

BERNARD MANDEVILLE: THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN IN THE
DEVELOPMENT OF CIVIL SOCIETIES

By

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ABSTRACT

This study examines a relatively unacknowledged feature of Bernard Mandeville's writing - his discussion of women and women's issues and the significance of this discussion to his larger thesis. The work is intended to demonstrate that the essential elements in Mandeville's developed thinking, fully argued by him in The Fable, were first discussed in his earlier reflections on women. By examining some of Mandeville's earlier, less well-known writing, in particular The Virgin Unmask'd and The Female Tatler, the study attempts to demonstrate that in them Mandeville lays out the essence of his argument, which is only later developed fully in The Fable of the Bees.

The study, by concentrating on the role of women in the civilizing process, is intended to bring to the fore a number of neglected features in Mandeville's writing. By closely scrutinizing Mandeville's theory of the psychological basis of all social relations, and the role of the passions, particularly pride, in the development of materially prosperous societies, the study attempts to demonstrate that the ideas and arguments that provoked Mandeville to develop his own comprehensive theory of the genesis and development of economically advanced societies were first articulated in the context of a discussion of female roles and feminine psychology. Further, that the formulation of Mandeville's ideas concerning the basis of society and social improvement did not originate as a ridicule of Richard Steele's priggish Squire Bickerstaff, his persona in The Tatler, as M.M. Goldsmith claims, but rather that these conceptions were present as early as The Virgin Unmask'd, written, it is argued, before Steele's Tatler was published.

The Introduction surveys the current scholarship on Mandeville and his significance as a social and economic theorist, and reviews scholarly opinion about the motives which may have prompted him to develop his controversial theories. Chapter One discusses the elements and significance of Mandeville's social theory. The chapter begins with a review of Mandeville's life, sketches out the development of the ideas presented in his writing, the effects these ideas had on his contemporaries, and his importance within a broad range of speculation in the early eighteenth century about the impulses which propel individuals to seek private gain.

Because the passions, particularly pride, play a dominant role in Mandeville's theorizing, Chapter Two is an examination of Mandeville's theory of pride and its role in the civilizing process. Mandeville's intellectual predecessors and his place within a long line of moral argument concerning the role of the passions in the development of society are examined. The argument proper begins in Chapter Three with a discussion of the intellectual inheritance about women. Special attention is given to two elements of Mandeville's argument concerning the establishment of civil societies, the creation of chastity as a moral virtue and the development of marriage as a civil institution. Mandeville's own attitude towards women and his ideas concerning sexuality and marriage and the significance of both to his theorizing are reviewed at some length. The chapter concludes with an analysis of Mandeville's economic theory and the importance of women to it.

The conclusion reached is that Mandeville's speculations on women are an important, but neglected, feature of his social thinking, without which his Fable would not be the powerful book it is.

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INTRODUCTION

In spite of the furor that surrounded the publication of his Fable, and his considerable eighteenth-century notoriety, Bernard Mandeville was a relatively obscure figure in the scholarly literature until F.B. Kaye's edition of The Fable of the Bees in 1923.¹ Mandeville's work, traditionally studied in departments of English, nevertheless exerted a powerful, yet often subterranean, influence on social theorizing, particularly in economics and sociology. More recently, "Mandeville has come to enjoy widespread scholarly recognition as a theorist, a precursor of Thorstein Veblen and Robert Merton, of Friedrich Hayek as well as Keynes."² Students of Mandeville have described him as a thinker primarily concerned with the description and analysis of society.³ Yet the nature of these concerns is still contested. Mandeville was, it has been claimed, "a psychologist interested in giving a naturalistic account of ethical phenomena" by scrutinizing human motives,⁴ a compulsive debunker of human pride and received opinion,⁵ and a "thoroughgoing antiheroic utilitarian" interested in economic growth.⁶ Mandeville's technique has produced similar scholarly disagreement, being seen as satire,⁷ mock satire,⁸ satire underpinned with paradox⁹ or not satire at all.¹⁰

1 Bernard Mandeville, The Fable of the Bees: or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits, F.B. Kaye, ed., 2 vols., (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1924). References will be cited parenthetically in the text by volume and page number.

2 E. J. Hundert, "Bernard Mandeville and the Rhetoric of Social Science," Journal of the History of Behavioral Sciences, vol. 22, (October, 1986), p. 311.

3 Richard I. Cook, "The Great Leviathan of Lechery: Mandeville's Modest Defense of Public Stews (1724)", Mandeville Studies: New Explorations in the Art and Thought of Dr. Bernard Mandeville (1670-1733), Irwin Primer, ed., (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1975), p. 23.

4 M.R. Jack, "Religion and Ethics in Mandeville", Mandeville Studies, Primer, ed., p. 35.

5 Robert Adolph, "What Pierces or Strikes: Prose Styles in The Fable of the Bees," Mandeville Studies, Primer, ed., pp. 158/63.

6 Ibid., pp. 161/2.

7 Cook, "The Great Leviathan of Lechery," p. 28.

8 M. M. Goldsmith, Private Vices, Public Benefits: Bernard Mandeville's Social and Political Thought, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 55. Goldsmith claims that Mandeville's ironic exposure of the intellectual folly of the proponents of public and Christian

The almost universal reliance upon Kaye's edition of The Fable¹ makes his views an appropriate place to start in reviewing Mandeville scholarship. Kaye argues that Mandeville's thought revolves around a paradox which turns on his definition of virtue. Kaye identifies two major contemporary currents of thought concerning virtue, one ascetic or theological, the other rational. In the ascetic or theological tradition, virtue denoted a transcending of the demands of corrupt human nature, a conquest of self. In the rational tradition, it suggested conduct ruled by reason, which was held to be the distinctly human property making moral life possible (I: xlvi). Mandeville's own definition of virtue melded these two strands of argument. Virtuous acts, he claims, could only be those "by which Man, contrary to the impulse of Nature, should endeavour the Benefit of others, or the Conquest of his own Passions out of a Rational Ambition of being good."² Kaye points to this definition as the crucial element in what he calls Mandeville's "rigourism" (I: xlvi). When Mandeville applies this definition of virtue to human behaviour, Kaye argues, he can find no virtuous conduct in the world (I: xlviii). By judging men's actions not by their consequences but by their motives, only acts springing from rational impulses

virtue is a kind of mock satire. Satire as a genre, he argues, ridicules individuals or social types for failing to adhere to known standards. Mandeville ridicules this standard. Satire exposes men's follies so that they can be corrected and assumes that men can act differently; Mandeville assumes that they can not. Ibid., p. 56.

9 Adolph, "What Pierces of Strikes," p. 161.

10 Philip Pinkus, "Mandeville's Paradox," Mandeville Studies, Primer, ed., p. 200.

1 Most of what is known about Mandeville derives from Kaye's "excellent and exhaustive edition of The Fable." M.R. Jack, "Progress and Corruption in the Eighteenth Century: Mandeville's 'Private Vices, Public Benefits' ", Journal of the History of Ideas, vol. 37, (1976), p. 370. See also J.C. Maxwell, "Ethics and Politics in Mandeville," Philosophy, xxvi, 1951; Thomas Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville-Virtue and Commerce in Early Eighteenth Century England, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1978), p. xi. Even scholars who do not accept Kaye's interpretation feel compelled to base a considerable part of their work on it.

2 The Fable I, p. xlvi. Kaye quotes Mandeville's own definition from The Fable I, pp. 48-9. Later, Mandeville argues that "real Virtue requires a conquest over untaught Nature." The Fable II, p. 127. Both definitions require a rational conquest of human nature before an act can be deemed to be virtuous.

could be judged virtuous, and Mandeville discovers no actions dictated entirely by reason, free from self-regarding passions (I: xlvi, xlvii). Central to Kaye's thesis is his argument that, although ostensibly holding up an ideal of virtuous conduct, Mandeville was adamant that such conduct was impossible to attain. He really advised men to abandon the attempt to be virtuous and instead rest content to achieve socially useful goals (I: 1). And this, Kaye argues, makes Mandeville "a thoroughgoing utilitarian."¹

Malcolm Jack criticizes Kaye for his conclusion that Mandeville applied two common contemporary standards in his assessment of the morality of actions, the rigoristic and the utilitarian,² and, by holding to both, designed a paradox that led to a "reductio ad absurdum" of rigorism as a literary device introduced for satirical purposes. This interpretation of Mandeville's ethical position, he argues, is based on a misunderstanding of his intentions, which were to satirize the position of those who retain these two contrary ethical criteria. Jack claims instead that Mandeville's writing should be understood as an early and sophisticated attempt to explain moral phenomena solely in terms of human psychology.³

1 The Fable I, p. lviii. Kaye defines utilitarianism as an ethic whose moral touchstone is results and not abstract principle. (I, xlix, n.1) While not a modern definition of utilitarianism, Kaye says, it reflects the condition of ethical thought of the day. (Ibid.)

2 The rigoristic as a criterion for judging the motives of individuals' behaviour; the utilitarian as a criterion for judging the social consequences. Jack, "Progress and Corruption in the Eighteenth Century," p. 370.

3 Ibid., pp. 370/71/75.

M.M. Goldsmith sees a similar importance in Mandeville's work.¹ He argues that, despite the ironic and mocking tone of The Fable, it is a serious examination of social interaction, following the philosophical pattern of an analysis of human nature and the genesis of society from a state of nature.² Mandeville's theory of the development of society differs from a Lockean or Machiavellian one because he sees no possibility of a social contract or a founder-legislator forming humans into a society.³ Mandeville's theory requires a long gestation period during which change is gradual and incremental. For him, Goldsmith says, "the mechanism by which humans are socialized is society itself."⁴ Although he does "not believe Mandeville was an economic theorist at all,"⁵ Goldsmith joins an associated debate over Mandeville's economic principles, arguing that he was a precursor of capitalism.⁶ It is difficult to discover any writers of the early eighteenth century, he argues, who warmly embraced the new commercial capitalism. By his "full-fledged acceptance of commercial modernity", Mandeville can be singled out as the great exception.⁷

1 M. M. Goldsmith, "Public Virtue and Private Vices: Bernard Mandeville and English Political Ideologies in the Early Eighteenth Century," Eighteenth-Century Studies, vol. ix, (1976), pp. 477-510; "Bernard Mandeville and the Spirit of Capitalism," pp. 63-81, Journal of British Studies, vol. 17, (1977); Private Vices, Public Benefits: Bernard Mandeville's Social and Political Thought; "The Treacherous Arts of Mankind: Bernard Mandeville and Female Virtue," History of Political Thought, vol. vii, no. 1, (Spring, 1986), pp. 93-114.

2 Goldsmith, Private Vices, Public Benefits, p. 58.

3 Ibid., p. 71.

4 Ibid., pp. 72/3.

5 Ibid., p. 124.

6 Goldsmith, "Mandeville and the Spirit of Capitalism", pp. 63-81. Similarly, but for different reasons than Goldsmith, Nathan Rosenberg argues that, except when he is dealing with foreign trade, Mandeville presents a conception of the role of government in economic and social affairs which encourages a self-regulating economy. N. Rosenberg, "Mandeville and Laissez-faire," Journal of the History of Ideas, vol. xxiv, no. 2, (April-June, 1963), pp. 183-196. A different interpretation of Mandeville's economics comes from Jacob Viner who argues that Mandeville advocates state intervention in economic matters. Jacob Viner, The Long View and the Short: Studies in Economic Theory and Policy, (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1958), pp. 340-342.

7 Goldsmith, "Mandeville and the Spirit of Capitalism," p. 71.

"The man who takes delight in continuous business and piling up wealth was invented by Bernard Mandeville", Goldsmith continues,

to expose and to ridicule the shallow, narrow-minded self-righteousness of the prevalent ideology of early eighteenth-century England, especially as that ideology was expressed in Richard Steele's Tatler; to oppose those who would "prescribe Rules of Happiness to every body else", Mandeville, living in a society which was becoming capitalist, invented the 'spirit of capitalism'.¹

A different view of Mandeville's significance comes from Thomas Horne, who provides a valuable guide to Mandeville's social and economic ideas. Like Goldsmith, Horne believes that Mandeville alone in the early eighteenth century openly argued that traditional moral and social assumptions are inconsistent with the goals of the wealth-generating state. But Horne differs from Goldsmith's interpretation of Mandeville as a capitalist theorist, arguing instead that "in Mandeville the psychological analysis of self-love is explicitly joined to a social and economic theory which is similar to what has been called the mercantilist conception of society."² It is Mandeville's provocative, even scandalous, economic arguments that demanded the attention of his contemporaries, Horne claims. His attack on frugality and his defense of luxury forced him to consider and then reject the basic analogy used by those who feared widespread luxury consumption: the comparison of the economy of the individual or family with the economy of the state.³ Like Goldsmith, Horne recognizes Mandeville's sensitivity to the long and slow process by which political and economic institutions evolve as central to his argument. Society

1 Ibid., p. 81.

2 Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, p. 51.

3 Horne argues that one of the strongest, most persistent, themes in Mandeville's economic thought is his refusal to equate the state with the individual. Ibid., p. 63.

does not depend upon the genius of individual men to make good laws, but on the cumulative experience of many generations.¹

In Mandeville, Horne claims, the great streams of mercantilism and of the seventeenth-century tradition of French moral discourse come together. With their strong emphasis on the importance of self-interest, these two traditions provided Mandeville with a method of psychological investigation that uncovered the operation of self-love in all human actions, a method which permitted him to expose the delusions which allow men to damn vices in others, while ignoring the same vices in themselves.² Mercantilist theory provided Mandeville with specific doctrines about the poor and the balance of trade and luxury; but more important, it provided him with a model of society based on the spending of the wealthy and the labour of the poor, held together by the power of the state. By debunking the arguments of public-spiritedness upon which the tradition of civic humanism rested, a tradition central to those who argued that England needed a moral revival, Mandeville's work constitutes one of the most important criticisms of that tradition.³

Mandeville's dislike of hypocritical cant is recognized by many scholars as one of the strongest motives behind his work. Horne, Malcolm Jack⁴ and Jacob Viner⁵ see this as providing a powerful incentive for Mandeville, whose aim

1 Ibid., p. 74

2 Ibid., p. 9.

3 Ibid.

4 Jack, "Progress and Corruption in the Eighteenth Century", p. 375.

5 Jacob Viner, "Satire and Economics in The Augustan Age of Satire", The Augustan Milieu, ed. by Henry K. Miller, Eric Rothstein, G.S. Rousseau, (Oxford University Press, 1970), p. 95. Viner argues that Mandeville parodied the pretensions of those who flourished under the social structure, and believed that they and it operated from moral principles. He attacked both the principles and those who, from sentimental albeit genuine attachment to them, advocated ""even minor changes in existing institutions to bring them nearer to what those principles demanded."

was not to parody the social structure itself, but to expose to ridicule the inconsistency of his contemporaries, who at once decried material progress because it brought in its train a corruption of moral and ascetic values, while fully enjoying the fruits of this development.¹ Mandeville's real interest was the psychology of moral behaviour. Jack argues that the development of Mandeville's arguments constitute an early and sophisticated attempt at explaining moral phenomena in terms of human motivations alone.² Like Horne, Jack credits the moralists of the French tradition with providing Mandeville with an intellectual framework within which to work out his ideas.³

One aspect of Mandeville's thought has, however, received little attention in this midst of this considerable recent revival of interest, the role of women in his work, a peculiar omission in light of the large body of his writing directed to them, the number of times they act as his spokesmen, and the frequency with which he specifically discusses women's behaviour. Only four works on Mandeville attend to the role of women at any length. Paul Bunyan Anderson, Gordon Vichert, Richard Cook and M.M. Goldsmith have discussed Mandeville's treatment of women, but none has seen women as of any particular significance to his larger theory of society. In his consideration of The Virgin Unmask'd, Vichert argues that this work, "a moral dialogue devoted largely to a defense of feminism,"⁴ is part of a large body of contemporary and controversial writing about the role of women. Mandeville's concern is to show the facts of marriage from a woman's point of view and to destroy male illusions about the real life of women. "It is this anxiety to give the truth, to show what

1 Jack, "Progress and Corruption in the Eighteenth Century," p. 373.

2 Ibid., p. 371.

3 Ibid., pp. 374/5.

4 Gordon S. Vichert, "Bernard Mandeville's the Virgin Unmask'd," Mandeville Studies, Primer, ed., pl.

the condition of women is really like, in contrast to the various popular representations of them, that remains the most important aspect" of this seminal discussion of female virtue.¹ Cook, on the other hand, claims that Lucinda, Mandeville's spokesman in The Virgin Unmask'd, is the foil he uses to point out the absurdity in arguing that reason prevails over human nature in social and moral matters. By her austere and uncompromising attitude towards marriage, Lucinda forces the reader to "choose between a bleakly unworkable rigourism on the one hand and a human and hence imperfect reality on the other."² Cook claims that the title, The Virgin Unmask'd, refers to the unmasking of Lucinda's rigid position, by which she "has reasoned herself into a life of literal and figurative sterility."³

Goldsmith argues that Mandeville uses women as a literary tactic to increase his ironic tone and to tweak the civic humanist tradition by subverting the prevalent hierarchy of values which excluded women from the pursuit of virtues appropriate to landed gentlemen and of aristocratic ideals of honour.⁴ In a recent article, he discusses Mandeville's concept of virtue from this perspective. Goldsmith analyzes Mandeville's treatment of female honour, discussed in several issues of The Female Tatler, and concludes that what is significant about Mandeville's discussion is his views about female virtue and roles.⁵ What is significant for him about Mandeville's definition of virtue is that, in opposition to traditional views, it applies equally to both men and women.⁶ To qualify as virtuous, one's motives must be pure and one's actions

1 Ibid., p. 10.

2 Richard I. Cook, Bernard Mandeville, (Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1974), p. 59.

3 Ibid.

4 Goldsmith, Private Vices, Public Benefits, p. 163.

5 Goldsmith, "The Treacherous Arts of Mankind," p. 110.

6 Goldsmith's point here, as it is in all his work, is that Mandeville was motivated to develop his argument by his desire to satirize and mock Richard Steele's Issac Bickerstaff who, in The

brave.¹ Mandeville set out to demonstrate that women are as capable of the classical, cardinal virtues like courage, magnanimity, and strength of soul as men.² Mandeville's sole purpose in doing so, Goldsmith continues, was his dislike of hypocrisy and pretension, and his desire to undermine civic humanism through ridicule and to suggest that there are goals worth pursuing other than virtue and glory, namely happiness.³ Goldsmith pays no attention to Mandeville's psychological probing into the motives behind the argument for different virtues for different sexes, except to argue that Mandeville was particularly opposed to the civic humanist conceptions of courage and honour. Although Goldsmith agrees with Vichert that Mandeville's design is to let young ladies know whatever is dreadful in marriage,⁴ and concludes that he was prepared to argue a case for women,⁵ he is essentially content to limit Mandeville's purpose in discussing women so often and at such length to his desire to satirize the arguments of his opponents. Unlike Goldsmith, Paul Bunyan Anderson makes a grand claim for the loftiness of Mandeville's thought.⁶ He identifies the problem of women as next to that of war and brute force in fascination and difficulty in Mandeville's work.⁷ But Anderson draws no conclusions about women's importance in this work, except to note that

Tatler, advocated a sentimental and romantic ideal of women, one in which they were limited to domestic and excluded from civic virtues.

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid., p. 113.

3 Ibid.

4 Ibid., p. 107.

5 Ibid., p. 114.

6 Paul Bunyan Anderson, "Splendor out of Scandal: The Lucinda-Artesia Papers in The Female Tatler," Philological Quarterly, 15 (1936), p. 298. Anderson compares Mandeville's "splendid intellectual and spiritual vision of the possibilities in imperfect material", to Shakespeare's mind as he was writing Measure for Measure and Christ's insight into human nature as recorded in the New Testament.

7 Ibid., p. 292.

some of Mandeville's writing is "brimming over with a humourous and eminently sane feminism."¹

Is Mandeville's discussion of women and women's issues integral to his larger thesis or, is it, as Goldsmith claims, merely a satirical device used to ridicule civic humanism and expose the hypocrisy of those who would cling to one set of moral standards while practicing another? This work is intended to demonstrate that the essential elements in Mandeville's developed thinking, fully argued by him in parts one and two of The Fable, were first expounded in his early reflections upon women and their unusual, and sometimes privileged, conceptual status. I will argue that a concentration upon the role of women in the civilizing process brings to the fore a number of neglected features of his argument. Further, not only does Mandeville use women to satirize the civic humanist tradition of virtue, as Goldsmith claims; more important, and overlooked by Goldsmith, Vichert and other scholars who have studied Mandeville's work and his discussions concerning women, he addresses conceptions of femininity in ways that are integral to his entire project. By examining some of Mandeville's earlier, less famous writing, particularly The Virgin Unmask'd and The Female Tatler, two works either addressed to women or women's issues or "written" by women, I will demonstrate that in them Mandeville lays out the essence of his argument, which will only later be developed fully in The Fable of the Bees.

A close scrutiny of Mandeville's theory of the psychological basis of all social relations, and the role of the passions, particularly pride, in the development of rich and prosperous civil societies, will demonstrate that the

¹ Ibid., p. 294.

ideas and arguments that provoked his attention, stimulated his interest and challenged him to develop his own comprehensive theory of the genesis and development of these societies, were first articulated in the context of a discussion of female roles and feminine psychology. I will argue that Mandeville's five months as contributor to The Female Tatler, together with The Virgin Unmask'd, provide valuable information about his thoughts on women, and that, in them, he discusses women and women's issues in a way that is central, both to his theory of society and the development of moral virtues and to his discussion of economic life. Equally as important, I will also attempt to demonstrate that Mandeville's early formulation of his ideas concerning the basis of society and social improvement did not originate as a ridicule of Richard Steele's priggish Squire Bickerstaff, his persona in The Tatler, as Goldsmith claims, but rather that these conceptions were present as early as The Virgin Unmask'd. Since this is a work of some 214 pages, and was published just shortly after The Tatler began, it is reasonable to assume that Mandeville wrote his book well before Steele's Tatler was first published.

I will begin by analyzing the elements and significance of Mandeville's social theory, tracing the genesis of his ideas to show the consistency between his mature thinking and his earlier writing, and the traditions from which his ideas both emerged and diverged. Because Mandeville's satirical style sometimes makes it difficult to know when he is serious, I have tried to identify common themes throughout his work. It is impossible to appreciate Mandeville and the innovative nature of his ideas without an awareness of the social climate and circumstances within which he wrote. Therefore, a considerable portion of the first chapter is devoted to a review of the assumptions and conditions prevalent at the time and the reactions Mandeville's notions provoked amongst his

contemporaries. The second chapter is devoted to a discussion of the major tenet of Mandeville's social theory: mankind's egoism and the dominance of the passions, particularly pride, in all human interactions and endeavours. The third and final chapter begins with a review of the intellectual inheritance about women, and contemporary attitudes towards them, and then develops the major arguments of the thesis.

