250; Ilja M. Veldman, "Lessons for Ladies: A Selection of Sixteenth and Seventeenth-Century Dutch Prints," *Simiolus: Netherlands Quarterly for the History of Art* 16, no. 2/3 (January 1, 1986): 127.

[28] Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout," 250, 220.

[29] Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout," 222.

[30] Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout," 222.

[31] Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout," 225. Considering Judith's courage, wisdom, and chastity, "moderation" may seem unfitting as her primary virtue. But while Holofernes drank himself into unconsciousness, Judith remained sober, giving her the opportunity to defeat her enemy. On page 226, Bleyerveld discusses how women were supposed to learn that "moderation in dress, eating, and drinking brings honor." In an even less flattering and more misogynistic interpretation, Judith also moderated her own lust for Holofernes, resisting his sexual advances to accomplish her task. Thus, by pointing to Judith's

generally accepted that Sachs's poem accompanied Erhard Schön's large woodcut *Twelve Famous Women of the Old Testament* (figs. 43-44), the earliest example of a series of virtuous biblical women.[32] Judith is the tenth woman in the row, easily identified by the sword and head she holds.[33] Its large size, measuring 76 centimeters long and printed on two blocks, suggests that Schön's woodcut was probably intended to hang on the wall, printed with Sachs's poem.[34] Unfortunately, no sheet combining the image and the text survives. If the print hung on the walls of a domestic interior, presumably as a constant reminder of womanly virtues for its inhabitants, then it is quite logical that such sheets suffered normal wear and tear: damp air, soot from the fireplace, or damage when (re)moved from the wall.

Prints depicting exemplary biblical women, which first appealed to German and Netherlandish urban elite living in successful mercantile cities like Nuremberg and Antwerp, remained popular throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.[35] For example, decades after Schön and Sachs's collaboration, Jost Amman designed a set of etchings inspired by their twelve women. Each of Amman's *Celebrated Women of the Old Testament* prints is inscribed with the woman's name, her number in Schön's row, and her virtue as described by Sachs's poem.[36] For example, on the Judith etching, the label "10 · Iudith die Messig [*mäßig*]" ("10 · Judith the Moderate") appears along the right edge (fig. 45). Perhaps Amman hoped to sell more prints by separating the virtuous ladies from one another. Far more interesting than Amman's decision to produce twelve separate images is the way he eroticized the women. All but two of Schön's women wear

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moderation, the authors imply that she restrained unladylike desires for alcohol and sex. They praise her inactivity.

[32] Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout," 224-225.

[33] Ten of the twelve women are holding identifying attributes. Only Sarah and Susanna have empty hands. They are all named in Sachs's poem. From left to right: Eve (apple and skull), Sarah, Rebecca (pitcher), Rachel (bare branch), Leah (flowering branch), Jael (hammer and tent peg), Ruth (sheaf of corn), Michal (cord), Abigail (basket of flowers), Judith (sword and head), Esther (crown and scepter), and Susanna.

[34] Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout," 225.

[35] Bleyerveld, "Chaste, Obedient and Devout," 250.

[36] It is entirely possible that Jost Amman numbered his women according to Sachs's poem instead of Schön's prints. It is unclear if Amman saw Schoen's print because their figures appear entirely unrelated, yet that does not preclude the younger artists' knowledge of the earlier work.

modest gowns that mask their largely static figures (figs. 43-44).[37] In contrast, all but two of Amman's women wear clingy dresses, reveal tantalizing stretches of bare leg and/or arm, and pose in aesthetically pleasing (or suggestive) positions. Compare, for instance, Schön's Judith (fig. 44, fourth figure from the left) who stands upright with a long pleated skirt and full sleeves that cover her body to Amman's Judith whose flowing, high-cut skirt reveals a shapely lower leg and dainty foot, and whose short-sleeved, form-fitting bodice leaves little to the imagination. Perhaps the most shocking transformation is from Schön's demure, veiled Susanna (fig. 44, first figure on the right) to Amman's nude, suggestively-draped Susanna with flowing tresses (fig. 46). Like his contemporaries who used *Weibermacht* prints as opportunities to represent nude Bathshebas and Phyllises, Amman produced beautiful, half-dressed female forms thinly cloaked in moralizing biblical narratives.

Images of virtuous women from the Bible as represented by Schön were likely intended for women's moral edification, but Amman's sirens targeted a different audience: male print collectors. I am not saying that nudity precluded a print from teaching virtuous behavior, but considering sixteenth-century society's concern about the dangers of female lust and sexuality, it seems unlikely that artists designed sexual imagery specifically for women. While it is entirely possible that women (alone or with their husbands) could have admired nude or semi-nude female bodies for their aesthetic value—or even found them arousing, there is simply not enough evidence to support an investigation of women's image reception. Therefore, based on what historical information is available, I will continue to assume that the nude female body was intended for male viewers' consumption. Since *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* features a prominent female nude, for the purposes of this thesis I am only concerned with interpreting Beham's image from the perspective of sixteenth-century German men.

[37] Eve, who appears nude in contemporary prints, wears an animal skin dress that exposes her lower legs and knees; Jael's form-fitting, short-sleeved dress clings her to navel and thighs as a gust of wind blow her skirt up to reveal a hint of knee and her boot-covered calves.

Throughout the late medieval and early modern periods, Judith was continually used as a personification of virtues: she was an exemplary woman. In this subcategory of Judith images, the artists may reveal her legs or arms or cleavage, but "good Judiths" are never nude Judiths. Celebrating the beautiful widow's chastity while displaying her body is inherently contradictory. Nudity, which may imply sexual activity, robs Judith of her chastity, moderation, and restraint; therefore, prints truly aiming to teach morals depicted their Judiths clothed. Furthermore, in this subcategory, Holofernes functions more like a prop than a full-fledged character. His head is a gruesome attribute identifying Judith and reminding the audience of her story. Even when his body is present, the focus is turned to Judith and her victory (figs. 41-42). In Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, a completely nude Judith holds the standard "pieces" of Holofernes, but her intimate relationship to his body elevates Holofernes from prop to participant. It is obvious that Beham's print does not belong with these pious images. Here, Judith is neither a virtue nor a personification of the Virgin, and she is certainly not a woman for other women to emulate. How does Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* compare to more heroic depictions of the narrative?

The Triumphant Heroine and the Tyrant

The core message of the Book of Judith is a simple one: with God's help the righteous can overthrow tyranny. By imagining Judith as the personification of Good vanquishing Evil (Holofernes), the pesky issue of her chastity could be ignored and her victory could allegorize any number of political or social struggles. Functioning as a personification, Judith's dangerous sexuality was neutralized, but her gender remained symbolically significant. God was able to use a *woman* to carry out His justice; thus, no matter how bad the odds may appear, with God's backing, the truly righteous will

ultimately prevail. Instead of Judith representing Chastity, Humility, or Moderation, in this light she becomes a symbol of heroic courage, justice, and political emancipation.[38]

Donatello's bronze, once-gilt sculpture *Judith and Holofernes* is an Italian Renaissance example of the "heroic Judith" type (1460, fig. 9). Judith grasps Holofernes's head by his hair and prepares to strike him with his sword. Here and in other Italian artists' depictions of Judith, she wears classicizing garments that "literally [envelope her] in the authoritative mantle of classical female heroism."[39] Whereas images of Judith in courtly gowns and fine jewelry allude to her questionably deceitful and seductive actions, antiquated clothing visually links Judith with legendary heroines.[40] A round engraving attributed to Baccio Baldini even depicts Judith wearing fanciful armor over her high-waisted, classically draped gown (fig. 47). The fringe on her shoulders and rosettes covering her breasts resemble the details of a cuirass—albeit a small, feminine one. The winged helmet and wreath around her neck symbolize victory. Altogether this Judith's appearance, from her exotic clothing to her confident stance, recalls images of classical goddesses, like Athena, and historically fearsome female warriors, like the Amazons. Typically, Italian artists also show Judith with her sword raised in victory, as depicted in Parmigianino's etching (fig. 48). Here Judith's disproportionately large, muscular arms thrust her weapon skyward and deposit Holofernes's head in the bag. By hiding Judith's lovely face in the shadows and equipping her with powerful limbs, Parmigianino emphasizes the role of Judith's heroic strength—rather than her appearance—in her triumph over Holofernes.

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[38] Ulinka Rublack, "Wench and Maiden: Women, War and the Pictorial Function of the Feminine in German Cities in the Early Modern Period," *History Workshop Journal*, no. 44 (October 1, 1997): 5; Peggy L. Curry, "Representing the Biblical Judith in Literature and Art: An Intertextual Cultural Critique" (PhD diss., University of Massachusetts Amherst, 1994), 9-10; Bernadine Ann Barnes, "Heroines and Worthy Women," in *Eva/Ave: Woman in Renaissance and Baroque Prints*, ed. H. Diane Russell (Washington, D.C.: National Gallery of Art / Feminist Press at the City University of New York, 1990), 32-33; Weigert, "Judith et Holopherne," 101.
[39] Ciletti and Lähnemann, "Judith in the Christian Tradition," 57.
[40] Ciletti and Lähnemann, "Judith in the Christian Tradition," 57.

Originally, Donatello's *Judith and Holofernes* stood opposite his *David* in the garden of the Palazzo Medici. Both Judith and David were physically weak by nature, but God gave them the strength to save their people and behead their enemies. David was just a boy when he battled the giant Philistine warrior Goliath, but David felled him with a stone from his slingshot and cut off his head. Armed with matching swords and severed heads as their attributes, Judith and David sometimes formed a couple representing humility, prefigurations (respectively) of the Virgin and Christ triumphing over the devil, or civic virtues.[41] Cosimo de' Medici commissioned both statues of the tyrant-slaying biblical heroes at a time when the Medici family wished to convey its "low social origins and opposition to the despotism of princes and tyrants."[42] Judith and David both functioned as visual metaphors for the Medici, who believed themselves to be the defenders of Florence and the city's people. Ironically, in 1494 when the Medicis were exiled from their beloved city, Donatello's *Judith and Holofernes* was moved to the front of the Palazzo Vecchio and reinterpreted as the embodiment of republican ideals. The Medicis were no longer Judith, but Holofernes, in the metaphor.[43] As arrogant despots from small states in central and northern Italy threatened the independence of free Italian cities, Judith and David were increasingly called upon as personifications of just tyrannicide and republican virtues.[44] According to Jan Białostocki, "their drawn swords were a warning to anyone who might want to disrupt the law, equality, and freedom of their societies."[45]

During the turbulent years that characterized the Reformation and Counterreformation, both Protestants and Catholics compared themselves to Judith. Believing that God was with them, Martin Luther and the reformers imagined themselves

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[41] Białostocki, "Judith: Story, Image, and Symbol," 121; Susan L. Smith, "A Nude Judith from Padua and the Reception of Donatello's Bronze David," *Comitatus: A Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 25, no. 1 (1994): 66.
[42] Białostocki, "Judith: Story, Image, and Symbol," 120.
[43] Weigert, "Judith et Holopherne," 101; Curry, "Representing the Biblical Judith," 10-11.
[44] Białostocki, "Judith: Story, Image, and Symbol," 122; Ciletti and Lähnemann, "Judith in the Christian Tradition," 58.
[45] Białostocki, "Judith: Story, Image, and Symbol," 122.

as Judith, armed with the strength of their faith, defeating Holofernes, the tyrannical, corrupt Catholic Church.[46] Like the Jewish widow, the Protestants fought for religious-political independence.[47] Of course, the Catholics considered themselves the heroic defenders of the Church, "protect[ing it] against the demon Protestants."[48] They, too, adopted Judith as a symbol of their righteous battle against blasphemous usurpers. As the conflict between the two religious factions escalated, members of both groups were killed. Ciletti and Lähnemann write, "In each case, the assassin, whether Protestant or Catholic, was hailed by his proponents as a new Judith."[49] After all, Judith's narrative justifies the murder of tyrants and heathens.[50] In the 1530s Catholic writers extended the Judith allegory to the impending threat of invading Turks (Holofernes); confronted with real pagan warriors, the Catholics and Protestants became a collective Judith! [51] Clearly Judith and Holofernes really could "stand for almost any adversarial relationship."[52]

Although sixteenth-century women were taught to emulate Judith's desirable feminine viruses, they were most certainly not encouraged to imitate her heroic behaviors: her leadership, meting out of justice, or tyrannicide. In fact, the Book of Judith itself is very clear about Judith's active role being temporary: she carries out God's plan, and then she returns to her quiet life as a good widow in Bethulia.[53] The central gender inversion in Judith's story is "momentary," reminds Ciletti, who writes, "whatever her power as a civic symbol, the virago is no exemplar for actual women."[54] Recall how German women—who had been active preachers, warriors, and iconoclasts during the early years of the Reformation—were told to return to their proper roles within the household once the Protestants firmly established their new church. Yet those women had

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[46] Barnes, "Heroines and Worthy Women," 32.
[47] Straten, *Das Judith-Thema*, 29.
[48] Weigert, "Judith et Holopherne," 104.
[49] Ciletti and Lähnemann, "Judith in the Christian Tradition," 58.
[50] Weigert, "Judith et Holopherne," 101.
[51] Barnes, "Heroines and Worthy Women," 32; Straten, *Das Judith-Thema*, 28.
[52] Barnes, "Heroines and Worthy Women," 32.
[53] Weigert, "Judith et Holopherne," 102.
[54] Ciletti, "Patriarchal Ideology," 66.

proven that they were, as Sara Matthews-Grieco writes, "as capable of soundly beating their spouses as they were capable of mounting city walls to defend their homes against an attacking army."[55] Perhaps because such fearsome women existed, some men worried that images of Judith "might give a more literal-minded and unsophisticated female public undesirable ideas."[56]

This type of Judith is a hero for the oppressed and a representation of justice; this Holofernes, on the other hand, is a domineering tyrant. It is possible that someone viewing Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* could imagine her heroic deeds and her symbolic association with some religious or political group, but that would be one of the least interesting ways to think about the image. Instead, I propose that Beham's nude Judith belongs in the subcategory closely associated with *Weibermacht* images. Moreover, *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* specifically recalls depictions of Phyllis riding Aristotle—a well-known battle of the sexes.

The Femme Fatale and the Fool

The Book of Judith characterizes its heroine's courageous acts as unquestionably positive and divinely sanctioned, but in the late medieval and early modern visual and textual traditions, her actions "assum[ed] new carnality and sensuality."[57] Seduction and sexual desire had always been central to Judith's narrative; after all, the clever widow

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[55] Sara F. Matthews-Grieco, "Pedagogical Prints: Moralizing Broadsheets and Wayward Women in Counter Reformation Italy," in *Picturing Women in Renaissance and Baroque Italy*, ed. Geraldine A. Johnson and Sara F. Matthews-Grieco (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 70.

[56] Matthews-Grieco, "Pedagogical Prints," 70. Matthews-Grieco provides an interesting example of selective Judith printing in footnote 21, page 265. She writes: "The refusal to represent Judith on the part of printmakers catering to lower and middle echelons of the urban market is confirmed by a comparison of the Vaccari and Lafréry print catalogues, as well as by a number of inventories of printshop stock drawn up by sixteenth- and seventeenth-century notaries." Apparently, Antoine Lafrery, who primarily catered to "educated clientele," carried several prints of Judith and Lucretia. But the Vaccari printshop, which "addressed a more general public," carried images of Lucretia and her self-sacrifice, but did not carry any prints of the murderous Jewish widow.

[57] Henrike Lähnemann, "The Cunning of Judith in Late Medieval German Texts," in *The Sword of Judith: Judith Studies across the Disciplines*, ed. Kevin R. Brine, Elena Ciletti, and Henrike Lähnemann (Cambridge, U.K.: Open Book Publishers, 2010), 239; Ciletti and Lähnemann, "Judith in the Christian Tradition," 56.

ultimately defeats Holofernes by exploiting his lust for her. Yet from St. Jerome on, the Church underscored Judith's chastity and suppressed her troubling sexuality.[58] While God and His church approved of Judith's cunning plan—which relied on her sex appeal for its success, fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Christians were particularly suspicious of Judith's sexual morality and skeptical about what exactly took place in Holofernes's tent.[59] Remember, in the minds of early modern audiences, Judith and every other woman constantly struggled to control their sexual desires, so it is unsurprising that Christian observers recognized the problematic, lust-dependent nature of Judith's tactics. The potential for reading Judith as an immoral woman had always been present.

Because Judith cunningly used her beauty as a weapon against her male adversary, her actions were sometimes categorized as *Weiberlist* (women's wiles), an element found in all *Weibermacht* texts and images.[60] "Cunning," a crucial component of *Weiberlist*, was a trait considered "typical of women," writes Barnes, "and, like their sexuality, it could be used as a powerful weapon against men."[61] Judith, like her sly sisters Phyllis and Delilah, recognized the power of her beauty and used it to manipulate and conquer a man. Yet the wise and beautiful widow stands out as one of the cleverest women among the *Weibermacht* women because her plan took such a great deal of forethought and wit. First, Judith dressed to inflame Holofernes's lust and infiltrate his camp. Then, for multiple days, she deceived the Assyrian general with her words and appearance. Under the guise of piety, Judith laid the groundwork for her escape by praying and eating kosher food each day. Finally, she executed both her enemy *and* a flawless getaway from a military camp! Holofernes did not stand a chance against Judith's alluring body and lethal mind.

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[58] Ciletti and Lähnemann, "Judith in the Christian Tradition," 60.
[59] Ciletti and Lähnemann, "Judith in the Christian Tradition," 60; Lähnemann, "The Cunning of Judith," 242; Susan Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened: Old Testament Women in Northern Prints*, Harvard University Art Museums Gallery Series 6 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Art Museums, 1993), 8.
[60] Lähnemann, "The Cunning of Judith," 239.
[61] Barnes, "Heroines and Worthy Women," 33.

In conjunction with Judith's initiation among the *Weibermacht* women, Holofernes joined the ranks of men defeated by seductive, cunning women. This is yet another instance of the zero-sum early modern power dynamic: Judith gains power, so Holofernes necessarily loses power. Notably, the High Middle German poet Frauenlob (c. 1260-1318) lists Holofernes with other tricked men from the Bible, history, and legend in a stanza from his poem "Langer Ton":

> Adam, the first man, was deceived by a woman;
> Samson himself was blinded by a woman,
> David was put to shame.
> By a woman, king Solomon was deprived of God's kingdom.
> Absalom's beauty did not succeed, a woman had him dazzled.
> Mighty as Alexander was, no different.
> Virgil was deceived by false means.
> *Holofernes was chopped up,*
> same as Aristotle was ridden by a woman.
> Troy, city and country alike, were destroyed by a woman.
> Achilles suffered the same.
> The fast Asahel became tame.
> The shaming of Arthur originated from women,
> and Perceval had many troubles.
> Since love conquered them all what does it matter if a pure woman burns
> and chills me?[62]

Here, Holofernes's experience is the central focus—not Judith's victory.[63] Male audiences who encountered this stanza—which must have been popular because it existed in many versions and contexts throughout the late medieval and early modern periods—may have sympathized with Holofernes and the other duped men.[64] They might have agreed with the poem's narrator who concludes in the final lines that he cannot be expected to resist women's charms when the greatest men in history could not. Essentially, in this example and many others, a narrative about a God-fearing woman

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[62] Stanza from Frauenlob's, "Langer Ton" found in *German Miscellany*, early 15th century. Washington, D.C., Library of Congress, Rosenwald Collection, MS 4, fol. 8r, as translated by Lähnemann in "The Cunning of Judith in Late Medieval German Texts," 243, 245 (my italics).
[63] Lähnemann, "The Cunning of Judith," 245.
[64] Lähnemann, "The Cunning of Judith," 243.

who saves her people from tyranny was repurposed as an example of women's power victimizing men.

Just as other *Weibermacht* narratives and images could be didactic or amusing—providing moments of laughter or opportunities for erotic perusal, so too could Judith's story and visual representations provide both moral teaching and entertainment. In the previous sections, I discussed how Judith could represent virtues for women to emulate and heroism from which groups drew inspiration. When Judith was categorized with the women from *Weibermacht* narratives, her story warned men against the power of women—reminding them to be on guard against female sexuality and cunning. This is particularly true in the stanza above: Holofernes is characterized as yet another casualty in a long line of men duped by deceitful beauties.

But, as I observed in chapter 1, each *Weibermacht* narrative possesses both an empowered woman and a weakened man. Therefore, in certain interpretations, Holofernes's excessive desires and lost masculinity could convey lessons about men's weaknesses and vices. For example, a stanza from Frauenlob's "Goldene Ton" reprimands male pride:

> When Judith slew Holofernes,
> her womanly sense was clever.
> She dared it to save the people,
> she carried home the head,
> indeed, these are the ways of the world.
> Since all the prince's people
> could not help him
> against God's will at all,
> you should consider now
> what God's power can bring about;
> they should take care day and night,
> ever since their sinful desire first began
> that He will make them suffer for it.
> *My Lords, if you are weakened by*
> *the boldness of pride*
> *you should overcome yourselves.*
> How can you achieve divine help

if you allow it to grow to great height?
He who is weakened by pride,
will be struck down by God.[65]

The poem warns "my lords" against the vice of pride. Men who are "weakened by pride" will surely be "struck down by God"—just as Holofernes was. Here, Holofernes takes up his usual mantle of sin personified, but he is not compared to the devil. Instead, a comparison is drawn between the Assyrian general and late medieval men.

While previous scholarship tends to focus on Judith's role in Holofernes's destruction, the military commander was not blameless in his own demise. After all, it was the general's excessive drinking that left him vulnerable to attack. True, Holofernes's defenses were weakened by blinding lust, but if he had drunk moderately that night, Holofernes might have prevented his own slaughter. In fact, the general's excessive drinking is a crucial plot point.[66] Because he drank more than he had in his entire life, Holofernes passed out and gave Judith the perfect opportunity to slay him. Now, recall that drunkenness was one of the most disruptive sins in sixteenth-century German cities. Consider also that drinking was central to male bonding and proving one's masculinity—specifically by testing the boundaries of one's self-control. I propose that early modern German men, who were abundantly familiar with the effects of alcohol, could relate to Holofernes and his overly-enthusiastic imbibing. Holofernes's fatal miscalculation may have served as a warning against their own drinking habits—or, it may have been a source of amusement.

[65] Stanza from Frauenlob's, "Goldene Ton," 15th century, as translated by Lähnemann in "The Cunning of Judith in Late Medieval German Texts," 241 (my italics).

[66] Holofernes's drunkenness and decapitation are mentioned together in the twentieth stanza of the "Judith-Song" (c. 1560): "Like their master Holofernes / The servants were completely sloshed. / Her servant-girl did guard the doors. / His head she cut off him, sound asleep, / she gave it to her servant for her sack; / there nobody could guess it." Thus, the poem directly links Holofernes's death with his drinking. Because he was too drunk to remain conscious, he could not defend himself against a woman. Ironically, sixteenth-century German men probably sang the "Judith-Song" while drinking at a tavern or some social gathering. The entire "Judith-Song" is translated in Lähnemann, "The Cunning of Judith," 252-258).

Excessive drinking robs a man of his masculinity in more ways than one. When a man drinks too much alcohol, the demon drink can take away his rationality and turn him into a base animal. But the Germans, whose culture called for near-boundless social drinking, knew from experience that alcohol consumption had both mental and physical effects. Too much wine, beer, or liquor can result in a man's inability to perform in the bedroom. Thus, no matter how enticing Judith's body was, after drinking so much wine, it is unlikely that Holofernes was physically capable of consummating his relationship with the Jewess. Surely this all-too-familiar, alcohol-related loss of masculinity was something for sixteenth-century German men to laugh about or mock. In Holofernes's case, the possibilities for derision are endless. I could imagine them joking about how Judith took hold of Holofernes's "sword" (penis) and cut off his "head" (castrated him) because he did not fulfill her sexual desires—a pressing concern that men had about real living women and their needy wombs. In the end, Holofernes failed to perform his masculinity, which left an opening for Judith to take control of the relationship.

Undoubtedly, the story of Judith's triumph over Holofernes could communicate both moralizing messages and lewd humor. But by the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries, the beautiful widow also became a source of sexual amusement as she was "absorbed into the eroticism of the Renaissance."[67] Artists specifically sought themes with potentially erotic connotations that might justify the inclusion of nude women in their compositions.[68] Like other women condemned of *Weiberlist* (e.g. Bathsheba), Judith's questionable sexual conduct gave artists the opportunity to depict her semi- or completely nude. Humanists' interest in the nude, artists' desire to demonstrate their skill with the female form, and collectors' demand for erotic images all influenced the number of nudes available on the art market, but the appearance of so many appealing figures likely "caus[ed] the viewer to sympathize more with the

[67] Białostocki, "Judith: Story, Image, and Symbol," 123.
[68] Białostocki, "Judith: Story, Image, and Symbol," 126.

heroine's conquered foe than with the heroine herself."[69] Unfortunately for Judith, she and her story existed in a man's world where male solidarity trumped biblical categories of good and evil.[70] It is thus unsurprising that male audiences viewing the voluptuous and enticing bodies of exposed Judiths would side with Holofernes—despite the fact that the apocryphal text insists Judith "was chaste when she entered Holofernes's tent and chaste when she left with his head in her sack."[71] Furthermore, Judith's nudity in sixteenth-century images suggests that she would do *anything*—including perform sexual acts—to secure the safety of her people: an admirable trait for a man, but an undesirable one for a (supposedly) chaste woman. As Elena Ciletti explains, "Once a sexual dimension is acknowledged for the female character, her identity as a legitimate, active heroine is simply not possible."[72] Thus, artists stripped away Judith's heroism along with her fine garments.

As I mentioned in the introduction, the Italian artists were the first to depict Judith in various states of undress, but it was in Germany that nude Judiths became popular. It seems that Conrat Meit created the earliest nude Judith north of the Alps about 1512-1514 (fig. 12).[73] His *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, a small alabaster statuette, shows the pleasantly plump widow with high breasts, narrow sloping shoulders, fleshy hips and thighs, and a round stomach. Judith stands between Holofernes's downturned sword and a short column on which she rests the general's head. Undeterred by death Holofernes sneaks a sideways glance at Judith's pudenda. His eyes direct the viewer toward his—and possibly their—object of desire. The small, private nature of this work is reminiscent of devotional objects—treasured objects viewed from intimate proximity.[74]

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[69] Ciletti and Lähnemann, "Judith in the Christian Tradition," 60-61; Barnes, "Heroines and Worthy Women," 29.
[70] Ciletti, "Patriarchal Ideology," 252.
[71] Barnes, "Heroines and Worthy Women," 33.
[72] Ciletti, "Patriarchal Ideology," 52.
[73] Of course, it is possible that an earlier nude Judith existed in Germany, but Meit's is the earliest surviving example.
[74] Many thanks to Joan A. Holladay for her observations on Conrat Meit's *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, which enriched my thinking about the viewers' experience of the object.

When held in the hand, the statue's creamy stone flesh likely absorbed heat from the viewer, giving "life" to the tiny female nude.[75] Like Pygmalion, the sixteenth-century male viewer may have wished that his beloved statue would transform into a living woman. Without question, this sensuous object is not a representation of Judith as a heroine or personified virtue.

Similarly, no one would mistake Hans Baldung Grien's *Judith with the Head of Holofernes* (fig. 13) as a painting for moral edification. Baldung's full-length nude holds a small knife and severed head, as well as a diaphanous cloth that does nothing to cover her body. Here, Judith's strangely twisted legs draw attention to the shadowy apex of her thighs: the viewer sees less of Judith's genitalia, but the effect is all the more tantalizing. Notably, Baldung's Judith was one of three strikingly similar panel paintings that he created in 1524 and 1525. The identity of those other full-length female nudes is most remarkable: Eve (fig. 49) and Venus (fig. 50). Eve is sometimes considered the first woman to employ *Weiberlist*; it is often implied that she used her sexuality to persuade Adam into sin—actions that certainly earn her story a place among the *Weibermacht* narratives. Venus is the goddess of love and lust who could use her power to manipulate men. Baldung seems to be interested in the seductive power of the female body, but, as I will argue in the next chapter, it is unclear whether viewers should fear or enjoy women's sensuous power and tempting bodies.

Although Meit's statue and Baldung's painting are appealing examples of nude Judiths in Germany, it is impossible to know how many people encountered those works. Instead, it is far more likely that wider audiences came across nude Judiths in prints by or after Sebald and Barthel Beham. The Beham brothers created a total of four designs featuring nude Judiths. In both of Sebald's prints, which date sometime between 1520

[75] I considered the physical experience of the alabaster statuette after discussing medieval manuscript covers with Holley Ledbetter. Ledbetter suggests that manuscript covers, which were originally adorned with velvet, embroidery, and precious stones or gems, must have warmed to the touch and provided the viewer with a specific physical experience of the object. According to Ledbetter, the different covers may have functioned as a memory device; specific covers reminded owners of the text and imagery inside.

and 1530, Judith is shown standing and accompanied by her maid (figs. 14-15). In my opinion, in Figure 14, the arches of drapery extending from Judith and her companion, as well as the pronounced lines around Judith's breasts and stomach, suggest that Sebald knew Nicoletto da Modena's c. 1500 engraving of Judith (fig. 7). Similarly, I wonder which print came first: Sebald's Figure 15 or Barthel's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*. The sharp turn of Judith's head and the direction of her flowing hair indicate some relationship between the two works, but I am unsure how to date them.

Regardless of how they relate chronologically or stylistically to Sebald's works, Barthel's nude-Judith engravings are particularly innovative because they depict the beautiful widow in a seated position (figs. 16-17). Before Barthel's 1523 print of Judith, in which the heroine sits on a stone ledge (fig. 16), artists had not shown the victorious Jewess on her bottom. However, not long after his prints began to circulate, other printmakers adopted Barthel's new position for their Judiths (figs. 51-52). In fact, both of Barthel's 1523 and 1525 Judiths were copied: his brother Sebald modified and re-published the 1523 Judith (fig. 53) and the Monogrammist RB produced a reverse copy of the 1525 Judith (fig. 54). Yet the question needs to be asked: why did Barthel seat Judith in the first place? One possibility is that he wished to provide his patrons with a slightly larger female nude and, thus, a closer encounter with her exposed body. Barthel was perfectly capable of depicting standing nudes in the same amount of space that he designed seated nudes (approximately 55 x 37 millimeters), but his standing Cleopatra from 1524 (fig. 55) is necessarily smaller and further from the foreground than his seated Judiths. Consider also how Barthel's Judiths would no longer fit in the pictorial space if they stood. Here, what I find interesting is that Barthel revisited the seated position in 1525 for his *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, but instead of a neutral stone ledge, he chose to place Judith's nude behind on the bare chest of her newly-deceased enemy—why?

Judith Riding Holofernes: Barthel Beham's *Weibermacht* Print

Scholars have written very little on Beham's 1525 representation of Judith and Holofernes. In 1990, Russell wrote, "The sexuality of Judith is heightened in this engraving by having her sit on top of Holofernes's nude body," but her analysis of the position and its eroticism went no further.[76] In 2011, Alexandra Schellenberg briefly described the 1525 Judith as a mighty figure that "almost fills the entire pictorial space."[77] She notes how Judith "sits upright" on top of Holofernes, "heroically look[ing] down at his severed head."[78] For Schellenberg, Judith's "eyes convey contempt and disgust, but also the triumph of a champion."[79] What is represented is a "moment of satisfaction, of the triumph of the heroine who selflessly brought about the salvation of her people," explains Schellenberg, yet perhaps Judith is also "disgusted by her own act."[80] This nude Judith is erotic but aloof. I cannot deny the accuracy of Schellenberg's observations: this is a fearsome and victorious Judith. Yet, like Russell, Schellenberg barely addresses the eroticism of Judith's position, and I believe that decoding Beham's placement of a nude Judith—however formidable—atop a nude Holofernes is essential for understanding his image.

In many respects the 1525 engraving is very similar to the one dated to 1523, but two years later, Beham totally changed the tone of the composition and the character of his heroine. In the 1523 image, Judith "exudes a Madonna-like loveliness;" she looks down into the face of her victim, her sword points skyward, and her hair is modestly braided around her head—only a single curl falls near her cheek.[81] Like the sword she brandishes, Judith's temperament has been turned 180 degrees in the second version.[82]

[76] Russell, *Eva/Ave*, 67.
[77] Alexandra Schellenberg in the catalogue section of Thomas Ulrich Schauerte and Jürgen Müller, eds., *Die gottlosen Maler von Nürnberg: Konvention und Subversion in der Druckgrafik der Beham-Brüder* (Emsdetten, Germany: Edition Imorde, 2011), 249-250; my translations from the modern German.
[78] Schellenberg, *Die gottlosen Maler von Nürnberg*, 249.
[79] Schellenberg, *Die gottlosen Maler von Nürnberg*, 249.
[80] Schellenberg, *Die gottlosen Maler von Nürnberg*, 249.
[81] Schellenberg, *Die gottlosen Maler von Nürnberg*, 250.
[82] Schellenberg, *Die gottlosen Maler von Nürnberg*, 250.

Judith is fiercer; her head is turned more sharply, her gaze is darkened, her grimly-set mouth suggests "cruelty," and her hair whips in the wind.[83] Interestingly, Beham replaces the soft curl framing the 1523 Judith's face with a tongue-like strand of hair near the chin of the 1525 Judith. Has the hair been repurposed to suggest a devilishly serpentine tongue?[84] Taking into account the wildness of the 1525 Judith, perhaps it is unsurprising that Beham places her in a more natural setting up against a grassy knoll; similarly, the quieter 1523 Judith appears to sit just outside a building with a fence—she has yet to succumb to Nature.

Beyond the details of each Judith and her setting, the greatest divergence between the 1523 and 1525 prints is the inclusion and placement of Holofernes's headless torso. It is this game-changing element that separates *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* from every other Judith image. In fact, decoding the clever references and multiple potential meanings of this outrageously intimate comingling of bodies is the primary goal of this thesis. In the pages that follow, I present various ways a sixteenth-century German man may have interpreted this engraving. This is not an exhaustive analysis, but an exploration of the iconography through the lens of early modern gender roles and relationships and the artistic sources available to Beham. This chapter includes the first of four explanations I propose for the presence of Holofernes underneath Judith.

To the best of my knowledge, Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* is the only late medieval or early modern representation of a nude woman sitting on the nude torso of a dead man. But it is not the only *Weibermacht* print featuring a female figure atop a male figure: Phyllis is shown seated on Aristotle (figs. 38-40). Since Judith could be included among the *Weibermacht* women, it is entirely possible that Beham drew upon widely available Phyllis-and-Aristotle iconography for his rendering of Judith.[85] As one of the most popular examples of the power of women, depictions of

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[83] Schellenberg, *Die gottlosen Maler von Nürnberg*, 250.
[84] I pursue this devious detail at greater length in a section on witches in the next chapter.
[85] Davis, "Women on Top," 161-162. Martin Knauer's *Dürers unfolgsame Erben: Bildstrategien in den Kupferstichen der deutschen Kleinmeister*, Studien zur Internationalen Architektur- und Kunstgeschichte

Phyllis riding Aristotle were easily recognized, so the audience viewing *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* could just as easily make the connection between the two cunning, highly sexual women and their “mounts.” Moreover, this particular position, which spotlights female dominance, likely reminded contemporary viewers of women’s power in general. Thus, this image could potentially carry with it all the connotations of “Battle for the Pants” and *Weibermacht* images—the didactic, humorous, and sexual meanings. As I discussed in chapter 1, these prints were open for multiple interpretations.

Perhaps two early sixteenth-century German *Phyllis Riding Aristotle* prints contributed to the design of Beham’s *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*. Beham may have been inspired to place a nude Judith on a nude Holofernes after seeing Hans Baldung Grien’s lascivious engraving (fig. 40). Baldung’s Phyllis dons only a head-coving for her ride around the garden; Aristotle is outfitted with a bridle—nothing more. Both Phyllis and Judith have thick torsos and limbs, wield weapons (a whip, a sword) in their right hands, and occupy their left hands with the heads of their “steeds.” Here, there is distance between Phyllis’ hand and Aristotle’s head, but in the Master M.Z.’s version (fig. 38), Phyllis tightly grasps the reigns over the philosopher-pony’s head—much like Judith grabs a handful of Holofernes’s hair. Despite the presence of clothing in the Master M.Z.’s work, the design is undeniably erotic: Phyllis’ bountiful breasts are difficult to miss; the drapery over her lap indicates that the courtesan’s knees are spread apart; and Aristotle eagerly cranes his neck backwards—in what must be an uncomfortable position—to see her. Truthfully, Aristotle’s head appears disconnected from his body—could this have reminded Beham of Judith with the head of Holofernes, a theme he returned to on multiple occasions? If nothing else, this Phyllis’ abundant and flowing curls could have inspired Judith’s untamed locks.

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101 (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2013), 34, includes an image of *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* next to an image of Georg Pencz’s *Phyllis Riding Aristotle*, but the author does not comment on the similarity. He merely states that Judith’s triumph over Holofernes earned her a position in the pictorial tradition alongside Phyllis. Knauer visually implies a connection but does not verbalize one.

Despite these many shared elements, it is important to note that Beham's Judith is *not* sitting on Holofernes back. Instead, she is seated on his upturned chest—a position without any other late medieval or early modern comparanda. So how might one interpret this strange position without obvious iconographical connections? In the next chapter I look beyond the *Weibermacht* tradition in search of Beham's source material. What I find are striking similarities between *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* and images of witches, Venus, and sex positions. The constant in all of the images I explore in this thesis—from the Battle of the Sexes to the sex positions—is the concept of women's power, of female dominance over men. But was that power always disastrously negative?

Not Everyman: The Educated, Affluent, and Visually Literate (Ideal) Male Viewer

Undoubtedly, prints depicting Judith as "an object of sexual delight" appealed to—and aroused—male viewers.[86] But in his *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, Beham provides his audience with a female nude and so much more: he presents them with a clever iconographical challenge. The number of early modern viewers with the level of intellectual sophistication and visual literacy required to decode and fully appreciate Beham's tiny paper-and-ink enigma were "almost certainly very limited."[87] The "common folks" of the "lower strata of society" likely recognized the story of Judith, her connection to the *Weibermacht* tradition, and the eroticism of her position, but I propose that the print has many more layers of meaning that would have surpassed the scope of "Everyman's" perception.[88]

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[86] Barnes, "Heroines and Worthy Women," 33; for more on "Arousal by Image," see David Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 317-344.
[87] Peter Parshall, "Prints as Objects of Consumption in Early Modern Europe," *Journal of Medieval & Early Modern Studies* 28, no. 1 (Winter 1998): 22; Alison G. Stewart, *Before Bruegel: Sebald Beham and the Origins of Peasant Festival Imagery* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2008), 85.
[88] Stephen H. Goddard, "The Origin, Use, and Heritage of the Small Engraving in Renaissance Germany," in *The World in Miniature: Engravings by the German Little Masters, 1500-1550*, 1st ed. (Lawrence: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, 1988), 17; Knauer, *Dürers unfolgsame Erben*, 23.

Before I close this chapter on the three faces of Judith and their audience, it is imperative that I identify and describe the viewing habits of the main consumers of fine miniature prints. It is from their elite perspective that I continue to interpret the meaning of Judith's provocative position in the next chapter. The "well educated, often well-traveled, urban, and at least moderately affluent" merchants and patricians who bought "upscale engravings" were familiar with classical, religious, and contemporary themes from their studies, travels, and engagement with local and foreign prints.[89] These perceptive viewers enjoyed the game of recognizing "quotations" from and references to ancient and contemporary sources. As Stocker points out, early modern Europe had "a culture that delighted in the clever manipulation of iconography to diverse ends, not least sexual."[90] I have no doubt that the members of Barthel Beham's ideal intended audience would have called upon their knowledge of German and Italian prints to decipher this artist's clever design.

Scholars agree that Beham and the other Little Masters—printmakers known for their remarkably small works—produced engravings "for an educated and literate audience upon whom complex allegories and recondite references to Roman history and mythology, and Latin quotations, would not be lost."[91] Many of the Little Masters' most important patrons "came from a burgeoning class of professional men" who were university-educated "in classical languages and history (the humanist curriculum)" and worked as civil servants, doctors, or merchants with international businesses.[92] Jeffrey Chipps Smith explains that during the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries, some

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[89] Jeffrey Chipps Smith, "Kleinmeisters and Kleinplastik: Observations on the Collectible Object in German Renaissance Art," in *The Register of the Spencer Museum of Art*, vol. 6, 6 (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1989), 46; Knauer, *Dürers unfolgsame Erben*, 23.
[90] Stocker, *Judith*, 30.
[91] Goddard, "The Origin, Use, and Heritage," 17; see also: Smith, "Kleinmeisters and Kleinplastik"; Giulia Bartrum, *German Renaissance Prints, 1490-1550* (London: British Museum Press, 1995), 8; Knauer, *Dürers unfolgsame Erben*, 23. In early modern Germany, Goddard notes, "Literacy has been estimated to ten to thirty percent in towns (perhaps five percent on a national scale)." Alison Stewart also cites these percentages in *Before Bruegel*, 85, attributing them to Rolph Engelsing, who suggests that the definition of sixteenth-century literacy be expanded to include listening and looking, not just reading and writing. Here, I am much more interested in collectors' visual literacy than their ability to read or write.
[92] Goddard, "The Origin, Use, and Heritage," 13; Bartrum, *German Renaissance Prints*, 8.

German merchants and scholars worked or were educated in northern Italy; he writes, "They admired and often envied some of their Italian colleagues' learning and knowledge of the ancient world."[93] It is thus understandable that the Germans wished to demonstrate their own sophistication and cultural appreciation by collecting Italian prints and analyzing works of art.

Unfortunately, little documentation survives about print collecting practices and the print market in Germany prior to 1550.[94] But evidence from the late fifteenth century, when prints primarily represented devotional themes, indicates that people pasted religious prints into their prayer books and even some secular texts.[95] It is reasonable to assume that collectors continued this practice into the sixteenth century, and that "the habit of gluing small prints into books…led to the practice of collecting them in albums or folders."[96] While a few print-filled albums survive from the second half of the sixteenth century, it is impossible to know if albums were used decades earlier.[97] What we do know is that the Little Masters' miniature prints were the perfect size for "insert[ing] in letters or interleav[ing] or mount[ing] in even the smallest books without being folded or trimmed."[98] Because of their small size, it is highly unlikely that the Little Masters' prints—excluding their larger friezes—were displayed on walls. Instead, they were probably arranged in books or early albums and stored in drawers or on shelves in collectors' libraries.[99] Unlike continuously displayed paintings or sculptures, prints were only seen on occasion. As Peter Parshall thoughtfully observes, "the experience of looking at a print was bound to be a determined occasion, one requiring a deliberate

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93 Smith, "Kleinmeisters and Kleinplastik," 47.
94 David Landau and Peter W. Parshall, *The Renaissance Print, 1470-1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 354; Parshall, "Prints as Objects," 21; Goddard, "The Origin, Use, and Heritage," 19; Dackerman, *Chaste, Chased & Chastened*, 2.
95 Knauer, *Dürers unfolgsame Erben*, 23.
96 Goddard, "The Origin, Use, and Heritage," 18.
97 Knauer, *Dürers unfolgsame Erben*, 23; for more on the development of albums in late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see: Peter Parshall, "Art and the Theater of Knowledge: The Origins of Print Collecting in Northern Europe," *Harvard University Art Museums Bulletin* 2, no. 3 (April 1, 1994): 7-36.
98 Goddard, "The Origin, Use, and Heritage," 18.
99 Parshall, "Prints as Objects," 20; Bartrum, *German Renaissance Prints*, 8.

pretext."[100] For instance, if a collector wished to enjoy his discretely stored images, he had to deliberately seek them out—a process that surely added a degree of anticipation to the encounter.[101]

Considering the small scale of many prints, the experience of viewing them was necessarily intimate.[102] One simply could not see the fine details of the tiny images—or their nude figures—from very far away. Therefore, for the full effect, viewers had to hold the prints mere inches away from their eyes. From my experience studying *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* at the Art Institute of Chicago, I know that viewing the smaller-than-a-business-card print from two feet away is very different from seeing it five inches from my face. Seen in such close proximity, Judith's nude body dominates both Holofernes and the viewer's field of vision; it is absolutely possible to immerse yourself in a 55 x 37 millimeter print. Whether the owner enjoyed his collection privately or among friends, he almost certainly did so from less than an arm's length away.[103] Held in the palm of a hand or mounted on the page of a book, small prints were perfect for personal use: for enjoying "their beauty or their erotic value," or for exercising one's "wit in inventing interpretations."[104] As Bette Talvacchia notes, it was the "intimate format, reproducibility, relatively low cost, and discreet (if necessary, furtive) storage" of prints that helped "[encourage] the development of a genre of explicit erotic representation."[105]

During the first half of the sixteenth century, prints conveyed increasingly complex messages—and the well-educated, visually literate print collectors whom I have described in this section relished the intellectual challenge they presented.[106] According

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[100] Parshall, "Prints as Objects," 20.
[101] Parshall, "Prints as Objects," 20.
[102] Goddard, "The Origin, Use, and Heritage," 13
[103] Bodo Brinkmann, "Witches' Lust and the Fall of Man," in *Hexenlust und Sündenfall: Die seltsamen Phantasien Des Hans Baldung Grien*, ed. Bodo Brinkmann, 2. Aufl (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 44; Weigert, "Judith et Holopherne," 109.
[104] Barnes, "Heroines and Worthy Women," 29; Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 297.
[105] Bette Talvacchia, *Taking Positions: On the Erotic in Renaissance Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 74.
[106] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 297.

to David Landau and Peter Parshall, "It was a delight for [elite Italian] buyers that prints offered obscure and mysterious subjects, puns, subtle allusions, and quotations from antique sources or contemporary literature." Several scholars grant the Little Masters and their German customers a similar level of intellectual sophistication. Stephen Goddard writes that some of the Little Master's more inventive prints "offer[ed] viewers a cocktail of erudition and wit, with a choice, it seems, of a moral, subversive, or lusty twist."[107] In her article on erotic engravings, Janey Levy demonstrates how the Behams "expected their audience to recognize [Italianate motifs and compositional formulas], and to appreciate the artists' fusion of northern themes with Italian formal elements."[108] Levy goes on to write that the Behams "play[ed] with their subjects, reinterpreting conventional themes and self-consciously 'quoting' familiar images in new contexts."[109] Similarly, Bodo Brinkmann insists that certain German audiences enjoyed ambiguous images for their discursive potential: the less straightforward the meaning, the longer and richer the discussion.[110] In his book Brinkmann addresses Hans Baldung Grien's 1523 painting of two witches rather than one of the Little Masters' prints, but his description of the small, clever work could be applied to *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*: it "triggers certain chains of associations which wrap themselves around a core like the skins of an onion, in layers of various thickness."[111] Select German audiences enjoyed multidimensional prints; Barthel Beham created visual cocktails surrounded by layers of meaning; and as I continue my analysis of *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, I join a long list of experts who agree that sixteenth-century Germans and their works of art demand closer and more careful consideration.

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[107] Goddard, "The Origin, Use, and Heritage," 18.
[108] Janey L. Levy, "The Erotic Engravings of Sebald and Barthel Beham: A German Interpretation of a Renaissance Subject," in *The World in Miniature: Engravings by the German Little Masters, 1500-1550*, 1st ed. (Lawrence: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, 1988), 45.
[109] Levy, "The Erotic Engravings," 49-50.
[110] Brinkmann, "Witches Lust," 44.
[111] Brinkmann, "Witches' Lust," 36.

Conclusion

Judith is a perfect example of the complex and contradictory nature of gender roles and relations in late medieval and early modern Germany. The same beautiful widow could alternately stand for the Virgin Mary, just tyrannicide, and dangerous sexual desire—and all those "faces" of Judith coexisted! Thus, in a very real way, Judith "embody[ed] every woman": the pious widow, the bold heroine, and the alluring seductress.[112] On a daily basis sixteenth-century men encountered living Judiths: dutiful housewives, brave reformers, and clever temptresses. Just as men's perceptions of Judith changed to fit the occasion, so too did their thoughts on the women in their lives. Yet each type of Judith—and, thus, type of woman—possessed a feminine power. Whether that power was good or evil changed depending on the "face" she assumed, but it all boiled down to fluid power dynamics. Since Barthel Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* is a *Weibermacht* image, the power she exerts would generally be perceived as negative. But that is only one way to interpret the dynamics between the fearsome female figure and the headless man beneath her.

In the final chapter of this thesis, I attempt to interpret Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* from the perspective of the ideal male print collectors described in this chapter. How did those well-educated, well-traveled men read Judith's provocative position? Obviously, it is impossible to shed my modern American female bias and analyze the print through the eyes of its male contemporaries. But through careful consideration of male viewers, the complexity of gender dynamics, and the ambiguity of Judith, I propose multiple potential meanings that may enrich both our interpretation of Beham's print and his place in the history of art. Admittedly, much of the next chapter is speculative, but I base my observations on historical facts, the sources available to sixteenth-century artists and print collectors, and an in-depth study of early modern gender and Judith.

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[112] Weigert, "Judith et Holopherne," 87.

~ Chapter 3 ~

The Provocative Position

Very little is known about Barthel Beham, the creator of *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* (fig. 17).[1] Beham, a sixteenth-century German painter and printmaker, was born in Nuremberg in 1502 and died in Italy in 1540.[2] The details of his early life and training before 1525 are uncertain; such information was either never recorded or has been lost.[3] Yet art historians can determine Beham's artistic interests and influences from his surviving works. For example, no written evidence proves that he or his older brother Sebald trained under Albrecht Dürer, but "there can be no doubt that [both brothers] were fully steeped in Dürer's art."[4] The subjects, compositions, and techniques that Beham employed throughout the 1520s exhibit Dürer's strong influence, but it is unclear if he knew Dürer personally or, like countless other artists, he studied the German master's prints.[5] Additionally, from as early as 1524, Beham's designs show the influence of Italian masters, such as Raphael and Marcantonio Raimondi.[6] His classically-inspired and erotic figures most likely derive from Italian prints, which were

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[1] For more on Barthel Beham, see Kurt Löcher's monograph *Barthel Beham: Ein Maler aus dem Dürerkreis*, Kunstwissenschaftliche Studien, Bd. 81 (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 1999); Thomas Ulrich Schauerte and Jürgen Müller, eds., *Die gottlosen Maler von Nürnberg: Konvention und Subversion in der Druckgrafik der Beham-Brüder* (Emsdetten, Germany: Edition Imorde, 2011); and Stephen H. Goddard, ed., *The World in Miniature: Engravings by the German Little Masters, 1500-1550*, 1st ed (Lawrence: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, 1988).

[2] The year of Barthel Beham's birth is confirmed by a 1531 portrait of Beham by Ludwig Neufahrer (d. 1563), which gives his age as 29. Jeffrey Chipps Smith, *Nuremberg, a Renaissance City, 1500-1618*, 1st ed. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), 196.

[3] Alison Stewart, "Sebald Beham: Entrepreneur, Printmaker, Painter," *Journal of Historians of Netherlandish Art* 4, no. 2 (September 2012).

[4] Goddard, *The World in Miniature*, 221; Stephen H. Goddard, "The Origin, Use, and Heritage of the Small Engraving in Renaissance Germany," in *The World in Miniature: Engravings by the German Little Masters, 1500-1550*, 1st ed. (Lawrence: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, 1988), 15.

[5] Alison Stewart, "Beham," *Grove Art Online. Oxford Art Online*. Oxford University Press, accessed March 31, 2013, http://www.oxfordartonline.com.ezproxy.lib.utexas.edu/subscriber/article/grove/art/T007324pg2; Smith, *Nuremberg*, 196.

[6] Stewart, "Beham."