My purpose in examining Mandeville's attitudes towards women and women's issues is to demonstrate that his reflections on women are an important and neglected feature of his theorizing; one without which we miss a central element of his importance. Through his discussion of women, Mandeville reveals something important about his social and economic thought and gives us a valuable insight into early eighteenth-century moral, social and economic arguments.

CHAPTER I

THE ELEMENTS AND SIGNIFICANCE OF MANDEVILLE'S SOCIAL THEORY

Bernard de Mandeville (1670-1733) was born in Holland and studied philosophy and medicine at the University of Leyden. Graduating with the degree of Doctor of Medicine in 1691, he practiced as a specialist in nerve and stomach disorders, the "hypochondriack and hysterick passions" or "diseases".¹ Mandeville's admiration for Thomas Sydenham (1621-89), "the English Hippocrates," may have influenced his decision to visit England.² After travelling on the continent, Mandeville moved to London "to learn the Language" and "happen'd to take great delight" in it.³ Although he continued to practice medicine, writing occupied much of his life from then on.

Not a great deal is known about Mandeville's adult life.⁴ In one of two known contemporary comments, Benjamin Franklin wrote that Mandeville was "a most facetious, entertaining companion."⁵ Although an entertaining companion and, in his own words, "a great Lover of Company,"⁶ he appears to have valued his solitude, where, surrounded by his books, he could lose himself in "Study and Contemplation."⁷ These brief glimpses of Mandeville as witty and charming, learned and thoughtful, are born out by his obituary. Published in B. Berington's Evening Post, 23 January 1733, and Applebee's Original Weekly

1 The Fable I, p xix, quoting from Mandeville's medical Treatise.

2 Bernard Mandeville, The Virgin Unmask'd : or, Female Dialogues Betwixt an Elderly Maiden Lady, and her Niece, On Several Diverting Discourses on Love, Marriage, Memoirs, and Morals, Etc., (London, 1709), with an introduction by Stephen H. Good, ed., (New York: Scholars' Facsimiles & Reprints, 1975), p. iii. Page references in the text are to Good's edition.

3 The Fable I, p. xix, quoting Mandeville's Treatise (1730), p. xiii.

4 Thomas Horne says that the most complete account of Mandeville's life can be found in Kaye's introduction to The Fable. Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville. p. xi.

5 The Fable I, p. xxix.

6 Ibid. Kaye quotes from a comment by Philopirio, Mandeville's spokesman in The Fable I, p. 337.

7 The Female Tatler, November 2, 1709.

Journal, 27 January 1733, the notice extolled him as a man of "an extensive Genius, uncommon Wit, and strong Judgment" who was "well skill'd in many Parts of Philosophy, and a curious search into Human Nature; which Accomplishments rendered him a valuable and entertaining companion."¹

"One of the most successful authors and widely famed men of his day, (whose) works were selling not only by editions but literally by dozens of editions,"² Mandeville wrote over a dozen works in English between 1703 and 1733. His literary career began quietly with a translation of Some Fables after the Easie and Familiar Method of Monsieur de la Fontaine (1703).³ The following year, he published ten additional verse fables as AEsop Dress'd; or, a Collection of Fables Writ in Familiar Verse.⁴ The first book-length translation into English of La Fontaine's fables, this collection contained two of Mandeville's own verses, "The Carp"⁵ and "The Nightingal and the Owl."⁶ Following Aesopic tradition, each fable is followed by a short moral which sums up its message. The style is similar to that of another of Mandeville's works published anonymously the

1 The Fable I, pp. xxix/xxx.

2 Ibid., p. xxv.

3 Mandeville had published three works prior to leaving Holland: Bernardia Mandeville di Medicina Oratio Scholastica. Rotterdam, (1685); Disputatio Philosophica de Brutorum Operationibus, Leyden, (1689); Disputatio Medica Inauguralis de Chylosi Vitaita, Leyden, (1691). The Fable I, p. xxx. Goldsmith claims that Mandeville's first published work appears to have been The Pamphleteers: A Satyr (London, 1703), "a clearly Whig work". Goldsmith, Private Vices, Public Benefits, pp. 28 & 91.

4 Bernard Mandeville, AEsop Dress'd; or, a Collection of Fables Writ in Familiar Verse. (London, 1704).

5 There is some disagreement over whether or not this fable is Mandeville's own. Paul Bunyan Anderson claims that "The Carp" was published earlier in Some Fables after the Easie and Familiar Method of Monsieur de la Fontaine. Anderson, "Splendor Out of Scandal," p. 423.

6 Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, p. 26. There is also some disagreement about whether or not this is Mandeville's own fable. Anderson claims that "The Nightingal and the Owl" was also published in Some Fables. Anderson, "Splendor.Out of Scandal" p. 291, n.7. However, when Mandeville presented the fable in The Female Tatler, (Wed. Feb.22, 1710), he called it "a Fable of English Growth." But in his next contribution he printed another fable, "The Wolves and Sheep," not credited as his own, which, he says, came from the same collection as "the Carp."

following year, "a sixpenny quarto" (I: xxxiii) of twenty-six pages, The Grumbling Hive: or, Knaves Turn'd Honest.¹ The Grumbling Hive, a "short bit of doggerel, written in Hudibrastic verse, was a satirical attack upon the ideas and efforts then associated with the Societies for the Reformation of Manners,"² which had sprung up in England in the 1690s. It was also, Issac Kramnick says, "a complex catalogue of all the corrupt individuals necessary for a flourishing society."³ This "general defense of corruption," Kramnick argues, answers a group of poets of the preceding fifteen years who had attacked luxury.⁴ The Grumbling Hive introduces themes that occupied Mandeville for the rest of his life, principally, his insistence on showing that it was their own egoism that tricked men into believing that moral virtues, such as honour, chastity and love for one's fellow man, were theirs by nature, not art and, further, that the kinds of behaviour they decried as being destructive to the body politic, prodigality, "that noble Sin,"⁵ luxury, vanity, pride and all other things they labelled vices, were those which gave them "what they lov'd": a rich and flourishing society.⁶

The Grumbling Hive now lay fallow for almost a decade until, in 1714, it reappeared as part of an anonymous book called The Fable of the Bees: or, Private Vices, Publick Benefits.⁷ The Fable was published separately in two parts. The first edition, published twice in 1714, consisted of the poem "The Grumbling

1 Bernard Mandeville, The Grumbling Hive; or, Knaves Turn'd Honest. (London, 1705).

2 Horne, Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, p. 7.

3 Issac Kramnick, Bolingbroke and His Circle: The Politics of Nostalgia in the Age of Walpole, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968), p. 201. Kramnick writes that these "second rate poets" had produced a series of long moral poems between 1695 and 1710 arguing the corrupting power of money on all classes of society. Robert Hopkins argues that Kramnick has suggested the only really plausible motive for Mandeville's writing The Grumbling Hive. Robert Hopkins, "The Cant of Social Compromise : Some Observations on Mandeville's Satire", Mandeville Studies, Primer, ed., p. 169.

4 Ibid.

5 The Fable I, p. 25, quoted from "The Grumbling Hive: Or, Knaves turn'd Honest."

6 Ibid., p. 27, quoted from "The Grumbling Hive: Or, Knaves turn'd Honest".

7 Ibid., p. xxxiii.

Hive: or, Knaves turn'd Honest" (1705), followed by a prose commentary, "An Enquiry Into the Origin of Moral Virtue," the work's most radical and influential part,¹ and twenty "Remarks" expanding on the themes in the poem. In 1723 a second edition was published, expanding the "Remarks" and adding "An Essay on Charity & Charity Schools" and "A Search into the Nature of Society." Further editions appeared in 1724, 1725, 1728, 1729 and 1733. In 1728 The Fable of the Bees, Part II, was issued, amplifying and defending the first part. In the first of its six dialogues, Cleomenes, Mandeville's spokesman, recommends The Fable to his antagonistic friend, Horatio, and entreats him to "Yield something to our Friendship, and condescend for once to read 'the Fable of the Bees'...It's a handsome Volume" (II: 57). At the very end of the last dialogue, his friend, now won over, confesses, "I am your Convert, and shall henceforth look upon 'the Fable of the Bees' very differently from what I did; for...there is certainly more Truth, and Nature is more faithfully copied in it almost every where" (II: 356).

The Fable lays out Mandeville's larger thesis. If social virtue forms the basis of civil societies², the "great Ends" of which are mutual happiness and more comfortable conditions of life³, then, ironically, this virtue must be founded, not on selflessness, benevolence or natural affection for one another,⁴ but on self-interest⁵ or "Pride", "the hidden Spring, that gives Life and Motion to all [men's] Actions."⁶ The Fable expands on the metaphor of a bee-hive.

1 Hundert, "The Thread of Language and the Web of Dominion: Mandeville to Rousseau and Back," Eighteenth-Century Studies, vol. 21, no. 2, (Winter 1987/8), p. 172.

2 The Fable II, p. 75.

3 Ibid., p. 46.

4 Ibid., p. 183. Mandeville insists that "this pretended Love of our Species, and natural Affection we are said to have for one another...is neither instrumental to the Erecting of Societies, nor ever trusted to in our prudent Commerce with one another."

5 Mandeville argues that self-interest is composed of two passions, self-liking and self-love. All actions, he claims, are motivated by self-interest. The Fable II, pp. 129-136.

6 The Fable II, p. 79.

Mandeville lists some of the many inventions, activities and talents found in a prosperous kingdom, "Engines, Labourers, Ships, Castles, Arms, Artificers, Craft, Science, Shop or Instrument" (I: 18), and shows how all are the result of prodigality and luxury. All citizens, rounder or respectable, who make up that kingdom, are "Knaves," not only "Sharppers, Parasites, Pimps, Players, Pick-pockets, Coiners, Quacks, South-sayers," (I: 19) but also "the grave Industrious were the same" (I: 19). Lawyers, physicians, government ministers, priests and soldiers are as worthy of the name "Knave" as the rest, for "All Trades and Places knew some Cheat, No Calling was without Deceit" (I: 20). Unlike many of his contemporaries who similarly described this state of affairs and pronounced it evil, Mandeville knew it and pronounced it good: "Thus every Part was full of Vice, Yet the Whole Mass a Paradise" (I: 24).

Between the publication of The Grumbling Hive and The Fable, Mandeville published other important works, both for an understanding of his developed thinking and of his arguments about women in particular. Mandeville's first prose work in English, The Virgin Unmask'd: or, Female Dialogues Betwixt an Elderly Maiden Lady, and her Niece, On Several Diverting Discourses on Love, Marriage, Memoirs, and Morals, Etc., was published in 1709 and reprinted in 1724. The Virgin Unmask'd is an insightful commentary on English society and politics at the turn of the eighteenth century in which Mandeville discusses a variety of topics ranging from fashions (V., 2-7), marriage portions (V., 34-5), jointures (V., 43) and childbirth (V., 119-122), to politics (V., 157, 173), government finance (V., 138), the class structure (V., 163-65) and the aesthetic merits of different languages (V., 170-71).¹ In dialogue form, Lucinda,

1 Good argues that this work, Mandeville's "most racy", is and "early and experimental work in which may be seen the seeds of much that was to develop in later works." The Virgin Unmask'd, intro., p. iii.

an older, wiser woman, instructs her niece, Antonia, in the arts of the world. Mandeville may have deliberately chosen the title as "a sucker trap"¹ to lure unsuspecting buyers into assuming it was a pornographic work,² since it bears a close resemblance to an earlier erotic work, A Dialogue between a married lady and a maid, published in 1688.³ Indeed, a prospective buyer, browsing through the book's first few pages, finds Lucinda chastising her niece for "going bare-ass'd" (V., 3) and telling her, knowingly, that "'tis the Heat of your Blood, your Wantonness, and Lascivious Thoughts, 'tis they, that are the Cause of all your immoderate Behaviour" (V., 2).

The Virgin Unmask'd is not in fact a pornographic titillator, but an exposition of the themes first seen in The Grumbling Hive and expanded later in The Fable. Mandeville's distinctive approach is evident throughout the book. Always the diagnostician of secular society, he is concerned to show the futility as well as the difficulty of judging the results of our actions by the motives which prompt them. Lucinda, Mandeville's spokesman, demonstrates this dilemma. After describing in detail the life of a nobleman of ancient family and the benefits the many dependant on him received because of his largesse, the following exchange takes place:

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- 1 David Foxon, "Libertine Literature in England, 1660-1745", The Book Collector, vol 12, no. 3, (Autumn, 1963), p. 296.
 - 2 See Vichert, "Bernard Mandeville's The Virgin Unmask'd"; Goldsmith, Private Vices, Public Benefits, p. 80. Goldsmith refers to Vichert's discussion of this tradition. David Foxon also discusses this tradition. Foxon's work, in three parts, traces the history of pornographic writing. Foxon says that the Ragionamenti of Aretino, a realistic and satirical view of the lives of women in different occupations, printed in 1534 and 1536 and first collected in a London edition of 1584, established the form - a dialogue between an older and younger woman - which remained the norm for at least 150 years. Foxon, "Libertine Literature in England, 1660-1745," p. 164.
 - 3 Vichert argues that by "an initial Mandevillian irony the unsuspecting male book-buyer is tricked into anticipating a work of pornography. Vichert, "Bernard Mandeville's The Virgin Unmask'd," p. 1. Mandeville's intended audience for this work was not limited to males.

Lucinda: and don't you think now Niece, that this Noble-man had a tolerably good Relish?

Antonia: I think so well of him, that I wish you could help me to such a Husband.

Lucinda: Take Care you don't repent....the Bottom of all this was Pride!

Antonia: Yet it was commendable, as long as so many receiv'd the benefit of it (V., 179).

Brutally cutting away Antonia's illusions and social delusions, Lucinda forces her to see herself and others, not as they appear or would want to be seen, but as they really are. Throughout the work, Mandeville repeatedly shows that "all is not Gold that glitters" (V., 73)¹: actions which may be judged as virtuous proceed from base motives, while actions conventionally judged as vile have consequences beneficial to society.

The Virgin Unmask'd does not seem to have made much of a stir when it was published. Indeed, it was not until 1724, the year after The Fable was reprinted in an enlarged edition and really began to attract attention,² that it was even reprinted. In the same year in which The Virgin Unmask'd was first published, a new periodical, The Female Tatler, printed its first issue on 8 July, 1709. The popular periodicals which proliferated at the beginning of the eighteenth century, "the newest and most original form of literary publishing," perhaps best illustrate the prevalent ideas of the period.³ Inspired by a similar periodical, The Tatler, first published on 12 April, 1709 by Richard Steele, The

1 Mandeville repeats this homily in Part II of The Fable, writing "all is not Gold that glisters." p. 61.

2 The Fable I, p. xxxiv.

3 Goldsmith, "Mandeville and the Spirit of Capitalism", p. 72; Anderson "Splendor Out of Scandal", p. 286. According to Anderson, periodicals were "most fruitful in bringing new experience into manageable shape."

Female Tatler satirizes and closely parallels Steele's publication.¹ Just as the first edition of The Tatler promises, "Whatever men do, or say, or think, or dream, Our medley Paper seizes for its theme" (Tatler, 12 April, 1709), so the supposed author of The Female Tatler, a Mrs. Crackenthorpe, promises in the first number that she too is "a Lady that knows everything" (F.T., 8 July, 1709). Unlike Steele's publication, which ridicules and chastises people publicly for transgressions that Steele deems improper, Mrs. Crackenthorpe vows to be "very Careful, unjustly or ungentlely, not to reflect upon any Person whatsoever." Nonetheless, she parodies Steele, promising "gently to correct the Vices and Vanities which some of Distinction as well as others, wilfully commit" (F.T. 8 July, 1709). The first 52 editions of The Female Tatler, alternating days with The Tatler, were published every Monday, Wednesday and Friday by Mrs. Crackenthorpe; but on 2 November, 1709, she retired from the scene, and the remaining issues were "Written by a Society of Ladies": Lucinda, Emilia, Araballa, Rosella, Artesia and Sopronia.²

1 Richmond P. Bond, The Tatler: The Making of a Literary Journal, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), pp. 196-7. Bond claims that "from the first paper to the last the derivative character of the periodical was obvious."

2 Anderson established that the "ladies", Lucinda and Artesia, were, in fact, Mandeville, and argues eloquently that The Female Tatler presents Mandeville's "characteristic thinking on the topics with which he continued to be concerned for the rest of his life." Although he found no "external evidence to connect Dr. Bernard Mandeville with the Female Tatler," he argues that the internal evidence is inescapable. "The Lucinda-Artesia papers are of one piece throughout: four or five years earlier than the prose remarks of The Fable of the Bees...they present Mandeville's characteristic thinking." Anderson, "Splendor Out of Scandal", p. 299. Thirty years later, Gordon Vichert, in an attempt to spare future scholars the labour of checking Anderson's work, published an article in the Quarterly verifying Anderson's claim. Vichert writes that Anderson's argument is devoted to pointing out the similarity in thought between the Lucinda-Artesia papers and Mandeville's acknowledged works. While this "internal evidence...is overwhelming," Vichert claims "there is external evidence as well." He refers to the reprinting of three of Mandeville's verse fables in the papers, and the printing of the poem "On Honour" two years before its appearance in Mandeville's miscellany collection, Wishes to a Godson. Gordon Vichert, "Some Recent Mandeville Attributions," Philological Quarterly, xlv, II, April 1966, pp. 459-63.

In the first edition of The Tatler, Steele explained that his periodical was designed to entertain 'the fair sex', in whose honour he has invented the title.¹ But Steele's paper has another and ultimately, to Mandeville, more disturbing objective than just entertaining the ladies. Through example, public ridicule and exposure of those whose behaviour he finds offensive, Steele seeks to enforce norms of conduct which Mandeville finds both hypocritical and harmful.² Steele warns his readers that, from time to time, he intends to "print bills of mortality," and "all such who are named therein, if they...are good for nothing shall find themselves in the number of the deceased."³ Having thus given fair warning to all "good for nothing[s]" in the first issue, in later numbers Steele, in the guise of the priggish Squire Bickerstaff, aligns himself with his "friends and fellow-labourers," members "of the Society for Reformation of Manners."⁴ The purpose of the Society, begun in 1690, was to suppress profaneness and debauchery, "abominable impieties [which] had overspread the nation."⁵ In the forty years after its inception, the Society calculated that it prosecuted about 101,683 persons in or near London.⁶ Both the Society and Steele's Tatler were favourite targets of Mandeville's, and both have been credited with providing him with the incentive for writing the Lucinda-Artesia papers.⁷

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- 1 The Tatler, in Three Volumes, vol. 1, Edinburgh, Robert Martin, MDCCCXLV, No. 1.
 - 2 See Dario Castiglione, "Considering Things Minutely: Reflections on Mandeville and the Eighteenth-Century Science of Man," History of Political Thought VII, 3 (Winter, 1986), pp. 463-488.
 - 3 Ibid.
 - 4 The Tatler, No. 3, note, p. 14.
 - 5 Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, quoting from Edward Stephens, The Beginning, and Progress of Reformation (1691), p. 1.
 - 6 The Tatler, No. 3, p. 14.
 - 7 Horne comments that it seems appropriate for Mandeville to use The Tatler as a foil because it symbolized much of the effort to convert England to more polite manners. Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, p. 9. Horne also points out that many of the later editions of The Female Tatler were directed against the reform movement. Ibid., p. 28. Anderson credits Steele's "superficial thought" with stimulating Mandeville's interest in using The Female Tatler to compel his readers to examine both themselves and human nature. Anderson "Splendor Out of Scandal," pp. 287/8.

Other catalysts which might have prompted Mandeville to become one of "The Society of Ladies" have been suggested, including his concern with the political and religious tension created by Dr. Henry Sacheverell's notorious sermon on passive obedience delivered in Saint Paul's cathedral on 5 November, 1709.¹ The most fully developed thesis about Mandeville's motives for writing the Lucinda-Artesia papers, and their subsequent importance to the development of his theories on society and politics, however, comes from Goldsmith. Mandeville's original formulation of his views, Goldsmith argues, was inspired by and directed against Squire Bickerstaff, Steele's persona in The Tatler.² Like Anderson,³ Goldsmith argues that Mandeville's theory of society was first presented in the satirical attack on Bickerstaff put forward by the The Female Tatler's Oxford gentleman.⁴ It is these ideas, he claims, reworked into a single social theory, that are propounded in The Fable of the Bees.⁵

Another, very important influence on Mandeville was Anthony Ashley Cooper, third Earl of Shaftesbury. Although not mentioned directly by Mandeville until his essay "A Search into the Nature of Society" (I: 323),

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- 1 H.J. Dickinson, "The Politics of Bernard Mandeville," Mandeville Studies, Primer, ed., p. 87. Unless Mandeville was prescient, Sacheverell's speech, delivered three days after Mandeville's first contribution, could not have prompted him to join The Female Tatler. A month later however, Mandeville wrote a satirical announcement in the paper advertising a soon to be published sermon, The Case of Passive Obedience, preached in the "Chief Mosque of Constantinople in the Christian Times, call'd St. Sophia...By Sache-ali-Verello, A Seditious Priest, that having no other Merits, would fain have dy'd a Martyr for the Cause, but was preserved by the Lenity of th^e Successors. Translated by a Non Juror". The Female Tatler, 5 December, 1709.
 - 2 Goldsmith, Private Vices, Public Benefits, p. 55. Like Goldsmith, Anderson also believes Steele to be Mandeville's opponent. Anderson claims that in The Female Tatler, Mandeville is practicing periodical journalism rather than philosophical controversy and that his natural opposite is not Shaftesbury, but Steele. Anderson, "Splendor Out of Scandal," p. 297.
 - 3 Anderson claims that the fullest expression of Mandeville's social vision is found in issues no. 62 and 64 of The Female Tatler. Anderson, "Splendor Out of Scandal," p. 297.
 - 4 Goldsmith, Private Vices, Public Benefits, p. 49 & 58.
 - 5 Ibid., pp. 58 & 77.

Shaftesbury's "lovely System" (II: 44) draws Mandeville's scorn both here and in Part II, where he satirizes Shaftesbury's "System" of social virtues in the first dialogue and rejects his account of morality and social virtue as innate and originating in the other-regarding sentiments mankind has for one another. Mandeville's criticism of Shaftesbury centered on the latter's insistence on calling "every Action perform'd with regard to the Publick Good, Virtuous; and all Selfishness, wholly excluding such a regard, Vice" (I: 324). This scheme, and Shaftesbury's moral absolutism, are diametrically opposed to Mandeville's moral relativism. Unlike Mandeville, who argues that morality, like artistic standards and fashions, is culturally determined,¹ Shaftesbury "looks upon Virtue and Vice as permanent Realities that must ever be the same in all Countries and all Ages" (I: 324). Mandeville uses suicide to illustrate his argument that morality is not the same everywhere for everyone. Although self-murder is a "heinous crime" to a Christian, he argues "it ought not to be considered so to a Heathen who has been taught it by his most venerated philosophers" (F.T., 3 Feb., 1710). Mandeville contrasts Shaftesbury's argument to his own and criticizes his naivety in imagining

that a man of sound understanding, by following the Rules of good Sense, may not only find out the *Pulchrum & Honestum*, both in Morality and the Works of Art and Nature,² but likewise govern him-self by his Reason with as much Ease and Readiness as a good Rider manages a well-taught Horse by the Bridle (I: 324).