"widely available in engraved form" in the sixteenth century.[7] Undoubtedly, both Beham brothers encountered foreign prints since their compositions depict subjects—such as classical mythology, history, and everyday life—"previously peripheral in German art," but regularly found in Italian designs.[8] Artists and artisans commonly learned their craft by copying masters' works.[9]

The best documented event from Barthel Beham's life occurred in the same year that he produced his provocative image of Judith and Holofernes. On January 16, 1525, the Beham brothers and their colleague Georg Pencz were interrogated by "a committee consisting of Christoph Scheurl, two other city lawyers, and five local preachers."[10] During questioning the young artists "refused to acknowledge the validity of the sacraments of mass and baptism"; they declared that they believed in God, but not in Christ; and they stated that they did not consider the Scriptures holy.[11] Furthermore, "when asked whether they recognized the authority of the Nuremberg city council, they said that they did not."[12] As a result of their blasphemy, heresy, and failure to accept the authority of the city council, all three men were exiled from Nuremberg on January 26.[13]

During their banishment the artists "petitioned frequently" to return to the city, and they were allowed to do so by November 16, 1525.[14] "Whether [the artists'] statements were prompted by youthful intemperance or by strong personal convictions cannot be determined," writes Jeffrey Chipps Smith.[15] Yet, as Alison Stewart points out, the men were certainly "young enough to be caught up in the excitement and turmoil of

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[7] Stewart, "Beham."
[8] Stewart, "Beham."
[9] Alison G. Stewart, *Before Bruegel: Sebald Beham and the Origins of Peasant Festival Imagery* (Aldershot, U.K.: Ashgate, 2008), 18.
[10] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 32
[11] Keith P. F. Moxey, "The Beham Brothers and the Death of the Artist," in *The Register of the Spencer Museum of Art*, vol. 6, 6 (Lawrence: University of Kansas, 1989), 25.
[12] Moxey, "The Beham Brothers," 25.
[13] Giulia Bartrum, *German Renaissance Prints, 1490-1550* (London: British Museum Press, 1995), 99; Smith, *Nuremberg*, 32.
[14] Bartrum, *German Renaissance Prints*, 99; Goddard, *The World in Miniature*, 221.
[15] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 32.

the changing religious and political scene in Reformation Nuremberg."[16] Since Barthel was twenty-three years old and both Sebald and Georg were twenty-five in 1525, it is easy to imagine them being swept away by religious fervor and driven by the bold nonconformity of youth.

In any case, it seems that the Nuremberg city council did not view them as a serious threat. Keith Moxey observes that "temporary expulsion was not the sort of punishment meted out by the council to those whom it perceived as its enemies."[17] Apparently, "in the same year, another pair of artisans who had spoken out against the council and its right to levy taxes was beheaded in the marketplace!"[18] Yet, again in 1526, the Beham brothers—as well as the poet shoemaker Hans Sachs and others—were questioned about their "deviant religious views."[19] Finally, Barthel permanently left Nuremberg in 1527 and spent the rest of his short life as the court painter for the staunchest Catholic princes in Germany: Ludwig X and, later, Wilhelm IV, dukes of Bavaria.[20] It is possible that Barthel's radical beliefs changed over time or that he tempered them—or gave them up entirely—to accommodate his patrons. Alternatively, the artist's personal beliefs may have had little to no impact on his body of work.[21]

Despite the trial's overwhelming presence in Beham scholarship—and this introduction, my final chapter is not about Barthel Beham's legal problems or the accused

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[16] Stewart, "Sebald Beham," 4.
[17] Moxey, "The Beham Brothers," 26.
[18] Moxey, "The Beham Brothers," 26-27.
[19] Goddard, *The World in Miniature*, 221.
[20] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 196.
[21] In *Jörg Breu the Elder: Art, Culture, and Belief in Reformation Augsburg*, Histories of Vision (Aldershot, Hants, U.K.: Ashgate, 2001), 136-209, Andrew Morrall describes both Jorg Breu's well-recorded thoughts on religion and several works he produced during the height of the Reformation. Morrall argues that Breu's artistic production subtly demonstrates his ideology, but what is important here, is the fact that Breu continued to produce woodcuts that were used interchangeably to illustrate Catholic and Protestant texts. Unlike the printers who produced them, "[Breu] attached no personal importance or sentiment to [the content of either sect's treatises]." (152) Thus, it seems to me that Breu was a business-savvy artist who knew that he could not limit his clientele by only catering to customers with his point of view—even though his personal beliefs were strong. This may have been the same for Barthel Beham during that era of divisive religious debates—after all, why produce works for only half the potential costumers?

artists' infamous moniker: "the godless painters." I agree with Stewart that "this episode was indeed crucial, but it was not all defining" for the Beham brothers and Georg Pencz.[22] Too many scholars make the mistake of fixating on isolated events in artists' lives simply because they were documented—sometimes remarkably well, as is the case here.[23] In my opinion, it is unwise to base one's interpretation of an artist's work on which set of records happen to survive the roulette wheel of time. Instead, for me, what the 1525 trial amplifies are the artists' rebellious natures and willingness to push the envelope—characteristics well supported in the visual evidence.

If I clung to the fact that the trial and *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* date to the same year, I could potentially argue that Beham created the work after he returned to Nuremberg, and that Judith represents "the godless painters" triumphing over the tyrannical Nuremberg city council. But, as I argued at length in chapter 2, Beham's 1525 Judith is not a Triumphant Heroine; rather, she is a seductive Femme Fatale who belongs among the *Weibermacht* women. Such an artist-centric, heroic interpretation fails to account for the eroticism of the odd little print. Moreover, interpreting a sixteenth-century print as an expression of the artist's beliefs or feelings is anachronistic. True, due in large part to Dürer's efforts to elevate the status of German artists, printmakers were more regularly recognized as artists rather than artisans. But, however personally satisfying or expressive the finished product, printmaking was first and foremost a professional trade that artists practiced to support themselves and their households. To be clear, I am not suggesting that medieval or early modern artists did not express themselves in their works; I am merely reminding that self-expression was secondary to attracting customers and making a profit in the Reformation era. For example, Beham may have felt some kinship with the persecuted widow in 1525, but his choice to depict Judith nude and atop Holofernes suggests that he had his potential patrons' interests in mind rather than his desire to document his victory over "tyranny."

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[22] Stewart, "Sebald Beham," 2.
[23] Stewart, "Sebald Beham," 2.

My engagement with Barthel Beham's biography is limited to exploring how his historical context—where he lived, who the prominent artists were, which sources were available to him, etc.—impacted his print production. I rely on Beham's artistic output for evidence of his interests and stylistic "teachers." Throughout this chapter, my argument carefully shifts back and forth between intentionality and reception. On one hand, I propose that Beham deliberately included references from German and Italian sources in his *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* to intrigue and entertain his potential patrons. On the other hand, I argue that well-educated, well-traveled patrons were capable of reading clever messages in the works, whether the artist deliberately supplied them or not. Essentially, I attribute great intellectual strength to both Barthel Beham and his ideal audience based on a combination of historical and visual evidence. To a certain extent, I believe, like Moxey, that "instead of identifying the final meaning of a work by establishing the artist's intended meaning, the historian can merely suggest the significance of the work within the broader context of the culture of the period as a whole."[24] However, I do not abandon Beham; instead, I incorporate him as an (obviously) vital element of the print's historical context—along with sixteenth-century gender dynamics, the early modern art market, and artistic exchange north and south of the Alps.

In this final chapter, I consider the pressures Barthel Beham faced as a young artist in sixteenth-century Nuremberg: the changing art market, the overwhelming presence of Dürer, and the imperative to not only engage, but also compete, with Italian artists. The intrepid printmaker responded to those challenges by producing erotic engravings that cleverly combined German elements with Italian figures and themes. In the following pages, I demonstrate how images of witches, Venus, and sex positions may have inspired Beham's depiction of Judith atop Holofernes. Admittedly, it is impossible to prove that Beham "quoted" different types of powerful women in his *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, or that he did so in order to convey a richer message about the power of women. Nevertheless, I am inclined to give Beham credit for seating Judith atop

[24] Moxey, "The Beham Brothers," 28-29.

her enemy like a witch riding a goat; for denuding his heroine and depicting her crouched like Venus; and for (nearly) illustrating the "reverse-cowgirl position" using two figures from biblical Apocrypha. By mischievously juxtaposing references to various examples of powerful women, Beham seems to suggest that the power of women may be painful or pleasurable—either way, men are at the mercy of the fairer sex. Furthermore, in my opinion, the well-educated, affluent patrons, whom Beham wished to entice and amuse, would have recognized his playful use of well-known sources and appreciated his witty visual commentary on the complex dynamics between men and women.

The Sixteenth-Century German Art Market and the Little Masters

During the early modern period, Nuremberg was one of "the leading metropolitan center[s]" in southern Germany.[25] At a time when the typical German town consisted of 500 to 2,000 inhabitants, Nuremberg boasted "40,000-50,000 people within its walls and another 40,000 in its territories."[26] Yet, as Stewart rightly notes, the bustling city was "small by European standards, especially when compared to Paris and North German and Italian cities."[27] Nuremberg owed much of its wealth and prominence to commerce and trade with cities as close as Augsburg and as far away as the Levant.[28]

But the city gained more than affluence from its many business contacts. "Through its international trade," writes Smith, "Nuremberg had access to the latest ideas and innovations throughout the continent."[29] Some of the most influential cultural imports making their way north were Italian prints and ideas, which "arrived in Germany through numerous channels."[30] For example, German merchants brought Italian engravings back from Venice, one of the many cities along Nuremberg's trading routes. Similarly, visiting scholars and teachers, whom Nuremberg welcomed, may have also

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[25] Stewart, *Before Bruegel*, 34.
[26] Stewart, *Before Bruegel*, 34.
[27] Stewart, *Before Bruegel*, 34.
[28] Stewart, *Before Bruegel*, 34.
[29] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 39.
[30] Goddard, *The World in Miniature*, 14.

carried prints with them on their travels.[31] Plus, "young members of the important Nuremberg families had long traveled to Italy or elsewhere for their higher education"; therefore, it is likely that they, too, purchased Italian prints and transported them over the Alps.[32] Of course, cultural and artistic exchange was a two-way street. German merchants and artists who ventured south to Italy undoubtedly brought their own prints, ideas, and culture with them; thus, international trade and travel provided exposure for both Italian and German workmanship well beyond the artists' "local market audience."[33]

The best example of this reciprocal exchange is the career of Albrecht Dürer. The native Nuremberg painter, printmaker, and intellectual spent time training in Italy; then, he brought Italian Renaissance ideas back to Germany where he "combin[ed] Italian concepts of human form, spatial construction, and iconography with the underlying naturalism of German late Gothic art."[34] Dürer went on to sell his prints in Italy and influence Italian masters' works, but his impact on Italian art is outside the scope of my thesis. Here, Dürer's impact on German artists is more important. No records give the exact number of students or journeymen in Dürer's workshop.[35] No written documents indicate that Dürer "had any pupils as engravers."[36] But the Nuremberg master's influence is undeniable: countless sixteenth-century German prints include "figures or entire compositions borrowed from Dürer."[37] Smith notes, "Almost every major painter and printmaker active in Nuremberg between 1500 and 1528 trained with Dürer or worked in his atelier."[38] Even the young German artists who did not train under Dürer's

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[31] Guy Fitch Lytle, "The Renaissance, the Reformation, and the City of Nuremberg," in *Nuremberg, a Renaissance City, 1500-1618*, by Jeffrey Chipps Smith, 1st ed. (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1983), Nuremberg, 19.
[32] Lytle, "The Renaissance, the Reformation, and the City of Nuremberg," 19.
[33] Lytle, "The Renaissance, the Reformation, and the City of Nuremberg," 18.
[34] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 4.
[35] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 48?
[36] E. Maurice Bloch, *The Golden Age of German Printmaking* (Los Angeles: Grunwald Center for the Graphic Arts, UCLA / Dickson Art Center, UCLA, 1983), 18.
[37] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 48; Christine Vogt, *Das druckgraphische Bild nach Vorlagen Albrecht Dürers (1471-1528): zum Phänomen der Graphischen Kopie (Reproduktion) zu Lebzeiten Dürers Nördlich der Alpen*, Aachener Bibliothek, Bd. 6 (Munich: Deutscher Kunstverlag, 2008).
[38] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 46.

watchful eye inevitably copied the master's prints—"which found their way into every studio of engraving"—often line by line.[39] By studying Dürer's works the younger artists learned to appreciate and utilize the "current innovation[s] in northern Italian and Roman art."[40] Fortunately for the next generation of northern artists, Dürer "translated the lessons of Italian art into a pictorial language that northern masters could comprehend."[41] Furthermore, he demonstrated how they might use Italian figures in their works (see, for example, how Dürer employed the *Apollo Belvedere* in his 1504 *Adam and Eve*).[42]

It is easy to detect Dürer's influence in engravings by the Little Masters, a group of early sixteenth-century German artists known for their exceptionally small prints.[43] According to Goddard, the list of men included among the Little Masters "has varied considerably from author to author," but "there is universal agreement that the core group consists of the three Nuremberg artists: Sebald Beham, Barthel Beham, and Georg Pencz."[44] Unfortunately, no documentation confirms that the members of Nuremberg's "unholy triad" actually trained in Dürer's workshop.[45] Nevertheless, even if they never set foot in his shop, the Little Masters lived and worked in Dürer's hometown, so they were undoubtedly exposed to his *oeuvre* no matter where they apprenticed.[46] Moreover, the Little Masters' prints show distinct signs that they copied Dürer's techniques, compositions, and use of Italian figures.

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[39] Bloch, *The Golden Age of German Printmaking*, 18; Smith, *Nuremberg*, 48
[40] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 4.
[41] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 4.
[42] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 45.
[43] Goddard explains that the Little Masters' prints all fall into roughly coherent size groups of about 117 x 75 mm and smaller. Notably, their largest prints—with the exception of their friezes—were about the same size as Dürer's small format prints. One could approximate the four popular Little Master engraving sizes by "continuing to halve Dürer's smallest standard-size print three times." (Goddard, "The Origin, Use, and Heritage," 14).
[44] Goddard, "The Origin, Use and Heritage," 13.
[45] David Landau and Peter W. Parshall, *The Renaissance Print, 1470-1550* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 315; Smith, *Nuremberg*, 46.
[46] Bloch, *The Golden Age of German Printmaking*, 19; Smith, *Nuremberg*, 46.

As Maurice Bloch astutely remarks, “Dürer was obviously a tough act to follow.”[47] No one—not even his students—could compete with the complexity and draftsmanship of Dürer’s prints. Thus, it may have actually been to the benefit of the Little Masters that the demands of the art market shifted in the 1520s when the Reformation “took hold” in Nuremberg.[48] With the city’s official adoption of Lutheranism on March 17, 1525, came “new attitudes about the function and even the morality of religious art.”[49] Many Protestant reformers and theologians insisted that traditional religious works of art, such as altarpieces and devotional statues, were idolatrous.[50] In countless German towns and cities paintings and sculpture were destroyed by iconoclasts.[51] Fortunately, the “iconoclasm was minimal” in Nuremberg where wealthy merchants and patricians had “richly decorated local churches with paintings, sculptures, and liturgical objects during the first quarter of the century.”[52] But the arrival of the Reformation in Nuremberg meant that “the adornment of churches ceased immediately.”[53] And because patrons stopped commissioning religious works, which had been “the major source of revenue for most artists,” the post-Reformation artists faced financial ruin.[54] They could either abandon their trades for “want of traditional patronage,” or they could “[develop] new artistic ideas.”[55] Indomitable and business-savvy artists who quickly embraced secular themes and reworked traditional ones were able to weather the storm.[56]

The Beham brothers were among the artists who successfully forged ahead and produced secular works with “narrative, allegorical, and emblematic subjects of striking

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[47] Bloch, *The Golden Age of German Printmaking*, 18.
[48] Lytle, “The Renaissance, the Reformation, and the City of Nuremberg,” 19.
[49] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 30, 4.
[50] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 4.
[51] Bartrum, *German Renaissance Prints*, 12.
[52] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 30, 4.
[53] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 33.
[54] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 30.
[55] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 36.
[56] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 4.

originality."[57] What was "catastrophic for many painters and sculptors" actually freed the Behams from directly competing with Dürer.[58] For instance, Dürer, who represented an earlier generation immersed in humanism and religious fervor, produced more conservative and primarily religious prints, whereas the Beham brothers created secularized images—"with sometimes renegade independence"—in order to appeal to art collectors with evolving tastes.[59] Essentially, Sebald and Barthel had to entice art patrons who usually spent their money on religious works to redirect their capital toward procuring new visual experiences on paper. To do this the brothers expanded their oeuvres to include images of Old Testament stories, everyday life, and lewd or erotic subjects.[60] But it is important to remember that the Behams' prints were not designed for any one patron—they were not discussed and commissioned like the religious works had been. Instead, the Nuremberg artists experimented with themes that they hoped small, select groups of patrons would find intriguing enough to collect and larger, broader audiences would find amusing enough to hang on their walls.[61] Fortunately, prints were not very expensive to make or purchase, so the Behams could afford to create risky, envelope-pushing designs that may not have resonated with every customer.[62] But overall, the Behams provided their audiences with unique and clever images that were appealing both for their suggestive and comic themes, as well as their reduced scale.

Since Sebald and Barthel's early prints share similar artistic approaches, styles, and themes, it is possible that the brothers worked together—perhaps in Sebald's workshop—before Barthel left the city in 1527.[63] But however similar their engravings were, and however closely they worked with Dürer or each other, "Barthel Beham was

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[57] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 316.
[58] Bartrum, *German Renaissance Prints*, 12.
[59] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 316.
[60] To be clear, the Behams and their contemporaries continued to produce religious works, but they responded to the demands of the new art market by designing works beyond the scope of traditional religious themes.
[61] Stewart, "Sebald Beham," 7.
[62] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 350.
[63] Stewart, "Sebald Beham," 3. Records indicate that Sebald Beham was a journeyman in 1521 and a master painter with his own shop in Nuremberg by 1525.

undoubtedly the most inspired of [the Little Masters]."[64] Like Landau and Parshall, I find that Barthel's prints are often "charged with coy wit and a clever sense of parody."[65] Despite the dearth of biographical information available on the younger Beham, his surviving body of work speaks to his inventiveness, which Landau and Parshall describe as "brilliant and idiosyncratic.[66] Even Barthel's earliest dated engravings from 1520—created when the artist was only eighteen years old—"demonstrate remarkable technical virtuosity and an interest in complex figural poses that often demand an ability to render foreshortened limbs convincingly."[67]

Yet Alison Stewart and other scholars tend to champion Sebald over Barthel. Perhaps they prefer the elder Beham, in part, because more of his works are monogrammed and more information is available about his life. Alternatively, scholars who wish to study scenes of everyday life and peasants might naturally favor Sebald, whereas someone like me, who analyzes erotic imagery, instinctively prefers Barthel. Here, it is important to note that many of the most inventive and erotic prints attributed to Sebald are actually copies he made after his brother's plates.[68] The elder Beham likely inherited his brother's stock of copper plates in 1540, the year Barthel died in Italy.[69] Sebald went on to rework several of the plates and to monogram many of those modified versions.[70] Still, both Beham brothers "responded boldly to the dual challenges of the Reformation and the High Renaissance," and they succeeded in an environment where other artists could not.[71] In fact, in 1547, Johann Neudorfer wrote that the Behams and

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[64] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 316.
[65] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 316; for more on Beham's wit, see Schauerte and Müller, *Die gottlosen Maler von Nürnberg*.
[66] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 316.
[67] Goddard, *The World in Miniature*, 221.
[68] Bartrum, *German Renaissance Prints*, 100. From my study of the Beham brothers and their erotic prints, it is quite apparent to me that Barthel was largely—if not solely—responsible for the most erotic Beham-brother prints. A longer and more detailed study is required to prove my hypothesis.
[69] Goddard, *The World in Miniature*, 223. After years of studying and imitating Italian works, Barthel Beham traveled to Italy around 1536 on a trip paid for by his Catholic patrons. He died there in 1540.
[70] Goddard, *The World in Miniature*, 223; Smith, *Nuremberg*, 176; Stewart, "Beham."
[71] Smith, *Nuremberg*, 4.

their colleague Georg Pencz were famous artists, and that "their entire print oeuvres, as well as individual prints, were available in good supply."[72]

In this section I have briefly introduced the sixteenth-century Nuremberg art market and the artistic sources that were available there in the 1520s. It is crucial to realize how many different external forces may have influenced Barthel Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*—whether the artist consciously realized their impact or not. For example, the boom in international trade brought Italian prints north and German prints south; Albrecht Dürer's body of work molded the minds and oeuvres of artists near and far; and the Reformation cut commissions for religious art, forcing artists to adapt or "die out." Because other scholars have marveled at Barthel Beham's brilliant, tiny works, it should not be difficult to imagine that he could have integrated lessons from Italian and German prints into his engravings in effort to secure more patronage—and to prove himself against those exemplars. In the remainder of this chapter, I present evidence from Beham's body of work that suggests he deliberately responded to both German and Italian designs in effort to compete in the international art market. His resulting print of Judith and Holofernes provides food for thought on the dynamics between men and women—as well as the demands of the men who enjoyed viewing women.

Judith the Witch

As demonstrated in chapter 2, Barthel Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* does not conform to traditional Judith iconography. Instead, Beham's Judith is nude, and she sits atop the nude torso of her slain enemy. In this instance Judith is neither a personified virtue nor an emblem of heroism; rather, she is a Femme Fatale with strong textual and visual connections to the *Weibermacht topos*. The only other *Weibermacht* character positioned on top of a man is Phyllis, the clever courtesan who rode on Aristotle's back. Clearly, the power of women is an important theme in Beham's

[72] Bartrum, *German Renaissance Prints*, 100; Stewart, "Sebald Beham," 10; Goddard, "The Origin, Use, and Heritage," 15.

1525 engraving. But it is my contention that ideal sixteenth-century male viewers (see chapter 2) would look beyond the obvious *Weibermacht* connections and consider additional visual sources for Judith's provocative position. They, too, would have recognized that Judith's intimate placement on Holofernes's chest is problematic and unique—a sign that the artist wanted them to engage more closely with the unusual image. But which depictions of seated female nudes did both Beham and his potential customers know? As it turns out, very few prints prior to 1525 show seated female nudes in a manner similar to Beham's Judith—but it is very likely that the ones that do circulated in Nuremberg. What is more impressive is how each "quoted" source enriches the message of Beham's engraving. The clever references enhance the intellectual viewing experience of those who recognize them, yet Judith's narrative and nudity are displayed simply enough for any viewer to enjoy.

The more discerning eye might recognize elements of *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* as references to Dürer's *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat* (fig. 56). In truth, Dürer's *Witch* is one of the closest iconographical matches I found—beyond Baldung's *Phyllis Riding Aristotle* (fig. 40)—for Beham's Judith. Despite the obvious age difference (Dürer's witch is old, and Beham's Judith is young), the two nude female figures share strikingly similar poses: Judith sits on Holofernes like the witch sits on her male goat. Both women also have prominently displayed left thighs, and their torsos are turned to showcase their breasts and stomach. Furthermore, Judith grips Holofernes's head by his hair much like the witch grabs the he-goat's head by its horn. Although the witch's arm is further extended, it is noticeable that both of the female figures' left arms are bent at the elbow. Each woman also holds a phallic tool: the witch clutches her distaff, which protrudes from between her legs like a penis, and Judith grasps Holofernes's sword, which may symbolize Holofernes's lost—or, as I suggest below, exhausted—manhood.

Since Dürer's evil figure found her way into prints by both German and Italian masters, it is safe to say that *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat* circulated widely and

that the witch theme was fairly popular. For example, Hans Baldung Grien, one of Dürer's documented students, references his master's goat-riding witch in *The Witches' Sabbath* (fig. 57). Here, Baldung replaces the old hag with a beautiful, young witch whose curls whip behind her in the wind. It is entirely possible that Beham knew Baldung's print in addition to Dürer's—though, in my opinion, Beham had Dürer's witch in mind when he posed Judith's left arm. South of the Alps, Marcantonio Raimondi, the famed Italian printmaker, borrowed Dürer's seated witch for his *The Witches' Procession* (*Lo Stregozzo*, fig. 58).[73] Marcantonio's witch sits on a skeletal carriage conveyed by strapping young Michelangelesque men. Like Dürer, Marcantonio includes goats in his composition—evidence that certain witch iconography was becoming more standardized. I mention *The Witches' Procession* to demonstrate the international popularity of Dürer, as discussed above, but also to support my claim that Beham had access to *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat*. Since a copy of the print made its way down to Italy and the workshop of Marcantonio, it stands to reason that Beham probably saw it in Nuremberg.