Mandeville is very clear about their incompatibility, commenting that two systems "cannot be more opposite than his Lordship's and mine" (I: 324). With

1 The Fable I, p. 324. See Kaye's note.

2 Home, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, p. 44. Home points out the intimate connection in Shaftesbury's own mind between a moral and an esthetic sense, his siding with those who argued that art has a moral purpose. It is an argument Mandeville rejected. The Fable II, p. 33.

tongue-in-cheek praise of Shaftesbury's "generous and refined" notions (I: 324), Mandeville concludes, "What Pity it is that they are not true...that the Solidity of them is inconsistent with our daily Experience" (I: 324).

There are a number of similarities between Mandeville's attack on Shaftesbury's moral and aesthetic absolutism in The Fable, published in 1723, where he argues that "what is called Beautiful...varies according to the different tastes of Nations and Ages," (I: 328) and his argument in The Virgin Unmask'd that there are no absolute aesthetic criteria because "Fashions and Customs...have alter'd with the Times" (V., 3). The close parallel between this and his statement in The Fable that "What is admired or approved of will change, as Modes and Fashions alter and Men vary in their Tastes and Humours" (I: 326), demonstrates that at least some of the ideas behind his criticism of Shaftesbury, put forward after 1720,¹ were integral to his arguments long before that.

In addition to The Virgin Unmask'd, The Female Tatlers and The Fable, Mandeville wrote one other work important to this paper. In 1724 he published an anonymous essay, Modest Defense of Publick Stews: or, An Essay Upon Whoring, As it is now practis'd in these Kingdom's. "Written by a Layman," it expands on "Remark H" from Part I of The Fable and, with Mandeville's characteristic sarcasm, is addressed to the "Gentlemen of the Societies," whose "Endeavours to suppress Lewdness, have only serv'd to promote it" (M.D. ii). The treatise, designed "to promote the general Welfare and Happiness of Mankind" (M.D. 1), proposes the establishment of a chain of whorehouses throughout the kingdom, stocked with just enough women to satisfy the sexual

¹ Horne argues that Shaftesbury did not become Mandeville's adversary until the 1720s. Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, p. 33.

needs of the male population. These public stews would not only prevent the seduction of young virgins (M.D. 10) and preserve the chastity of many women (M.D. 50, 56, 63), they would also keep men free from venereal disease and benefit the economy by allowing men to satisfy their sexual urges without wasting precious time and energy, better spent on business, wooing and seducing virtuous women into moral sin and economic and social ruin (M.D. 22-25).

Like The Grumbling Hive and The Virgin Unmask'd, Modest Defence of Publick Stews illustrates Mandeville's penchant for exposing men's pretences. As he explains in the introduction to Part 1 of The Fable, "most Writers are always teaching Men what they should be, and hardly ever trouble their Heads with telling them what they really are" (I: 39). Sometimes brutally, sometimes gently, but always wittily, Mandeville persists in stripping away illusions, demonstrating that morality, like fashion, depends on the mores of a particular society, and that many practices, such as whoring, considered moral offences, are in reality only social ones.¹ Virtues and vices are nothing more than those acts which society deems to be either beneficial or harmful. But herein lies the paradox of the Grumbling Hive and The Fable: for if the qualities identified as virtues are to be encouraged and those identified as vices discouraged, then the flourishing society all enjoy will wither and die.

Mandeville's portrayal of the bee-hive as a microcosm of human society, where "These Insects liv'd like Men, and all Our Actions they perform'd in small" (I: 18), was not original.² The Roman fabulist Phaedrus, who translated

1 Bernard Mandeville, Modest Defence of Publick Stews: Or, An Essay Upon Whoring as it is now practis'd in these Kingdoms, (London, 1724), p. 8.

2 For example, Sir Humphrey Mackworth, in England's Glory, (London 1694) wrote "The more the merrier....like Bees in a Hive, and better Cheer, too." pp. 20-23. Quoted in Joyce Appleby, "Ideology and Theory: The Tension Between Political and Economic Liberalism in Seventeenth-Century England," The American Historical Review, vol. 81, no. 3, (June, 1976), p. 507. See also

and imitated the fables of Aesop, wrote a fable of the bees that may be the source of a number of La Fontaine's fables which Mandeville employed, including that of the wasps and the bees.¹ Yet Mandeville's use of the bee-hive as a metaphor for society is remarkable "for the new [and, to his own generation, startling] pattern he made out of [these] old materials."² The orthodox view in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries was that without vice the world would be a better place. Virtuous societies were believed to be those where benevolence and love for one's fellow-man flourished and vices such as sloth, lust, avarice, pride and prodigality were vigorously policed. Mandeville insists that this view of human nature and society is an elaborate fiction. He persistently points out that if men will examine themselves and "think on the Cause" (V., 88) of their actions, they will find that "When People are too Lazy, or fearful to undertake anything, they are praised for being Contented, and the Effects of Avarice are often called Temperance and Sobriety" (V., 73). Not content to have men examine their motives and "judge of every Thing according to the Merits" (V., 130), he declares that there can be no merit in their motives, only self-interest. Mandeville insists that societies as we know them need vice and, moreover, that not only are all actions in these societies the result of base motives, but "that the public benefits existed not in spite of, but because of, the private vices."³

Roseann Runte, "From La Fontaine to Porchat: The Bee in the French Fable," Studies in Eighteenth-Century Culture, 18, ed., J.W. Yolton and L.E. Brown, pp. 79-90, for a useful discussion of the bee as metaphor and image in early-modern Europe.

- 1 J.A.W. Gunn, "Mandeville and Wither: Individualism and the Workings of Providence", Mandeville Studies, Primer, ed., p. 99. Gunn claims that Phaedrus was probably Mandeville's source of inspiration for writing his fable. English examples of other works that draw social conclusions from the life of bees can be found in W.H. Greenleaf, Order, Empiricism and Politics (London, 1964), p. 24.
- 2 Basil Willey, The Eighteenth Century Background, (London: Chatto & Windus, 1940), p. 95.
- 3 Ibid.

Mandeville's Fable received spectacular attention in recently altered social circumstances. J.G.A. Pocock argues that the period after the Revolution of 1688 was one of change and development in some ways more radical and significant than even those of the Civil War and Interregnum.¹ The arrival of William III, with his continental interests, meant that English troops and money were committed to a series of major continental wars. The problem of raising money to support this quasi-permanent enlargement of the standing army forced the government to develop new financial institutions, particularly the Stock Market, the National Debt and the Bank of England, which revolutionized not only the government and the way it could conduct its affairs, but the shape of English society itself. In 1693, the first English Loan was floated, and in 1694, "the great Engines we had then to move (our Trade and our War) under a great scarcity of money, to keep them agoing" gave rise to the establishment of the Bank of England.² By the end of the seventeenth century, England was a leading trading nation, and the wealth generated by trade provided a ready source of revenue that government was able to tap through these new institutions. The creation of new forms of wealth through the expansion of commerce into the West Indies and North America, and technical innovation among the merchants and traders of London, resulted in a significant redistribution of wealth to new groups.³ London lawyers, government officials, and particularly merchants who had made their fortunes in commerce,⁴ had money to invest in these new institutions, which "were essentially a series of devices for encouraging the large

1 J. G. A. Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1975), p. 423.

2 J. Broughton, The Vindication and Advancement of our National Constitution and Credit: Attempted in Several Tracts, (1710), [Goldsmith, Kress Collection], p. 25.

3 P.G. M. Dickson, The Financial Revolution in England: A study in the Development of Public Credit, 1699-1756, (Toronto: The MacMillan Company, 1967), p. 4.

4 H.J. Habakkuk, "English Landownership, 1680-1740", The Economic History Review, vol. x, no. 1, (Feb.,1940), p. 3.

or small investor to lend capital to the state, investing in its future political stability and strengthening this by the act of investment itself, while deriving a guaranteed income from the return on the sum invested."¹ This new "monied interest", overwhelmingly London-based,² became increasingly powerful as the government became more and more dependant on its members for the capital needed to wage war.³

Wealth did not just stoke the engines of war, however. The marketing strategy of the East India Company managers, "equal to Macy's in the twentieth century," stimulated a fashion craze that created a "revolutionary force".⁴ By demonstrating the elasticity of demand, the East India Company provided domestic defenders of spending with a new paradigm, the citizen as consumer, driven by what Joyce Appleby calls the "propulsive power of envy, emulation, love of luxury, vanity and vaulting ambition."⁵

Although benefiting the government and its investors, these new financial institutions and consumer demands nonetheless caused deep anxiety and concern. The financial institutions, not relying on land, the traditional source of wealth and power, created a new and threatening form of wealth, public credit. More and more, money came to be obtained on the security of

1 Pocock, Machiavellian Moment, p. 425.

2 W.A. Speck, "Conflict in Society," Britain After The Glorious Revolution: 1689-1714, Geoffrey Holmes, ed., (London: Macmillan & Co., 1969), p. 145. Speck says it is at this time that the term "the City" began to be used to describe the business section of the capital.

3 Ibid., p. 142. War was expensive. Geoffrey Holmes calculates that the cost of conducting the wars against France during the reigns of William III and Anne was 130 million pounds. Geoffrey Holmes, "Introduction: Post-Revolution Britain and the Historian," Geoffrey Holmes, ed., Britain after the Glorious Revolution, 1689-1714, p. 22.

4 Appleby, "Ideology and Theory," pp. 503/5.

5 Ibid., p. 505. See also The Birth of a Consumer Society: The Commercialization of Eighteenth-Century England, Neil McKendrick, John Brewer, J. H. Plumb, eds., (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1982).

remote revenues and ultimately on confidence alone.¹ Although many of the large investors were the peers of the realm, a group that Roy Porter characterizes as being, by 1709, "collectively fabulously wealthy," these peers were a very small group.² Below the peers in the social order, the squires, far from being rich, were caught in a vicious squeeze of land taxes, poor crops and the cost of emulating the peers who indulged in "an orgy of consumption."³ With their income derived almost solely from their land, squires had little money to invest and were thus unable to take advantage of the new financial devices and opportunities.⁴ Frozen out by "the great landlords who maintained their pre-eminence by means of an unshakeable grip on political power,"⁵ many of the squires were left behind, becoming relatively poor and politically disaffected. By 1709, the conflict between the "landed interest," who derived their revenues almost solely from rents and land, and the "monied interest," whose income came from "the new machinery of public credit," trade, government spending and the new financial institutions, had reached critical proportions.⁶

To understand Mandeville's effect on his contemporaries, and the intensity of feeling generated by the conflict, it will help to reconstruct Pocock's

1 Speck, "Conflict in Society," p. 142.

2 Roy Porter, English Society in the Eighteenth Century, (London: Penguin Books, 1982), p. 74. It is calculated that something in the order of 26% of the national income was in the hands of only 6.5% of the population, composed of the aristocracy and gentry, lawyers, civil servants, merchants and sea-traders. W.A. Speck, "Mandeville and the Utopia Seated in the Brain," Mandeville Studies, Primer, ed., p. 70.

3 Porter, English Society in the Eighteenth Century, pp. 75-82. Joyce Appleby argues that the rich landowners spent rather than invested their income. Appleby, "Ideology and Theory". p. 500.

4 The burden of taxation, which fell most heavily on landowners, meant that they lacked capital. This was compounded from the 1690s to 1709 by the disastrous frequency with which poor harvests occurred. 1709 saw the biggest crop failure of the period. This cycle of crop failure, taxation and lack of revenue meant that land-owners did not have capital to invest. Speck, "Conflict in Society," pp. 139-142; Porter, English Society in the Eighteenth Century, pp. 81/2.

5 Porter, English Society in the Eighteenth Century, p. 75.

6 Speck, "Conflict in Society," p. 149.

argument in The Machiavillian Moment about the relationship between the notion of civic virtue and the polity. Pocock argues there was a historical progression from a morality founded on real property to one founded on mobile forms of wealth.¹ At the end of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries, the archetypical landed gentleman, living exclusively on his rents, independent of any outside agency and therefore immune to venal corruption, was still the ideal of the virtuous citizen. Practicing frugality because he was anxious to improve his estate for inheritance, it was thought that he would engage in civic actions for public rather than private interest.² To a society equating civic or public good with private virtue, and both with careful financial management, a revived "ethic of frugality"³ took on added significance. The citizen, corrupted by luxury, would be distracted from seeking the public good. The only way the nation's liberty could be preserved, and its decline into moral corruption, despotism and barbarity prevented, it was argued, was by promoting both public and private virtue.⁴

Once public credit entered the political arena, and it became possible to increase wealth through means other than ownership of real property, the entire concept of public virtue was threatened. Although the agrarian values of landed independence and rural stability remained constants in the social perceptions of the period, the reality was that ownership of land came to depend more and more on trade and credit. But, as often happens in times of rapid change, there was a lag between what was deemed acceptable moral behaviour and social and economic realities. The great debate between the "landed" and the "monied"

1 Pocock, Machiavellian Moment, p. 441.

2 Ibid., p. 445.

3 Ibid., p. 464.

4 Goldsmith, "Mandeville and the Spirit of Capitalism", p. 70.

interests in the early eighteenth century was conducted by the journalists and publicists of the day. Although champions of the monied interests, court writers like Addison and Steele were pitted against the landed interests or country ideologists. Pocock argues that even they never dreamed of denying that land was substantially what its partisans said it was: the foundation of civil virtue and society.¹ Nor, he continues, did they challenge the concept that private virtue and frugality were necessary to ensure a strong 'Body Politick'.²

To his contemporaries, Mandeville's doctrines seemed to threaten both the secular and the religious assumptions from which virtuous citizens were held to be a prerequisite for virtuous states.³ By his insistence that "Nothing is more beneficial to the Publick than the Prodigal, or more immediately detrimental than the Miser, yet both are Vices, without which the Society could not subsist" (F.T., 25 Nov., 1709), Mandeville drew the wrath of his contemporaries who believed that vice, particularly prodigality, threatened the very existence of the nation. Mandeville alone in this period openly argues that conventional moral and social thought are inconsistent with the contemporary economic goals of the state.⁴ Championing "the ethic of self-interest" ⁵ over the ethic of private virtue and frugality, put forward by men like Steele and Addison, and those in the Societies who sought to enforce traditional norms of conduct,

1 Pocock, Machiavellian Moment, p. 446. Goldsmith claims that "for Augustans, public virtue and private virtue were connected; private vices were not the sole concern of private men for they were causally linked with civic corruption." Goldsmith, "Public Virtue and Private Vices," p. 480.

2 The Fable I, 347. Mandeville says that "by Society I understand a Body Politick, in which Man either subdued by Superior Force, or by Persuasion drawn from his Savage State, is become a Disciplin'd Creature that can find his own ends in Labouring for others, and where...each Member is render'd Subservient to the Whole, and all of them by cunning Management are made to Act as one."

3 Pocock, Machiavellian Moment, pp. 441-6.

4 Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, p. 51.

5 Pocock, Machiavellian Moment, p. 464.

Mandeville not only insists that some vices "are so necessary to the State, that no Nation can be Great without them," but also claims "that to wish for a flourishing Trade, and the decrease of Pride and Luxury is as great an Absurdity, as to pray for Rain and Dry Weather at the same time" (F.T., 30 Nov., 1709).¹

Mandeville argues that no private action, however odious, which contributes to the public good, can be considered a vice; it must on the contrary be regarded as a virtue precisely because of its beneficent effects. In his Modest Defence of Public Stews, he argues at great length that "if a Publick Act, taking in all its Consequences really produces a greater Quantity of Good, it must, and ought to be term'd a good Act; altho' the bare Act, considered in itself, without the consequent Good, should be in the highest Degree wicked and unjust" (M. 68/9). Not only must individual acts be considered good if their social effects are positive, but even "wicked" laws, if they produce public benefits, must also to be deemed good: "we may in Confidence affirm," he writes, that "no beneficial Laws can be sinful" (M. 68/9). Although his Female Tatlers were only speaking of moral virtues, not Christian ones, "as it is not the Business of Tatlers to meddle with Religious Matters" (F.T., 3 Feb., 1710)², in The Fable Mandeville draws on

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- 1 Mandeville was not alone in recognizing the close relationship between rich and powerful nations and pride and luxury. Others, including Defoe, reached the same conclusion before him. Lovejoy claims that in the thought of late seventeenth and early eighteenth century writers, approbateness or love of praise, the desire to be well thought of, came to be widely accepted as "the sole subjective prompting of good conduct, the motive of virtually all the modes of behaviour necessary for the good order of society and the progress of mankind." Arthur O. Lovejoy, Reflections On Human Nature, (Baltimore: Joseph Hopkins Press, 1968), p. 157. Both Dudley North, who, in 1691, wrote that "the main spur to Trade, or rather to Industry and Ingenuity, is the Exorbitant Appetites of Men," and John Houghton, who, ten years earlier, had written that "our High-Living, so far from Prejudicing the Nation,...enriches it," recognized the economic advantages that accrue to a nation from pride and vanity. Sir Dudley North, Discourses Upon Trade (1691), quoted in McKendrick, p. 14; John Houghton, A Collection of Letters for the Improvement of Husbandry and Trade (1681), quoted in McKendrick, "Commercialization and the Economy," The Birth of a Consumer Society, p. 15.
 - 2 Mandeville may have been deliberately distancing himself from "Religious Matters" to ensure that the ecclesiastical courts could have no jurisdiction over The Female Tatler. Foxon points

the authority of religion to support his position that whatever produces good must be deemed to be good. "God, in his infinite wisdom, could not make errors or mistakes," he argues, "and therefore, every human scheme or act must be part of God's design; and if they are part of God's design, as it follows they must be, and God is all good, then all the actions committed by his design must be good" (II: 256).

Mandeville's importance within a broad range of speculation in the early eighteenth century about the impulses which propel individuals to seek private gain is that he was one of the first to offer a thorough-going psychological analysis of the difficulty of self-knowledge and the stratagems employed by individuals in heightened commercial societies to hide these passions from themselves.¹ His claim that virtue and public spiritedness are incompatible with a rich and flourishing nation and that passion, in the form of pride, must be encouraged rather than combatted (II: 119) in order to promote wealth, is a lesson Mandeville probably learned from La Rochefoucauld, Pierre Nicole,² La Fontaine, Jacques Esprit and, most of all, Pierre Bayle.³ Like them, he rejects the idea that society derives from anything other than the actions of self-interested individuals, and finds absurd the belief that communities cohere either because of men's natural sociability or because of their ability to act in strict accordance with moral rules.⁴

out that "a general offence against morals...was a matter for the ecclesiastical courts." Foxon, "Libertine Literature", p. 30.

- 1 Kaye says that Nicole, Fontenelle, Abbadie, and J.F. Bernard were writers who announced the pains of introspection somewhat in Mandeville's spirit. *The Fable* II, p. 107, n.2.
- 2 Mandeville refers directly to Nicole in his discussion of Courage in Remark R of *The Fable*, p. 213.
- 3 Horne, *The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville*, pp. 31, 20-25. Malcolm Jack credits L'Abbadie, LaPlacette, Rochefoucauld and Bayle as Mandeville's French antecedents. Jack, "Progress and Corruption in the Eighteenth Century," p. 375.
- 4 Horne, *The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville*, pp. 22/3.

Mandeville's insistence that all publicly-beneficial acts derive from egoism and self-interest, and that "if the most publick spirited Man in the Universe will be pleased strictly to examine himself, he will find that he has never committed any Action deliberately but for his own sake" (F.T.#80.), is similar to ideas expressed by Bayle, to whom he admitted a particular debt.¹ Bayle, a Huguenot who fled France for Holland, stressed the importance of egoism in the analysis of human action and provided Mandeville with a full-bodied approach to moral relativism and a social justification for luxury.² Bayle taught in Rotterdam at the same time as Mandeville was attending the Erasmian school there and may have been his teacher.³ Bayle's Pensées Diverses Sur La Comète (1683),⁴ originally published when Mandeville was in his teens, was translated into English in 1708, the year before Mandeville published The Virgin Unmask'd. It is possible that Mandeville read Bayle's Continuation des pensées diverses (1704), which explicitly propounds the principle of the utility of luxury.⁵ Indeed, there is a striking similarity between Mandeville's ideas about the social origins of moral values and Bayle's, and a similarity of both to Epicurus, an explicit source of Bayle's arguments. Like Mandeville, Bayle argues that moral values are culturally determined.

Car s'il est vrai que les persuasions generales de l'esprit ne sont pas le ressort de nos actions, et que c'est le temperament, la coûtume,

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- 1 Mandeville refers directly to Bayle at different times in his work. For Example, The Fable I, p. 167.
 - 2 Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, p. 96.
 - 3 Popkin speculates that Bayle was Mandeville's teacher at the Erasmian school. Richard H. Popkin, "Isaac de Pinto's Criticism of Mandeville and Hume on Luxury," Studies on Voltaire and the Eighteenth Century, ed. by Theodore Besterman, vol 154, (1976), p. 1705, n.2. J.E. Labrouse, Bayle, (The Hague: M. Nijhoff, 1964), vol. II, p. 117, n.50. E.D. James and Horne claim there is no evidence that Mandeville and Bayle ever met. E.D. James, "Faith, Sincerity and Morality: Mandeville and Bayle," Mandeville Studies, p. 44; Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, p. 28.
 - 4 Pierre Bayle, Pensées Diverses Sur La Comète, Édition Critique Avec Une Introduction & Des Notes, A. Prat., vol. I & II, (Paris: Librairie & Droz, 1939).
 - 5 See Bayle's Pensées Sur la Comète, II, pp. 100/01.

on quelque passion particulière qui nous determine, il peut y avoir une disproportion énorme entre ce que l'on croit, et ce que l'on fait.¹

Moreover, both credit the fear of worldly reproach as the greatest "Bulwark of Morality" (M.D., 17) and honour "qu'il y a d'hommes qui surmontent la crainte de la mort, la plus violente de toutes les passions, par la crainte de l'infamie."² Both Bayle and Mandeville lay special stress on pride and vanity in the process of social interaction. Like Mandeville, Bayle not only suggested that vices can motivate the same acts as virtues, but also concluded that a society, in order to prosper, must rely on vices alone.

Il faut donc dire, que c'est l'amour propre, cette passion inseparable de nôtre nature, qui nous rend avarés. Car cette maudite passion nous faisant trouver du plaisir à tout ce qui flatte nôtre vanité, à tout ce qui nous distingue des autres hommes, à tout ce qui nous peut procurer l'accomplissement de nos desirs, à tout ce qui nous peut servir de rempart contre les maux que nous craignons, nous porte à desirer ardemment d'avoir du bien, parce que nous esperons de trouver tous ces avantages-là dans la possession des richesses.³

Mandeville employed Bayle's central arguments about human motivation in the service of a wholesale critique of conventional moral assumptions within advanced economies. It was in this way that his "economic rationalism and moral cynicism"⁴ posed a threat to contemporary self-understanding. By insisting on a direct relationship between vice (or "Evil both Natural and Moral") and "a Populous, Rich and Flourishing Nation," (I: 325) and on the relativity of moral virtues,⁵ Mandeville was "held to rival Machiavelli

1 *Ibid.*, p. 119.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 81.