So if Beham intended for his elite viewers to recognize Judith as an iconographical descendant of Dürer's witch, what was he saying about her? What did it mean to be a witch in the 1520s in Germany? In the early sixteenth century, witches were prevalent in popular literature: poetry, plays, pamphlets, and broadsides—many of which were illustrated.[74] One of the most widely available anti-witch guides was the *Malleus Maleficarium* (Hammer of Witches), which two Dominican inquisitors published in 1486.[75] Between 1487 and 1520, presses in Germany, Italy, and France printed thirteen Latin editions of the *Malleus*—a sure sign that contemporary audiences were interested in

[73] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 348.
[74] Jane P Davidson, *The Witch in Northern European Art, 1470-1750* (Freren, Germany: Luca Verlag, 1987), 31; Charles Zika, *The Appearance of Witchcraft: Print and Visual Culture in Sixteenth-Century Europe* (London: Routledge, 2007).
[75] Laura Weigert, "Autonomy as Deviance: Sixteenth-Century Images of Witches and Prostitutes," in *Solitary Sex: A Cultural History of Masturbation*, ed. Paula Bennett and Vernon A. Rosario II (New York : Cambridge, MA: Zone Books / MIT Press, 2003), 40.

learning more about witches and their craft.[76] But Jane Davidson suggests that witch literature was popular "due to the viewers' morbid fascination and not just to fear"—audiences found the "sensational" pamphlets irresistible.[77] Notably, it was not until the second half of the sixteenth century, about 1560, that widespread fear of witches and the corresponding witch-hunt craze took hold in Germany. And even when the trials began, "Nuremberg, like many German economic and cultural centers, was quite temperate in its persecution of witches."[78]

In truth, early sixteenth-century depictions of witches, such as Dürer's *Witch Riding Backward on a Goat*, and the corresponding witch lore had little to do with the later, bloodier developments. Linda Hults explains:

> From Dürer and Baldung's early sixteenth-century images of witches…we learn that witches are indeed women at the symbolic level. *We find no simple and necessary correspondence between the images and the chronological peaks of the European witch-hunts*; instead, their visual rhetoric…is more far-reaching. *It emerges from the ideals, fantasies, anxieties, and competitive demands of early modern models of masculinity*—in particular, that of the visual arts.[79]

Male artists designed images of witches, which were often based on texts written by men, for male audiences. It is unsurprising that men in patriarchal German cities (see chapter 1) delighted in misogynistic witch mythology and capitalized on yet another opportunity to depict and view the female nude. Furthermore, writes Hults, "Images of witchcraft helped male artists enhance their status by proving their imaginative intellectual prowess to peers or superiors."[80] Undoubtedly, Dürer's engravings—including those about witches—target "an elite male audience," and Baldung's "often erotic drawings of witches…were intended for a small group of male friends."[81] Although records do not

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[76] Linda C. Hults' *The Witch as Muse: Art, Gender, and Power in Early Modern Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, 2005), 60.
[77] Davidson, *The Witch in Northern European Art*, 31.
[78] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 66.
[79] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 107 (my italics).
[80] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 24.
[81] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 24.

say who owned which witch prints and drawings, we do know that both Dürer's Nuremberg patrons and Baldung's Strasbourg patrons were "respected humanists and members of the noble and imperial courts."[82] Thus, the coterie of male viewers that sixteenth-century artists wished to "shock, confound, and amuse" with their witch imagery was likely "the political and religious leadership of southern German society."[83] Creative depictions of witches provided "fodder for learned discussion" while also "resonating with their audience through scatology, misogynistic humor, eroticism, and above all their reinforcement of various masculine identities."[84] Whether they found the witch images amusing or abhorrent—or a combination of both, the type of men viewing Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* knew the iconography, as well as the connotations, associated with the deviant female figures.

Essentially, witches were women—women with unbridled lust who had intercourse with the devil and caused various social ills, including, but not limited to, impotence, bad weather, sickness, and death.[85] Women were categorically understood to be the "weaker sex"; thus, they were deemed "more easily seduced by the devil"—just as Eve had been seduced by the serpent.[86] By the beginning of the fifteenth century, people generally thought that a witch's power came from a pact she had made with the devil, which she then "sealed with illicit sexual relations."[87] According to the misogynistic lore promoted in the *Malleus Maleficarium*, Part I, Question 6: "All witchcraft comes from carnal lust which is in women insatiable."[88] It was thus their overwhelming sexual urges that drove unsatisfied women straight into the devil's arms. Here it is important to remember that early modern men feared that they could not satisfy women's hunger for

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[82] Weigert, "Autonomy as Deviance," 41.
[83] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 46; Weigert, "Autonomy as Deviance," 41.
[84] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 42, 93.
[85] Some men were tried as witches later in the century, but I cannot think of a single early sixteenth-century image of a male witch.
[86] Heide Wunder, *"He Is the Sun, She Is the Moon": Women in Early Modern Germany* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 148.
[87] Wunder, *"He Is the Sun, She Is the Moon"*, 148.
[88] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 69.

seminal fluid and that their wives would turn them into cuckolds by seeking fulfillment elsewhere. Thus, the extreme female deviance that led to witchcraft was inherent in women but also partially a response to men failing to perform their proper gender roles within the household and/or community. Broadly speaking, if men could not control their women (whether mother, wife, or other relative), then “the devil [would] usurp [their] authority.”[89]

Truthfully, witch mythology and imagery is just another variation on a familiar theme: the complexity of sixteenth-century gender roles and dynamics—a subject perpetually linked with sex and sexuality. Like texts and images on the “Battle of the Sexes” and the *Weibermacht*, descriptions and representations of witches express male anxiety about female sexuality and power—while (potentially) amusing or arousing male viewers. For example, in his *The Witches’ Sabbath* (fig. 57), Baldung drapes limp sausages over a pitchfork on the left side of the image; the droopy meat almost certainly alludes to penises—possibly penises that the witches “conjured away.”[90] According to contemporary treatises and popular sermons on witchcraft, “witches were a primary source of impotence.”[91] They were thought to “focus their vehement hatred of society on procreation,” wreaking havoc on conception, pregnancies, births, lactation, and the health of children and mothers.[92] Since the early sixteenth century was a time when “procreation was declared necessary for the maintenance of social order,” a man’s failure to perform was not only humiliating, but considered bad for the community.[93] Interestingly, Lyndal Roper notes, “Impotence was the bodily ill for which men most often appear to have sought magical assistance, and which they feared women had brought about.”[94]

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[89] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 69.
[90] Davidson, *The Witch in Northern European Art*, 24; Bodo Brinkmann, “Witches’ Lust and the Fall of Man,” in *Hexenlust und Sündenfall: Die seltsamen Phantasien des Hans Baldung Grien*, ed. Bodo Brinkmann, 2. Aufl (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2007), 56.
[91] Weigert, “Autonomy as Deviance,” 36; Lyndal Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil: Witchcraft, Sexuality, and Religion in Early Modern Europe* (London ; New York: Routledge, 1994), 188.
[92] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 22-23.
[93] Weigert, “Autonomy as Deviance,” 36.
[94] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 188.

Of course, men's inability to function sexually probably had more to do with their excessive drinking habits and less to do with the power of women. It is my belief that clever intellectuals—and probably a fair number of less educated men—would find Baldung's lifeless pseudo-appendages humorous rather than frightening. Again, this is an example of men (hypothetically) mocking other men's failure to perform their masculinity. Alternatively, they might attribute the flaccidity of the sausages to the repulsive actions of the witches or to the hideous appearance of the old crone in the center of the print. After all, there are certainly non-magical ways to "steal manhood" or temporarily "castrate" a man.

But witches did not always steal penises; sometimes (at least in images) they stole pants. For example, in another of Baldung's witch prints, which illustrates Johann Geiler von Kayserberg's sermon against witches, a group of three witches has taken a man's trousers (fig. 59). The nearly nude man climbs the tree on the left and unsuccessfully reaches for his breeches, which fly like a flag on the end of one witch's pitchfork. Symbolically, the absence of a penis or a pair of pants is similar: the man has been stripped of his power, authority, and sexual potency.[95] This is an important example of the kind of overlap that is possible between two different types of Power of Women images: "Battle for the Pants" and witches. The witches are literally powerful women, supplied with supernatural abilities by the devil, yet Baldung involves his witches in a "Battle for the Pants"—normally a domestic dispute between spouses. If Baldung's witches could be embroiled in a battle for the pants, then it seems to me that Beham's Judith, represented as a *Weibermacht* figure, could be positioned like a witch. What I propose is a degree of fluidity between the various types of powerful women images. Since the power of women was such a popular theme (e.g. *Weibermacht*, "Battle of the Sexes," witches, etc.), and the message was basically the same in each subcategory ("beware the power of women"), then it is logical that some amount of exchange was possible. Furthermore, the type of elite male patrons collecting Power of Women images

[95] Weigert, "Autonomy as Deviance," 22.

may have enjoyed piecing together and interpreting the complex networks of references—especially since so many of them were sexually charged and humorously misogynistic.

Notably, much of witch lore (and, thus, imagery) is unmistakably sexual: witches fly on phallic brooms or pitchforks, sleep with the devil, and dance naked with sexual abandonment at the witches' sabbaths.[96] For instance, in Dürer's *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat*, the ugly old hag specifically rides a goat, "a symbol of lust and the animal form most often taken by the devil," her alleged consort.[97] She also grasps the he-goat's horn, which was "often a sign of the fool or the cuckolded husband."[98] Even her backwards positions carries deviant and sexual connotations: riding backwards "signified ostracism and derision (as, for example, of the cuckolded husband or unruly woman)."[99] Furthermore, four winged putti appear below the witch; they may signify "the lusty tendencies of witches in general."[100]

By echoing the loaded imagery from Dürer's *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat*, I propose Beham wanted his audience to think about Judith in the same suggestive terms—without forgetting her connection to Phyllis or her own apocryphal narrative. Admittedly, this is a multilayered exercise that requires a rich visual literacy, but I believe, like Brinkmann, that Beham's ideal audience enjoyed complex images that "trigger[ed] chains of associations."[101] It is my contention that *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* is exactly the kind of image that they looked forward to decoding. For example, a first level of meaning might come directly from the Book of Judith: Holofernes lusted after the beautiful widow—perhaps one could say he was as lusty as a goat. With her beauty and cunning words, she cast a spell over the Assyrian general. Next, the viewer might associate Judith's seated position with that of Phyllis riding

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[96] Roper, *Oedipus and the Devil*, 202.
[97] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 74.
[98] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 74.
[99] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 74.
[100] Davidson, *The Witch in Northern European Art*, 18.
[101] Brinkmann, "Witches' Lust," 44.

Aristotle—a comparison that is both visually and thematically similar. Like Aristotle, Beham's dead general is, in a way, being ridden like a horse. And it just so happens that horses were "symbols of the passions (especially lust) that human beings attempt to rein in."[102] Since Judith rides her horse-man backwards, like the witch rides her randy billy goat, she also symbolizes the unruly woman—a woman who dominates men. The overlapping of meanings from all levels of interpretation strengthens the overall effect of the image: *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* is a highly sexual print that focuses on women's power over men. By visually implying that Judith is witch-like, both her sexuality and power are heightened—and cast in a supernatural, negative light. It is thus unsurprising that Beham would combine his *Weibermacht* Judith—a powerful women who used her beauty and cunning to overthrow a man—with witches—powerful, hypersexual women who spurned patriarchal authority.

Actually, Beham's Judith is like a witch in many ways. The more a well-educated, visually literate viewer contemplates Judith as she relates to early sixteenth-century witch lore and iconography, the stronger the connection between the beautiful widow and the heretical hags becomes. Take, for instance, the fact that witches were believed to cause impotency, robbing men of their masculine authority and, in some cases, their penises. After charming Holofernes with her lovely appearance and wise words, Judith stole his sword—a well-recognized phallic symbol of masculinity, and she cut his head off. While Judith did not remove her enemy's genitalia, it would be easy to associate Holofernes's beheading with castration and, thus, impotency.

Importantly, Judith employed both well-crafted phrases and her alluring beauty to cast a devastating spell over Holofernes. In the early sixteenth-century, Johann Geiler von Kayserberg, the humanist and Dominican preacher of Strasbourg Cathedral, insisted that women were ten times more likely to be witches than men due to their "instability of spirit, because they are understood better by demons, and *because of their*

[102] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 102.

talkativeness."[103] Geiler went on to explain how women "have slippery tongues, and are unable to conceal from their fellow-women those things which by evil arts they know."[104] It is certainly no coincidence that an early modern man would point to women's speech as one of the chief reasons for the spread of witchcraft. Recall, for instance, how St. Jerome's writings warned against the disruptiveness of women's speech, and how early modern women were taught to be "chaste, *silent*, and obedient." Moreover, as Diane Wolfthal writes, sixteenth-century men were very concerned with the gossip of women and the negative effects of women's speech—especially among other women.[105] It is an obvious misogynistic jab against women to blame the spread of witchcraft on "the female tongue pass[ing] along evil knowledge."[106]

Here, I draw attention to the dangerous speech and untrustworthy tongues of women—especially as they relate to witchcraft, due to an easily-overlooked detail in Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*. Below Judith's frowning mouth, Beham includes an oddly placed curl of hair (fig. 60). As I mentioned above, the two small lines come together in a manner that resembles a serpent's long, flexible tongue. As a woman Judith, too, possessed a "slippery" tongue that men (rightly) feared. Perhaps by giving Judith a pseudo-tongue Beham subtly reminds his viewers that the widow's words helped her topple Holofernes. Additionally, Beham may have had witch lore in mind when he drew the wisp of hair at Judith's chin. Combined with her dark gaze and downturned mouth, Judith's countenance is foreboding and frightening, like a witch. Yet, on another level, Beham may be alluding to the first narrative in many *Weibermacht* series: The Fall. Before Eve convinced Adam to eat the forbidden fruit, the serpent persuaded Eve to taste it. Quite often in late medieval art, the serpent has a female head (fig. 61)—sometimes it was identical to Eve's. Obviously depicting the serpent with a

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[103] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 84-85 (my italics).
[104] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 69.
[105] Diane Wolfthal, "Women's Community and Male Spies: Erhard Schön's *How Seven Women Complain about Their Worthless Husbands*," in *Attending to Early Modern Women*, ed. Susan Dwyer Amussen and Adele F. Seeff, Center for Renaissance and Baroque Studies (Newark, NJ: Associated University Presses, 1998), 117–54.
[106] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 69.

woman's head is typical medieval misogyny, but it also visually connects Eve—and all her daughters, all womankind—to the serpent and to false speech. Thus, all women—including Judith—have the capacity for deceptive and dangerous speech. Since Judith is positioned like a witch in this engraving, the serpentine tongue may reference demonic incantations or the evil gossip that purportedly spread witchcraft.

Typically, witches are shown practicing their blasphemous craft outdoors (figs. 56-59). Whether they are riding goats backwards or circling around a cauldron, the often-nude witches inhabit spaces beyond proper society and culture.[107] The wild women embrace nature, shedding their clothes and sitting directly on the ground in the forest. Perhaps the witches are depicted at home in the untamed, natural world because they were believed capable of manipulating the weather and the crops—generally causing terrible storms that resulted in poor harvests and famine. Whatever inspired the artists to place their witches in an outdoor setting, it seems Beham followed suit by situating Judith on the ground near a grassy hill. For Judith's narrative, it would be logical to show the Assyrian camp or Holofernes's tent and bed in the background; instead, Beham places his completely nude figures in an outdoor setting.

Regardless of the wicked words they used or the settings they inhabited, early sixteenth-century witches were often armed with beautiful, voluptuous bodies that cast their own spells over male viewers. But the witches' beauty was deceptive; inside they had rotten souls that the devil owned. Likewise, Judith used her beauty as a disguise for her murderous intent; she relied on her captivating appearance to deceive Holofernes and leave him vulnerable to attack. Many early modern men could relate to the overwhelming appeal of beautiful women, as well as the "helplessness" they felt when exposed to the

[107] Ancient Greek women left the confines of the city each year to perform fertility rites. According to Ancient Greek ideology, women were inherently closer to Nature, and men were inherently closer to Culture/Society. I wonder if the same ideology applies to witch lore—if, like the Maenads who went wild for Dionysus in the forest, witches were women who lost themselves to the devil in the forest. This deserves further exploration.

"magic of the female body."[108] Because women's bodies threatened to bewitch the minds and bodies of men, all women were "potential sorceresses."[109] But however "dangerous" the female form, men continued eagerly collecting images of female nudes, including witch prints. In fact, it was one of Dürer's witch engravings that "established early on the trend of using witches as vehicles for erotic representations."[110] The Nuremberg master's *Four Witches* (fig. 62) showcases various angles of the female body, nearly offering its audience a 360º view of the female nude in a single print. Of course, any real danger of looking at the female form was absent from prints of fictional nude women; the printed witch could not cast a spell or turn her evil on the voyeuristic print collector. Thus, the engraved nudes were pleasing pictures for male viewers that posed no real threat to their masculinity.

Barthel Beham capitalized on the art market's demand for images of nude women. He produced print after print featuring erotic representations of the female nude, including an engraving after Dürer's *Four Witches*. In his *Three Women and Death* from about 1525-1527 (fig. 63), Beham copied Dürer's composition of four women in a circle, but he altered the figures. Instead of four young beauties, Beham replaced one woman with a skeletal representation of Death; he transformed the other three female nudes into representations of the three ages of women: the youngest on the right and the oldest on the left. Beham's *Three Women and Death* is evidence that the younger Nuremberg artist had access to Dürer's prints, studied them, and copied elements from the master's originals into his compositions. *Three Women and Death* is not an exact copy after *Four Witches*, but it is similar enough that contemporary viewers may have recognized its source and considered the added layers of meaning such a relationship brought (i.e. the connection between women of all ages and witches, etc.). It is my belief that the design of *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* may be similar enough to Dürer's *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat* that a well-educated, visually literate audience may have

[108] Wunder, *"He Is the Sun, She Is the Moon"*, 151.
[109] Wunder, *"He Is the Sun, She Is the Moon"*, 151.
[110] Davidson, *The Witch in Northern European Art*, 18.

recognized Beham's borrowing from Dürer. And if those perceptive viewers recognized the reference, then they could associate Beham's Judith with the dreaded power of women embodied by witches.

Judith as Venus

Of course, Barthel Beham did not just study Albrecht Dürer's works, and witches were not the only seated female nudes he encountered before 1525. It is important to remember that Beham had access to prints from Italy. In fact, according to Jürgen Müller and Kerstin Küster, the Beham brothers belonged to the first generation of Northern European artists who had access to the "achievements of antiquity and the Italian High Renaissance…in more printed examples than just the ancient coins."[111] In addition to Dürer's Italian-inspired designs, the Little Masters had "the engravings of their Italian contemporary, Marcantonio Raimondi, as a basis for learning about the Italian Renaissance."[112] As a matter of fact, Marcantonio's prints were a sort of "textbook on Raphael, Michelangelo and the antique" for Barthel Beham, Master I.B., and Georg Pencz.[113] But the Little Masters "tended to appropriate isolated figures or general themes rather than whole compositions or technical traits" from the Italians.[114] For example, Beham borrowed a seated female nude from *The Judgment of Paris*, a print with over twenty figures designed by Raphael and executed by Marcantonio (figs. 64-65). The Nuremberg printmaker transformed a water nymph, who sits to the right of the three standing goddesses, into *A Nude Woman Seated on a Cuirass* (fig. 66). The spine of Beham's nude is straighter, but she rests her elbow near her knee and turns her head to

[111] Jürgen Müller and Kerstin Küster, "Der Prediger als Pornograf? Konvention und Subversion in der Bildpoetik Sebald und Barthel Behams," in *Dürers unfolgsame Erben: Bildstrategien in den Kupferstichend der Deutschen Kleinmeister*, ed. Martin Knauer, Studien zur Internationalen Architektur- und Kunstgeschichte 101 (Petersberg: Michael Imhof, 2013), 28.
[112] Patricia A. Emison, "The Little Masters, Italy, and Rome," in *The World in Miniature: Engravings by the German Little Masters, 1500-1550*, 1st ed. (Lawrence: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, 1988), 30.
[113] Emison, "The Little Masters, Italy, and Rome," 33.
[114] Emison, "The Little Masters, Italy, and Rome," 33.

look at the viewer just as the water nymph does. This is only one strong—and especially relevant—example of Beham working from Marcantonio's designs.

Although it may seem strange today, artistic imitation (*imitatio artis*) was encouraged in the sixteenth century.[115] Artists, such as the Beham brothers, strove to integrate elements from well-known works into their compositions in a way that did not "immediately jump off the page and catch the eye."[116] As Müller and Küster explain, "the ability to keep the references to other works disguised show[ed] the craftsmanship of the artist or graphic designer."[117] Well-executed *imitatio artis* maintained a constant balance between "showing and hiding," and it assumed "a certain audience"—an audience of visually literate connoisseurs capable of recognizing the quoted elements.[118] But the *imitatio artis* method "systematically favored the same art and artists over and over again": the Italian masters.[119] So, "for the Behams," write Müller and Küster, "Italian art was always both a model and the competition."[120] On one hand, the brothers participated in *imitatio artis*, using Raphael or Marcantonio's figures in their prints. On the other hand, the rebellious Nuremberg printmakers brought their own "decidedly anti-classical" spin to their creations and used their "depravity-filled minds" to produce works that "pok[ed] fun at authority" and the classical canon.[121] Müller and Küster suggest that the Behams used Italian sources in an unorthodox manner because the brothers associated the southern masters with "the Popes and the cultural leadership of the Catholic Church."[122] Janey Levy argues that the Behams chose to imitate their German predecessors and contemporaries rather than Italian sources in their erotic prints as a reflection of "the

[115] For more on the Behams' artistic imitation, see Müller and Küster, "Der Prediger als Pornograf?"; and Janey L. Levy, "The Erotic Engravings of Sebald and Barthel Beham: A German Interpretation of a Renaissance Subject," in *The World in Miniature: Engravings by the German Little Masters, 1500-1550*, 1st ed. (Lawrence: Spencer Museum of Art, University of Kansas, 1988), 40–53.
[116] Müller and Küster, "Der Prediger als Pornograf?" 29; my translations from the modern German.
[117] Müller and Küster, "Der Prediger als Pornograf?" 29.
[118] Müller and Küster, "Der Prediger als Pornograf?" 29.
[119] Müller and Küster, "Der Prediger als Pornograf?" 29.
[120] Müller and Küster, "Der Prediger als Pornograf?" 29.
[121] Müller and Küster, "Der Prediger als Pornograf?" 30, 25.
[122] Müller and Küster, "Der Prediger als Pornograf?" 30.

nationalist sentiment that ran through the German Renaissance."[123] While it is impossible to determine what Barthel Beham was thinking when he borrowed from either Italian or German sources, what is clear is that artistic imitation was a common, international practice that targeted the type of well-educated, visually literate male viewers who would have bought and interpreted *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*.

Audiences who were familiar with prints depicting ancient sculpture may have perceived the position of Beham's Judith as a reference to the *Crouching Venus* (fig. 67).[124] Like the pagan goddess of love and lust, Judith is nude; she turns her neck to look over her shoulder; and her prominent thigh is parallel to the ground, which is only a short distance away from her bare bottom. Although most sixteenth-century Germans never set eyes on a sculpted crouching Venus, it is quite possible that northern print collectors and artists either owned or encountered images of the nude deity. They may have acquired Marcantonio's engraving of the *Crouching Venus* (fig. 68), which depicts Venus accompanied by Cupid. The Italian printmaker's goddess is outdoors; she leans against a short pillar and rests her weight on her right foot. Alternatively, German print collectors and artists may have studied Albrecht Altdorfer's copy after Marcantonio's *Crouching Venus* (fig. 69). According to Janey Levy, it was Altdorfer's print that introduced "images of Venus after her bath...into northern art" in the early 1520s.[125] In the German master's version, the goddess appears in reverse: her left thigh is in the foreground and her head turns to face the right edge of the print. With both Marcantonio's original and Altdorfer's copy circulating in Germany, it is very likely that Beham and his ideal audience were familiar with the crouching Venus figure.

Whether he worked directly from Marcantonio's design or Altdorfer's copy, I am convinced that Beham imitated the *Crouching Venus*' body and head position in his

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[123] Levy, "The Erotic Engravings," 51.
[124] It appears that I am not the first art historian to recognize Venus in the Behams' images of female nudes. Janey Levy suggests that the Beham brothers' depictions of solitary bathing women may "[recall] Italian depictions of Venus after her bath." See "The Erotic Engravings," 47.
[125] Levy, "The Erotic Engravings," 47.

Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes. Consider what Altdorfer's Venus would look like if she extended her left arm toward the artists' monogram: her shoulder would fall back, her torso would twist, and her breasts would be visible—especially if she used her right hand to hold a sword. Furthermore, with her left arm and shoulder repositioned, Venus could turn her head more sharply to the left—as Judith does in Beham's print. It seems to me that Beham combined the body and head positions of *Crouching Venus* with the extended arms and seated pose of Dürer's *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat*.

I wonder if Beham's juxtaposition of witch and goddess originated from his study of Dürer's *Four Witches* (fig. 62). If a demon was not peering through the doorway in the background, it would be easy to identify Dürer's four nude women as "something other than witches."[126] For Hults, they may be figures from classical mythology: Venus and the Three Graces. Hults notes that the central figure "wears a wreath of myrtle, a plant associated with Venus."[127] Furthermore, the wreath-wearing nude is "viewed from the back in a pudica pose recalling the Capitoline, Medici, and ultimately the Knidian Aphrodites."[128] This is a good example of Dürer employing *imitatio artis*: he borrows a female nude from classical antiquity, turns her 180º, and hopes his audience will recognize the reference. Similarly, the Nuremberg master alludes to the Three Graces, a triad typically depicted dancing in a circle, by arranging his female nudes in a circular group.[129] Dürer set out to impress his well-educated patrons with his technical skill while also "challeng[ing] them with his subject matter," intending for his elite viewers "not only to recognize layers of meaning but also to construct meaning from [his] clues."[130] I believe that this is precisely the exercise Beham expected from his audience when they viewed *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*.

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[126] Davidson, *The Witch in Northern European Art*, 18.
[127] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 62.
[128] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 62.
[129] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 62.
[130] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 64.

Undoubtedly, Venus was a popular figure to imitate in sixteenth-century prints. But were artists simply referencing Venuses to accomplish *imitatio artis*? Or, since the goddess of love and lust was almost always represented as a female nude, were they just copying available models of the female form? Venus was a convenient figure to quote and a useful exemplar to study at a time when artists rarely drew nude women from life, but the goddess carried her own strong connotations. For many sixteenth-century Germans, Venus represented "evil, bestial love," or carnal love.[131] She supposedly appealed to "the senses and the imagination," inspiring "debauchery" and instilling lust in men's minds.[132] Thus, both conceptually and visually, Venus was comparable to other (sometimes supernaturally) powerful women, including witches and the wily women of *Weibermacht* narratives.

Notably, several late medieval and early modern artistic representations pair Venus with the seductive women in *Weibermacht* series. This relationship is perhaps best demonstrated by an illustrated page from an early fifteenth-century German miscellany (fig. 70). In the lower right corner of the page, Lady Love, or Venus, stands under Frauenlob's stanza that lists men duped by women (see chapter 1). A queue of famous men waits for an audience with the mostly nude Venus—her full-length cloak only serves to conceal her shoulders. The banderoles separating Venus from her suitors reads:

> Alexander, Salomon, Samson and Absalom, Aristotle, and Virgil all together say thus: No master ever became so wise not to join the train of fools. I hope I will be successful with my beloved![133]

Basically, as Henrike Lähnemann writes, Venus "is causing all this mess."[134] It is Venus' power over love and lust that aids women in their *Weiberlist* and in their creation of a "train of fools." It is Venus' power that helps Judith conquer Holofernes. In fact, in the

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[131] Hults, *The Witch as Muse*, 65.
[132] Hults, The Witch as Muse, 65.
[133] Banderole text found in *German Miscellany*, early 15th century. Washington, D.C., Library of Congress, Rosenwald Collection, MS 4, fol. 8r, as translated by Lähnemann in "The Cunning of Judith in Late Medieval German Texts," 244.
[134] Lähnemann, "The Cunning of Judith," 245.

upper right corner diagonally across the page from the standing Venus, the manuscript illustrator drew Judith holding Holofernes's head. Here, Lähnemann notes, "Judith becomes a prop of Venus."[135]

Unfortunately, no man's heart is safe against the power of Venus—whether he is an Assyrian general or a sixteenth-century German man. This concept is graphically illustrated in Master Caspar of Regensburg's colored woodcut about 1485 (fig. 71). A nude, flesh-colored Venus stands at the center of the composition, towering over the kneeling man to the right. The goddess is surrounded by abused, red hearts—each of which suffers a different torture. There are hearts pierced by a spear, a sword, and an arrow; burned in a fire; and sawed in half—just to name a few of the cruelties exacted on the tender organs. The overarching message is clear: Venus (who usually acts through women) could manipulate and punish men's hearts, causing emotional suffering or—as recounted in *Weibermacht* narratives—causing men's demise. Yet, as the German miscellany illustrates, the men keep lining up for more!

Essentially, Venus embodies the power of women—a power that tramples men's hearts, manipulates their bodies and minds, and turns them into fools. As yet another variety of "powerful woman," Venus is seamlessly incorporated into images of witches and *Weibermacht*—proving again how fluidity and exchange was possible between Power of Women subcategories.[136] It is important that there was a long, lasting history of Venus-*Weibermacht* overlap. The German miscellany and its Venus-Judith pairing dates back to the early fifteenth century, and the trend to match Venus with *Weibermacht* women continued well into the sixteenth century. For example, around 1525, Hans Baldung Grien paired his voluptuous Venus (fig. 50) with both the first woman to employ *Weiberlist*, Eve (fig. 49), and one of the most popular *Weibermacht* recruits, Judith (fig. 13). Both the fifteenth- and sixteenth-century examples linking Venus and Judith suggest

[135] Lähnemann, "The Cunning of Judith," 245.
[136] Although I do not have a ready example, it would be logical if certain "Battle of the Sexes" imagery alluded to Venus, too.

that it would not take much of an intellectual leap for audiences to read Beham's Judith as a type of Venus.

By positioning Judith like the *Crouching Venus*, Beham added another layer of meaning to his print. In fact, the new layer could direct viewers to ignore the meanings established by the other layers (i.e. the Book of Judith, etc.) in favor of interpretations that build on an overarching message about the power of women. For example, instead of being empowered by God to save the Jewish people, Beham's Judith, who so closely resembles Venus, could be understood as a woman empowered by the pagan goddess—just as the page from the German miscellany suggests. Yet, I am skeptical about how negatively Barthel Beham viewed Venus. In a drawing of Venus with Cupid (fig. 72) assumed to be more or less contemporaneous with the 1525 Judith, Beham shows the full-length goddess with large, outstretched, angelic wings. Her countenance is calm, even ethereal. Is it a coincidence that both Beham's seated Judith and winged Venus tilt their heads with downcast eyes toward the right, extend their left arms toward the right, and share the same plush body type? The young artist's own body of work reveals his interest in Venus and supplies evidence that he may have had Venus in mind when he designed *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*.

Beham's winged Venus with Cupid is the only readily identifiable image of the goddess that he created, but I propose that he also intended for *A Nude Woman Seated on a Cuirass* to represent Venus (fig. 66). I wonder if Beham created his *Nude Woman* after studying Marcantonio's *Judgment of Paris* and *Crouching Venus*. While *Nude Woman* is most assuredly taken from the *Judgment of Paris* print—the reuse of the exposed back, confrontational gaze, and arm-to-knee position is indisputable, it would be easy for Beham to think of the *Crouching Venus* when he saw another similarly positioned female nude. By adding Venus iconography to his borrowed water nymph, Beham transformed his classical (albeit less muscular) nude into a goddess.

Because Beham's nude woman is not accompanied by Cupid, other scholars have not interpreted her as Venus. But Beham's seated nude holds a double-sided convex mirror—a symbol of vanity or beauty often associated with the goddess of love (see fig. 73), and she sits on a man's armor—an attribute, I propose, signifies her affair with Mars, the god of war.[137] When Venus is not crouching or bathing in sixteenth-century prints, she is often shown in intimate proximity to Mars. Sometimes the martial deity is covered in head-to-toe armor (fig. 74), but other times he is as nude as Venus, having already shed his protective attire for more pleasurable activities (fig. 75). In Marcantonio's *Mars, Venus, and Cupid*, Mars' discarded cuirass, shield, and battle ax lay at his feet. In Parmigianino's illicit print *Venus and Mars near Vulcan at his Forge* (fig. 76), the cuirass of the god of war rests on a helmet in the foreground while Mars has sex with Venus in the background. I cannot say for sure if Beham had access to these images of the gods, but there was certainly a contemporary iconographic link between Venus and the cuirass through her relationship with Mars.

By seating his nude Venus atop Mars's discarded cuirass, Beham alludes to the symbolism of Venus and Mars' coupling: Love (or Lust) conquers War. This theme is, in my opinion, best illustrated in Sandro Botticelli's *Venus and Mars* (fig. 77). In the Italian master's painting, the nearly-nude Mars reclines in a post-coital slumber as baby satyrs play with his forgotten armor—his cuirass is tucked under his crooked arm. Venus watches her dead-tired lover sleep. It is cheeky of Beham to depict Venus admiring her beauty in a mirror from atop Mars' cuirass—for it was her beauty that disarmed him! It is as if Beham is purposely displaying the seductive body that conquered war and asking, "Do you blame Mars for succumbing to her charms?" What man would not remove his armor at the promise of love-making with *that* woman?

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[137] Levy, "The Erotic Engravings," 47; according to Levy, the Beham brothers' inclusion of mirrors in images of nude women bathing "may be an allusion to Venus." Even though the mirror "was not usually part of the conventions for depicting Venus after her bath, it was a familiar attribute of Venus in other contexts." For Levy, this was the type of "visual quotations that the Behams expected their audience to recognize and appreciate."

Within Beham's own *oeuvre*, *A Nude Woman Seated on a Cuirass* is the closest figural and thematic match to *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*. Since Beham did not include the year of its creation on *Nude Woman*, I cannot say if she pre- or post-dates the 1525 Judith. But I would like to argue that Beham could have been thinking of Love and War when he chose to place Judith atop Holofernes. Like Venus, the beautiful widow used her appearance to seduce and topple a man of war—here, she literally has him on his back. Holofernes's bare torso lies on the ground like the cuirass and his head rests in the same lower, right corner as the helmet in *Nude Woman*. Instead of resting her bottom on sculpted metal, Judith sits on the bare, muscular chest of her slain lover-enemy. The general's armor is missing in *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, but Holofernes's cuirass was sometimes depicted near his headless body (fig. 78)—perhaps linking the Assyrian general with the god of war in Beham's mind. If an observant viewer associated Judith with the *Crouching Venus*—or even Beham's seated Venus—then it is possible that he, too, would associate Holofernes with the seduced and sexually exhausted Mars. Clearly, this is not an obvious interpretation of the Judith print—or an interpretation that the print readily presents. There is no cuirass and, as far as I can tell, Beham was the first artist to sit Venus atop Mars' armor. Because crucial iconography is missing and the artist employs a unique position, it would have been difficult for the majority of viewers to decode. Nevertheless, I find Beham's clever use of figures and thoughtful intra-*oeuvre* reference amusing and revealing—both about the potential meanings of Judith and the caliber of mind that Beham may have possessed. In my opinion, if a viewer caught the allusion, he would find that the Venus-Judith reference enriched the image and added to his enjoyment of the ambiguous piece.

Sex Positions and Censorship

In addition to powerful women, the late medieval and early modern "Battle of the Sexes," *Weibermacht*, witches, and Venus themes have something else in common: sex. As a matter of fact, sex is at the heart of each Power of Women subcategory that Beham

may have incorporated into his *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*. Phyllis offers Aristotle sexual gratification in exchange for letting her ride him around the garden. Witches conjure away men's sex organs—or at least their ability to perform. Venus piques men's sexual interest and has a torrid affair with Mars. Even Judith's own narrative depends upon her sex appeal—and, remember, Holofernes fully intends to have sex with the alluring widow after dinner! It seems to me that sex, as much as the power of women, unites Beham's various visual references; therefore, I propose that the young artist may have chosen to imitate works that encouraged his viewers to read Judith's provocative position as a reference to sex.

It is possible that Beham's visually literate audience recognized Judith as an iconographical descendant of a lusty female satyr from an ancient Roman sarcophagus (fig. 79). On the far left side of a relief depicting scenes from a bacchanalia, a satyress with hairy goat legs readies herself to take a satyr-herm's stone penis (fig. 80). The semi-nude female figure steadies herself by extending her right arm and grasping the satyr-herm's horns. By reaching for her inanimate partner's head, the female satyr's torso twists to reveal both of her breasts—although her head remains in profile. Since the satyress' right leg is elevated to better align her genitals with that of her stoic paramour, the female figure's leg is parallel with the ground. By now, each of these elements is a familiar characteristic of Beham's Judith.

Of course, I am not suggesting that Beham or his audience had ready access to the original sculpture. Like the Roman *Crouching Venus*, the sarcophagus frieze was the subject of sixteenth-century Italian prints. Sometime between 1510 and 1520, Marcantonio created an engraving after Raphael's drawing of the debaucherous mythological festivities (figs. 81-82). In Marcantonio's print the scene is reversed: the satyress' left leg is prominently raised and her left arm is extended. Notice also how the face of Marcantonio's female satyr matches that of Beham's Judith: both female nudes gaze downward.

But missing from Marcantonio's engraving—yet present in the original sculpture—is the satyr-herm's penis. Either Marcantonio removed the herm's shaft or Raphael censored his original drawing before giving it to the famed printmaker. For me, it does not matter who castrated the statue; instead, I am more interested in how that mutilated male figure may have influenced Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*. In my opinion Beham's decapitated Holofernes could be the satyr-herm's twin: both male figures have curly, dark hair and beards, large noses with pronounced nostrils, and—from what is visible in each print—muscular torsos. Furthermore, like the satyr-herm's shaft, Holofernes's penis is not depicted. Or is it? In Marcantonio's print the satyress uses her right hand to reach between her legs for the statue's missing manhood. In Beham's print Judith firmly grasps Holofernes's sword with her right hand. Because the position of Judith's right thigh is unclear, it is impossible to determine whether the sword stands suggestively between her knees. Nevertheless, I am convinced that Beham's clever audience would recognize his jocular symbolism: Holofernes's penis is not missing after all—Judith is holding it.

Although Beham's Judith and Holofernes are positioned very similarly to Marcantonio's satyress and satyr-herm, it is important to note that Judith sits whereas the satyress stands. It is possible, of course, that Beham rotated the bodies without the benefit of a source depicting the exact position of his figures. But around the time that the Nuremberg printmaker designed his *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, an Italian print featuring a crouching female nude above a reclining male nude circulated in Europe. In my opinion *Position 14* (fig. 83) from *I Modi* (The Positions), a series of sixteen prints depicting sex positions, may have inspired Beham's suggestive placement of Judith. *Position 14*, which imitates the Roman sarcophagus' satyr-herm and satyress, depicts a man and woman copulating on a cart pulled by a winged cupid.[138] The female figure

[138] Richard Aste, "Giulio Romano as Designer of Erotica: *I Modi*, 1524-1525," in *Giulio Romano, Master Designer: An Exhibition of Drawings in Celebration of the Five Hundredth Anniversary of His Birth*, ed. Janet Cox-Rearick (New York: The Bertha and Karl Leubsdorf Art Gallery / Hunter College of the City University of New York, 1999), 47. *Position 14* is not the only sarcophagus-inspired coupling featured in *I*

crouches backwards over her lover as he supports his body in what is known as the "crab position" today. The man's arms are bent under the weight of the woman on top of him. His muscular torso is parallel to the ground, as is the female figure's prominent left thigh. The woman extends her left arm behind her back, twisting her torso to reveal her bare breasts. Instead of grasping with her lover's head, her fist hovers above his tousled hair and well-kempt beard. She seems to hold some sort of garment or strap in her left hand. As in the previous print this woman's head remains in profile and she gazes downward with her eye in shadows. Fortunately for this lascivious female figure, her partner's shaft is still attached. She boldly reaches between her legs to position his penis where she wants it. To the best of my knowledge, this is the *only* early sixteenth-century image of a nude man on his back with a crouching nude woman above him—other than *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*. But the series of illicit—and sometimes downright acrobatic—sex positions is not documented in Germany. Could Barthel Beham have seen the erotic prints?

According to Bette Talvacchia, the veritable expert on all things *I Modi*, Giulio Romano gave Marcantonio Raimondi sixteen drawings of "erotic embraces" before he left Rome to work in Mantua at Federico Gonzaga's court.[139] Since it probably took Marcantonio a few months to produce the "sixteen finely worked plates" after Romano's drawings, Talvacchia suggests that the first appearance of *I Modi* "might have occurred early in 1525"—though 1524 has also been suggested as the original date of publication.[140] Either way, it is chronologically possible that Beham could have seen *Position 14* before creating his engraving. Unfortunately, the explicit prints, "each of which displayed a heterosexual couple engaged in the sexual act," provoked the wrath of the Catholic Church.[141] Pope Clement VII confiscated and destroyed as many copies of *I*

Modi. "The Naples sarcophagus was a source of formal quotations and allusions" for Giulio Romano's preparatory *I Modi* drawings, writes Aste.

[139] Bette Talvacchia, *Taking Positions: On the Erotic in Renaissance Culture* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999), 84, 4.

[140] Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 84; Levy, "The Erotic Engravings," 42.

[141] Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 4.

Modi as he could root out.[142] As Landau and Parshall write, "It is a tribute to the efficiency of the Pope's power of suppression that the *Modi* were more or less stamped out of Rome."[143] Additionally, the Pope had Marcantonio imprisoned for several months.[144] Luckily, the Italian printmaker had friends in high places. In his *Vita* of Marcantonio, Vasari describes how "Cardinal de' Medici and Baccio Bandinelli, who served the Pope in Rome," were able to "rescue" the jailed artist.[145] Yet, despite the large-scale destruction of the licentious prints, "it is clear that many sets of *I Modi* in various forms and versions found their clandestine way around Europe."[146]

For several reasons I believe Barthel Beham would have either seen the original *I Modi* or a hastily-made copy after them. First, because Nuremberg traded with Venice, there was a well-documented pathway for and tradition of bringing the most popular Italian prints—a category to which *I Modi* certainly belonged—north to Germany. Second, as Levy demonstrates, erotic images appealed to the same audiences in Germany as they did in Italy: affluent, well-educated, visually literate humanists, patricians, and clergymen.[147] For example, in 1516, Cardinal Bibbiena commissioned painters—perhaps Giulio Romano—to paint Raphael-designed sexually explicit frescoes in his bathroom. Similarly, around 1532, Albrecht Altdorfer "painted murals depicting men and women bathing together on the walls of the so-called Caesar's Bath in the bishop's residence at Regensburg."[148] It is thus logical to assume that German collectors, like their southern counterparts, desired and did everything in their power to procure copies of *I Modi*. Third, erotic art was extremely popular in Europe during the early modern period.[149] From as early as the 1460s, "every printmaking center across Europe" produced and

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[142] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 298; Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 4
[143] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 298.
[144] Levy, "The Erotic Engravings," 42.
[145] Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 6.
[146] Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 4.
[147] Levy, "The Erotic Engravings," 41.
[148] Levy, "The Erotic Engravings," 41.
[149] Miriam Hall Kirch, "Looking into Night: An Erotic Engraving by Sebald Beham in Context" (M.A. thesis, The University of Texas at Austin, 1998), 36.

copied erotic works. And, as Landau and Parshall write, “there is hardly [an erotic engraving] by an Italian artist that was not mimicked somewhere in Germany or the Netherlands, and vice versa, within a few years from the date of its production.”[150] I cannot believe that the most highly sought-after, blatantly erotic images from the first quarter of the sixteenth century were not available somewhere in Nuremberg. And, finally, considering the content of their oeuvres, I am convinced that the Beham brothers would have been particularly interested in studying Marcantonio’s *I Modi*.

Barthel Beham’s body of work clearly demonstrates his interest in erotic imagery, especially profane, sensual depictions of female nudes. As Lisa Kirch points out, both Barthel and Sebald “took special care in composing figures so that their genitalia would be most prominently displayed.”[151] For example, in his *Death and the Sleeping Woman* (fig. 84), Barthel unreservedly splays his sleeping nude’s legs. By parting her thighs, the artist gives his audience a clear view of her vulva—a better view than he grants the voyeuristic Death. Similarly, he positions his *Bathing Nude* (fig. 85) with her vulva on display. Oblivious to the viewer’s gaze, she looks at herself in a convex mirror and unconsciously raises her leg—a pose that reveals her hairless genitalia to the hungry eyes of male print collectors. Both as an artist who specialized in erotic prints and as a man who enjoyed viewing wanton female nudes, Barthel Beham would have been a prime candidate to seek out the infamous *I Modi* prints. He may have owned copies, encountered them in the collections of a patron, or heard about them from travelers or merchants. Ultimately, where there is a will, there is a way—and I think Beham would have desperately wanted to study those prints.

So if erotic art was popular and widely copied throughout Europe, why were Marcantonio and his *I Modi* dealt with so harshly? It seems that the authorities were particularly offended by “the explicit portrayal of sexual activity.”[152] Instead of

[150] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 298.
[151] Kirch, “Looking into Night,” 52.
[152] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 298.

"cloaking" the sixteen couples in mythology, identifying each pair as a god or goddess and his or her consort, Romano's drawings harkened back to a more blatantly sexual antique tradition featuring unidentified lovers.[153] Unfortunately for Marcantonio, during the Renaissance the accepted practice was to "[present] scenes of sexual dalliances as exploits of the pagan gods" because the thin mythological veneer "deflect[ed] accusations of impropriety."[154] By publishing works without the "sanctioning cover of high culture," the *Modi* had no iconography to "cushion its reception."[155]

Considering how forcefully the Catholic Church attacked Marcantonio and his *I Modi*, as Landau and Parshall note, "one might assume it would not have been prudent to issue a similar set [of erotic prints] straight away."[156] But the demand for explicit imagery was too profitable for artists to resist, so in 1527, Jacopo Caraglio created prints after Rosso Fiorentino and Perino del Vaga's erotic drawings of the *Loves of the Gods*. The artists "toned down" the sexual display with clever folds of drapery, "slung legs," and "less detailed descriptions of conjugal gymnastics"—they even added a few "mildly allusive verses" about the gods to some of the plates.[157] Apparently, their modifications made the erotic images acceptable since the censors did not destroy them. In fact, the *Loves of the Gods* became "one of the most successful series in the Renaissance" and survives in as many as five different sets of copies.[158] The remains of *I Modi* are, by contrast, as Talvacchia puts it, "stunningly scarce": at least two engravings of *Position 1*, the least profane position; a woodcut of *Position 2*; and a set of nine censored fragments survive.[159] Talvacchia explains:

> Our present knowledge of the sequence of *I Modi* rests on woodcuts printed in a sixteenth-century book...These prints copied the engravings (or some version of them) without much finesse, purely to render a hot

153 Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 46, 49-50.
154 Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 4.
155 Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 49-50.
156 Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 298.
157 Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 298.
158 Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 298.
159 Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 5.

> property in a commercially viable way that paid no attention to quality, detail, or refinement of style.[160]

It is likely that the more liberal printing presses in Venice published the sub-par woodcut copies about 1527 (for example, fig. 83). Still, Pope Clement VII was doubtless not the only person in the last five hundred years who wished to eradicate the erotic prints.

During the early part of the Renaissance, censorship was "so mixed and inconsistent as to defy summary."[161] Because the different regions, courts, and city councils determined what was acceptable to print—and their enforcement of those rules varied in efficiency, Renaissance censors could "severely [limit] freedom of expression" or allow "openness" and novelty.[162] In Nuremberg in the mid-1520s, the rise of political and religious unrest—accompanied by increased pamphleteering—"led to further impositions of official censorship."[163] For example, in 1524, the Diet of Nuremberg "granted municipal authorities the right to search printing shops and confiscate banned material."[164] The "conservative and often paternalistic leadership" in Nuremberg had "long assumed the right to control any form of public activity in the city," but it was not until the religious uprisings and after the Peasants' War in 1525 that the city council exercised control over publications.[165] Of course, it is difficult to determine the efficiency of the increased censorship. One later, but particularly relevant, example of the Nuremberg council's censorship in action involves the Nuremberg publisher Hans Guldenmund. Apparently, in 1535, the council discovered that Guldenmund had, as the council described it, "a most shameful and sinful little book, containing many obscene pictures of unconventional lovemaking."[166] The printer confessed to having nine copies of the book in his possession but claimed that he did not intend to keep them. According to Guldenmund, the Augsburg woodblock cutter Hans Schwarzenberger had given them

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[160] Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 5.
[161] Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 74.
[162] Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 74.
[163] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 225
[164] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 225
[165] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 225.
[166] Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 225.

to him on consignment to sell in Frankfurt, although he "disposed of them later in Leipzig."[167] Although the Nuremberg council expressed its concern that "lustful images alone can provoke great scandal and incite the young to sinful vices," according to Landau and Parshall, their desire to eliminate such imagery and the low survival rate of erotic prints "says nothing certain about the availability of such prints at the time."[168] What this information about Nuremberg's censorship does suggest is that Barthel Beham may have had good reason to cloak his reference to a sex position in the guise of Judith slaying Holofernes.

Of all the sex positions that Beham could have referenced in his engraving, he daringly chose to imitate the most "unnatural" and "immoral" of them all: woman on top. During the Middle Ages and Renaissance, religious authorities harshly condemned "a range of sexual postures [that] fell within the canonic definition of 'contrary to nature' or 'unnatural.'"[169] According to Pierre Payer, there were "two dimensions to this natural way": form and position.[170] The natural form required vaginal intercourse; the natural position dictated that the woman lie on her back with the man lying over her—the standard "missionary position."[171] In fact, the Church forbade all sex positions except missionary position, "[the formation] considered best for impregnation."[172] It was because all other positions were "liable to frustrate [procreation], the only redeeming justification for unsinful coitus," that they were banned.[173] Yet even among the abhorrent positions, some were considered more offensive than others. The thirteenth-century theologian Albert the Great ranked five categories of positions by escalating sinfulness: missionary position, lying laterally beside one another, sitting, standing, and, finally,

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167 Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 225.
168 Landau and Parshall, *The Renaissance Print*, 225.
169 Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 115.
170 Pierre J. Payer, *The Bridling of Desire: Views of Sex in the Later Middle Ages* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 76.
171 Payer, *The Bridling of Desire*, 76.
172 Patricia Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe: A Cultural History*, Cambridge Social and Cultural Histories (Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 198.
173 Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 117, 115.

copulating like animals with the man entering from behind.[174] But sometimes woman on top was included as a sixth forbidden sex position; when mentioned, it was deemed "worse than all but coitus from behind."[175]

In addition to potentially deterring pregnancy, the woman on top position was considered to be intensely pleasurable—a problem for medieval and early modern religious authorities who "defin[ed] sexual desire under any circumstances as a manifestation of lust, one of the seven deadly sins."[176] The Church was so obsessively concerned about sexual sin that it trained confessors to ask married penitents about their coital positions—for even spouses were forbidden from "having sex in an illicit manner."[177] Truly, Marcantonio's *I Modi*—as well as Beham's *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*—were produced "in a culture with a far-reaching system of religious values that viewed sexuality as an arena for committing major sins."[178] It is really no wonder, then, that Pope Clement VII reacted so vehemently against the *Modi*. The erotic prints not only "represent[ed] a state of sin," but they almost certainly caused viewers to have sinful thoughts and probably led some devil-may-care couples to attempt the wicked positions.

Although woman on top was supposedly bad for procreation and worse for the purity of one's soul, what was particularly unsettling about the position, which was referred to as "the horse" in Greco-Roman societies, was its symbolic subordination of men.[179] Talvacchia explains:

> Throughout all eras, the reversal of the symbolic positions of domination and subordination assumed by the woman on top with man beneath was feared as a literal overturning of the social order and stability.[180]

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[174] Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 120.
[175] Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 120.
[176] Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 122, 117.
[177] Talvacchia, Taking Positions, 119, 115.
[178] Talvacchia, Taking Positions, 115.
[179] Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 44.
[180] Talvacchia, *Taking Positions*, 122.

Again, I question if the prospect of pleasurable fornication actually struck "fear" in the hearts of men. Nevertheless, it is logical that fascination with and concern about dominant women would extend to coital positions. After all, in most sixteenth-century Power of Women images, the source of women's power is sex. For example, cunning women use their sexually appealing bodies to manipulate men into doing their bidding. And, with the promise of sex, women make men vulnerable to humiliation or attack. Still, it is interesting to this modern feminist that sixteenth-century men persistently villainized women's use of sex. Armed with sex women manipulate, humiliate, and destroy their male adversaries—as if, when empowered, a woman's only desire is to attack men. Of course, in reality, without the benefit of brute force, forged steel, or a voice on any governing council, medieval and early modern woman had little more than their bodies to leverage to effect change—and even that could be taken by force. By producing images of female dominance that were inevitably met with derision, male artists in patriarchal Germany helped neutralize the disconcerting power of female sexuality: laughing at improper women and the weak-willed men who fell at their feet preserved the idea that the power of women was absurd.