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 100/101.

4 McKendrick, "Commercialization and the Economy," p. 16.

5 For an example of his argument on this see *The Fable I*, pp. 327-330.

and Hobbes as the Father of Lies."¹ His economic and social theory, fully developed in The Fable of the Bees, was found morally intolerable by the majority of his contemporaries, who saw codes of moral behaviour as essential elements of the workings of the social scheme. As Kaye remarks in his introduction to The Fable, the most considerable thing about Mandeville's adversaries is their numbers (II: 4). His book was criticized by contemporaries as ill-written and incoherent, the style as mean and pitiful, the language as barbarous and the humour as low (II: 5). It was declared a public nuisance by the Grand Jury of Middlesex² and burned by the public hangman in Paris.³

Unlike Defoe and others among his contemporaries who justified vice in trade as an economic but not a moral virtue, Mandeville contended that what was commonly understood as vice was both. By seeking non-moral explanations for the evolution of society and its ability to provide individuals with goods and services, he "banished virtue from our consideration of government,"⁴ and sought to transform "Private Vices" into "Publick Virtues." It was this doctrine that earned Mandeville the enmity of his contemporaries. His insistence that emulative spending was not only necessary to the economic well-being of the nation, but instinctive in mankind's nature, was held to threaten the social order, draining the estates of the aristocracy, whose bills for luxuriant living would even further outstrip their incomes, and blur class distinctions with every

1 James Redwood, Reason, Ridicule and Religion: The Age of Enlightenment in England, 1660-1750, (London: Thames & Hudson, 1976), p. 87; see also Pocock, The Machiavellian Moment, p. 465; and McKendrick, "Commercialization and the Economy," p. 16.

2 Fable I, Introduction, xxxiv.

3 Hundert, "Mandeville to Rousseau and Back," p. 182. The Fable was burned by the public hangman in 1740. On 27 July, 1709, an abusive letter addressed to Lord C appeared in the London Journal, to which Mandeville replied two weeks later. This reply, together with the letter and the Grand Jury's presentiments, was reprinted in all subsequent editions of The Fable. The Fable, p. xxxiv.

4 Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, p. 75.

level of society seeking to emulate the one above it.¹ Orthodox Christian social assumptions ensured that the search for wealth and luxury, qualities long held to be vices by the Christian churches, would be vociferously denounced. Mandeville, while acknowledging the traditional Christian virtues, at the same time championed the traditional Christian vices, arguing that these virtues were incompatible with a rich and flourishing society. Why would men act virtuously, he asked, if all they would receive is the pleasure of doing it, "which most people reckon but poor Pay" (I. 222). Dorante, Mandeville's villain in The Virgin Unmask'd, a thoroughly despicable character, jibes at the moralists who would own that "bare Virtue" is worth nothing, "for telling us that it is its own reward, is as much as they would say be Virtuous as long as you live and you'll get nothing but your labour for your pains" (V., 64). Similarly, in The Female Tatler, Mandeville's Oxford Gentleman, admitting that "the certainty of a future State, makes it the Interest of every individual Person to be Virtuous," argues contrarily that "Humility, Temperance, Contentedness, Frugality, and several other Virtues, are very insignificant as to the Publick, and so far from making a Country Flourish, that no Nation ever yet enjoy'd the most ordinary Comforts of Life, if they were not Counter-ballanc'd by the opposite Vices" (F.T. 25 Nov., 1709).

This is the counter-balance that Mandeville proclaimed as his paradox of "private vices, publick benefits." National prosperity depended on what orthodox opinion viewed as individual depravity. In this way, Mandeville extended a paradox previously identified by La Rochefoucauld: "Thus in the same way that poisons, properly mixed, can help make up medicine, the vices of

1 Porter, English Society in the Eighteenth Century, p. 69.

men can help make up their virtues."¹ Mandeville's contemporaries were neither ready nor willing to swallow the medicine he prescribed for them. While the increased trade and commerce brought about by the consumption of luxury goods conspicuously benefited the state by increasing its power, and everyone from the king to the clergy, tradesmen to soldiers, revelled in their own display of finery and equipment, popular opinion still denounced luxury as evil in itself and corrupting in its effects.²

1 Maxime No. 83, quoted in Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, p. 24. See also Lovejoy's transl. of maxim #182 in Reflections On Human Nature, p. 40. Hirschman argues that La Rochefoucauld dissolved the passions and almost all virtues into self-interest. Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests, p. 42 and p. 11.

2 The Fable I, pp. xcvi/vii.

CHAPTER II

PRIDE AND THE CIVILIZING PROCESS

The study of the passions is central to Mandeville's analysis of mankind and society. For Mandeville, the well-spring for men's actions and, indeed, society itself can be traced directly to what Lovejoy calls men's emotive and appetitive, as distinct from their intellectual and cognitive, side.¹ Mandeville argues, *a posteriori*, that from self-liking, the primary passion, all of the other passions may be accounted for (II: 175/6). Distinguishing between self-liking, the primary passion, and self-love, the passion in which all other passions are centered, he claims that the latter is given to all for self-preservation,² while the former, since one cannot love what one does not like, ensures it (II: 129-136). Together, these two passions lead one to act always from self-interest. Self-love is "the Law of Nature" (I: 200); self-liking, innate in "Human Nature" (II: p.91), is the source of pride (II: 131).

In his analysis of the passions, Mandeville concentrates upon a commonly-addressed theme. His rejection of the traditional Christian view that a good society requires morally virtuous individuals, and his acceptance of approbateness or pride as the primary cause, not only of materially wealthy societies, but of society itself, is similar to that of his acknowledged intellectual predecessors, the French 'moralists' of the seventeenth century, who questioned the belief that society resulted from anything other than the manipulation of

1 Lovejoy, *Reflections on Human Nature*, p. 144.

2 The quality identified as self-love by Mandeville in Part I of *The Fable* acts on us because "we are all Lovers of Self Preservation and would naturally avoid whatever we think troublesome or hurtful." Self-liking, identified in Part II of *The Fable* acts as a balance to self-love. Because we are all great admirers of praise and desire to be thought well of by others, we temper our otherwise socially harmful tendencies. *The Female Tatler*, 6 Jan., 1710.

men's passions.¹ Almost obsessively, these analysts of human nature tried "to reduce most of the other 'passions' to one or another of the forms of 'pride' to show it to be the true explanation of actions which those who performed them supposed to spring from quite other motives, to trace its workings in the most various situations of social life, and to exhibit it as the force which keeps every vocation going, except those which serve the primary physical needs of food and shelter."² The desire for praise, that craving for admiration or applause, came widely to be accepted as men's primary motive in social conduct, and the only prompt for behaviour necessary for the good order of society and the progress of mankind.³

A keen observer of the stratagems employed by men, "not only to deny the high Value they have for themselves, but likewise, to pretend that they had greater Value for others, than they have for themselves" (II: 145, 150), Mandeville suspected their sincerity (II: 16). He was intent on showing that benevolence, humanity and other "social virtues" at the heart of orthodox moral reasoning in fact are the products of 'Pride' or 'Vain-glory' (II: 65), rather than any innate, other-regarding sentiments of mankind for one another.⁴ Mandeville delights in pointing out what he calls men's "Contrarities" (II: 136), and demonstrating that everything attributed to virtue can in fact be reduced to the workings of 'Pride', "that one predominant Passion" (II: 75). It is 'Pride', innate and unalterable in "human Nature" (II: 91/2), that fosters rich and flourishing societies (V., 136; F.T., 30 Nov. 1709). Increased and influenced by a

1 Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, pp. 22/3.

2 Lovejoy, Reflections on Human Nature, p. 141.

3 See Lovejoy, Ibid., p. 157.

4 Mandeville illustrates how pride simulates "Love of our Species, and natural Affections": The Fable II, p. 183. He satirizes Shaftesbury's 'lovely System' of social virtues in the first dialogue of Part II of The Fable, p. 44.

"refin'd Education" (II: 91), managed and concealed by an "artful" one (II: 79), pride is the means whereby men are taught to "play the Passion against itself" (II: 125), thus appearing to place public good over private interests.

In The Virgin Unmask'd, The Female Tatler and The Fable of the Bees, Mandeville illustrates, in increasingly detailed ways, how pride, "a Passion, that is not to be gratify'd without being conceal'd, and never enjoy'd with greater Ecstasy than when we are most fully persuaded, that it is well hid" (II: 99), fosters society by its very contrarieness.¹ Posing the question of whether rich and flourishing societies can arise from "that Instinct of real Affection...without Ambition or the Love of Glory," rather than from "a staunch Principle of Pride and Selfishness, acting under Pretence to, and assuming the Resemblance of, that Affection" (II: 259),² he argues that they can not. If genuine affection existed in the world, it would destroy pride and selfishness, and thus have "prevented the very Existence of that Pomp and Glory, to which human Societies have been, and are still raised by worldly Wisdom" (II: 260). In The Female Tatler, the Oxford gentleman, Mandeville's spokesman, explains his position on the development of society.

As to the saying, that 'Man is a Sociable Creature', it is very true, but generally misunderstood, for it means not that Human Creatures by some good Quality or innate Virtue peculiar to themselves, Esteem their own kind and love one another's Company more than other Animals; for in that Sense it is utterly false, but it signifies, that by multiplicity of their Wants as well as Appetites...the vast Love every one of them has for himself...they are of all Animals the only Species, of which even the greatest Numbers may be made

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- 1 Mandeville gives a detailed description of pride's contrarieness and the ways in which it benefits society. Mandeville, The Virgin Unmask'd, pp. 174-80. In his first contribution to The Female Tatler, he discusses the necessity for pride and honour in civil society. The Female Tatler, 2 Nov., 1709.
 - 2 Mandeville argues that man pretends to act from "Principles of Social Virtue." The Fable II, 109/110.

Subservient to one another, and by Skilful Management, compose a lasting Society (F.T., 25 November, 1709).

Not only are private virtues the result of sheer self-interest, but so too are civic virtues such as honour and courage, selflessness and love of country. Honour, beholden to our frailties, is "the tye of Society" (I: 218).¹ Mandeville argues that there is no virtue, at least that he is acquainted with, "that has been half so instrument to the civilizing of Mankind" as honour (I: 218). Together with wisdom and fortitude, sublime qualities of man, honour, "separated by Art from the Dregs of Nature," has been "exhalt'd and refin'd into a Spiritual essence" by "the fire of Glory" (I: 105).² In The Female Tatler, Mandeville, using a technique he often employs to demolish an argument, has the brave Colonel Worthy, "newly return'd from Flanders...a Man of undaunted courage," (F.T., 2 Nov., 1709)³ lay out the civic humanist position on the need for virtuous citizens in a state (F.T., 6 Jan., 1710). Worthy commends himself to the company in the room as "a Man of Honour," who says nothing but "what is of an unquestionable Truth." He holds forth about the glory of martial men and states with the conviction that nowhere can a man distinguish himself better than in the service of his country, where "his maintaining himself there Voluntarily upon his own Charge, bespeakes him to be Brave, to hate Idleness and to love his own Country" (F.T., 6 Jan., 1710). With characteristic Mandevillian irony, the brave Worthy, not wanting to hear his adversary's counter argument, flees the

1 Mandeville used this metaphor previously in The Female Tatler, referring to honour as "the tie of Civility." The Female Tatler, 2 Nov., 1709.

2 Hirschman argues that spokesmen for the chivalric, aristocratic ideal made this striving for glory and honour into the touchstone of men's glory and greatness. During the Renaissance, he claims, the striving for honour achieved the status of a dominant ideology. La Rochefoucauld challenged this ideology and showed all the heroic virtues to be forms of self-love. Albert O. Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests: Political Arguments for Capitalism before Its Triumph, (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1977), pp. 10/11.

3 Goldsmith points out that courage is a virtue particularly appropriate to landed gentlemen. Goldsmith, Private Vices, Public Benefits, p. 134.

scene before the Oxford Gentleman can reply with a succinct summary of Mandeville's theory of the role of the passions as socializing agents. "Mankind is a strange Compound," he explains, "made up of Qualities that contradict each other" (F.T., 6 Jan., 1710). The need for praise and the desire to be well thought of by others counterbalances the harmful effects of mindlessly pursuing one's own self-interest to the detriment of society. By showing that it is not selflessness or concern for public welfare that is innate to man, but rather self-interest, Mandeville here begins the construction of a theory of civil society whose motor force is the desired ends of self-interested individuals.¹

How can self-interested individuals, who, like planets, are little worlds unto themselves, concerned only with their own happiness and with avoiding whatever they think troublesome or hurtful (I: 178), be made to subdue their own self-interest? How can men who, of all species of animals, "without the Curb of Government" are "less capable of agreeing long together in Multitudes" (I: 41), be brought together in societies, where they need to substitute for their own self-interested acts those beneficial to the community? As Lovejoy frames the question, "how, by means of what political device, could you bring creatures whose wills were always moved by irrational and "depraved" passions to behave in ways which would not be inconsistent with common good?"² The device Mandeville selected to account for self-interested individuals cooperating for the good of society, Lovejoy argues, was "counterpoise", the balancing of one passion by another, while Albert O. Hirschman argues instead that Mandeville spoke of

1 Hundert argues that for Mandeville, the "motives of purely self-interested actors are a necessary feature of any satisfactory account of social organization." Hundert, "Bernard Mandeville and the Rhetoric of Social Science," p. 311.

2 Lovejoy, Reflections on Human Nature, p. 41.

"harnessing" the passions, transforming them through the civilizing medium of "society".¹

Regardless of whether we understand Mandeville's solution to the problem of controlling the passions to be the notion of "counterpoise" or that of "harnessing", for at different times he argues each view,² Mandeville's conception of this dilemma directly bears upon a long line of moral argument.³ The notion of one passion counteracting another derives from Augustine (354-430 A.D), who denounced three principal sins of fallen man: lust for money and possessions, lust for power, and sexual lust.⁴ The only one of the three for which Augustine found any extenuating circumstances was lust for power. Augustine cautiously endorses the possibility that lust for power, combined with a strong desire for praise and glory, could create "civil virtue",⁵ and here he conceives "of the possibility that one vice may check another."⁶

Lovejoy has shown that the general revival of Augustinian theology, particularly in seventeenth-century France, and importantly in Bayle's work, was

1 Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests, p. 16. Hirschman identifies three different solutions which emerged for restraining men's destructive passions in the interests of the state: repressing and harnessing the passions were two solutions suggested; the third, the concept of the countervailing passions, anticipated utilizing one set of comparatively innocuous passions to countervail another more dangerous and destructive set or, perhaps, to weaken and tame the passions in internecine fights. Ibid., pp. 14-20.

2 In The Virgin Unmask'd, Mandeville uses the countervailing solution, arguing that only a stronger passion can counteract another. The Virgin Unmask'd, p. 83. However, I would agree with Hirschman that his theory of how men can be brought to subdue their self-interest in the interest of society did not so rely on the passions being pitted one against another, thus neutralizing them, as on their being transformed or channeled into something else. Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests, pp. 16-18. For examples, see Mandeville, The Fable II, p. 125; and I, p. 140-146; 200-206; 55.

3 Lovejoy, Reflections on Human Nature, p. 41. Lovejoy argues that the framers of the American Constitution believed that one could use the method of counterpoise as a political device to bring creatures whose wills were always moved by irrational and "depraved" passions to behave in ways which would not be inconsistent with the "common good".

4 Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests, p. 9.

5 Ibid., p. 10.

6 Ibid.

Mandeville's point of entry into this tradition, whose most influential eighteenth-century exponent he became.¹ Like Bayle, Mandeville argues that neither the might of government nor the fear of the hereafter are sufficient to cause men to restrain their destructive passions for the benefit of society. This is the crucial insight upon which Mandeville develops his argument. In his introduction to Part I of The Fable, Mandeville explains that he believes "Man...to be a compound of various Passions, [and] that all of them, as they are provoked and come uppermost, govern him by turns, whether he will or no" (I: 39). Later, he gives an example of how this works in his discussion of the transformation of "the Passion...call'd Fear" (I: 200), "the only useful Passion.that Man is possess'd of toward the Peace and Quiet of a Society" (I: 206), into courage, when displaced by anger (I: 205). Mankind, Mandeville argues, brings nothing with him into this world but his passions. Just as his courage derives from fear, so too does his "Tendency to Religion" (I: 55). "Fear" is the passion that first gives men an inkling of an invisible power (I: 55). In the same way that men are taught by governors to harness their passions to counterfeit social and civic virtues, so too are they taught to counterfeit moral and religious virtues: hypocrisy passes for religion; avarice for frugality; pity for charity (I: 254/5).² Mandeville uses the example of that "darling Passion, Lust" (I: 145), to illustrate how politicians, "the Artful Moralists", by flattering men's pride and increasing their self-esteem on the one hand, and inspiring them "with a superlative Dread and mortal Aversion against Shame" one the other, contribute to the civilizing

1 See Lovejoy, Reflections On Human Nature, pp. 170 &179; and E.D. James, "Faith, Sincerity and Morality: Mandeville and Bayle," Mandeville Studies, Primer, ed., pp. 43-65.

2 The social virtues are the only ones Mandeville categorizes specifically. The lines of division between the others are fuzzy. Bayle argues, in Pensées sur la Comète that a society of atheists can be just as moral as a society of Christians.

process by teaching men the arts of concealment and disguise. Neither religion nor superstition, traditionally held to be the bulwarks of moral behaviour,

put Man upon crossing His Appetites and Subduing his dearest Inclination, but the skilful Management of wary Politicians; and the nearer we search into human Nature, the more we shall be convinced, that the Moral Virtues are the Political offspring which Flattery begot upon Pride (I: 51).

If men, proud, lustful and self-seeking by nature, do not cohere from "some good Quality, or innate Virtue peculiar to themselves," (25 Nov., 1709) and yet are able to live together in civil societies, then there needs to be some means of channeling their behaviour to society's "great Ends" (II: 46): mutual happiness and a more comfortable condition of life. Mandeville's moral relativism is at the heart of his theory of civil society, a term he is one of the first to use.¹ He argues that men are taught to value certain characteristics, labelled and lauded as virtues: selflessness, self-sacrifice and love for fellow-men, honour, courage and fortitude; and to condemn others, labelled and reviled as vices: selfishness, self-interest, pride, lust, and prodigality. Mandeville employs the ancient Lucretian device of the skilful politician or "Lawgiver"² to illustrate the means whereby men might have come, by slow degrees, from a state of nature, where "it is inconsistent with the Nature of Human Creatures that any number of them should live together in tolerable Concord without Laws or Government" (II: 309), to their present, civilized state.

The use of the metaphor of the skilful politician or lawgiver enables Mandeville to animate a theory which explains how "that marvelous

1 The whole thrust of Mandeville's work is to explain how "civil Society", which "consists in great Multitudes of both Sexes, that widely differing from each other in Age, Constitution, Strength, Temper, Wisdom and Possessions, all help to make up our Body Politick," came to be. The Fable II, p. 46.

2 See Hundert, "Mandeville to Rousseau and Back," pp. 173-77.

metamorphosis of 'destructive 'passions' into 'virtues'" might actually have taken place.¹ Recognizing the evils of the purely natural state, "Lawgivers and other wise men" (I: 42), slowly and through the ages, "by Skilful Management compose a lasting Society" (F.T., 25 Nov., 1709).² But to do this, they had to "make the People they were to govern, believe, that it was more beneficial for every Body to conquer than indulge his Appetites, and much better to mind the Publick than what seem'd his private interest" (I: 42).³ Thus 'lawgivers' must consider two main points, "what things will procure Happiness to the Society under their Care" and, "what Passions and Properties there are in Man's Nature, that may either promote or obstruct this Happiness" (II: 275). What they found, Mandeville argues, when they examined the motives behind mankind's actions, is that self-interest is the governing human property, and pride is the primary human passion, "the hidden Spring, that gives Life and Motion to all his Actions" (II: 79). Men must be taught to practice "the Golden Rule,"⁴ that all-encompassing maxim of morality and, by experience and imitation, learn to "conceal the high Value they have for themselves" (II: 145). They do this by conversing with one another. In this way, they learn the "many useful Cautions,

1 Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests, p. 17.

2 Ibid., p. 18. In a note, Hirschman points out that it has been convincingly argued by Rosenberg that by "Dextrous" (or "Skilful") management, Mandeville did not mean detailed day-to-day intervention and regulation but rather the slow elaboration and evolution, by trial and error, of an appropriate legal and institutional framework. Rosenberg, "Mandeville and Laissez-Faire," pp. 183-196.

3 For an elaboration of Mandeville's theory of the role of the "Lawgiver", see Lovejoy, Reflections on Human Nature, p. 172. Lovejoy argues that Mandeville used this feature of his account of the genesis of moral virtues merely as a literary artifice and that there was a long tradition behind its use. Mandeville's more frequent emphasis, Lovejoy claims, is upon the desire to be admired and praised by others, but because Mandeville regards being admired and praised as an insubstantial, and unreal, value, he tends to use his account of the method of moral education as a further means of satirizing his race and of representing man to himself as an irrational, ridiculous, and self-deceiving creature. Ibid., p. 177 Malcolm Jack, citing Lovejoy, says that the invention of the 'lawgivers' must be read allegorically and not literally. Jack, "Progress and Corruption in the Eighteenth Century," p. 372.

4 As Mandeville explains, men "naturally will not do, as [they] would be done by." The Fable II, p. 271.

Shifts, and Stratagems" (II: 139) that enable them to behave more tolerably to one another (II: 145).¹

The subtlety of Mandeville's argument about how self-interested individuals can be manipulated to live together in harmony, each conquering his appetites and subduing his own private interest for the public good, involves a little known feature of his thought, his interest in language "as a vehicle of socialization".² In his discussion of the importance of rhetoric in Mandeville's social and moral theories, E. J. Hundert draws attention to Mandeville's argument that it is through public speech "that a very considerable, if not the greatest part of the attribute (of sociability) is acquired" (II: 189)³. If individuals are to be manipulated into "crossing [their] Appetites and Subduing [their] dearest Inclinations," they must be convinced that they will receive greater reward by doing so than they would by indulging their natural inclinations. The reward offered in exchange for "the Violence, which by so doing they of necessity must commit upon themselves," is public approbation in the form of "Praise", through the "bewitching engine" of "Flattery" (I: 42: II, 92). By exploiting the desire for esteem, both one's own and that of others,⁴ "wise Men" and "Lawgivers", through the seduction of speech, make men believe that praise is a worthy substitute for other more tangible rewards.⁵

1 See The Fable II, pp. 139; 189; 191; 211.

2 Hundert, "Mandeville to Rousseau and Back," p. 170.

3 Ibid., pp. 170-172. Hundert argues that Mandeville's location of the origin of language in men's need to express their wants and their will did not arise from any serious epistemological interests on his part, but rather as a supplement to his interest in the development of social relationships.