Keeping in mind that the "horse position" was frowned upon for its subordination of the male partner and that the power of women was something a man might find humorous, it is useful to revisit sixteenth-century Phyllis riding Aristotle imagery. Recall, for instance, how Phyllis used Aristotle's lust for her to transform him into her willing horse. Although the narrative and corresponding imagery uniformly show the foolish philosopher down on his hands and knees with the beautiful courtesan perched on his back (figs. 38-39), in my opinion, it would have been very easy for sixteenth-century men, who were accustomed to word play and bawdy metaphors, to think of the horse sex position. Since his figures are nude, this may have been the not-so-subtle meaning of Hans Baldung Grien's *Phyllis Riding Aristotle* (fig. 40). Furthermore, the symbolic effect would remain the same regardless of exactly how intimately Phyllis rode Aristotle. Either way, the philosopher assumed a subordinate position under a dominate woman. This

"new" interpretation heightens the eroticism of Judith's position on top of Holofernes: one could say that she's "riding"—or rode—the general like a horse.

It is logical to conclude that Barthel Beham hid the woman on top position in Old Testament Apocrypha to get it through the censors and into the hands of collectors under the noses of religious authorities. But I wonder if he also positioned Judith atop Holofernes as a wonderfully clever joke. Remember, before sixteenth-century artists corrupted her, Judith was depicted as a prefiguration of the Virgin Mary or a personification of multiple virtues. Thus, by showing the pious and chaste widow in a compromising position, Beham cheekily questions the legitimacy of Judith's claim that "it was my face that seduced [Holofernes] to his destruction, and that he committed no sin with me, to defile and shame me."[181] Perhaps Beham and his patrons found *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* to be a more believable portrayal of Judith's success—and an exponentially more amusing and arousing one, too. Additionally, by imitating either the highly desired *Modi* or the satyress with the satyr-herm from the Roman sarcophagus, Beham not only demonstrated his wit but also his craftsmanship and ability to compete on the art market.

The bottom line is that seeing Judith's nude posterior pressed against Holofernes's nude torso probably triggered sexual associations in the minds of the men viewing the print—and not just the minds of elite viewers either. The equation was simple enough for the least intellectual men to understand: a naked woman plus a naked man equals sex. No erudite explanations required for immediate enjoyment! Yet, Beham does not depict nameless figures. His Judith and Holofernes are identifiable characters, a widow and a warrior, involved in a battle for a besieged city. Taking into consideration that most sixteenth-century Germans would have been familiar with the metaphors that compared sexual intercourse to jousting, battling, and conquering a castle, I propose that Beham wanted his viewers to think of the two nudes as participants in a "nocturnal

[181] Judith 13: 15-16 NRSV.

battle"—the most intimate "battle of the sexes."[182] Furthermore, since men were often described as wielding phallic weaponry during their sexual battles, my interpretation of Holofernes's sword as his symbolic penis falls in line with the prevalent and violent metaphors.[183] Here, both literally and figuratively, the cunning widow has used the warrior's weapon against him. But it is important to note that Beham does not actually show the sex act. In fact, Judith's vagina is nowhere near Holofernes's groin.

Instead, I propose that the print may actually depict a post-coital scene similar to the one presented in Botticelli's *Venus and Mars*. Notice, for instance, that Holofernes's face shows no signs of distress or struggle. He looks peaceful. His eyes are closed and the muscles in his face are relaxed as if he were asleep. True, his head is separated from his torso, but it is not far from his body or hanging from Judith's hand. One might imagine that this is the face of a man exhausted, yet satisfied, from having sex in the "crab position"—a posture that certainly requires considerable strength and exertion. The knowing male viewer might also recognize the sleeping Holofernes's exhaustion as a result of recent ejaculation, not just a difficult pose. After all, according to Aristotle, "the sequel to sexual intercourse is exhaustion and weakness rather than relief."[184] The orgasm, which "was envisaged as a male phenomenon," brought about "fundamental loss" and weakness.[185] Importantly, in some ancient medical and theological treatises sexual exhaustion was compared to death. For example, the Pseudo-Aristotelian *Problems* (4.1) "note[s] a similarity between sexual intercourse and death, for eyes were cast upwards in each event as though following the direction of expiring heat."[186] In the same vein, Tertullian, the third-century Christian apologist, wrote: "...in the last breaking wave of delight, do we not feel something of our soul go out from us?"[187] Following their libidinous battles, men were described as "killed," "finished off," and "spent as though

[182] Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, 112, 115.
[183] Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, 113.
[184] Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, 168.
[185] Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, 168.
[186] Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, 168.
[187] Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, 168.

dead."[188] Here, in his clever way, Barthel Beham alludes to *la petite mort*, "the little death" of orgasmic release, by staging Holofernes's literal death in a woman-on-top sex position—an enjoyable position that presumably resulted in a death-like, post-coital languor.[189]

Conclusion

It is impossible to determine the exact sources Barthel Beham studied prior to his creation of *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* in 1525. Without an inventory of Beham's print collection or any documentation describing the works he encountered, I admit that my interpretations are speculative. Nevertheless, in this chapter, I have presented a combination of historical evidence and visual analysis to suggest three potential sources for Judith's provocative position: witches, Venus, and sex positions. Each of the three potential sources was published before or during 1525 and circulated widely, both north and south of the Alps. Each also depicts a female nude in a "seated" position. Personally, I am inclined to believe that Beham intentionally imitated powerful female figures from German and Italian sources to produce a visually and symbolically rich print for the amusement of his intellectual audience.

But even if Beham never saw the works discussed in this chapter and never intended for viewers to associate Judith with witches, Venus, sex positions, or Phyllis, for that matter, I believe visually literate, well-educated male print collectors could have read those references into Beham's engraving on their own. They were familiar with the concept of *imitatio artis*, and thus, they were on the lookout for references to well-known works. Those ideal audiences were also familiar with witty wordplay and bawdy metaphors, and they were always ready to demonstrate their intellectual prowess by decoding multivalent imagery. Spotting—or imagining—disguised quotations from ancient or contemporary sources was part of the game of viewing.

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[188] Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, 168.
[189] Simons, *The Sex of Men in Premodern Europe*, 168.

For the sixteenth-century German men who read *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* as I have, the overarching message was a pointed one about the power of women to captivate and conquer their male adversaries, a power inextricably linked with sex. It seems to me that the 1525 engraving may showcase both the painful and the pleasurable aspects of being topped by a woman. On one hand, from witches to goddesses, wives to *Weibermacht*, women were capable of destroying men through humiliation, impotency, or death. On the other hand, those same women were also able to arouse and seduce them. For example, Judith literally kills Holofernes by beheading him, but Beham symbolically suggests through her provocative pose that Judith also gives Holofernes *la petite mort*. Early modern print collectors would have both recognized and appreciated such loaded double entendres. By embracing the changing art market and providing explicit, yet clever, secular designs, Barthel Beham became a successful printmaker during a period when many artists simply could not keep up with the times.

~ Conclusion ~

Why did Barthel Beham seat Judith atop Holofernes? This question has been the guiding force behind my hermeneutical exploration of Beham's 1525 engraving. Yet after three long chapters of research and analysis, it is impossible for me to provide a single, definite answer. Instead, what my thesis demonstrates is that the young Nuremberg printmaker probably intended for his puzzling and erotic image to inspire multiple interpretations. In efforts to better understand *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, I approached the print with three different questions, each of which establishes the foundation of a chapter in this thesis. First, how might a sixteenth-century German audience interpret the relationship between Beham's Judith and Holofernes? Second, what type of Judith is Beham's voluptuous widow? And, third, what is the meaning of Judith's provocative position? As I worked through each of these queries by contextualizing the print and its artist and looking closely at contemporary works of art, I may not have provided comprehensive answers to every question raised, but my thesis provides new insights into how a well-educated, visually literate sixteenth-century German man may have engaged with and read the tiny printed image.

By stripping away most of the narrative elements associated with the Book of Judith, Barthel Beham produced a representation of Judith and Holofernes depicting a relationship between a man and a woman. But what did it mean to be a man or a woman in early modern Germany? In order to begin to comprehend the meanings a contemporary viewer may have drawn from Beham's print, one must first appreciate the complexity of sixteenth-century German gender roles—including both the ideal and "lived" versions of masculinity and femininity. Understanding that gender roles and relationships were complicated and fluid led me to suggest that scholars should nuance the way they read *Weibermacht* (Power of Women) imagery. Like gender dynamics, the Power of Women theme is too complex to reduce to a single, straightforward meaning: it could be didactic,

humorous, or erotic—sometimes simultaneously. Yet, in a patriarchal society like early modern Germany, it was unlikely that men truly feared women; thus, I proposed that the popularity of *Weibermacht* narratives and images most likely stemmed from their ability to entertain viewers—either with laughter or arousal.

Exploring contemporary gender discourses and reevaluating the *Weibermacht* imagery in chapter 1 was crucial because I went on in chapter 2 to argue that *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* is a *Weibermacht* print. Like women living in sixteenth-century Germany, Judith could represent ideal femininity or the destructive power of female cunning and sexuality. Unfortunately for Beham's Judith, she is neither a personification of virtues nor a symbol of righteousness toppling tyranny. Instead, she is best categorized as a Femme Fatale or a *Weibermacht* figure. With that designation comes a level of villainization that encourages viewers to laugh at Holofernes and the absurdity of women's power while allowing artists the opportunity to eroticize Judith and arouse audiences. Moreover, the nudity of Beham's Judith suggests that the 1525 print was intended for male viewers' enjoyment, not the moral edification of women or the rallying of people for a specific cause. True, men of any intellectual level could appreciate Judith's nude beauty, but I proposed that Beham's target audience consisted of affluent, well-educated, well-traveled humanists, patricians, merchants, and artists. The ideal type of men that Beham wanted to decode his multivalent image would have appreciated his clever allusions and jocular metaphors—whether they viewed the image privately or in groups.

I made my first foray into unraveling Beham's layers of meaning in chapter 2 by comparing Judith to Phyllis riding Aristotle, but it was in chapter 3 that I more fully explored the potential sources for the Nuremberg printmaker's design. Some might be discouraged by the dearth of biographical information about Barthel Beham, but the details of his personal life were of little consequence to me. Broadly speaking he was a young artist working in the shadow of Albrecht Dürer during the heat of the Reformation when the art market's demands changed and during the international artistic exchange of

the Renaissance when Italian sources traveled north to Nuremberg. Rather than interpreting Beham's work from the perspective of his limited biography, it was more productive for me to study his *oeuvre* for clues about his interests and sources of inspiration. Beham and the other Little Masters learned their craft by studying the works of Dürer and Italian masters, such as Raphael, Michelangelo, and Marcantonio Raimondi. When they produced their own works, many of them imitated figures or compositions from the famous masters' designs. By trying to pinpoint the source or sources that Beham referenced in his *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, I hoped to determine the hidden message behind Judith's provocative position. What I discovered were three different types of potential iconographic sources for the nude seated Judith: witches, Venus, and sex positions.

Although it is impossible to know exactly which prints Beham studied prior to or during 1525, after analyzing his *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes* alongside other sixteenth-century prints, I am inclined to believe that he knew Hans Baldung Grien's *Phyllis Riding Aristotle*, Dürer's *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat*, Marcantonio's *Crouching Venus* (either the Italian print or Albrecht Altdorfer's copy), and *Position 14* from Marcantonio's *I Modi*. Each of the potential sources speaks to the power of women—a power linked to their sexuality and to sex. By integrating multiple types of powerful women into his Judith and Holofernes composition, Beham enriched the meaning of the relationship between his male and female figures. It seems to me that he has provided a witty visual commentary on the pains and pleasures associated with being topped by a woman—and that he laughingly questioned the lengths to which Judith went to achieve success!

Sixteenth-century German men may have had anxieties about their performance as masters of their households or lovers in their beds, but overall, I am unconvinced that they feared women or the fairer sex's ability to overthrow the patriarchy. Instead, the Power of Women was a ridiculous and provocative theme that artists profited from and male print collectors enjoyed. Barthel Beham capitalized on the popularity of Power of

Women imagery and the increasing demand for erotic art in his *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, producing an amusing and enticing “puzzle” for the erudite patrons he wished to attract and challenge with his work.

~ Figures ~

Figure 1: *Judith Beheading Holofernes*, Latin Bible, Salzburg, c. 1428-1430. Munich, Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, Cod. Lat. 15701, fol. 174v.

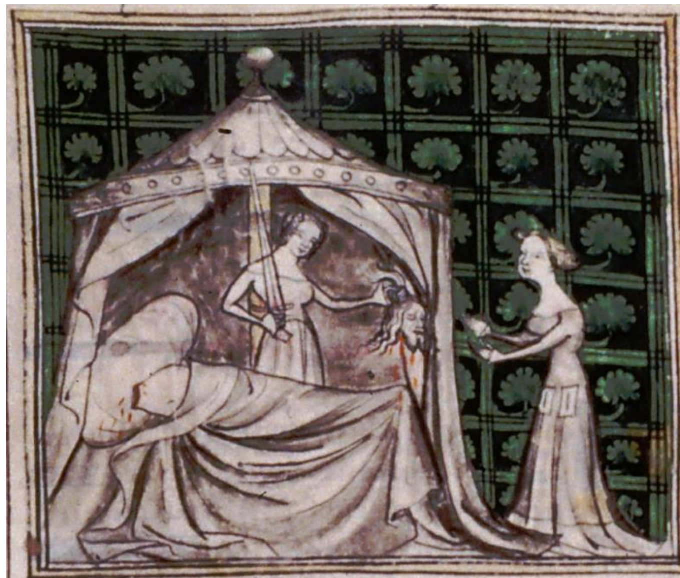


Figure 2: Guyart Desmoulins, *Judith and her Maid with the Head of Holofernes*, Bible Historiale, France, end of 14th century. Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS. Bodl. 971, fol. 202v.

Figure 3: Jacopo de' Barbari, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, Italy, c. 1498. Engraving, 185 x 123 mm. London, British Museum.

Figure 4: *Judith*, Midas-Objekt, Naples, c. 1350-1360. Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett, 78 E 3, fol. 183r.

Figure 5: *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, *Speculum Humanae Salvationis* (*Mirror of Human Salvation*), Germany, c. 1473. Woodcut, fol. 164v.

Figure 6: Attributed to Bartolomeo Bellano or workshop, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, Padua, c. 1500. Bronze, 8.4 cm. Formerly Berlin, Kaiser-Friedrich Museum.

Figure 7: Nicoletto da Modena, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, Italy, c. 1500. Engraving, 92 x 58 mm.

Figure 8: Michelangelo Buonarroti, *Judith and her Maid with the Head of Holofernes*, Rome, 1508-1512. Fresco. Rome, Sistine Chapel.

Figure 9: Donatello, *Judith and Holofernes*, Florence, c. 1456-1457. Partially gilt bronze, 236 cm. Florence, Palazzo Vecchio.

Figure 10: Sandro Botticelli, *Return of Judith to Bethulia*, Italy, c. 1470. Tempera on wood, 31 x 24 cm, right half of diptych. Florence, Galleria degli Uffizi.

Figure 11: Georg Pencz, *Judith and her Maid with the Head of Holofernes*, Nuremberg, c. 1541. Engraving, 49 x 78 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 12: Conrat Meit, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, Germany, c. 1512-1514. Alabaster with gilding, 30 cm. Munich, Bayerisches Nationalmuseum.

Figure 13: Hans Baldung Grien, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, Germany, c. 1525. Oil on panel, 208.8 x 74 cm. Nuremberg, Germanisches Nationalmuseum Nürnberg.

Figure 14: Sebald Beham, *Judith and her Maid with the Head of Holofernes*, Nuremberg, c. 1520-1530. Engraving, 109 x 68 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 15: Sebald Beham, *Judith and her Maid with the Head of Holofernes*, Nuremberg, c. 1520-1530. Engraving, 114 x 71 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 16: Barthel Beham, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, Nuremberg, 1523. Engraving, 58 x 40 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 17: Barthel Beham, *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, Nuremburg, 1525. Engraving, 55 x 37 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 18: Attributed to Cornelis Anthonisz, *The Wise Man and the Wise Woman* ("Come and behold me, I signify a wise man; all behold me, for I am a wise woman"), Amsterdam, second quarter of the 16th century. Woodcut, Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.

Figure 19: Anton Woensam, *A Wise Woman*, Germany, c. 1525. Woodcut. Vienna, Graphische Sammlung Albertina.

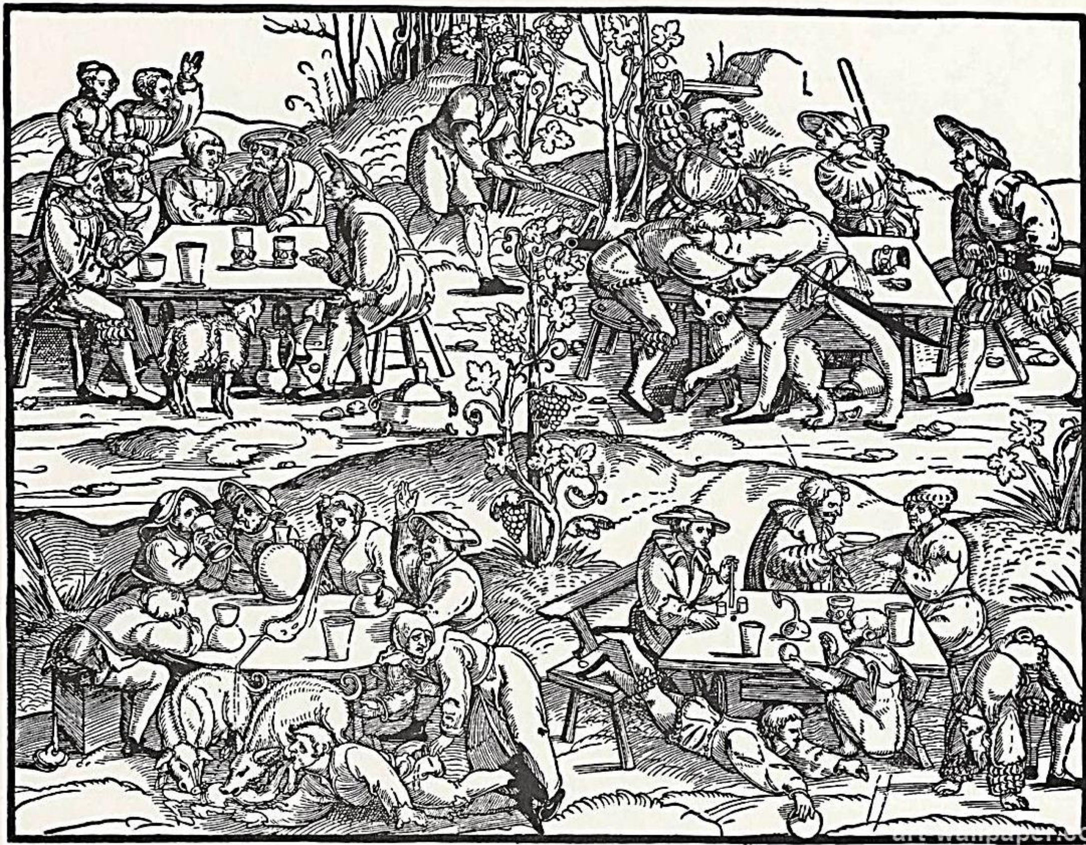


Figure 20: Erhard Schön, *The Four Effects of Wine*, Germany, 1528. Woodcut. Coburg, Kunstsammlungen der Veste Coburg, Kupferstichkabinett.

Figure 21: Sebald Beham, *Peasants behind the Hedge from the Peasants' Feast or the Twelve Months*, Germany, c. 1546-1547. Engraving, 5 x 7.3 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Wie Siben Weyber vber jre vngeratene menner klagen.

Eins mals ich in dem Brachmon heiß
Mir auff ein tag/für nam ein reiß
Hin durch ein holtz lustig genůg
Die mich vber ein wasser trůg
Hin durch ein blůmen reyche wisen
Darinn sach ich ein bechlein flissen
Auß eim gestreuß zů dem ich schlich
Vnd vor der Sunnen hitz entwich
In dem hört ich ein leis gedöß
Hinter mir/sam in eim gemöß
Zů ruck thet ich dem hall nach schawen
Da sach ich sitzen siben frawen
Radweis vmb eynen külen prunnen
Im schatten vor der heyssen Sunnen
Still schlich ich in den pusch hinein
Auff das ich hören möcht gar fein
Ir heymlich reth/von wort zů wort
Also lauscht ich an disem ort
Gar wunderstil/was da wolt weren
Traurig waren all jr geperen.

Die erst Fraw.

Da fieng die aller eltest an
Vnd sprach/ich hab ein jungen man
Gehabt ein jar vnd viertze wochen
Der hat sein trew an mir geprochen
Den hab ich zů eim herren gmacht
Jtzund bin ich von jm veracht
Er heyßt mich seynen alten betzen
Vnd thůt mich mit hön worten pretzen
Vnd geet vmb mit andren schlepsecken
In die taber vnd huren ecken.
Dergleych hat er auch seyn bescheyd
Im hauß daheim mit meyner meyd
Auch hat man jm nechten zů nacht
Ein banckhart in das hauß gebracht
Den můß er lassen hin vmb lon
Was ich lang spart/das wirt er on
Noch můß ich zů dem allen schweygen
Er spot meyn vnd zeygt mir die feygen
Darumb jr frawen all gemeyn
Laßt euch meyn not geklaget seyn.

Die ander Fraw.

Ein junge fraw hinwider sprach
Ich leyd noch grösser vngemach
Von meynem alten grawen man
Den ich vmb gelt genumen han
Bey dem ich hab keyn freud noch můt
Wann er strebt geytzigklich nach gůt
Vnd hat meyn sorg vor yederman
Geet eyner für vnd sicht mich an
So můß ich dann Aifferbeis essen
Der eyffer hat jn gar besessen
Drutz das ich mit eym red ein wort
Er schleycht mir nach an alle ort
Er horcht vnd loßt/daucht wie ein mauß
On jn dörfft ich nicht für das hauß
Wenn ander frawen höflich prangen
Můß ich daheym sitzen gefangen
Ich dörfft nicht auß zum fenster schawen
Also můß ich/jr lieben frawen/
In meynem jungen blůt verderben
Sol das lang wern/so můß ich sterben.

Die dritt Fraw.

Zum dritten sprach ein fraw gantz arm
Ach Got jr sitzet beyde warm
In ehr vnd gůt vorhin erworben
Mit meynem man bin ich verdorben
An ehren freuden vnd an gůt
Seyn ding er als verlassen thůt
Wann er ist faul vnd gar vnechtig
Hinlessig vnd gantz vnfürtrechtig
Mit arbeit sticht er keynen Bären
Er schleufft nur vmb nach newen mären
Auff seyn handel hat er keyn sorg
Des Kaysers gůt nem er auff borg
Zů zalen hat er gar keyn sin
Bis man jn treybt mit gricht dahin
Er sagt vil zů/helt nicht das minst
All jar erschleycht vns der hauß zinßt
Dann můß wir pfand für haußzinß lassen
So loß ist er vber die massen
Vnd hat verlorn glauben vnd trawen
Das sey euch klagt jr frumen frawen.

Die vierd Fraw.

Die vierd fieng an zů klagen auch
Ir frawen/ich hab ein weynschlauch
Alle Wirtßheuser er auß schleufft
Darinn er schlemmet/frißt vnd seufft
Vnd drinckt gantze vnd halbe zů
Vnd füllt sich wie ein dreber ků
Dann kumpt er heym vnd wirfft ein greyß
Ein saw het wol daran jr speyß
Dann stinckt er wie ein faules aß
Vnd bald er auß schlefft vber das
So zeucht er hin zum prenten weyn
Da ander drunckenboltz auch seyn
Darnach er auff ein süplein geet
Wann er mer gelts im hauß nicht het
Das wert dann hin den gantzen tag
Vor hunger ich die haut kaum trag
Den ich leyd mit meyn kleynen kinden
Mit dem thůt mein haußrat verschwinden
Das ich schir nichts mer hab im hauß
Ir frawen rat wo sol ich auß?

Die fünfft Fraw.

Die fünfft zů klagen auch anhůb
Vnd sprach/meyn man ist ein spil bůb
Alle schlupffwinckel er auß kreucht
Darvor sich sunst ein yeder scheucht
Bis er die nassen knaben findt
Da geet er an als sey er blindt
Mit karten spil vnd dem vmbschantzen
Wann sie dann rupffen all seyn pflantzen
Vnd das sie jn gar baden auß
Dann kumpt er mawlet in das hauß
Flücht/es möcht der erdpoden krachen
So ich dann auch red zů den sachen
So thůt er mir die haut vol schlagen
Thůt knecht vnd meyd zum hauß auß jagen
All meyn kleyder hat er versetzt
Zin vnd das betgwand auch zů letzt
Das ich im stro lig bey der nacht
Vnd hab jm doch vil gelts zů bracht
Das ist hindurch mit meynem man
Ir frawen rat was sol ich than?

Die sechst Fraw.

Weynend hůb an jr klag die sechst
Vnd sprach/in glück bin ich die schwechst
Was jr all fünff klagt in gemeyn
Das hat meyn man an jm alleyn
Er bůlt/er eyffert/trinckt vnd spilt
Er leugt vnd treugt/ist faul vnd stilt
Grob/vnzüchtig vnd vnbescheyden
Er flůcht vnd schilt gleych eynem heyden
Die bösten rott er an jm hat
So mans findt in der gantzen stat
Darmit thůt er sich teglich balgen
Hawen vnd in dem kot vmb walgen
Er ist ein lautre hadermetz
Das ich offt bey mir selber schetz
Das er zů letzt erstochen wer
Dartzů ist er mir gar gefer
Tag vnde nacht mit schlahen rauffen
Ich můß jm offt zů nacht entlauffen
Ich wolt das er am galgen hing
Got geb wie es mir darnach ging.

Die sybend Fraw.

Die sibend ein feyßt erber weyb
Sprach/das ich nicht vnklaget bleyb
Vber meyn man so ist mir bang
Das er offt ist von mir so lang
Auff meß vnd marckten vberland
Sunst helt er sich in seynem stand
Gen mir als ein recht biderman
Vber den ich nichts klagen kan
Doch war er erstlich frech genug
Das ich mit güten jm abzug
Ir frawen so nempt bey mir ler
Das ewer keyne fürbas mer
Vber jr man so thörlich klag
Voraus wo mans nicht helffen mag
Sunst bringt sie sich mit jm in schand
Sonder sie sol jn mit verstand
Gütlich straffen mit allem fleyß
Das er laß ab von seyner weyß
Villeycht so wirt ablassen er
So spricht Hans Sachs Schůmacher.