4 By pride, Lovejoy argues, Mandeville meant two things, a craving to be able to think well of oneself; and a craving to be well thought of, chiefly as an aid to the former. Lovejoy, Reflections on Human Nature, pp. 180/81.

5 Hundert, "Mandeville to Rousseau and Back," p. 173. Hundert also develops this idea in "Bernard Mandeville and the Rhetoric of Social Science."

Contrary to common understanding, Mandeville argues, individuals, following the "Rules of good Sense", cannot govern themselves with either ease or readiness (I:323). Fortunately, however, egoism, the corollary of pride, can be used to manipulate them into behaving in socially acceptable ways: "So silly a Creature is Man, as that, intoxicated with the Fumes of Vanity, he can Feast on the thoughts of the Praises that shall be paid his Memory in future Ages" (I:213/4). Three months after becoming a contributor to The Female Tatler, Mandeville explains "the Intent and Usefulness" of Tatlers. The "great Aim which the old Philosophers and all Moralists, both antient and modern, have ever had in view, is the Happiness of Society." They accomplish this, he claims, "by teaching every body to govern his own Affections," and in this way "they [make] all the Members tollerable one to the other, and consequently serviceable to the whole Body" (F.T. 17 Feb., 1710). If it is the business of philosophers and moralists "to reduce great numbers into a Society,"¹ it is the business of Tatlers, similar to that of the ancient stage, "to make them a Civilis'd and Polite Society" (F.T., 17 Feb., 1710),² to polish what the philosophers and moralists cut out roughly (Ibid.).

Mandeville identified men's love of flattery or praise, proceeding not from any principle of virtue but from the vice of pride, as the quality in their nature by which they can be taught to behave in a way that fosters social harmony (F.T., 6 Jan., 1710). How this works is one of his more complex psychological arguments. The love of praise, which derives directly from self-liking, is innate to all, but, paradoxically, acts which seem to be motivated by self-

1 See also The Fable II, pp. 128/9.

2 Steele, on the other hand, claims that the theater should play a role similar to that of the philosophers and moralists. "It is not the business of a good play to make every man a hero," he observes, "but it certainly gives him a livelier sense of virtue and merit than he had when he entered the theatre." The Tatler, no. 99, (26 Nov., 1709).

interest, regardless of whether prompted by self-preservation, self-esteem or by the desire to gain the esteem of others, will not be praised. Only those acts which seem to originate from selfless motives will be deemed to be praiseworthy. Thus the only sure way to earn praise is to "take such uncommon Pains for some Publick Good, that no body can reasonably think the purchase of all the Praise in the World to be worth the trouble" (F.T., 6 Jan., 1710). Only by acting in ways that belie their self-interest can men gain the praise of others; only those seemingly "virtuous" acts, which appear to stem from other-regarding sentiments or motives will earn the esteem of one's fellows.

Here we encounter another of Mandeville's 'contrarities'. Because pride is innate, the visible signs of it, either in countenance, mien or speech, are easily recognized by all; because men have been taught to take pride in counterfeiting good behavior in public (F.T. 2 Nov., 1709), subduing their own self-interested acts for those which appear to be in the public interest, acts that might betray self-interest have been strictly prohibited, by common sense, in all societies (II: 125-126). This 'contrariety' causes men to go to extraordinary lengths to convince others that their acts are other-regarding. The effect of mankind's desire for approbation is integral to Mandeville's social theory. Pride, this "Principle of Self-Esteem" (II: 92), ensures that men will want to be well regarded by others (II: 133) and to be able to think well of themselves; it makes them susceptible to manipulation by "Lawgivers and other wise Men" who, offering the proper rewards, "by skilful management compose a lasting Society" (25 Nov., 1709). As Hundert points out, "flattery was thus the 'bewitching Engine' used to tame men by encouraging within them a conception of self which has as part of its content the opinions of others. Once the arts of flattery 'insinuated themselves into the Hearts of Men,' and they were instructed in the rhetoric of honour and shame,

in the ideals of public service and the symbolic rewards of praise,"¹ men would go to extraordinary lengths to convince others that their actions were not motivated by self-interest:

He that would be praised, must at least seemingly recede from that first Principle, so as to make others believe that his own Benefit is not the only thing he aims at. This is the great Point where we are all cheat and are cheated by one another; if the most publick spirited Man in the Universe will be pleased strictly to examine himself, he will find that he has never committed any Action deliberately but for his own sake (F.T., 6 Jan., 1710).

Left to its own devices, pride is either inconsequential or destructive to the harmony of society; but dexterously managed, it can be manipulated to make men solicitous of the welfare of others, placing the public over their private interests. Experience has taught us, Mandeville argues, that "tho' Pride was not to be destroy'd by Force, it might be govern'd by Stratagem" (I: 78\9). And the best stratagem for doing this is to play the passion against itself by teaching individuals to exult secretly in their ability to conceal their pride. Only this can compensate for the sacrifice of restraining compelling emotions (II: 125; 127/28). Horatio comments on the contrary nature of pride, musing that "it is very strange; that to encourage and industriously encrease Pride in a refined Education, should be the most proper means to make Men sollicitous in concealing the Outward appearances of it" (I: 125). Cleomenes, always the psychologist, explains that it would be impossible for "mortal strength" to endure the restraint "if Men could not be taught to play the Passion against itself, and were not allow'd to change the natural Home-bred Symptoms of it, for artificial Foreign ones" (II: 125). What Mandeville means by playing the passion against itself, is "placing a secret Pride in concealing the barefac'd Signs of it" (II:

¹ Hundert, "Mandeville to Rousseau and Back," p. 173.

125). The more the outward signs of pride are concealed, the more pride is heightened, and in this way 'Pride', "often most superlative, where it is most conceal'd" (II: 91), is encouraged, increased and influenced (II: 79, 91, 125).

One of the tenets of Mandeville's argument is that the civilizing process, by which "great Multitudes of both Sexes, that widely differing from each other in Age, Constitution, Strength, Temper, Wisdom and Possessions" (II: 46) are brought to live together in "civil Society" is dependant on "good Manners or Politeness" (II: 128). The origin of the "Art of good Manners...a Science that is ever built on the same steady Principle in our Nature" (II: 146), like the origin of all arts and sciences, Mandeville claims, is self-liking. Like all other arts, pride, working on human nature, makes improvements in good manners (II: 146). The importance that Mandeville places on politeness and good manners can be gleaned from the number of times he refers to it in his index in Part II of The Fable.¹ By allowing the display of those "Symptoms of Pride," which are offensive to one another if not camouflaged (II: 131), politeness provides men with an outlet through which they can express and gratify their pride in warrantable ways (II: 127). Since good manners have no other end than to "make ourselves acceptable to others, with as little Prejudice to ourselves as is possible" (II: 147), for the good order of society, and because those in whom pride has been most encouraged will be most likely to offend and be offended, men of politeness and good breeding learn at a very early age to conceal the objectionable signs of pride in themselves, while stoking the pride of others. The doctrine of good manners thus teaches individuals to substitute for offensive signs of pride, easily

1 Politeness is not only discussed under its own listing, under headings such as "exposed", "the use of it," "seeds lodged in self-love and self-liking," "how it is produced from pride" and "philosophical reason for it"; but is listed under at least ten other subject headings in Mandeville's own index in Part II of The Fable. This point has been ignored by virtually all of Mandeville's commentators.

recognizable in language, looks, or gestures, other, more socially acceptable, signs which can be denied for being what they really are. And to reinforce the charade further, good manners and politeness not only forbid that the game be mentioned in polite company, but, more insidiously, combine with men's pride to deceive them into believing the masquerade.

Men are born with the capacity to reason and think, Mandeville argues, but this capacity will not develop spontaneously in those who have not had time for leisurely reflection (V., 32; II: 190). Just as morals and society evolve slowly and by degrees, so too do thinking and reasoning. Thus, "those that have not been used themselves to thinking, but just on their present Necessities, make poor Work of it" (II: 190). Left uninstructed in rude nature, individuals are stupid and ignorant, but, in close association with one another, by conversing with others wiser than themselves, they learn to think abstractly (II: 211). For this reason, in cities and towns, "a Nursery which the Country People know nothing of" (F.T., 20 Jan., 1710), men are better able to deduce abstract principles from concrete events than are those in more remote, less inhabited parts of a country (II: 190). But the preparation for this must begin in the nursery. Affection prompts mothers to feed and protect their children, but when people are poor and women have no leisure to play with their children, the children grow up to be stupid and ignorant (II: 189).

Particularly aware as he is of the role and influence of language as a vehicle of socialization, Mandeville argues that conversation not only teaches men to think abstractly, but, more importantly for society,¹ it persuades them to be polite

1 Mandeville argues that the inventions and technologies that benefit society do not come from abstract reasoning and speculation but from practical application perfected through time: "They are very seldom the same Sort of People, those that invent Arts, and Improvements in them, and those that enquire into the Reason of Things." *The Fable II*, p. 144.

and well-mannered (II: 189). Since it is a universal characteristic of self-liking that "all untaught men will ever be hateful to one another in Conversation, where neither Interest nor Superiority are consider'd...because without a Mixture of Art and Trouble, the outward Symptoms of that Passion are not to be stifled" (II: 138), good breeding and good manners are necessary to inculcate in them the habit of flattering the pride of others while concealing their own. Once joined together in society, through conversing with one another, men learn to hide the "barefac'd Pride" which otherwise causes them to be so hateful to one another (II: 138). Only in this way do they learn to be sociable creatures (II:139; 189; 191; 211). Through the civilizing effect of speech and the joint experience of many ages, men learn to live together in societies, eventually coming to the rich and flourishing condition of contemporary commercial states (II: 139; 141). By everyone behaving in ways acceptable to all, "every individual Person is rendered more happy...in the Fruition of all the good Things he can purchase" (II: 147). Without the ameliorating influence provided by politeness and good manners, men would not be able to live long together without warring with one another. Although pride, through proper education, works to the benefit of society, when surpressed it turns to envy and malice, and becomes "the Cause of Cruelty" seen in mobs (II: 131/32). Politeness and manners, by allowing an acceptable outlet for pride, enable men to live together in civil societies.¹

Mandeville is not arguing that politeness and manners are for everyone. His audience is not "the rude and unpolish'd Multitudes" (I: 136), who perform "the Drudgery of hard and dirty Labour (II: 259), but rather the "beau monde" or

1 Mandeville's argument in defence of duelling is premised on the assumption that without the restraining effect of duelling, men would feel free to offend one another and to insult women. Thus, he argues, duelling contributes to polite society. The Fable II, p. 102; The Female Tatler, 2 Nov., 1709.

"fashionable part of Mankind" (II: 259): ladies and gentlemen whose "chief Study and greatest Sollicitude, to outward Appearance, have ever been directed to obtain Happiness in this World" (II: 147; 16). Not interested in turning the whole population into "a Civilis'd and Polite Society," Mandeville directs his efforts towards those who, in his opinion, stand most in need of good manners and politeness, "the voluptuous Men of Parts, that will joyn worldly Prudence to Sensuality, and make it their chief Study to refine upon Pleasure" (II: 127). None benefit society more, because, he claims, it is their "Fickleness, and...restless desire after Changes and Novelty," that is the cause of "earthly Greatness" (II: 260). Their contribution to society is civil society itself.

CHAPTER III

THE ROLE OF WOMEN IN MANDEVILLE'S WORK

1. The Inheritance

At the beginning of the eighteenth century, ideas of women as lusty whores, scolding wives, trembling virgins, and nurturing and compassionate mothers competed with one another for prominence. The polarity between the traditional view of women as sexually and economically aggressive and self-seeking, inherited from such widely divergent sources as Aristotle, the Bible and Juvenal's satires,¹ and the Puritan view of women as companions and help meets to men,² equal before God, resulted in an increasingly idealized view of women and marriage amongst Mandeville's contemporaries. At the same time, they retained the traditional misogynist mistrust of them.³ Dryden's translation of Juvenal's Sixth Satire on women, published in 1692, "the most sweeping of

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- 1 Mandeville was acquainted with Juvenal's Satires, quoting from Juvenal in The Fable II, p.277, n.1. Regina James divides "the traditional satires with their familiar Juvenalian topics - feminine infidelity, luxury, vanity, pedantry, promiscuity, masculinity, and shrewdness; and the serious writings on education and marriage meant to fit women to be better companions to their husband and mothers to their children." Regina James, "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary, or, Mary Astell and Mary Wolstencroft Compared," Studies in Eighteenth Century Culture, Volume 5, ed. by Ronald C. Rosbottom, (The University of Wisconsin Press, 1976), pp. 121-139.
- 2 Edmund Leites argues that the Puritans maintained a certain egalitarianism with respect to the relation between man and wife in moral matters; women were expected to concern themselves with their husband's moral and spiritual state. However, in all other matters, men and women were placed in a hierarchy: males to rule, females to follow. Edmund Leites, The Puritan Conscience and Modern Sexuality, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 15. Felicity Nussbaum claims that the effect of Puritanism on the status of English women defies easy clarification. It both improved the status of the sex and increased male authority over the family. Felicity Nussbaum, The Brink of All We Hate: Satires on Women, 1660-1750, (Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1984), pp. 12/3.
- 3 Nussbaum argues that the period from the Restoration to the mid-eighteenth century in England witnessed a burgeoning of satires against women: "it may be that by the mid-eighteenth century, the image of the ideal woman, virtuous and chaste, largely replaced the satiric myth of whore, infidel, and Amazon in literature. Such a paragon constitutes a new myth, one of a desexualized upholder of the social, domestic and religious order." Nussbaum, The Brink of All We Hate, p. 136. Marlene LeGates argues that although the emphasis shifts to the ideal of a virtuous woman, women are still perceived as inherently dangerous and disorderly. Marlene LeGates, "The Cult of Womanhood in Eighteenth-Century Thought", Eighteenth-Century Studies, 10,(1976), pp. 21-39.

classical anti-feminist satires,"¹ like others of its time, kept alive an especially virulent legacy of anti-feminist assumptions and traditions, "the stereotypes of the vain coquette, the affected learned lady, the Amazonian imitator of men."² Heirs to an intellectual tradition that equated women with both extreme carnality and rigorous chastity, they had a wealth of literary, scholastic and religious material, both written and oral, to draw on.³

The view of women as carnal, vain and envious by nature came from several different traditions: philosophical, physiological, medical and religious. Ian Maclean, writing on the effect of the religious tradition on the Renaissance notion of women, explains that "in the metaphorical and allegorical understanding of biblical texts woman is often identified with sensuality. Once Adam's eyes have been opened (Gen. 3:7), woman in her person, became an incitation to lust and concupiscence."⁴ Women, revered and reviled, "holy-threatening, passive-active, AVE-EVA,"⁵ are a symbol for both virtue and sin. This legacy of alternating eulogy and vituperation, derived from the Bible, certain Fathers of the Church, and moralistic writings of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance,⁶ is mirrored in another notion which, Maclean claims, can be

1 Nussbaum, The Brink of All We Hate, p. 77.

2 Ibid., p. 92.

3 A study made of the ideas about women, expressed in the writings of Mandeville's and Steele's contemporaries, has been summarized into three categories by Richmond Bond. Bond identifies the first group as the conservative writers who held to the traditional doctrine that in morals, body and intellect women are weaker than men and therefore need to cultivate the passive virtues; the second group are the men of wit and gallantry who praised and satirized women in works that might be cynical, extravagant, or conventional; the third group, identified as the rational reformers, are those who promoted an enlightened equality in education, legal rights and individual opportunities. Bond, The Tatler: The Making of a Literary Journal, p. 84.

4 Ian Maclean, The Renaissance Notion of Woman, (London: Cambridge University Press, 1978), p. 16.

5 Sekora, Luxury, The Concept in Western Thought, Eden to Smollett, (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1977), p. 59.

6 Maclean, The Renaissance Notion of Woman, p. 7.

found from the earliest times and in the most far-flung cultures:¹ that of the female opposed to the male. This notion of the male opposed to the female is found in Aristotle's tendency to produce dualities in which one element is superior and the other inferior. The duality of male/female in Aristotle's philosophy is paralleled by the dualities of active/passive, perfect/imperfect, complete/incomplete.² The female, according to Aristotle, differs from the male in her make-up. She possesses fewer mental faculties and is passive, material and deprived. In contrast, the male is courageous, honest and imbued with moral strength.³ Naturally more robust and active, more rational and less subject to extremes of emotion, the male by nature is the head of the state, the home and the female herself. Because the male is active and the female passive, and activity is associated with virtue, Maclean argues that the female is excluded from moral behaviour "unless she obtains entrance through...virtues deemed as imperfect as she is."⁴ Excluded from the civic virtues of courage, selflessness and love of country, she is left with the meaner virtue of chastity.

Women's imperfection, resulting as it does from her physical characteristics, is thus natural and unchangeable. By the end of the sixteenth and the beginning of the seventeenth century, however, many doctors at least were writing eloquently against what they regarded as the wrong done to the honour of women by Aristotle. "It is possible to argue" Maclean claims, "that there is a feminist movement in medical spheres, where in theology there is little evidence of one."⁵ In spite of this, however, the belief persisted that the effects of the uterus on the mind weakened rationality and increased the violence of the

1 *Ibid.*, p. 2.

2 *Ibid.*, p. 8.

3 *Ibid.*, pp. 8 & 32.

4 *Ibid.*, p. 51.

5 *Ibid.*, p. 33.

passions in women.¹ The malevolent effects of the female's uterus are considered to be the cause of a number of maladies, including lovesickness, melancholia, listlessness and irrational behaviour.² Thus it was commonly accepted that women, like children and the mad, were meant by nature to be governed. The commonplace notion of women as less rational and more passionate is satirized by the novelist and essayist Mary Astell, who, in 1696, addressing the relationship between man and wife in An Essay in defence of the female sex, scorns the tyrannical husband, arguing on behalf of the wife that "Since her Reason is suppos'd to be less, and her Passions stronger than his...he sho'd not play the little Master so much."³

In the eighteenth century the popular myth of the disorderly, rapacious female began to be replaced by a new and equally debilitating one, that of the chaste maiden and the obedient wife.⁴ Chastity, modesty and long-suffering, closely identified with the female sex even by Stoic writers,⁵ and a commonplace in traditional conduct book literature,⁶ did not emerge as the "language of use"⁷ for talking about women nor the mode of thought for thinking about them until the 1740's and 50's.⁸ Pocock argues that around the late seventeenth century the

1 Mandeville, with his medical speciality in the 'hypondriack and hysteric passions', imputes certain physical and emotional impairments to the effect of the uterus but does not argue that it causes any mental or moral impairment. A Treatise of the Hypochondriack and Hysteric Diseases, (London, 1711), p. 172; quoted in John Mullan, "Hypocondria and Hysteria: Sensibility and the Physicians," The Eighteenth Century, Theory and Interpretation, vol. 25, no. 2, (Spring, 1984), G. S. Rousseau, ed., pp. 141-174, p. 160.

2 Ibid., p. 44.

3 Mary Astell, An Essay in defence of the female sex, (London, 1696), [Goldsmith, Kress Collection], p. 42.

4 See Marlene LeGates, "The Cult of Womanhood in Eighteenth-Century Thought", p. 23; and Felicity Nussbaum, The Brink of All We Hate, p. 136.

5 Maclean, The Renaissance Notion of Woman, p. 51.

6 LeGates, "The Cult of Womanhood in Eighteenth-Century Thought," p. 26.

7 Pocock, Machiavellian Moment, p. 405. The phrase is used by Pocock in a different context.

8 See Regina James, "Mary, Mary, Quite Contrary," p. 134.

notion of women's 'virtue' acquired a specifically sexist meaning.¹ At the beginning of the eighteenth century, writers such as Steele and Addison confined women's virtue to chastity and compliant domesticity, holding up the image of the companionable woman and 'help meet' wife as the ideal, all the while employing stereotypic language to describe contemporary women.² If chaste and docile females and 'help meet' wives were the ideal, "termagant wives...and women who pretend to the conduct of such affairs as are only within the province of men" were too often the reality, Steele complains.³ "Sweetness of Temper, and Simplicity of Manners are the only lasting Charms of Woman,"⁴ he argues, but then notes that "there is an outrageous Species of the Fair Sex which is distinguished by the Term Scolds."⁵ Timidity and fear, even though, but more especially because, they make women weak, are attractive and excellent qualities in them.⁶

If we were to form an Image of Dignity in a Man...we should give him Wisdom and Valour, as being essential to the Character of Manhood. In like manner if you describe a right Woman in a laudable Sense, she should have gentle Softness, tender Fear, and all those parts of Life, which distinguish her from the other sex,

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- 1 Pocock, Machiavellian Moment, p. 405. Pocock notes that the notion of women's "virtue" acquired as specifically sexist a meaning as that of her "fortune" which, during the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries "came to bear the predominantly monetary meanings of inheritance, acquisition, or dowry."
 - 2 In an ironic twist, Mandeville compares Steele's "artful Encomiums" on the sublimity of the human species to tricks used by women to teach children manners. The Fable I, p.53.
 - 3 The Tatler, Bond., ed., No. 36, 2 July, 1709, p. 355.
 - 4 Steele, The Tatler, no. 61, 2:82, quoted in Edmund Leites, "Good Humor at Home, Good Humor Abroad: The Intimacies of Marriage and the Civilities of Social Life in the Ethic of Richard Steele," Educating the Audience: Addison, Steele, and Eighteenth-Century Culture, Edward & Lillian Bloom, eds., (Pasadena: The Castle Press, 1984), pp. 51-89, p. 60.
 - 5 The Tatler, no. 217, 4:157, quoted in Leites, "Good Humor at Home, Good Humor Abroad," p. 60. Scolding, Mandeville argues, serves a socially useful purpose as a vent for anger. It is only a custom, he claims, when "Language is arrived to great Perfection, and Society is carried to some degree of Politeness," The Fable II, p. 295. Interestingly, Mandeville discusses the practice of scolding primarily in relation to men.
 - 6 Leites argues that Steele attacked extreme states of feelings in his campaign to establish good humour as the temperament and mood appropriate to social life and marriage. Leites, "Good Humor at Home, Good Humor Abroad", p. 51.

with some Subordination to it, but such an Inferiority that make her still more lovely.¹

Puritan teachings on the importance of spiritual compatibility between man and wife, taken up as well by non-Puritan writers who stressed the importance of love as attraction before marriage and friendship afterwards,² appear to have been honoured more in the breach than in the observance. Mary Astell, vehemently attacking those who would blacken the image of marriage by satirizing it, writes that if men are not happy in the 'Married State',

tis their own fault....The wise institutor of Matrimony never did any thing in vain; we are the Sots and Fools if what he design'd for our Good, be to us an occasion of falling. For Marriage, not withstanding all the loose talk of the Town, the Satyrs of Ancient or Modern pretenders to Wit, will never lose its due praise from judicious Persons....Marriage in general is too sacred to be treated with Disrespect, too venerable to be the subject of Raillery and Buffoonery.³

Leites credits prominent seventeenth century Puritan theologians, who held that neither sex was more lusty than the other, with changing the medieval and Renaissance belief that women were the more rapacious of the two. This change in attitudes toward the relative strength of sexuality in men and women, he argues, "may be attributed to changes in both the conception and the treatment of the moral capacities of women."⁴ When treated with less moral respect, women "will be regarded as more subject to the demands of sexuality. In the medieval world generally, they were regarded as inferior moral creatures and

1 Richard Steele, *Spectator*, no. 144, 2:70, quoted in Leites, "Good Humor at Home, Good Humor Abroad", p. 63.

2 LeGates, "The Cult of Womanhood in Eighteenth-Century Thought", p. 24. LeGates argues that the changes in the literary representation of marriage neither reflected nor followed societal changes in practice or attitude, but rather preceded or anticipated them.