Stephan Hamer zů Nürmberg in der Rotgassen. 1531.

Figure 22: Erhard Schön (image), Hans Sachs (text), *Seven Wives Complaining about their Husbands*, Germany, 1531. Woodcut. Gotha, Herzogliches Museum.

Ein gesprech zwischen Siben mennern/darinn sie jre Weyber beklagen.

Eins abents ich spaciret auß
Auff ein schlaff trunck in ein wirtßhauß
Darinnen siben menner sassen
Die frölich truncken vnde assen
Vnd redten gar von mancherley
Was in dem land wer das geschrey
Possirten also mit eynander
Kamen von eynem auff das ander
Zů letzt die red sich thet vmbscheyben
Zů klagen auch von jren weyben
Wie keyner seyner recht kündt thon
Vnd was nur vber zwerch thet gon
Müst die schuld alleyn tragen er
Als ob das weyb vnschuldig wer
Vnd het keyn wasser nie betrübet
Mit dem eyner den andern übet
Also nam ich ein halbe maß
Damit hinter den ofen saß
Vnd höret jren schnacken zů
Wie ich hernach erzelen thů.

Der erst man.

Anfieng ein junger schöner man
Hört zů/ein altes weyb ich han
Die mich teglichen hart beklagt
Ich sey ein büler/wie sie sagt
Vnd ob ich gleych dasselbig thů
So bringt sie mich doch selb darzů
Wenn ich gern mit jr frölich wer
So brumpt sie wie ein alter Ber
Sie ist ein weyb bey achtzig jaren
Vnd wil ich sol jr helffen sparen
Vnd sol bey jr im hauß vmb zausen
Weyt bin ich lieber von jr dausen
Jr gelt sie mir vmbd oren plewt
Hat mich zwar nur ein mal gerewt
Das weret auff heutigen tag
Das ich euch allen trewlich klag
Het ich gewißt jr langes leben
Zů jr het ich mich nicht begeben
O der mir saget sie wer todt
Dem geb ich ein gůt pottenbrodt.

Der ander man.

Ein alter sprach/Hört/ich vertreyb
Meyn zeyt mit eynem jungen weyb
Die ich von jr schön wegen nam
Die ist mir lengest worden gram
Vnd thůt vberwensch ob mir
Als ob ich nit gehört zů jr
Teglich sie sich zirt/preyst/vnd putzt
Vor dem spiegel streicht/zafft/vnd mutzt
Gantz reysig auff den reuterschlag
Vnd leit am fenster vbertag
Zů schawen auff die jungen knaben
Die teglich vor der thür hin traben
Wann ich jr auff die net thů schawen
So klagt sie dann bey andern frawen
Ich sey ein alter eyfferer
Het sie gůt erbarlich geper
Helt mich ehalich mit trewem můt
Seyd sie von mir hat ehr vnd gůt
Ich west sie auch zů halten wol
Rat jr/wes ich mich halten sol.

Der dritt man.

Zum dritten sprach ein schlechter man
So wißt das ich ein Eheweyb han
Die ist seer faul vnd gar vnheußlich
Zottet/zerhadert/vnd gantz scheußlich
Schlächtisch mit arbeyt/ist doch starck
Vnd steht stäts an dem klapper marck
Da sie erfert vnd richtet auß
Wie ander leute halten hauß
Vnd wann ich sol zů mittag essen
Hat sie des krauts am marck vergessen
Die Erbes sind verprent zů kolen
Dann můß/vom koch/ichs/pfenbert holen
Das kot leyt hinter der stubthür
Ein saw man wol darinn verlür
Der gleych im hauß sunst vberal
Ligt es wie in eynem Sewstal
Das machet mich auch werckloß seer
Das ich fürthin mag nymer mer
Kummen auff grünes zweyg mit jr
Wiewol sie des geyt vrsach mir.

Der vierdt man.

Zu dem vierdten so sprach ein feyster
Ach Got/meyn fraw ist selber meyster
Erstlich ließ ich jrn zaum zů lanck
Jetz scheupt sie mich gar vnter panck
Gelt nympt sie ein/vnd geyt es auß
So můß ich seyn der narr im hauß
Vmbgehn an eyner hennen stat
Jr ding kaufft sie jr ein mit rat
Mir langt sies auff eym spenleyn her
Ertap ich etwan gelt on gfer
So thů ich mich vnmůts ergetzen
Thů mich zů gůten gsellen setzen
Mit den trinck ich die nacht zum tag
Dann fürt meyn fraw vber mich klag
Ich verderb sie mit meym weyn sitzen
Ließ meyn weyb aber jr poptzen
Mit schurtzbeltzen/röcken vnd schauben
Mit porten/stauchen/goller/hauben
So wolt ein hund ich sorgen lan
Meyn weyb aber die heist Sieman.

Der fünfft man.

Zum fünfften sprach ein wüster knab
Jr lieben gsellen/wißt ich hab
Ein weyb/das ist schier ymmer vol
Das wissen alle nachpaurn wol
Wann sie schleycht heymlich int weinkeller
Versaufft kandel/schüssel vnd deller
Wo sich dasselb nicht wil gepüren
Lat sie daheym den plinden füren
Jn hefen/krügen heymelich
Bis das sie doch gefüllet sich
So ich ein anders gwinnen wil
Setz ich mich auch vber das spil
Bis ich den bettel gar verschweyß
Das macht sie mit jr vollen weyß
Sie pricht hefen so prich ich krüg
Nicht weyß ich wie lang es noch tüg
Sie war auff schleckerey erzogen
Weyß nicht wers ander hat betrogen
Ich nam sie von der pfenning wegen
Wer ich dieweyl im Rein gelegen.

Der sechst man.

Der sechst in eynem knöbel bart
Sprach/keyner hat ein bößre hart
Als ich selb hab eynen fegteuffel
Die jn so drutzigklich auff kneuffel
Sie kiffelt/keyffelt vbernacht
Was ich mach/red/oder betracht
Das gfelt jr alles von mir nicht
Sie gronet/prumet/beyßt vnd sticht
Da můß ich seyn jr dieb vnd schalck
So schlag ich sie dann in den balck
Vnd mach mich darnach auß dem hauß
Bleyb offt ein tag zwen drey darauß
Das ich nur schlemen spilen thů
Da bringt mich meyn fegteuffel zů
Der rent mir nach offt ins wirtßhaus
Vnd holhüpt mich mit worten auß
Ein hund ein brot kaum von mir nem
So halt wir hauß gantz widerzem
Niemant macht zwischen meyner frawen
Vnd mir frid/dann schauffel vnd hawen.

Der sybend man.

Zum letzten sprach ein erber man
Nit mercklichs ich zů klagen han
Dann das meyn weyb ist feißt vnd schwer
Erstlichen war sie magerer
Da zug ichs nach dem willen meyn
Derhalben wir yetz eynig seyn
Jedes thůt was das ander wil
Vnd sind freuntlich/fridlich vnd stil
So solt jr mit bescheydenheyt
Ewre weyber zů erster zeyt
Gezogen haben tugenthafft
Vnd mit vernunfft sie han gestrafft
Wo weyber ziehen vber zwerg
Vnd menner auff ein andern berg
Da eyns dem andern gündt nicht gůtz
Da bringt ein drutz den andren drütz
Derhalb ziech yeder noch seyn weyb
Das er mit jr bey ehren bleyb
Wie man dann spricht/ein frumer man
Ein frumes weyb jm ziehen kan.

Stephan Hamer zů Nürmberg in der Rotgassen. 1531.

H. S. S.

Figure 23: Erhard Schön (image), Hans Sachs (text), *Seven Men Complaining about their Wives*, Germany, 1531. Woodcut. Gotha, Herzogliches Museum.

Figure 24: Erhard Schön (image), Hans Sachs (text), *There is No Greater Treasure on Earth than an Obedient Wife who Covets Honor*, Germany, c. 1533. Woodcut. Gotha, Herzogliches Museum.

Figure 25: Israhel van Meckenem, *Battle for the Pants*, Germany, c. 1495-1503. Engraving, 160 x 109 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 26: Monogrammist MT, *A Mistreated Husband*, Germany, c. 1540-1550. Engraving, 74 x 59 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 27: Hans Schäuffelein, *Diaper Washer*, Germany, c. 1536. Woodcut to lost poem *Ho, Ho, Diaper Washer* by Hans Sachs. Coburg, Kunstsammlungen der Veste Coburg, Kupferstichkabinett.

Figure 28: Housebook Master, *Coat of Arms with Peasant on his Head*, Germany, c. 1470-1500. Engraving, 137 x 85 mm. London, The British Museum.

Die Neünerley hewt einer bösen Frawen/sampt jren neün aygenschafften.

ALs ich eins abents gieng spacieren
Ward einer sach nach fantasieren
Gieng auff vnd ab die Haller wiesen
Do gieng herein vom Püchsen schiessen
Meinr gsellen einer der sich zwar
Verhayrat het in disem Jar
Der war zerckratzet vns zerkrelt
Den grüst ich vnd zů red jn stelt
Wo er gewest wer vntern katzen
Er sprach/du darffst mich nit seer fatzen
Die katzen haben mein nicht gfelt
Mein Fraw die hat mir also gstrelt
Ich sprach/wie hat sich das begeben
Er sprach/nun hör vnd merck mich eben
Mein weyb ist nicht wie ander leut
Wann sie hat wol neünerley heut
Obeinander/des hat sie pur
An jr auch neünerley natur
Des můß yegkliche haut allein
Besonderbar geschlagen sein
Es wil kein schlagen an jr klecken
Ich sprach thů mir die sach entecken
Das ichs verstee/ich bitt dich drumb
Er sprach/in Summa summarum
Als ich am Montag kam vom wein
Vnd was ich fragt die Frawen mein
So wolt sie mir kein antwort geben
Do dacht ich bey mir selbert eben
Ich hab offt ghört von alten leuten
Etlich weyber sind von neün heuten
Der mir zů teyl ist eine worden
Also ergrimmet ich in zorn
Vnd thet jr die Stockfisch haut plewen
Zum nechsten sich vor mir zů schewen
Antwort zů geben auff mein frag
So bald ich jr gab noch ein schlag
Do het ichs auff Bernhaut troffen
Do kam ein röt jr her geloffen
Vnd fieng heymlichen an zů prummen
Wiewol ich kein wort hab vernummen
Gab ich jr noch ein gůts an schlaff
Vnd sie gleich auff Genßhaut traff
Erst fieng sie an ein solches schnadern
Ein schwatzen klapern vnd thadern
Ee ich ein wort antworten thet
Het sie die weyl wol siebne gredt
Thet mit hönworten mich fast effen
Erst thet ichs auff die Huntzhaut treffen
Erst fieng sie hefftig an zů pellen
Vnd hieng mir an vil schamper schellen

Ich wer ein Esel/Narr vnd tropff
Ich gab jr noch ein gůts an kopff
Do traff ichs auff den Hasen palck
Sie loff daruon vnd schray du schalck
Du Huren jeger vnd Eebrecher
Du Spilgur vnd du wein zecher
Stach mich mit der gleich worten spitzig
Ich luff jr nach wurd wider hitzig
Vnd stach sie wider zů den oren
Traff sie gleich auff die roßhaut voren
Do schlugs auff sam der windt her wehet
Vnd stieß mich das ich mich verdrehet
Erst traff ichs auff die haut der katzen
Do fiels auff mich mit kreln vnd kratzen
Als wölt sie mich zů flecken reissen
Das schryen kundt ich kaum verpeissen
Ich zuckt ein prügel lanck genůg
Damit ichs auff die Sew haut schlůg
Tantzt jr auff dem rück vnd den armen
Das sie sich selbert thet erbarmen
Vnd fieng an zů greynen vnd rüln
Als ich sie war noch baser knüln
Erst traff ichs auff die menschen haut
Do rüffet sie vmb gnad gar laut
Vnd sprach mein hertz lieber Man
Hör auff ich wil sein nymmer than
Mich hat ein nachpawrin verfürt
Zů handeln das sich nicht gebürt

Der wil ich volgen nymmer mer
Hab dir zů pfandt mein weyblich eer
Vnd fiel mir weynend vmb den hals
Ich sprach/es sey vergeben alß
Doch kumm nymmer das rat ich dir
Dich auff zůbaumen gegen mir
So macht wir mit einander fride
Wie lang es wert das waiß ich nit
So hat der hader sich angspunnen
Wie wol ich hab die schlacht gewunnen
Ist mir mein teyl auch tückisch woren
Im angsicht hals vnd vmb die oren
Das ich der schlacht nicht laugnen mag
Ich sprach/mein gsell merck was ich sag
Jr jungen Eemänner seyt zů gech
Zů mütwillig/doll/dumm vnd frech
Wenn euch ein weyb nit schön ansicht
Oder nach ewerm sinn zů spricht
Oder nicht aller sach recht geyt
Wenn jr schon gar vnheußlich seyt
Wölt jrs mit schlagen als auß richten
Das zimpt eim biderman mit nichten
Vngraten Ee werden darauß
Man můß mit krieg nit halten hauß
Sonder mit frid vnd freündtschafft mer
Paulus vns mannen geyt ein ler
Die weyb mit vernunfft zů regieren
Nit pollern/grob tyrannisieren

Weyl sie der schwechst werckzeug sein
Derhalben straff dein weyb allein
Mit vernünfftigen gůten worten
Zwischen euch beyden an den orten
Mein liebes weyb/das solt nicht thon
Vnd jhenes steet dir übel an
Schaw diß ist schand/vnd jhens ist schad
Wilt haben mein gunst vnd genad
So stee des müssig/vnd volg mir
Dargegen wil ich volgen dir
Wo mir ein ding steet übel an
Wil handlen als ein redlich Man
Vnd wil kein böß wort dir mer geben
So müg wir wol vnd freündtlich leben
Bey leyb laß niemandt dich verhetzen
Das du dich gegen mir wölst setzen
Der gleich sol niemandt mich verfüren
Zů handlen das nicht thů gepüren
Was dir felt soltu klagen mir
Was mir bricht wil ich sagen dir
Du darffst dich vor mir gar nicht schewen
Kein mēsch maint vns mit gantzē trewen
Als wir zwey ghören ye zůsamen
Was wolt wir zancken vnd grißgramen
Füren ein solch Teuffelisch leben
Vnd vns vnter die leut außgeben
Die halten dann nichts von vns beyden
Schaw also straff dein weyb bescheyden
Ist denn ein eer jn jrem leyb
So zeuchst auß jr ein ghorsam weyb
Wie man denn spricht ein ein frummer Man
Ein frummes weyb im ziehen kan
Wo sie aber blieb aygenwillig
Nicht handlet das wer gleich vnd billig
Wolt dir gar nicht sein vnthenig
Vngehorsam vnd widerspennig
Wo sie rümoret noch dar gegen
So magstu straffen sie mit schlegen
Doch mit vernunfft vnd wol bescheyden
Das es vnschedlich sey euch beyden
Also went süß vnd sawers für
Wie einem biderman gepür
Biß jr zů letzt eins synnes werdt
Dardurch euch hie in zeyt auff erdt
Frid/freüd vnd freündtligkeyt erwachs
Im Eeling standt / das wunscht Hans
(Sachs

¶ Gedrückt durch Hans
Guldenmundt.

Figure 29: Barthel Beham (image), Hans Sachs (text), *The Nine Hides of an Angry Wife*, Germany, c. 1520-1540. Woodcut. Gotha, Schlossmuseum.

Figure 30: Albrecht Dürer, *Design for Decoration in the Town Hall of Nuremberg*, Germany, 1521. Pen and brown ink with watercolor, silhouetted and mounted on another sheet (probably by artist), 256 x 351 mm. New York, The Morgan Library & Museum.

Figure 31: Master ES, *Samson and Delilah*, Germany, c. 1460-1465. Engraving, 13.8 x 10.7 cm.

Figure 32: Hans Burgkmair, *Samson and Delilah*, from *Weiberlisten*, Germany, c. 1519. Woodcut, 118 x 95 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 33: Lucas van Leyden, *Solomon Adoring the Idol of Moloch*, Leiden, c. 1514. Engraving, 171 x 135 mm. Chicago, The Art Institute of Chicago.

Figure 34: Master MZ, *Solomon Worshipping False Gods*, Germany, 1501. Engraving, 18.5 x 15.7 cm. Washington, D.C., National Gallery of Art.

Figure 35: Hans Burgkmair, *Solomon's Idolatry*, from *Weiberlisten*, Germany, c. 1519. Woodcut, 118 x 94 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 36: Georg Pencz, *David and Bathsheba*, German, c. 1531. Engraving, 47 x 76 mm. London, The British Museum.

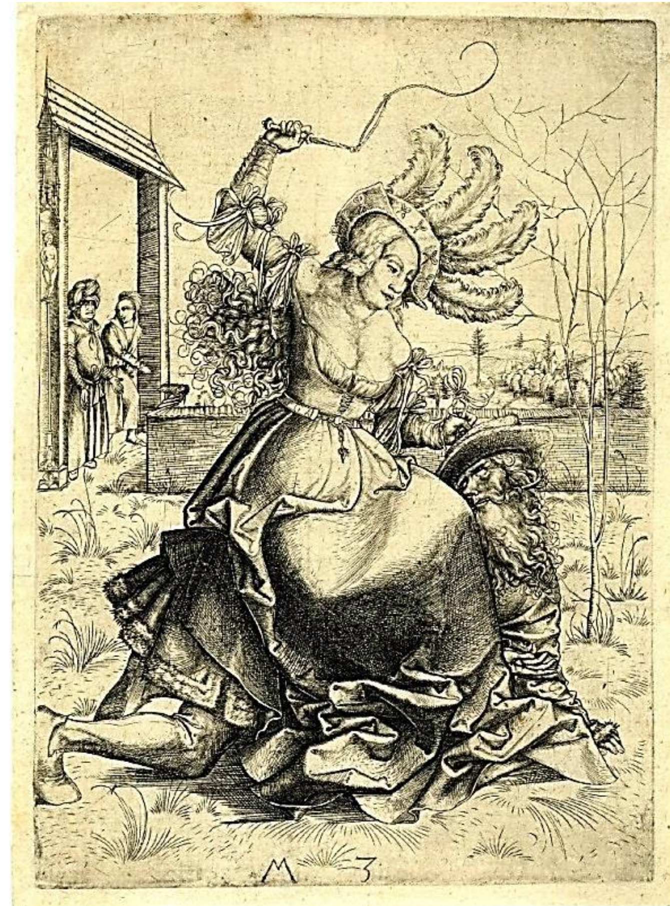


Figure 37: Hans Burgkmair, *David and Bathsheba*, from *Weiberlisten*, German, 1519. Woodcut, 119 x 94 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 38: Master MZ, *Phyllis Riding Aristotle*, German, c. 1500-1503. Engraving, 180 x 130 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 39: Housebook Master, *Phyllis Riding Aristotle*, Germany, c. 1483-1488. Drypoint, 159 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum Amsterdam, Rijksprentenkabinet.

Figure 40: Hans Baldung Grien, *Phyllis Riding Aristotle*, Germany, c. 1515. Woodcut, 33.3 x 23.8 cm. Berlin, Staatliche Museen zu Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett.

Figure 41: *Judith, Humilitas, and Jael*, *Speculum Virginum*, c. 1140. London, British Library, MS Arundel 44, fol. 34v.

Figure 42: *The Virgin Mary Overcomes the Devil/Judith Kills Holofernes*, *Speculum Humanae Salvationis*, Southwest Germany or Austria, c. 1330-40. Vienna, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Cod. S.N. 2612, fol. 32v.

Figure 43: Erhard Schön, *Eve, Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, Leah, Jael*, left sheet of *The Twelve Famous Women of the Old Testament*, Germany, c. 1530. Woodcut, 198 x 383 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 44: Erhard Schön, *Ruth, Michal, Abigail, Judith, Esther, Susanna*, right sheet of *The Twelve Famous Women of the Old Testament*, Germany, c. 1530. Woodcut, 196 x 382 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 45: Jost Amman, *Judith the Moderate*, from *Celebrated Women of the Old Testament*, Germany, c. 1568-1596. Etching, 84 x 56 mm. London, The British Museum

Figure 46: Jost Amman, *Susanna the Chaste*, from *Celebrated Women of the Old Testament*, Germany, c. 1568-1596. Etching, 84 x 56 mm. London, The British Museum.

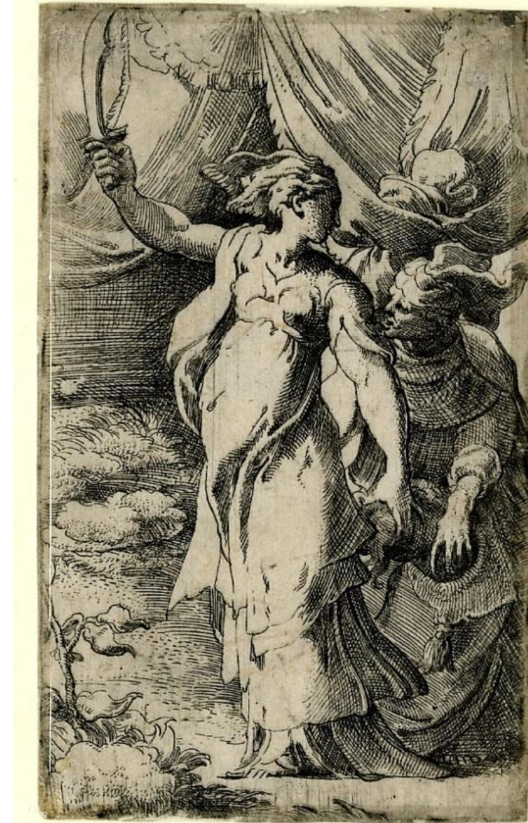


Figure 47: Attributed to Baccio Baldini, *Judith and Holofernes*, Florence, c. 1465-1480. Engraving, 115 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 48: Parmigianino, *Judith and her Maid with the Head of Holofernes*, Italy, c. 1503-1540. Etching, 154 x 92 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 49: Hans Baldung Grien, *Eve*, Strasbourg, c. 1524-1525. Oil on panel, 208 x 83.5 cm. Budapest, Szépművészeti Múzeum.

Figure 50: Hans Baldung Grien, *Venus and Cupid*, Strasbourg, c. 1525. Oil on panel, 208 x 84 cm, Otterlo, Kröller-Müller Museum.

Figure 51: Jacob Binck, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, Germany, c. 1520-1559. Engraving, 45 x 31 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 52: Hans Ladenspelder, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, Germany, 1535. Engraving, 68 x 47 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 53: Sebald Beham after Barthel Beham, *Judith with the Head of Holofernes*, Germany, 1547. Engraving, 175 x 48 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 54: Monogrammist RB after Barthel Beham, *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, Germany, c. 1530-1550. Engraving, 63 x 38 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 55: Barthel Beham, *Cleopatra*, Germany, 1524. Engraving, 58 x 39 mm. London, The British Museum.

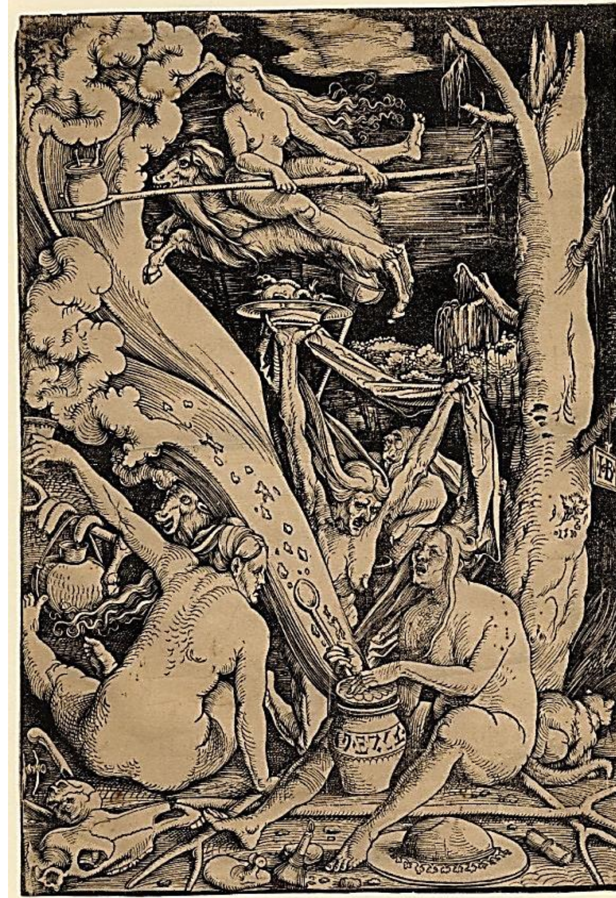


Figure 56: Albrecht Dürer, *Witch Riding Backwards on a Goat*, Nuremberg, c. 1500-1502. Engraving, 115 x 72 mm. Chicago, the Art Institute of Chicago.

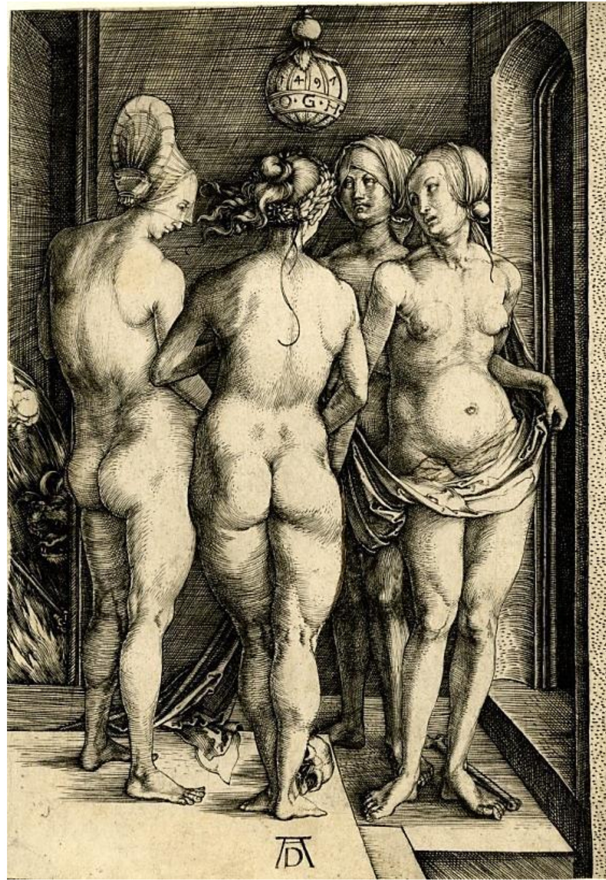
Figure 57: Hans Baldung Grien, *The Witches' Sabbath*, Germany, 1510. Woodcut, 375 x 259 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 58: Marcantonio Raimondi after Raphael or Giulio Romano, *Lo Stregozzo* (*The Witches' Procession*), Italy, c. 1520s. Engraving, 30 x 63 cm. Austin, The Blanton Museum of Art.