3 Mary Astell, *Reflections Upon Marriage*, 3rd ed., (London, 1706), [Goldsmith, Kress Collection], p. 8.

4 Leites, *The Puritan Conscience and Modern Sexuality*, p. 120.

therefore, treated as the more lusty of the two sexes."¹ Less moralized than men because they had less access to "moralizing institutions" such as universities and other conscience-forming bodies,² Hilda Smith argues that women could not pursue the goals idealized within civic humanism because they could hold neither public office nor professional positions within either the university or church.³

2. Passions, Sexuality and Marriage.

Mandeville was ambivalent in his attitudes towards women, but for different reasons than most. Unlike many of his contemporaries who accepted either the traditional or the idealized view of women, and justified it on the principle that men and women have entirely different characteristics,⁴ Mandeville began his theorizing with the claim that all persons bring nothing into the world with them but their passions (II: 207), and that "the same appetites were given to all" for the same purpose (V., 31).⁵ He thus rejects out of hand the traditional view of Eve's inconstancy as a curse on women. In The Virgin Unmask'd, Lucinda sarcastically lashes out at men who, "derive our inconstancy, from Eve our Mother" (V., 128), and believe of a women:

Yet, as a Husband, she could leave him there,
In hopes to meet with other Joys elsewhere;
And once got out of Sight, she prov'd so frail,

1 Ibid.

2 Ibid., p. 120. Both Leites and Hilda Smith agree that women were excluded from moralizing institutions. Hilda Smith, Reason's Disciples, Seventeenth-Century English Feminists, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1977).

3 Hilda Smith, Reason's Disciples, p. 40. Leites argues, in opposition to Smith, that by the eighteenth century the relative balance of repression in the middle classes had changed. Women were now subject to more internal restraints than were men he argues. Leites, The Puritan Conscience and Modern Sexuality, p. 120.

4 Bridget Hill, Eighteenth-Century Women: An Anthology, (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984), p. 10.

5 Mandeville uses passions and appetites interchangeably: "a Man need not conquer his Passions...good Breeding only requires we should hide our Appetites." The Fable I, p. 72.

That she would listen to a Serpent's Tale,
 And rather enter with the Dev'l in Chat,
 Than be a Woman, and not be Coquet (V., 130).

Mandeville holds that all notions of virtue and standards of moral conduct are the result of social conditioning rather than religion or nature. Addressing his male contemporaries, he argues that since women's "immortal substance is without doubt the same with ours,"¹ differences between the sexes are mainly the result of education and upbringing.

The consequences of this argument for social understanding are profound. If women's immortal substance is the same as men's and there are no significant appetitive differences between the sexes, arguments concerning women's innate incapacity for rational thought, a necessary prerequisite for virtue, cannot be based on natural law. If this is so, then to what can women's subordinate role be attributed? What is it that motivates men to argue that women have different virtues than men? And if common beliefs concerning female virtues are just an elaborate fiction, does this not imply that so too are notions about all virtues? Mandeville argues that it does. Beginning with the premise that individuals are motivated solely by their passions, he claims that "moral virtues" are nothing more than those qualities which skilful politicians and moralists, using the siren call of pride, have lured men into believing. By persuading individuals to subdue their own self-interested passions, law makers have rendered them more tractable, and thus are better able to "reap the more Benefit from, and govern vast Numbers of them with greater Ease and Security" (I:47). Through his arguments and insights about women, Mandeville seeks to explode some of the prominent myths that surround them and demonstrates that moral virtues, "the

1 Mandeville, *Hypocondriack and Hysterick Passions*, p. 174; quoted in E. D. James, "Faith, Sincerity and Morality: Mandeville and Bayle", *Primer*, ed., p. 50.

Political offspring which Flattery begot upon Pride," are not absolute, objective standards, but relative, self-serving ones.

Throughout his work, Mandeville is as interested in interpreting motives as he is in exposing hypocrisy. Many of the most important arguments that Mandeville makes precisely and in detail in The Fable, including the arguments designed to show that private vices result in public benefits, and those concerned with the development of moral virtues,¹ are first made in The Virgin Unmask'd, his reflection on the female sex. In this early work, Mandeville illustrates how actions ascribed to virtuous motives are almost always derived from self-interested passions, and he uses marriage, considered by his contemporaries to be both the ideal and the natural state for women, to illustrate his point.²

It is very significant that Mandeville uses The Virgin Unmask'd, his first prose work in English, and an examination of marriage, to argue his thesis about the social origins of virtue, and that he uses a woman as the medium by which to do it, exposing the motives and the hypocrisy of his contemporaries at the same time. Mandeville reveals his prejudices concerning women's capabilities very early in the book. Though his satirical manner sometimes makes it difficult to know whether he is serious or not, the consistency with which he makes the same claims about women's intellectual capabilities in other works lends credence to accepting Lucinda's stated opinions concerning herself as a true reflection of Mandeville's own. The antithesis of the popular image of a female, Lucinda is no giddy-brained thing incapable of controlling her own passions.

1 The Virgin Unmask'd, p. 73; Chapter 8.

2 See Maclean, Renaissance Notions of Woman, pp. 26/7; p. 57. Maclean claims that the belief that women cannot be considered except in relation to marriage is reinforced by the ethical and medical vision of marriage as a natural state. See also Roy Porter, "Mixed Feelings: the Enlightenment and Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Britain," Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Britain, ed., Paul-Gabriel Bouce, New Jersey: Barnes & Noble Books, 1982).

Employing the rhetoric of civic humanism, she describes herself as "a Rational and Unconcerned Stander-by," (V. 34), and says of herself, "I was always so Unnatural, as to deny my Appetite, what my Reason told me would hurt me, tho' my Inclination was never so strong" (V., 125).¹ Lucinda, in turn, examines the comparative merits of the married and single states. In a series of short, gossipy stories, she demonstrates that it is neither virtue nor reason which motivates women to marry, but rather, that "unaccountable Passion," love (V., 75).²

Mandeville was much more sympathetic to the view that held women to be sexually rapacious by nature than he was to the view that held them to be chaste and timorous. Unlike contemporaries who claimed that love is a virtue which transcends the demands of the flesh and, for women at least, the only true basis for marriage, in The Virgin Unmask'd Lucinda argues on Mandeville's behalf that the force which drives women to marry is nothing more than their natural sexual appetite (V., 124), an urge so strong that against all that is reasonable, men, using it, have "Enslaved our Sex." "In Paradise", she claims, as Artesia does later in The Female Tatler, "Man and Woman were upon an even foot; see what they have made of us since: is not every Woman that is Married, a Slave to her Husband" (V., 127).³ What human beings call love, Mandeville

1 Bridget Hill argues that spinsters were treated with scorn and derision. Chastity, to which so much importance was attached, becomes a frozen asset in a spinster. Hill, Eighteenth-Century Women, p. 12

2 By "Love", Mandeville means "a strong Inclination, in its Nature distinct from all other Affections of Friendship, Gratitude, and Consanguinity, that Persons of different Sexes, after liking, bear to one another: It is in this Signification that Love enters into the Compound of Jealousy, and is the Effect as well as the happy Disguise of that Passion that prompts us to labour for the Preservation of our Species". The Fable II, p. 142.

3 Mandeville makes a strikingly similar argument in The Female Tatler. 20 Jan., 1710. See also The Female Tatler, 25 Jan., 1710, where Mandeville attributes the lack of eminent women in history to the fact that "Since Men have enslav'd us, the greatest part of the World have always debar'd our Sex from Governing, which is the Reason that the Lives of Women have so seldom been described in History".

argues, is nothing more than "the Effect as well as happy Disguise of that Passion that prompts us to labour for the Preservation of our Species" (I: 142). Lucinda scorns romantics who view marriage as the natural and ideal state for women and a cure-all for everything that ails them.¹ She argues that "Married Women are infinitely more exposed to Accidents, that may occasion Trouble, Grief, and Misery, than Maids" (V., 119, 124). From their personal suffering over the calamities that may befall their husbands and children, to the physical hardships of pregnancy and childbirth, married women's lot in life is one of pain and tribulation (V., 119-24). "Old Maids", on the other hand, "as soon as that troublesome Itch is over, rejoice at having kept their Liberty, and agree unanimously in the Comforts of a Single Life" (V., 32).²

Mandeville ridicules these mores which draw an absolute line between virtuous and immoral sexual conduct in women, with men the wooers and women the wooed. Such conventions, he argues, are not rooted in natural law. Quite the contrary, in savage societies men and women copulate at will, without giving any more thought to what they are doing than do animals. Not only are these conventions not natural, Mandeville claims, they are also unreasonable.³ As Lucinda scornfully tells her niece, "What your Opinion of Wooing may be, I can't tell, but I always thought it very ridiculous (V., 30). The absurdity of this situation is that women, using all their charms to attract men, play at being

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- 1 Ilza Veith argues that it was a commonly accepted opinion that hysterical women needed only to be married to be cured. Mandeville, for the first time in medical literature, Veith claims, argued that women should not be married off just to cure them. Women should either be cured of hysteria first, or else remain single and not inflict their infirmity on their husbands and children. Ilza Veith, Hysteria, The History of a Disease, (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965), pp. 153/4..
 - 2 See also pp. 21 and 32 of The Virgin Unmask'd for the advantages of spinsterhood over marriage.
 - 3 In Modest Defense of Publick Stews, Mandeville argues that one of the advantages of whorehouses would be to relieve males of having to distract their attention away from business and devote it to wooing women, just so they can satisfy their sexual urges.

distant and aloof, and seem to disdain the very advances they have invited. Men, in turn, first prostrate themselves at the feet of women, proclaim themselves slaves for life, and then, once married become tyrants. All this is necessary, Mandeville argues, so that women can be married and spend the rest of their lives in bondage to the very men who enticed them into giving up their freedom (V., 30).

The rules of religion, law and social convention are so pervasive that it is necessary to arm and fortify both sexes, but women in particular, against their natural sexual impulses. "The Appetite it self, and all the Symptoms of it, tho' they are plainly felt and understood," Mandeville argues, "are to be stifled with Care and Severity, and in Women flatly disown'd" (I: 143). Although natural and necessary for the continuance of the human race, lust, left unrestrained, is so destructive to the order of society that, in Mandeville's words, "the Peace and Happiness of the Civil Society requires that this should be kept a Secret, never to be talk'd of in Publick." Not only is it taboo in polite society to talk about lust, but the prohibitions against it are so strong that it is considered a depraved appetite; (V., 124) men and women no longer even recognize it for what it is (I: 145). "The very Name of the Appetite...is become odious, and the proper Epithets commonly join'd to Lust are Filthy and Abominable" (I: 143). By illustrating how ridiculous social conventions look when subjected to the scrutiny of a rational observer and demonstrating that the impetus for marriage, the most sacred of all social institutions, is filthy and abominable lust, not lofty and unsullied virtue, Mandeville makes a strong case for his thesis that social institutions, like rich and flourishing societies themselves, depend not on men's virtues but on their vices.

The hypocrisy of contemporary attitudes towards women, nicely summed up by Patricia Meyer Spack's argument that "one may claim that men love women for their virtue, but everyone knows better,"¹ was not lost on Mandeville. Nor, he argues, was it lost on women: "A young Lady of refin'd Education keeps a strict Guard over her Looks, as well as Actions, and in her Eyes we may read a Consciousness that She has a Treasure about her, not out of Danger of being lost, and which yet she is resolved not to part with at any Terms" (I: 70). In a very clever ploy, Mandeville makes two points, both important to his argument. He demonstrates that standards of morality, like standards of dress, are only what society determines them to be and have no intrinsic value in and of themselves. He also exposes the hypocrisy in the attitudes of his contemporaries, ridiculing their contrariety which encourages "the very Virgins, that should be the temples of Modesty, [to] go with their Bodies half naked" (V., 3/4), in order to invite male attention, while at the same time demanding that they preserve their virginity.² Loved by men for their sexual attractiveness, women must "fly to Art and additional Ornament" (II: 133) to make themselves more agreeable to men. Having done so, they then must fortify themselves against the inevitable outcome, never giving in to their natural appetites nor men's seductive charms until they are safely married.

1 Patricia Meyer Spacks, "Ev'ry Woman is at Heart a Rake", Eighteenth-Century Studies: An Interdisciplinary Journal, vol. 8, 1974-5, no. 1, (Fall 1974), pp. 27-46. p. 40.

2 Important to Mandeville's thesis is his argument that modesty in women depends on social convention. He devotes the first chapter of The Virgin Unmask'd to illustrating how rules of convention, like rules of dress, depend solely on taste and public opinion. "Nothing is immodest in Dressing", he claims, "but when People shew those Parts, which the Custom of the Country bids 'em hide: In some Countries Women's Petticoats reach but a little lower than their Knees; yet if here a Woman...should pluck up her Coats half Way the Calf of her Leg, Everybody would call her immodest." The Virgin Unmask'd, p. 6. And the parts which are considered acceptable to show, even if they make a woman half naked in the process, he argues, are those that men find most attractive.

Women are caught in a double bind according to Mandeville. Limited to a very narrow range of moral behaviour where morality is equated with sexual innocence, they are forced by the weight of the social and political structure to be chaste and modest. Exhorted to behave virtuously, the expectation is that, because their reason is weaker and their passions stronger, they cannot unless strictly policed. The dictates of modesty and the force of honour will not allow women, particularly "the middle Rank of Womankind" (M.D., 45) who have their interest and fortune depending on their reputation, to indulge that "Inclination which nature has given us to propagate our Species" (I: 69) outside marriage, without risking ruin and lasting shame. This is the reason why "all young Women have strong Notions of Honour carefully inculcated into them from Infancy" (M. 42).¹ Because "Interest, indeed, is inseparable from Female Honour; nay it is the very Foundation of it" (M.D., 45), it is necessary to counterbalance women's violent sexual desire by honing their pride to heighten their shame. For "do but increase Man's Pride," Mandeville claims, "and his fear of Shame will ever be proportion'd to it" (I: 209). It is women's fear of shame,² their concern for what others, particularly men, will think of them, and not their love of virtue, that protects their chastity until such time as they are married.³

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- 1 Mandeville divides men into two classes: one which consists of abject, low-minded people who are incapable of self-denial; the other class, and the one to which he directs his work, consists of those who have a sufficient stock of pride to be manipulated into subduing their passions. The Fable I, pp. 42/3.
 - 2 Mandeville allows only two causes of chastity, "Religion and the Fear of Shame," and argues that the former is seldom effective. Bernard Mandeville, An Enquiry Into The Origins of Honour And The Usefulness of Christianity in War, (London, 1732), p. 56. In both The Virgin Unmask'd and The Fable Mandeville discusses the physiology and psychology of blushing, which, he claims, results when women in particular feel shame at the discovery, or even the possible knowledge by someone else, of some forbidden act or thought, particularly of a sexual nature. The Virgin Unmask'd, pp. 7 & 19; The Fable I, pp. 65/6.
 - 3 See also The Female Tatler, 11 Nov., 1709.

Mandeville appropriately employs the language of the battlefield to discuss women's virtue; their "glorious Field of Mars" is their own sexual nature, their honour their chastity.¹ In direct opposition to those who claim that there is no higher virtue for women than chastity, nor for men than courage, Mandeville argues that neither is praiseworthy and, more important to his argument, that neither has any foundation in reason or religion. He compares female virtue to garrisons under attack, laid siege to from without by men and betrayed from within by their own secret wishes (V., 28) and uses Lucinda to satirize the common wisdom that reason, religion and a modest way of life can be antidotes against natural appetites, particularly lust.² Lucinda explains to Antonia the stratagems she used to reinforce Antonia's honour: "to allay the Heat of your Blood; I often persuaded you to Fasting...I advised you to frequent Prayers, and the Reading of Pious Books" (V., p.20). However, Lucinda is a prudent woman who does not fully trust in these remedies to curb "wild Nature." In a further effort to heighten Antonia's dread of shame and fear of dishonour, and thus safeguard her against "this Provocation of Nature" (V., 31), she admits, "I told ye Five Hundred Stories about Rapes of my own Invention" (V., 22). Once she had done this, Lucinda confides to Antonia, "Your Vertue and Modesty I was persuaded of...I never fear'd any Thing base" (V. 22). The reason for this lack of concern, Lucinda says, was because "I knew you had Pride enough to secure your Honour" (V., 22).

Lucinda's argument that Antonia's virtue is neither natural, nor god-given, but the result of the fear of shame instilled in her through custom and education, is similar to Mandeville's later argument in The Fable, that pride and

1 Mandeville, An Enquiry Into The Origins of Honour, p. 53.

2 Mandeville uses the same comparison several times in his Modest Defense of Publick Stews, pp. 42/3, 50, 58.

its reverse passion, shame, are the "two passions, in which the seeds of most virtues are contained":(I: 65)¹

for tho' the Good and Evil of Honour and Dishonour are imaginary, yet there is a Reality in Shame, as it signifies a Passion, that has its proper Symptoms, over-rules our Reason, and requires as much Labour and Self-denial to be subdued, as any of the rest; and since the most important Actions of Life often are regulated according to the Influence this Passion has upon us, a thorough Understanding of it must help to illustrate the Notions the World has of Honour and Ignominy (I: 64).

The psychology of shame and its application to women in particular is a necessary feature of Mandeville's social thesis. His training as a doctor and his interest in the relationship between emotions and actions made him a perceptive observer of human nature and social institutions. Perhaps sparked by his study of the "hypochondriack and hysteric diseases", he turned his observations of the physical changes undergone by women who have been taught to feel shame at even the thought of sex, into a comprehensive theory of society and morality. Mandeville argues that shame, a learned response, is a powerful deterrent against socially harmful acts. Beginning with The Virgin Unmask'd, he analyses the psychological and physiological relationship of shame and demonstrates how it is used to control individuals so that they will behave in socially desirable ways (I: 145). When women learn to regard their natural sexual feelings as immodest and disgusting, then, thereafter, every time they feel this taboo urge, they will blush from shame just from imagining that others will know what they are feeling or

1 Kaye points out that Mandeville, in 1732, recanted this statement that pride and shame are two distinct passions. He claimed instead that they are different affections of one and the same passion. The Fable I, p. 67, n.1.

thinking. Honour without shame is not possible Mandeville claims and therefore women must be trained to feel the latter to guard the former.¹

It is the needs of civil society that tie female chastity so securely to female honour. For if the security of the state rests on the courage, born of pride and honour, of its male citizens, and upon their willingness to fight to death for the state, so too does the orderly succession of property, that other bastion of citizenship, depend on the chastity of females. The sexual fidelity of wives was considered essential to prevent bastards who would bring confusion to family property and inheritance.² In some areas in England, free bench, the practice of granting a widow a portion of her deceased husbands estate, was conditional upon chaste living and no remarriage.³ Without the assurance that one's heirs are one's own, succession of property is confounded.

Mandeville's problem is to demonstrate to his contemporaries, who believe that "the Fundamentals of Natural and Moral Justice and Decorum, are laid down, and clearly stated, from Scripture and Reason",⁴ that, in fact, moral virtues, like moral vices and social institutions, are the result of custom and education, the cumulative experience of generations propelled by and acting on mankind's self-love and self-liking. By exposing the self-seeking motives behind

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- 1 For a discussion of the effects and power of shame in shaping honour, see Remark C in Part I of the The Fable and the second dialogue in The Virgin Unmask'd.
 - 2 Roy Porter, "Mixed Feelings: the Enlightenment and Sexuality in Eighteenth-Century Britain," p. 16.
 - 3 E.P. Thompson, "The Grid of Inheritance: a comment," Family Inheritance: Rural Society in Western Europe, 1200-1800, Jack Goody, Joan Thirsk, E. P. Thompson, eds., (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1976), pp. 328-360, p. 350-355. In some counties, hapless widows who had been so imprudent as to violate their chastity could, for the price of a public humiliation, regain their property. To do so, they were required to ride astride a ram and recite a poem acknowledging their shame. Ibid.
 - 4 The Female Tatler ran an advertisement for The Doctrine of Morality: Wherein the Fundamentals of Natural and Moral Justice and Decorum, are laid down, and clearly stated, from Scripture and Reason., The Female Tatler, 8 Nov., 1709.

commonly-held notions about marriage and women, notions believed to be sanctified by religious precept and traditional wisdom, Mandeville calls into question all notions about virtue and thus about the foundations of society itself. Vichert points out that Mandeville uses Lucinda to demonstrate the hardships married women suffer. He graphically details their use as pawns in the marriage market¹, bartered by parents and in-laws for financial gain; he points to the physical hardships they suffer bearing children and the emotional hardships they endure when they lose them; he is sensitive to their vulnerability to the vagaries of fortune should their husbands die or squander their marriage portions. Mandeville had more extensive purposes than these, however. Throughout his career, Mandeville sought to expose the self-deception inherent in the moralizing cant of his contemporaries about relations between the sexes. Using a literary device he later employs in both The Female Tatler and Part II of The Fable, Mandeville's two interlocutors demonstrate reason's impotence as a first cause in directing the actions, not only of women, but of all mankind. First we act and then we reason, he argues, and it is only after our passions are spent or where "all equally Mutinous, none could predominate enough to make a great impression" (V., 85/6; 131), that reason comes to the fore (V., 88). In The Virgin Unmask'd, Lucinda demonstrates the difficulty in judging the merits or virtues of individuals unless "the Principle from which they acted, and the Motive that first edg'd them on, were thoroughly known" (V., 73). Because she wants Antonia to judge everything according to its own merits, she is brutally frank

1 W.A. Speck argues that the shift in the pattern of landownership which was going on at this time is attributable to a variety of long-term economic tendencies, including the ability of the large landowners to corner the more attractive bargains in the marriage market, as well as to engross the more lucrative posts in the administration and invest their surplus capital in the profitable public funds and private companies." W. A. Speck, "Conflict in Society", p. 138. See also pp. 145-7.

with her, thus leaving her no alternative but to "think on the Cause," both of her own and other's behaviour (V., 130).

The Virgin Unmask'd gives a powerful demonstration, both of the inefficacy of reason and virtue and of the power of passion as the motivating force in society and of the hypocrisy of Mandeville's contemporaries who argued that the subordination of women, like other fundamentals of natural and thus moral justice, derives its legitimacy from scripture and reason. Contrary to contemporary beliefs about marriage, the motives which prompt women to marry derive from no moral sources. If marriage is a rational institution, then an objective evaluation of the married state should reveal its advantages, for women and as well as men. Mandeville shows, however, that if the merits of both the married and single state for women are examined, it becomes obvious that the unmarried state holds at least as many advantages for them as does the married, and that marriage, as an institution, is no more natural than society itself. Each is the result of human intervention and political manipulation; both are the result of mankind's vices rather than virtues. The notion that women are motivated to marry by virtue is nothing more than a chimera. Left to their own natural devices, women would surely choose to remain single, "Mistress[es] of [their] own Choice" (V., 33). It is only women's libidinous urges, coupled with social standards which tie their self-interest to their chastity, that force them, against all that is natural and reasonable, into marriage.

3. Women and the Critique of 'Virtue'

A more apt title for The Virgin Unmask'd is "Virtue Unmask'd". The object of Mandeville's satire is not to unmask Lucinda's arid rationality,¹ but to

1 Cook, Bernard Mandeville. p. 59.

use it to unmask virtue and a society that refuses to recognize its hypocrisy.¹ Just as social and civic virtues are the product of mankind's manipulation of one another, so too are moral virtues. Chastity, decreed by all the powers, civil, religious, and political, to be inviolate in women, derives from mankind's vices and is no more a law of nature than is any other virtue. Having exposed the myths behind female virtue and laid bare the fallacy that virtue is either natural or absolute, Mandeville successfully satirizes his contemporaries who subscribe to the civic humanist tradition in which virtue is seen as the moral as well as material foundation of social and personal life.²

Mankind's capacity for self-deception is so great, and the effects of a learned education so persuasive, that, contrary to common belief, learned men, far from having the greatest understanding of human nature, usually have the least.³ This being so, and egoism, the consequence of mankind's self-liking, being as it is, a powerful incentive to men to conceal their motives from themselves, as well as from others, how then can men be brought to a state of self-awareness? In a digression on painting in Part II of The Fable, Cleomenes, Horatio and Fulvia, the only female character in the book, argue the merits of two paintings, one a charming but faithful copy of nature, the other a grander, but false representation. Fulvia, with unfashionable straightforwardness, argues in the Epicurean tradition for a real representation of nature over an idealized

1 Mandeville argues that "real Virtue requires a conquest over untaught Nature." The Fable II, p. 127; and cautions that the "imaginary Notions that Men may be Virtuous without Self-Denial are a vast Inlet to Hypocrisy" The Fable I, p. 331. Mandeville's paradox, Kaye argues, turns on his definition of virtue in which virtue was either a transcending of the demands of corrupt human nature, or a conquest of self. The Fable I, p. xlvii. Thus, if women only remain chaste in order to catch a husband, and only marry in order to indulge their lust, then even the purest virgin cannot claim any virtue for her chastity.

2 Pocock, Machiavellian Moment, p. 446.

3 See The Female Tatler, 9 Jan., 1710; 20 Jan., 1710; 16 Nov., 1709; and The Virgin Unmask'd, pp. 134/5.

and sublime one. She explains that "a picture then pleases me best when the Art in such a Manner deceives my Eye, that without making any Allowances, I can imagine I see the Things in reality which the Painter has endeavour'd to represent" (II: 32/3). In reply, Horatio, an adherent of Shaftesbury's "lovely System",¹ arguing for an exalted representation of nature, protests against "Filth and Nastiness, or vile abject Things not fit to be seen, at least not capable of entertaining Persons of Quality" (II:34). At this point, Cleomenes, in a tactic Mandeville often uses to point up the absurdity of the position he is mocking, adjudicates the argument, explaining that "Great Masters don't paint for the common People, but for Persons of refin'd Understanding" (II: 35). Great artists, he continues ironically, unlike *Michel Angelo*, *Demetrius*, *Dionysius* and *Lysippus*, who have all been criticized for their too natural portrayals, should use artifice when portraying men, painting only what men wish to see rather than what is natural. After further discussion, Fulvia, still holding fast to her position, states: "I prefer any thing that informs my Understanding beyond all the Recreations which either my Eyes or my Ears can be regal'd with"².

Fulvia's role in this exchange is an interesting one. The sentiments she expresses represent an argument used by Mandeville in The Virgin Unmask'd and The Female Tatler, one in which he attacks the pretensions of learned men who entertain exalted notions of their intellectual and moral capabilities and whose "Pride makes 'em such Fools as to fancy they shall persuade the World,

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- 1 Shaftesbury argues that there is a close connection between taste and morality and that they are psychologically dependent on one another. See Walter Jackson Bate, "The Sympathetic Imagination in Eighteenth-Century English Criticism", English Literary History, (June, 1945), xii, p. 146. See also Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, chapter 3, for a discussion of Shaftesbury's philosophy.
 - 2 Kaye argues that in this satire on the conventions forbidding realism in the arts, Mandeville may have been not only indirectly preparing the defence of his psychological and moral realism, but vindicating the realistic homeliness of his style, which had been attacked. Kaye, ed. The Fable II, p. 38, n.1.

that they know every Thing (V., 135). Women, because they are not esteemed for their learning, and are thus not compelled by pride to appear more learned than they really are, or corrupted by sophistical arguments, are not caught in this trap. In The Female Tatler, for example, Lucinda discusses the difficulty of understanding pedantic writing and suggests that it can be understood "by the help of the Females", much in the same way that

_____ The Tame Female
Of Elephants inveigles the Male.
(F.T., 9 Jan., 1710).

Mandeville deliberately uses women to present his views. In introducing Fulvia, he explains that he does so because he has some things to say about painting and opera that he thought with her could "be brought in more naturally, and with less Trouble, than they could have been without her" (II:19). Women are in a rather unique position, treated almost as 'idiots savants'; they are at the same time acknowledged to have special insights often denied to men. Their more delicate constitution and emotional sensitivity were believed to heighten their sensibilities, endowing them with extraordinary intuitive powers.¹ As Jenny Bickerstaff, Steele's female persona in The Tatler explains, "truth and simplicity...we may more justly pretend to beyond the other sex."²

In both The Female Tatler and The Virgin Unmask'd, Mandeville takes pains to point out that women's wit and understanding are equal to men's. Any differences between them, he argues, stem from differences in education (F.T., 20 Jan., 1710; V., 27/8). Because sound judgment is no more than the labour of the brain joined to experience (II: 172), women have as much capacity for it as do

1 For a discussion of this theme see G.S. Rousseau, *Nerves, Spirits and Fibres: Towards Defining the Origins of Sensibility; with a Postscript*, 1976, The Blue Guitar, II, (1976).

2 The Tatler, 2 July, 1709.

men.¹ Their superior capacity for sound judgment, joined with the fact that they are not blinded by pride in their ability to reason (F.T., 20 Jan. 1710), makes women privy to insights not available to men.² Although his contemporaries assumed that women's frailer bodies implied mental and emotional weakness,³ which justified their reduced status and exclusion from political life, Mandeville did not.⁴ In The Female Tatler, Mandeville uses the insights provided by women to point out the absurdity and hypocrisy of rules of honour which result in the glorification of war, and the flouting of both civil and religious laws in order to assuage one's honour through duelling (F.T., 2 Nov., 1709; 16 Jan., 1710). Women's natural capabilities, combined with their lack of sophistry and intellectual pretension, makes them privy to insights lost to men.

Mandeville may have chosen to give women a place of prominence in his work, often using them as his spokesmen, for no other reason than that, in his role as "universal gadfly", he was "chiefly bent upon annoying everybody".⁵ It is more likely, however, that he did so because the image of women was the most effective satirical device by which to prick the civic humanist pretensions of his contemporaries and to demonstrate the fallacies underlying contemporary

1 A clear indication of Mandeville's position on women's versus men's intellectual capacities can be found in his index where, under the heading of "Brain", he notes "The Brain [is] more accurate in Women than it is in Men." The Fable II, p. 361. Under the heading of "women", Mandeville lists as a subject, "are equal to Men in the Faculty of Thinking, 188. Excell them in the Structure of the Brain, 189." The Fable II, p. 377.

2 In Mandeville's account of the psychology of human beings, it is mankind's ego that gets in the way of his natural ability to perceive the truth. Men believe themselves to be superior to animals because they have the capacity to reason; they also believe themselves to be superior to one another for the same reason. With their natural ability to perceive the world as it really is corrupted by reason, they are blind to their own nature. Enamoured with their own intellectual powers, they refuse to admit what they do not know.

3 Maclean, The Renaissance Notion of Women, pp. 43/4.

4 Contemporary Galenist physicians still maintained the belief that women were inferior to men for physiological reasons. Maclean, The Renaissance Notion of Women, p. 35. While not commenting on this in particular, in The Virgin Unmask'd, Mandeville disdains their medical practices. The Virgin Unmask'd, p. 161.

5 Lovejoy, Reflections on Human Nature, p. 171.

notions of virtue.¹ A natural corollary of the Aristotelian belief that men and women have different and opposing attributes, with men possessed of those qualities and characteristics which are necessary for a virtuous citizenry, is the idea that women must behave differently from and subordinate to men. It is men's nature to be strong and courageous, it is women's nature to be weak and fearful; it is men's nature to command and lead, it is women's nature to obey and follow. Women are admonished to be modest, silent, patient in suffering and complying, those who aren't are labeled scolds or shrews. Mandeville unequivocally rejects this view of the order of nature and society whereby "the greatest Encomium a Man can give his Wife is to tell the World that she is Obedient" (F.T. 25 Jan., 1710). He attacks contemporary notions of female virtue which limit women to lesser moral standards, suitable only to domestic, not public life, and argues that "Patience, Chastity, Conjugal Love, and other Female Virtues," are no more women's lot by nature than "Magnanimity, Courage, or any of the Heroick Qualities, by which Men have made themselves Famous" (F.T., 25 Jan., 1710) are men's. Rather, Mandeville claims, all virtues are the result of custom and design and women are as capable of virtue as men are. Because the hierarchy of the family, like the hierarchy of society, is believed to be established in nature, aberrations which might undermine the authority of either are viewed by Mandeville's contemporaries as an affront to nature and ultimately to order and stability. Thus, women who affect "everything that's Masculine," including "Manly Reason, without the least Womanish Check"

1 Goldsmith argues that Mandeville uses women to subvert the prevalent hierarchy of values which excluded women from the pursuit of virtues appropriate to landed gentlemen and the aristocratic ideals of honour. Goldsmith, Private Vices, Public Benefits, p. 163.

(F.T. 22 July & 15 Aug., 1709),¹ are considered both an outrage and a threat to society and therefore strongly criticized.²

In The Virgin Unmask'd and The Female Tatler, Mandeville's female characters are the very antithesis of the "natural" and ideal female. Well-educated, unmarried and of independent means, the two Lucindas and Artesia possess all of the traditional "manly" characteristics considered taboo for women but essential for virtuous, hence male, citizens. The prevalent attitude towards women who are so unnatural as to deny their femininity is put forward in The Female Tatler by an old gentleman who ridicules Lucinda and Artesia for their learning and independence. He warns them that

no Prudent Man will ever take a Wife that knows more than himself: Every body loves Women that are Gay and Witty, but Solidity and Learning are no more becoming them than Breeches, and Latin is as ungentle a Furniture for the inside of a Woman's Head, as a Beard is for the outside (F.T., 17 Feb., 1710).

"Young Women" should not behave in such an unbecoming and unnatural way, he admonishes, but "shou'd only Study how to get Husbands" (F.T., 17 Feb., 1710). Mandeville presents women who contrast sharply with this portrayal: learned, knowledgeable about world affairs and financially independent, they are as capable of rational thought and as possessed of the heroic virtues as men.³ In The Virgin Unmask'd Lucinda is not only a spinster, a learned lady and a woman of substantial means with a personal income of £30,000,⁴ but, to add

1 Mandeville was not yet a contributor to The Female Tatler.

2 Bridget Hill claims that spinsters and learned ladies were scorned because chastity, to which so much importance was attached, was considered a "frozen" asset in a spinster, while learned ladies were considered to be "desexed." Hill, Eighteenth-Century Women, p. 12.

3 See The Virgin Unmask'd, p. 151; The Female Tatler, Dec. 9 & 14, 1709; Jan. 20, 25, 30; Feb., 3 & 8, 1710.

4 A fortune of fifty thousand pounds was considered a substantial achievement for a rich London merchant. Kramnick, Bolingbroke and His Circle, p. 50. See also Lorna Weatherill, Consumer Behaviour and Material Culture in Britain, 1660-1760, (New York: Routledge, 1988).

insult to injury, she is also one of the new financial entrepreneurs, holding a mortgage on land in exchange for a loan (V., 113) and able to talk with authority about government bonds and securities.¹ Not content to argue that "the highest Degrees of Virtues are all the same," Mandeville even goes so far as to develop a "Table of Fame" for women in The Female Tatler (F.T., 9 Dec., 1709; 20 & 30 Jan., 1710), in opposition to the "Table of Fame" for men, published by Steele in The Tatler.² He fills his table with women who have demonstrated wisdom, courage and love of country equal to that of any man. Because the lack of women honoured for heroic deeds in the history books is cited as justification in The Tatler for not giving women a table of fame of their own, Mandeville's heroines argue that the only reason women have been conspicuously absent from the annals of history is because men have engrossed the writing of history to themselves. They

have always been so careful to pick out the most remarkable Subjects, never endeavouring to render any Name Immortal, whose Greatness was not able to perpetuate their Own. From what I have said it is evident, that the Women, unless they had enjoy'd an equal Share of Power and Greatness with the Men, will not be found upon Record for their Excellencies so much as the latter, tho' they had exceeded them in every Virtue (F.T., 25 Jan., 1710).

Artesia reiterates the complaint, made in both The Virgin Unmask'd, and The Female Tatler, that "since Men have enslav'd us," women have been debarred

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- 1 Bridget Hill argues that "the main principles behind the accepted theory of the role of women were that men and women have entirely different characteristics and capacities." Hill, Eighteenth-Century Women, p. 12. Mandeville does not subscribe to this idea and in his last edition of The Female Tatler, has Lucinda argue, as she did in The Virgin Unmask'd that "Letters were denied us, lest we shou'd see and claim our great Prerogative and Equality with haughty Man, to whom we were created Friends not Servants, and design'd to advise and assist them in the Government of the Earth." The Female Tatler, 29 March, 1710.
 - 2 Steele's Squire Bickerstaff promised a table of fame for the women but never put one together. In one edition of The Tatler, however, he wrote that "Sweetness of Temper and Simplicity of Manners" are the only lasting charms of women. The Tatler, no, 61., quoted in Leites, "Good Humour at Home, Good Humour Abroad," p. 60.

from governing, "which is the Reason that the Lives of Women have seldom been described in History" (25 Jan., 1710).¹

The question of why men have enslaved women is, moreover, central to Mandeville's larger argument about the evolution and development of civil societies. The contrivance of chastity as the chief virtue for women has a very practical explanation, Mandeville argues. It removes a constant source of contention that would always be present if men could not lay ownership to women. As well, it satisfies men's need for dominance, meets the needs of civil society by ensuring an orderly succession of property rights and provides for a constant supply of cheap labour, thus enabling society to be divided into classes, a necessary prerequisite for rich and flourishing nations (F.T., 30 Nov., 1709; V., 116). When Mandeville turns his attention to the question of how, and by what means, savages, driven by their appetites, can be civilized, he begins with the assumption that, in a state of nature, men will satisfy their two primary needs, lust and hunger, vying with one another for women and food. So powerful is the sexual urge, Mandeville argues, and so disastrous for civil society the consequences of an unbalance in the number of males and females, that nature has contrived to keep the numbers of adult males and females in equal balance. Nature compensates for the number of men that are invariably killed by war² and the vagaries of life by producing more male than female babies (II: 256/7).³ Otherwise, the "perpetual Scarcity of Women, and Superfluity of Men, would

1 See The Virgin Unmask'd, pp. 127/8; The Female Tatler, 20 Jan., 1710, 25 Jan., 1710, and 17 Feb., 1710.

2 By war Mandeville means civil, foreign, massacres, private murders, poison, swords and all other hostile acts men use to kill one another. The Fable II, pp. 254/5.

3 Kaye notes that Mandeville is referring to Natural and Political Observations...upon the Bills of Mortality. The Observations claim that although more men die than women because of their more hazardous life, the fact that their birth rate exceeds females by about a thirteenth part preserves the balance between the sexes. The Fable II, p. 257, n. 1.

make great Uneasiness in all Societies...the Price of Women, would be so enhanced by it, that none but Men in tolerable good Circumstances would be able to purchase them" (II: 258/9).

4. Female Chastity

Mandeville's hypothetical account of how societies might have developed also has, as an important component, an explanation of the evolution of chastity. His argument that female chastity is not natural, but a product of pride and social conditioning, derives from the tradition of Bayle, but breaks with that tradition in a very important way. In his Pensées Diverses Sur La Comète, Bayle explains his mistrust of female virtue, saying:

je ne voi pas qu'on doive trouver étrange, que je soupçonne de fausseté la plus-part des vertus humaines, et la chasteté des femmes nommément. Si celles qui ont fait leur devoir de ce côté-la, s'examinent à la rigueur, elles trouverent, je m'assure, que la peur du qu'en dira-t-on, y a plus contribue que toute autre chose.¹

While Mandeville believes with Bayle that "les femmes s'y piqueroient de pudicite, parce qu'infailliblement cela leur acquerroit l'amour et l'estime des hommes,"² he does not, like Bayle, lay special blame on women for being more lustful than men because of a defect in their constitution.

C'est qu'elles sont retenuës par la dure loi de l'honneur, qui les expose à l'infamie, quand elles succombent au penchant de la nature. Il est certain que si les hommes n'eussent point attaché l'honneur et la gloire des femmes à la chasteté, les femmes seroient aussi generalement plongées dans les pechez de la chair, que les hommes; il ya a même beaucoup d'apparence qu'elles s'y

1 Bayle, Pensées Diverses Sur La Comète II, p. 82.

2 Ibid., p. 103.

porteroient avec plus d'ardeur, parce qu'il est fort apparent que cette passion est plus violente dans les femmes que dans les hommes.¹

Indeed, there is an intricate relationship in Mandeville's argument between the physiology of the sexes and the psychology that must be employed with women. Because women mature earlier sexually than do men (II: 123)², they must be flattered more and from an earlier age to secure them against their own nature. Again Mandeville disagrees with Bayle's low opinion of women, particularly his argument that, by nature, women are more lustful than men. On the contrary, he argues, the sexual urge is stronger in men than it is in women (I: 71).³ For this reason, not only must a woman be secured against her own nature, but she must also be secured against the wiles of "a Seducer of uncommon Address and resistless Charms," who "may court her to what Nature prompts and sollicitates her to do" (II: 123).

One of Mandeville's major tenets is that if virtue, moral, social or religious, is innate in mankind, then men would not behave as they do. Striking evidence of this, he claims, can be found in an examination of female chastity. It is only 'good' women who are driven to murder their unborn children in order to protect their self-interest. Whores, who could be expected to be without either

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- 1 Ibid., pp. 79/80. Horne argues that Bayle's low opinion of women helps explain why the chastity of women is one of his favourite examples of the way in which pride works. Horne, The Social Thought of Bernard Mandeville, p. 30. Not only were women more lustful than men by nature, according to Bayle, but "des vices qui flattent extrêmement nôtre vanité, nôtre envie, nôtre avarice et nôtre haine...generalement parlant, les femmes sont fort vaines et fort envieuses; si bien que pour les entretenir agreablement, it ne suffit pas de savoir mentir en les loüant, il faut encore savoir mentir en blâmant les autres femmes, et sur tout celles qui sont en concurrence de beauté, ou d'esprit, ou de credit, ou de rang avec celles qu'on entretient. Bayle, Pensées Diverses Sur La Comète, pp. 91/2.
 - 2 Mandeville argues that men are not usually ready for sex until they are about fourteen, whereas women are ready by about twelve. The Fable II, p. 201.
 - 3 Mandeville is somewhat ambivalent concerning male and female sexuality, arguing that although sexual desire is slower to be aroused in women, once raised to the critical height, it is absolutely irresistible. Mandeville, Modest Defense of Publick Stews, p 52.

conscience or morality, seldom are guilty of this crime (I: 75). 'Good' women may be persuaded to give in to their sexual urges in private but, because their honour, "ally'd and clearly annex'd to worldly Interest," (M.D., 46) demands that they remain chaste until married,¹ if their private acts can be publicly discovered, they will risk all, even murdering their bastard children, to escape public disgrace.² Neither love of virtue nor hatred of vice keeps women chaste, Mandeville claims. Only pride, in the guise of shame, is powerful enough to do that. "Honour routed never rallies, nay, the least Breach in female Reputation is irreparable" (M.D., 44): threat of gaol and fear of god will not persuade women above a certain class to suffer the shame of dishonour and the public ignominy and loss of opportunity that inevitably follows such a disclosure.

If moral virtues are not absolute and inviolate, rooted neither in natural or divine law, then what explains the ferocity with which society proclaims chastity to be the chief, if not the only, virtue of any consequence for women and the relentless pursuit of hapless women who are so unfortunate as to besmirch theirs? Mandeville argues that the explanation is to be found in men's domineering spirit. In the early stages of the development of societies, he claims, mankind's natural propensity to dominate, coupled with self-love and self-liking, will cause men to strive for superiority over one another: Because "every Man is born with this domineering Spirit," once his needs for food and sexual

1 Mandeville claims that "all marry'd Women are above the World, in so far as they are out of the Reach of any Suspicions or Surmises, or even a Probability of Incontinence; and since they are not liable to be detected by Pregnancy, there's no other Sort of Conviction able to prejudice them." Mandeville, *Modest Defence of Publick Stews*, p. 46.