Figure 59: Hans Baldung Grien, *Weather Spell*, in Johann Geiler von Kayserberg's *Die Emeis*, fol. 37v. Strassburg, 1516. Woodcut, 8.8 x 14.2 cm. Frankfurt, Universitätsbibliothek Johann Christian Senckenberg.

Figure 60: Barthel Beham, detail of *Judith Seated on the Body of Holofernes*, Nuremburg, 1525. Engraving, 55 x 37 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 61: *The Serpent Tempting Eve*, *Spiegel Menschlicher Behaltnuss* (*Mirror of Human Salvation*), Germany, c. 1481. Woodcut, fol. 2r, col. 1.



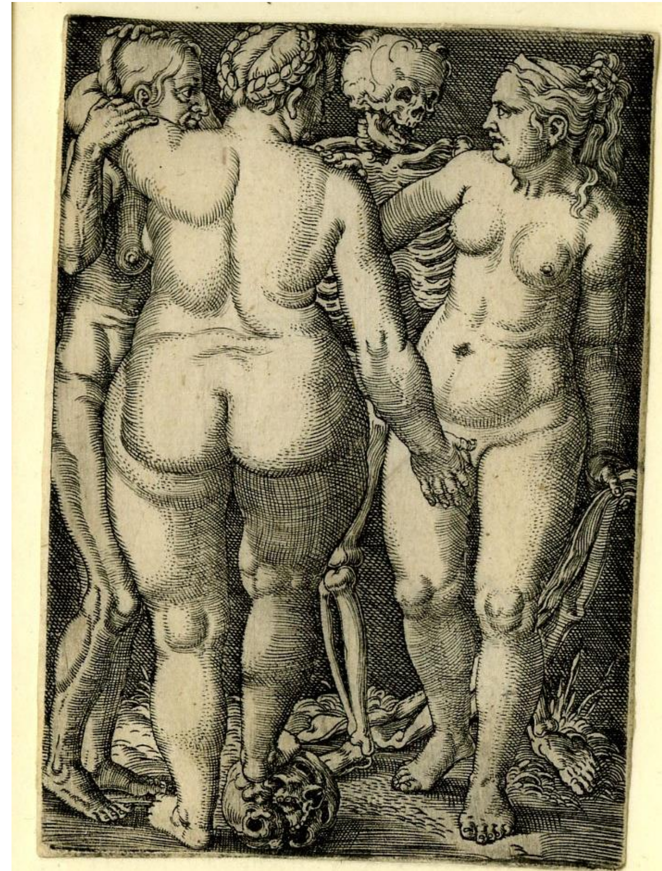


Figure 62: Albrecht Dürer, *The Four Witches*, Germany, 1497. Engraving, 190 x 132 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 63: Barthel Beham, *Three Women and Death*, Germany, c. 1525-1527. Engraving, 73 x 54 mm. London, The British Museum.

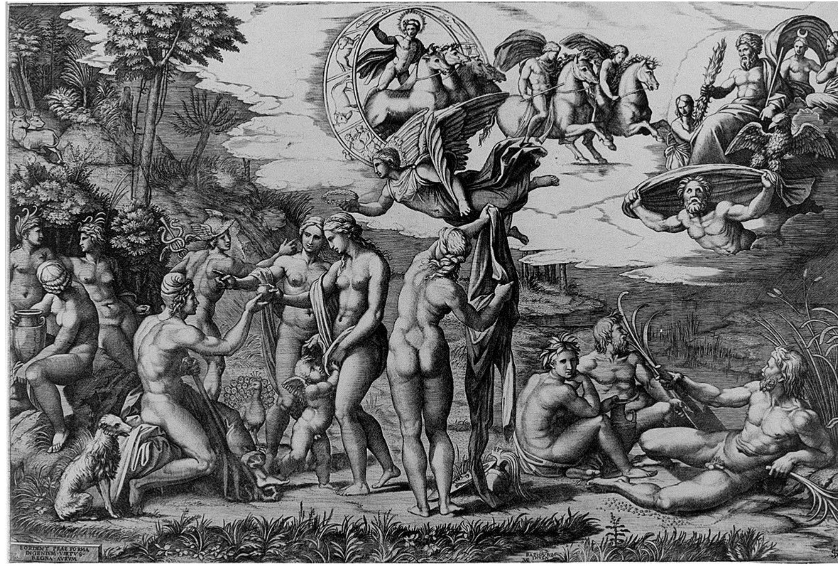


Figure 64: Marcantonio Raimondi after Raphael, *Judgment of Paris*, Italy, c. 1510-1520. Engraving, 29.1 x 43.7 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Figure 65: Marcantonio Raimondi after Raphael, detail of *Judgment of Paris*, Italy, c. 1510-1520. Engraving, 29.1 x 43.7 cm. New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Figure 66: Barthel Beham, *A Nude Woman Seated on a Cuirass*, Nuremberg, c. 1520-1540. Engraving, 51 x 35 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 67: *Crouching Venus* (Lely's Venus), Rome, 2nd century AD. Marble sculpture, 1.120 m, Roman copy after Hellenistic original from 200 BC. London, Royal Collection, on long-term loan to The British Museum.

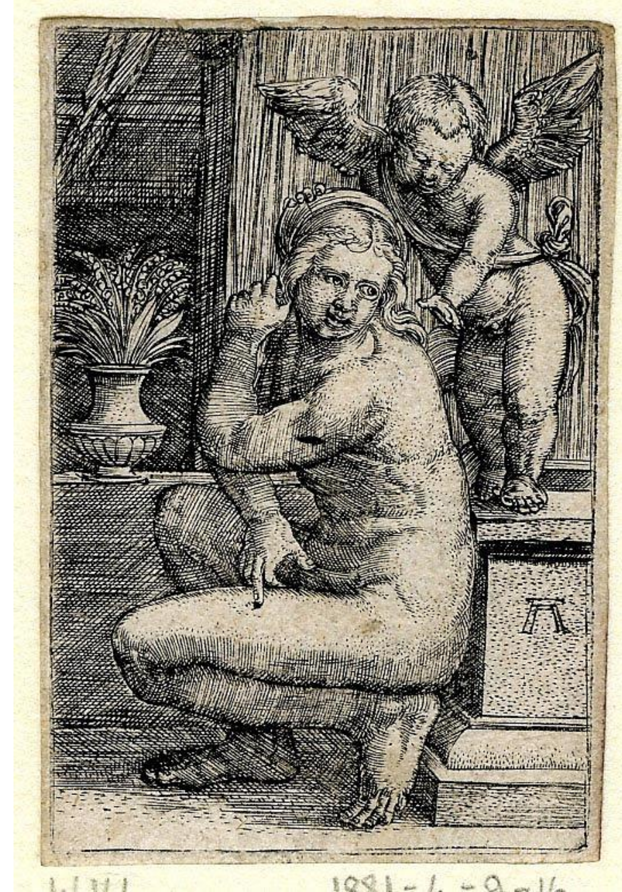


Figure 68: Marcantonio Raimondi, *Crouching Venus*, Italy, c. 1510-1527. Engraving, 223 x 146 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 69: Albrecht Altdorfer, *Crouching Venus*, Germany, c. 1525-1530. Engraving, 61 x 40 mm. London, The British Museum.

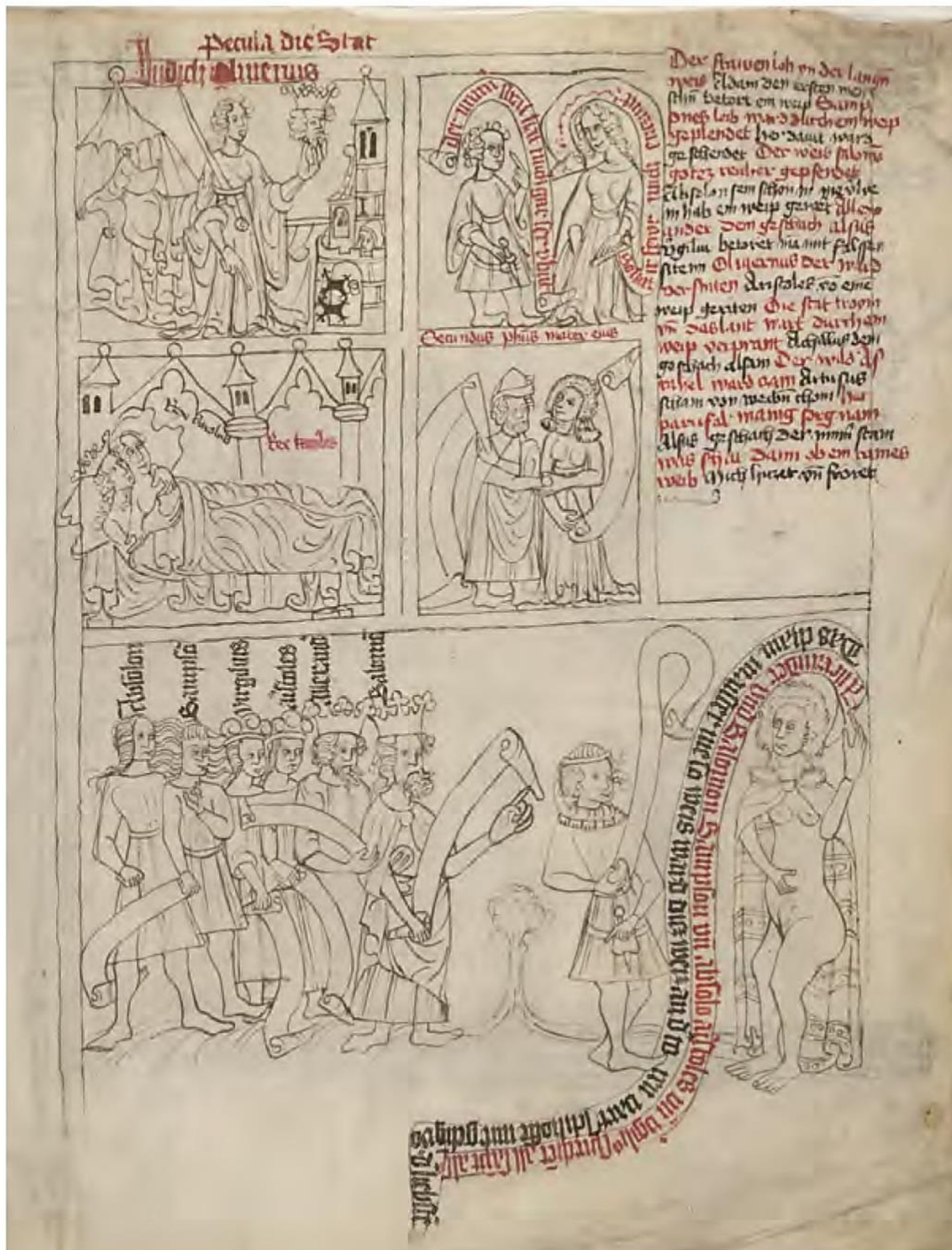


Figure 70: *Power of Women*, German Miscellany, early 15th century. Washington, D.C., Library of Congress, Rosenwald Collection, MS 4, fol. 8r.

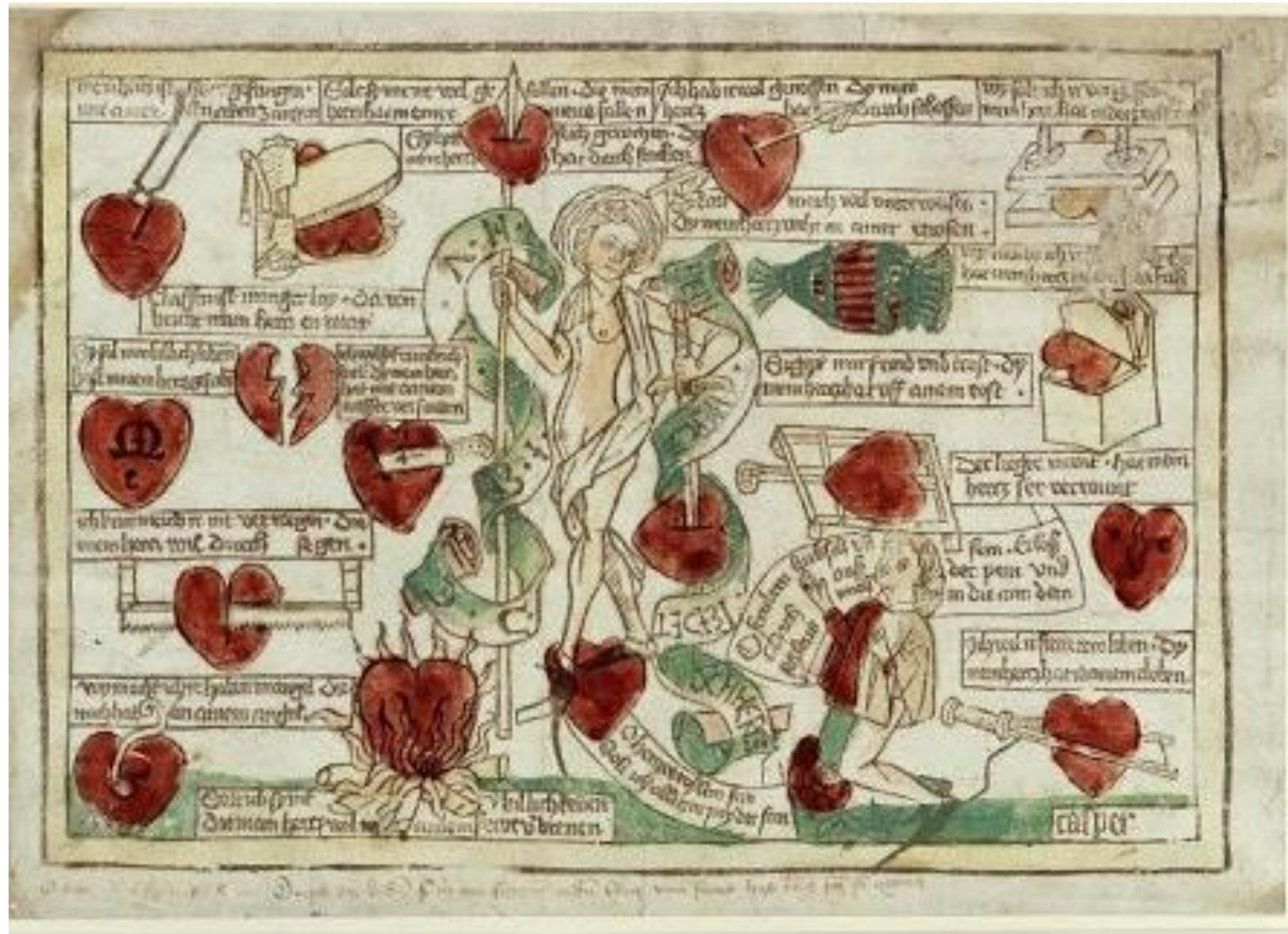


Figure 71: Master Caspar of Regensburg, *Venus and the Lover*, Regensburg, c. 1485. Colored woodcut, 25.7 x 36.5 cm. Berlin, Staatliche Museen Berlin, Kupferstichkabinett,.

Figure 72: Barthel Beham, *Venus and Cupid*, Germany, c. 1525. Drawing, 180 x 135 mm. Leiden, Rijksuniversiteit, Prentencabinet.

Figure 73: Monogrammist IB, *Venus and Cupid*, Germany, c. 1523-1530. Scabbard design engraving, 180 x 24 mm. London, The British Museum.

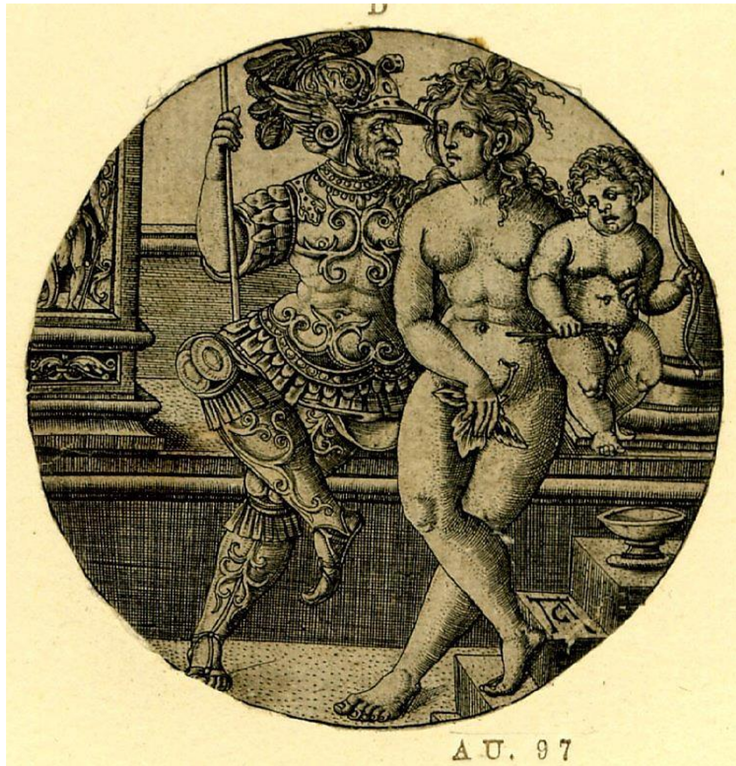


Figure 74: Allaert Claesz, *Mars, Venus, and Cupid*, Netherlands, c. 1520-1530. Engraving, 65 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 75: Marcantonio Raimondi, *Mars, Venus, and Cupid*, Italy, c. 1508-1510. Engraving, 296 x 211 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 76: Enea Vico after Parmigianino, *Venus and Mars Embracing near Vulcan at his Forge*, Italy, 1543. Engraving, 225 x 335 mm. London, The British Museum.

Figure 77: Sandro Botticelli, *Venus and Mars*, Italy, c. 1485. Tempera on panel, 69.2 x 173.4 cm. London, The National Gallery.

Figure 78: *Judith and her Maid with the Head of Holofernes*, Bible, Germany, c. 1478. Woodcut.

Figure 79: *Sarcophagus with Scenes of a Bacchanalia*, Italy, c. 140-160 AD. White marble, 204 x 510 x 66 cm. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli.

Figure 80: Detail of *Sarcophagus with Scenes of a Bacchanalia*, Italy, c. 140-160 AD. White marble, 204 x 510 x 66 cm. Naples, Museo Archeologico Nazionale di Napoli.

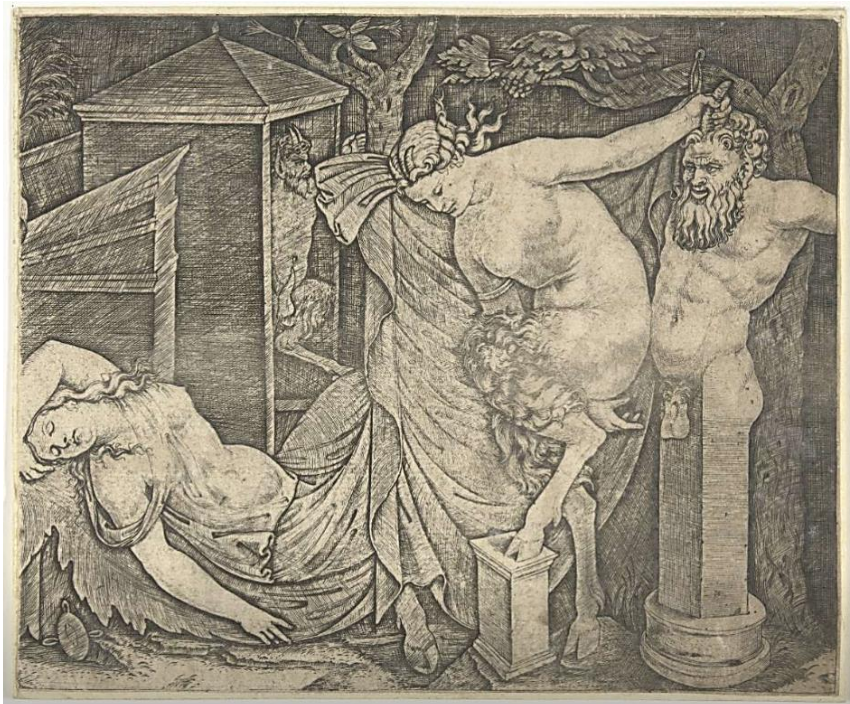


Figure 81: Marcantonio Raimondi after Raphael, fragment of *Bacchanal*, Italy, c. 1510-1520. Engraving, 143 x 175 mm. Amsterdam, Rijksmuseum, Rijksprentenkabinet.

Figure 82: Marcantonio Raimondi after Raphael, *Bacchanal*, Italy, c. 1510-1520. Engraving, 150 x 505 mm. Oxford, Ashmolean Museum.

Figure 83: After Marcantonio Raimondi after Giulio Romano, *Position 14*, from *I Modi*, Venice, c. 1527. Woodcut after *I Modi*. After Lynne Lawner, *I Modi: the Sixteen Pleasures*, page 87.

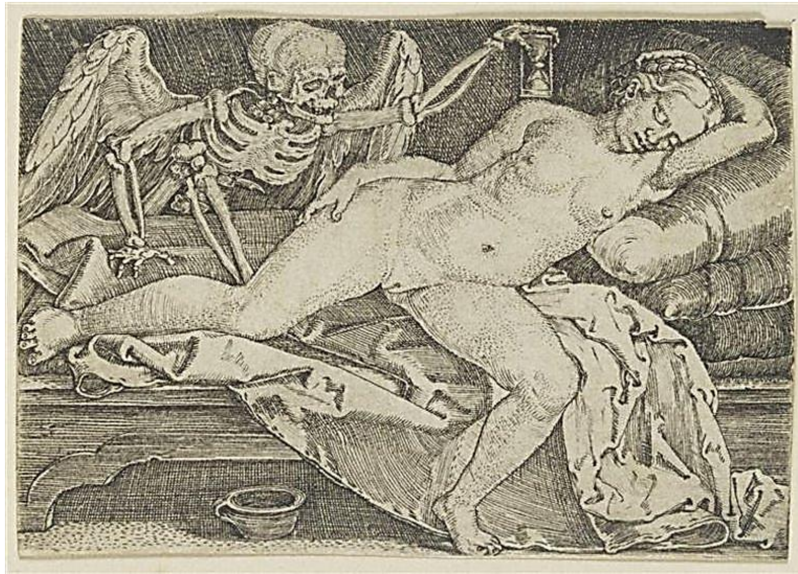


Figure 84: Barthel Beham, *Death and the Sleeping Woman*, Nuremberg, c. 1520s. Engraving, 54 x 77 mm. Paris, Musée du Louvre, Département des Artsgraphiques, Collection Edmond de Rothschild.

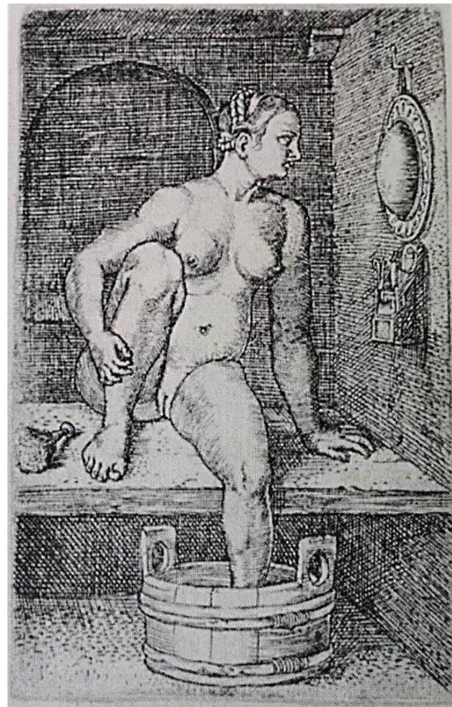


Figure 85: Barthel Beham, *Bathing Woman*, Nuremberg, c. 1520s. Engraving, 67 x 42 mm. Coburg, Kunstsammlungen der Veste Coburg.

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~ Vita ~

Kendra Jo Grimmett was born in Indianapolis, Indiana. In 2007, she entered the University of Chicago in Chicago, Illinois. During her years as an undergraduate, Grimmett held internships at the Indianapolis Museum of Art, the Oriental Institute Museum, the Smart Museum of Art, the Smithsonian Institute's National Portrait Gallery, and the Art Institute of Chicago. In September 2010, she traveled to Oxford to study the Bohun Psalter-Hours at the Bodleian Library. Under the supervision of Aden Kumler, Grimmett wrote her honors thesis, entitled "Messages for a Medieval Bride: Counseling Mary de Bohun on Marriage and Motherhood," on the Bohun Psalter-Hours' rich visual program. In June 2011, she graduated with honors from both the Department of Art History and the College. Then, in August 2012, Grimmett entered the Graduate School at the University of Texas at Austin pursuing a master's degree in Medieval to Early Modern Art History. During the spring of 2014, she helped organize the Vagantes Medieval Graduate Student Conference, which took place in Austin, Texas, and she curated a special manuscript exhibition at the Harry Ransom Center for conference participants. Grimmett also served as Jeffrey Chipps Smith's graduate research assistant and helped edit the final manuscript of Smith's *Visual Acuity*, a selection of essays from the Frühe Neuzeit Interdisziplinär conference, "Visual Acuity and the Arts of Communication in Early Modern Germany."

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