2 *The Fable I*, pp. 75/6; *The Fable II*, p. 124; *The Female Tatler*, 11 Nov., 1709. For examples of the treatment that women who murdered their bastard children received, see Hill, *Eighteenth-Century Women*, pp. 138-49.

gratification are satisfied, "a Desire of Superiority, and grasping to himself"¹ will make him look for ways to gain ascendancy over others. For this reason, in a state of nature men will value themselves for their strength and prowess, whereas women "will always prize themselves for what they see Men admire in them" (II: 133).² It is this human tendency for mankind to value themselves, either for what others think of them, or, more perversely, what they imagine others think of them,³ that results in the contrivance of chastity as "the chief Virtue of the Women" (F.T., 20 Jan., 1710), as well as all other moral virtues.⁴ As Lucinda explains, women do not behave modestly because they value modest behaviour, but only because they are afraid men will despise and hate them if they behave otherwise (V. 10). Lust, "that Passion that prompts mankind to labour for the Preservation of our Species" (I: 142),⁵ is so strong a force in human beings that, in savage societies, men and women will satisfy their sexual urge without any thought or understanding of what it is they are doing.⁶ Thus, without some strong incentive for restraint, "tho' we agree not to take away, and

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- 1 This "Thirst of Dominion" plays an important role in Mandeville's theory of society. Without it, he argues, men "could never have been form'd into Societies." The "Desire of Dominion", he claims, "is a never-failing Consequence" of men's pride. The Fable II, pp. 204/5.
 - 2 Although Mandeville gives a reasoned argument for why men will value themselves for strength and prowess, he does not give a similar argument for why it is that women value themselves for what men prize in them.
 - 3 See The Fable I, p. 217, for Mandeville's argument on how this trait in men can be used to the benefit of society.
 - 4 "Patience, Chastity, Conjugal Love, and other Female Virtues", are considered important, but the consensus of The Female Tatler's contributors is that chastity is the most important female virtue. Male virtues are "Magnanimity, Courage, or any of the Heroic Qualities, by which Men have made themselves Famous." The Female Tatler, 25 Jan. 1710. The Oxford Gentleman, however, explodes the myth that there are different virtues for men and women, arguing that there is a single standard and that all virtuous acts proceed from self-interested motives. The Female Tatler, 6 Jan., 1710. Goldsmith argues that Mandeville "in a number of his works both directly and indirectly undermined the conviction that there was a single standard of ethical value—a standard embodied in the eighteenth-century conception of the landed patriotic gentleman citizen." Goldsmith, Private Vices, Public Benefits, p. 158.
 - 5 Preservation of the species is the result, not the cause, of lust Mandeville argues. See An Enquiry into the Origins of Honour, pp. 28/9.
 - 6 Mandeville tells a wonderful story about a cherry tree to illustrate this point. The Fable II, pp. 224/5.

rob a Man of the Woman that is his own, it is yet to be fear'd, that if we like her, this innate Principle, that bids us gratify every Appetite, will advise us to make Use of her, as if she was our own; tho' our Neighbour is at the Charge of maintaining her, and all the Children she brings forth" (II: 273).¹ Compelled as he is by the conceit of egoism to imagine that everything he can get his hands on is his own, the savage "will look upon his Children as his Property" (II: 200-204).² This is the original motive, Mandeville argues, that prompts men to value chastity in women above all else. To be certain that their children are their own, men have contrived to make chastity the primary female virtue. But if women are to be restrained from satisfying a passion as compelling as lust, there has to be an even more compelling passion substituted in its place. By tying women's honour solely to their chastity, pride, the "Principle of Self-esteem" (II: 92), ensures that women, because they want to be well thought of by men, will endeavour to restrain their "darling Passion, Lust", giving way to it only within the confines of marriage. In this way, men can be reasonably confident that the offspring of the union are their own, and that they own the offspring they father.

Mandeville gives preeminence in his theory of "Pride" to women. Convinced that the differing degrees of pride are owing to circumstances and education (II: 122), he argues that women, while not having "more Pride from Nature than Men....have a great deal more from Education" (II: 122/3).³

1 Mandeville argues this theme at length in his Modest Defense of Publick Stews.

2 It is not just savages that are prompted by these motives, Mandeville claims. Love is not the cause of marriage, but the effect of lust. Men do not marry out of any noble sentiments, but out of pride and a desire to secure their possessions: "a rich Man may, with great Impatience, wish for a Son, to inherit his Name and his Estate; perhaps, he may marry from no other Motive, and for no other Purpose; but all the Satisfaction he seems to receive, from the flattering Prospect of a happy Posterity, can only arise from a pleasing Reflection on himself, as the Cause of those Descendants" The Fable II: 228.

3 Mandeville does concede that individuals born with the finest parts have the greatest aptitude to be proud, and that "the workmanship in the Make of Women seems to be more elegant, and better finish'd....There is no Reason to imagine, that Nature should have been

Women's pride, refined to a higher pitch than men's because they are flattered more, and from an earlier age (II: 123), increases their fear of shame, "the Reverse of Pride" (I: 66), thus keeping them mindful of their honour which "has no other object than their Chastity"(II: 124).

The Multitude will hardly believe the excessive Force of Education, and in the difference of Modesty between Men and Women ascribe that to Nature, which is altogether owing to early Instruction: *Miss* is scarce three Years old, but she is spoke to every Day to hide her Leg, and rebuk'd in good Earnest if she shews it; while *Little Master* at the same Age is bid to take up his Coats, and piss like a Man" (I: 72).

Mandeville's utilitarian bent is evident in this argument that the standards of virtue are different for men than for women. If the standards are absolute and apply equally to both sexes, he argues, then neither sex will dare make the first advance towards the other and there will be no increase in population, particularly among fashionable people (I:71). But because virtue is socially determined, and because it is in the interest of politicians to encourage large populations, and since lust is stronger in men than in women, society has made it acceptable for male modesty to have a less rigorous standard applied to it. With male modesty not tied to chastity, as is a female's, all that is required for men to be modest, is for them to maintain "a civil Behaviour amongst the Fair in Publick and a Deportment, inoffensive both in Words and Actions" (II: 12).

If it is pride of ownership and lust for dominion that prompts all men in rude and savage states to value chastity as the prime virtue in women, it is the need for large populations that makes matrimony politically desirable in

more neglectful of them out of Sight, than she has where we can trace her; and not have taken the same Care of them in the Formation of the Brain, as to the Nicety of the Structure, and the superior Accuracy in the Fabric..." The Fable II, p. 173

societies with more complex social structures. Once men no longer live in a state of nature, Mandeville claims, "but form'd into several Societies independent of one another, and these Societies again [are] divided into several Ranks and Degrees of Men, distinguished by their Titles and Possessions, which descend from Father to Son" (M.D., 27), marriage becomes absolutely necessary. Not only is marriage necessary "for the regular Propagation of the Species, and their careful Education, but likewise for preserving that Distinction of Rank among Mankind, which otherwise would be utterly lost and confounded by doubtful Successions" (M.D. 27). The impetus for marriage may come from men's inclination to lewdness (M.D., 29), but the purpose of marriage is to promote population growth (M.D. 30/1). By regulating lust to prevent the inevitable strife and mischief that results if men and women are free to promiscuously copulate and change partners at will,¹ legislators encourage social harmony, peace and prosperity. Mandeville argues the mercantilist case² that the prosperity of any country depends "in a great measure, on the Number of its Inhabitants" (M.D. 5). For this reason, it is in the interest of the politicians to regulate relations between men and women, require less rigorous standards of chastity for males than for females and promote large populations by encouraging marriage.³

5. Fashion and Improvement

One of Mandeville's most carefully developed positions, and the only vice for which he supplies a detailed demonstration of how it could be turned into a

1 Mandeville, An Enquiry Into The Origins Of Honour pp. 28/9. Mandeville argues that marriage was not invented to make men procreate, they already knew how to do that, but rather to regulate procreation to prevent mischief.

2 See T.E. Gregory, "The Economics of Employment in England, 1660-1713", Economica 1:37-51, (1921), p. 37. Unlike his contemporaries though, Mandeville argues for the benefits of consumption, not just production.

3 Mandeville argues this theme in The Virgin Unmask'd, p. 116, and The Fable I, pp. 70/1.

public benefit, Hirschman claims, is the vice traditionally associated with women and civic ruin, "the passion for material goods in general and for luxury in particular."¹ Traditionally thought to be more deeply imbued than men with "the trio of vices - ambition, avarice and lechery,"² women were synonymous with luxury and thus with self-indulgent excess of any sort, sexual as well as material.³ Moral prohibitions against luxury and legal prohibitions against dressing above one's station had existed in one form or another in many societies. Women's desire to ornament themselves and enhance their beauty, a persistent theme throughout church history, produced a copious literature of admonitions to them about self-ornament long before Mandeville's time.⁴ Sumptuary laws, still read from pulpits annually in England, applied to all citizens who laboured or were dependent on others, but they applied to women in particular.⁵ The desire to dress above one's rank was seen as a threat to the social order, undermining class distinctions, corrupting the morals and

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- 1 Hirschman, The Passions and the Interests, p. 18. Hirschman overlooks Mandeville's argument about how female chastity is derived from men's vices, to the continual benefit of society. Mandeville's Fable of the Bees was one of the more important eighteenth-century works on luxury. See also Sekora, Luxury.
 - 2 Ibid., p. 22. Mandeville identifies lust, pride and selfishness as the passions that men must hide for the happiness and embellishment of society. The Fable I, pp. 68/9.
 - 3 With one major exception, virtually all medieval and Renaissance personifications of luxury are feminine. The major exception, Sekora says, was Spenser's Faerie Queen. Depicted as a beautiful, lustful woman in the windows of Chartes, Notre Dame and Amiens, luxury appears carrying the comb and mirror of cupidity and self-love. In some places she holds a scepter to mark her omnipotence and sexual domination over men; several medieval and early Renaissance depictions carry beneath the name a subtitle: "The Power of Woman". Sekora, Luxury, pp. 44/5.
 - 4 See Maclean, The Renaissance Notion of Woman, pp. 14-16. Jerome, Aquinas and Saint Francis all took up the debate. Ibid., p. 15.
 - 5 See Sekora, Luxury, pp. 58-61. Sekora claims that the Society for the Reformation of Manners was formed in 1692 by influential men in London who decided that the sumptuary laws were being neglected. Ibid., p. 61.

discipline of citizens and impoverishing the state by diminishing the aggregate wealth of the commonwealth through overspending on luxury goods.¹

Mandeville's intention was to turn the traditional arguments against luxury upside down, arguing instead that luxury is as necessary to create rich and flourishing societies as his contemporaries believed it to be harmful. Qualities customarily held to be advantageous to society such as "Humility, Temperance, Contentedness, Frugality, and several other Virtues" are so "very insignificant, as to the Publick," Mandeville argues, "and so far from making a Country Flourish, that no Nation yet enjoy'd the most ordinary Comforts of Life", if they were not "Counter-ballanc'd by the opposite Vices" (F.T., 25 Nov., 1709). Pride, passion and prodigality are so essential to the state, "that no Nation can be Great without them...[and] to wish for a flourishing Trade and the Decrease of Pride and Luxury is as great an Absurdity, as to pray for Rain and Dry Weather at the same time" (F.T. 30 Nov., 1709).² Mankind's emulative nature and women's insatiable appetite for fashion provides the incentive for invention and keeps tradesmen, craftsmen, shopkeepers and scores of others employed. Indeed, it is this reciprocal relationship between the never-ending desires of the prosperous classes and the labour of the poor that drives society (I: 355/356).

This is the reason that Mandeville directs his work to the middle and upper classes and argues so vigorously on behalf of the "beau monde". Society is beholden for the comforts and splendors of life neither to the lower classes, who

1 This attitude is discussed in an early edition of The Female Tatler where "the Prodigality of inferior classes" and "the Deceitfulness of most Men's Appearances," are criticized because rank distinction is "highly necessary for the Oeconomy of the World." The Female Tatler, 12 Aug., 1709. The necessity for sumptuary laws to prevent harm to English morals and manufactures through excessive spending on luxury goods is discussed by an anonymous writer in A Proposal for Remeeding our Excessive Luxury, (1700), [Goldsmith, Kress Collection].

2 Mandeville repeats this argument in The Fable. "Luxury and Politeness ever grew up together, and were never enjoy'd asunder." The Fable II, p. 147.

are devoid of honour (I: 199) and thus seldom powerfully influenced by pride to improve their lot (I: 194), nor to sober-living citizens who manage their money prudently. Rather, society is the beneficiary of vain, affected pleasure seekers who have wealth and spend it lavishly (F.T., 25 Nov., 1709). One of the first to focus attention on consumption as a spur to economic growth,¹ Mandeville, unlike most of his contemporaries, argues for the benefits deriving to the economy from consumption, particularly foreign consumption. His contemporaries deplored the frequently changing fashions in food and clothing because these items were usually imported. Foreign trade was thought to be beneficial to the state only if English goods were sold abroad or imported goods were re-exported.² Mandeville, however, did not agree. If England did not buy luxury items such as Indian pepper, tea, coffee, calico and fashion goods from other countries, she would not be able to sell her own products to them,³ and not only would the economy be undermined but civil society itself would be threatened (I: 111). Arts and sciences, trade and commerce, employment, the class structure and domestic tranquility are all, he claims, due to the profligate spender and the insatiable consumer.⁴

These economic features of Mandeville's social theory rest on one primary notion, that human beings are egotistical by nature. Passion and self-interest,

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- 1 F.B. Kaye points out that North had also anticipated Mandeville's attack on National Frugality when he wrote: "Countries which have sumptuary Laws, are generally poor....for that never thrives better, than when Riches are tost from hand to hand." Sir Dudley North, Discourses upon Trade (1691). p. 15; The Fable, I, p. 108.
 - 2 Joan Thirsk, Economic Policy and Projects, (Oxford: Clarendon, Press, 1978), p. 134. The fashion craze for Indian cottons, imported silks, French fashion goods and exotic foods was deplored because these items were believed to hurt the home economy by draining money from the country and fostering lax morals in the people. A Proposal for Remeeding our Excessive Luxury.
 - 3 Kaye writes that Mandeville was not abandoning the orthodox 'balance of trade' argument, but rather arguing for the stimulation of both exports and imports. The Fable I, p. 111.
 - 4 Mandeville devotes two consecutive papers to this topic. The Female Tatler, 25 Nov., 1709; 30 Nov., 1709.

manifest in a desire to be well regarded by others, results in mankind's propensity to strive constantly for preeminence over one another. Central to Mandeville's theory, and overlooked by scholars, is his description of the effect that this need for esteem has on women and the social consequences which flow from it. He argues that mankind's need for confirmation from others of his own self-worth acts on women, causing them to value themselves for whatever it is that men prize in them. And what men prize, Mandeville claims, is physical attractiveness. Mandeville was acutely aware of what Neil McKendrick calls "the biological display function of clothes."¹ In a state of nature, he argues, women who, naked and unenhanced, are less attractive than others, very quickly discover that they can enhance their beauty by the use of artifice and ornament. Once other women realize this, they too begin to improve on nature.² In this way, because human beings constantly strive to emulate those whom they feel are superior to themselves (I: 330), with time and through custom, by constantly competing with one another for men's attention, women are driven to dress above their stations (I: 127/8). The direct correlation between pride and luxury gives women the foremost role in the development of the fashion industry. Their greater pride and their need to be physically attractive to men combine to produce in them an almost insatiable desire for fashion goods.

1 McKendrick, "Commercialization and the Economy," p. 39.

2 This is a topic of considerable discussion in the The Virgin Unmask'd. Lucinda argues that women only show those parts of their bodies that men find attractive. Because men find women's bosoms attractive, women display them. The reason that women don't show "the Lower-parts, for there [they] are Ugly, Ill-shaped, Nasty Creatures," is not out of modesty, Lucinda says, but because "they are only afraid Men will despise and hate them for it." The Virgin Unmask'd, p. 10.

The Financial Revolution, begun in the 1690s, had a significant effect on women's fortunes and especially upon their power as consumers.¹ P.G.M. Dickson argues that the creation of new forms of mobile wealth through the expansion of commerce into the West Indies and North America, along with technical innovations among the merchants and traders of London, resulted in the distribution of this wealth to new groups of people.² Prominent among them, controlling both land and money, were women.³ There is evidence to suggest that early eighteenth-century demographic conditions "were favourable for the production of heiresses."⁴ By coincidence, at the same time as the financial revolution was taking place, a 'quirk' of nature, combined with English inheritance laws, provided women with greatly increased access to wealth, both in property and investment capital. Since fewer males were being born than females, and patrimony was divided equally among sons and daughters, the number of heiresses and brides with large portions increased substantially while large quantities of land were brought under direct or indirect female control.⁵ Inheritance, marriage settlements and widowhood combined to offer women increased control of large sums of money, which they then invested in the new

1 The effect of this revolution on women is an omission in Goldsmith's discussion on women and their place in early eighteenth society. Goldsmith argues that few women held or controlled landed or commercial property. M.M. Goldsmith, "The Treacherous "Arts of Mankind," p. 96.

2 P. G. M. Dickson, The Financial Revolution in England: A Study in the Development of Public Credit, 1699-1756, (Toronto: The MacMillan Co., 1967), p. 4

3 For women as land owners, see H.J. Habakkuk, "English Landownership, 1680-1740," The Economic History Review, vol. x, no. 1, (Feb., 1940), pp. 2-17; Lloyd Bonfield, "Marriage Settlements and the Rise of Great Estates: The Demographic Aspect," The Economic History Review, 2nd series, vol. xxxii, no. 4, (Nov. 1979) pp. 483-493; and Christopher Clay, "Marriage, Inheritance and the Rise of Large Estates in England, 1660-1815," The Economic History Review, 2nd series, vol. xxi, no. 3, (1968), pp. 503-518. Dickson, The Financial Revolution in England, pp. 256; 298.

4 Lloyd Bonfield, "Marriage Settlements and the Rise of Great Estates," p. 486. Both Bonfield and Clay cite Hollingsworth's calculations of male replacement rates for the peerage in support of this conclusion. Clay, "Marriage, Inheritance and the Rise of Large Estates in England, 1660-1815," p. 510.

5 Bonfield, "Marriage Settlements and the Rise of Great Estates," p. 486; Clay, "Marriage, Inheritance and the Rise of Large Estates In England," p. 504.

financial institutions. Evidence of this is their importance as speculators, from the first establishment of public credit at the end of the seventeenth century, up to at least the middle of the next century. Dickson calculates that when the first English loan was floated in 1693, women made up 18.6% of the subscribers for 11.9% of the subscription. As the century wore on, they became increasingly important as investors in both government and private shares, holding, by mid-century, 25.4% of the Bank stock for 18.8% of the total amount, and 22.5% of the East India stock for 16.5% of the total.¹ What this meant was that women as consumers and investors were now an important component of and potent market in British civil society.²

The image of "woman as capricious consumer", a recurrent feature of "the rather prominent sexism found in Augustan social criticism," was a target for many of Mandeville's contemporaries.³ Steele, for example, attacked women for their love of finery, rhapsodizing that they are loveliest when plainly dressed in simple, unadorned garments. Mandeville argues for the benefits deriving to society from "the Fickle Strumpet that invents new Fashions every Week; the haughty Dutchess that in Equipage, Entertainments, and all her Behaviour would imitate a Princess" (I: 355). He employs the common image of the woman who wants a new gown for thoroughly selfish and whimsical reasons to demonstrate the unintended consequences which flow to society from the self-

1 Dickson, The Financial Revolution in England, p. 256.

2 Women were also an important component in the marriage market and contributed to the widening gap between the wealthier and the poorer landowners. Speck claims that the wealthy landowners were able to corner the marriage market, thereby increasing their wealth and holdings. Because it was socially acceptable for gentlemen (but not for gentlewomen) to marry down the social ladder, men were able to make prudent alliances with wealthy merchants' daughters. Speck, "Conflict in Society," pp. 138, 145.

3 Pocock, Machiavellian Moment, p. 465. Both Montesquieu and Addison also attacked women for their consumerism.

indulgent woman and the extravagant spender.¹ Indeed, the "abominable improvement in Female Luxury" does far more to promote the welfare of the nation than all the beneficent virtues of a good and contented gentleman, living in harmony with his neighbours and coveting nothing, ever could (I: 355/6; 226; F.T., 30 Nov., 1709).

Women, both single and married, gained increasing command of earnings of their own² and, in luxurious cities like London in particular, access to shops and private dealers selling a wide variety of consumer goods.³ Mandeville gives a facetious demonstration of the power of emulation amongst all classes of women and the effects of their emulative spending on fashion. From "the poorest Labourer's Wife in the Parish," who will "half starve her self and her Husband to purchase a second-hand Gown and Petticoat" (I: 129), to the "Merchant's Lady" who, not bearing to see the women below her in the social scale fitted out as well as she is, "flies for refuge to the other End of the Town, and scorns to follow any Fashion but what she takes from thence," to the court, where "the Women of Quality are frighten'd to see Merchants Wives and Daughters dress'd like themselves," women compete with one another, emulating those above them and striving to set themselves off from those below. And all of this acts to benefit society, Mandeville argues, by setting the "Mantua-makers" and other assorted tradesmen to work.

1 Mandeville devotes three editions of The Female Tatler to the benefits of both those who devote their time to earning money and those who devote it to spending money, each is necessary to the other and both to society. See 13, 17 and 22 March, 1710.

2 McKendrick argues that even women in domestic service received higher money wages as a result in the rising competition for labour. McKendrick, "Commercialization and the Economy," p. 23.

3 See E. A. Wrigley, "A Simple Model of London's Importance in Changing English Society and Economy, 1650-1750", Past and Present, No. 34, (July, 1967), pp. 44-70, p. 51. Wrigley argues that by Mandeville's time the shop is a normal feature and a most important influence on social life.

To this Emulation and continual striving to out-do one another it is owing, that after so many various Shiftings and Changings of Modes, in trumping up new ones and renewing of old ones, there is still a *plus ultra* left for the ingenious; it is this, or at least the consequence of it, that sets the Poor to Work, adds Spurs to Industry, and encourages the skilful Artificer to search after further Improvements. (I: 130)

Commercial societies are the product of the uninhibited and often whimsical pursuit of desires which raise production by increasing demand. Thus there is a direct relationship between improvements in female luxury and economic improvement. Mandeville argues that the desire for luxury materials such as brocades and embroideries encourages trade and promotes the welfare of the country (I: 125). He scoffs at contemporary suggestions that religion has any relevance for the behaviour of individuals and the wealth of nations, and argues instead that "the silly and capricious Invention of Hood'd and Quilted Petticoats" has done far more to spur trade, employ workers and promote the arts and sciences than religion and sober living ever could (I: 356).

Although unaware of the demographic trend which improved women's fortunes, Mandeville was certainly conscious of their emerging role in the nation's economic life. Unlike contemporaries such as Steele, he did not deplore women's growing economic independence as a threat to marital harmony and an aberration of the natural order of society. Instead, he viewed their participation in the economic life of the nation as natural, and important for a flourishing, commercial nation. Moreover, he understood their importance to transcend their power as consumers. As Mandeville points out in The Virgin Unmask'd, too often men are able to wheedle women's portions and wealth away from them (V., 117/8).¹ If all that is necessary for a rich and flourishing

1 Astell expresses a similar complaint against husbands in Reflections Upon Marriage, pp. 13/4 .

society is that money circulate, then it matters not if women or men are spending it.

CONCLUSION

The importance of women in Mandeville's social thinking derives from what he understood to be the most basic and fundamental facts of human association. When Mandeville analyzed society, he did not find magnanimous, spiritually lofty individuals who associate together out of a natural desire for society and an innate love for one another. Rather, he found a collection of self-interested individuals. What leads to society, he argues, is their pride and the desire for dominion over one another (II:204/5). Self-liking makes individuals so fond of the approval and approbation of others that they can be manipulated into behaving in socially desirable ways and, through a slow evolutionary process, learn to curb and restrain wild nature and assume traits that will allow them to live together in stable and harmonious groups. Mandeville's work is about pride, a quality in human beings so ineffable, yet so powerful, that, properly developed and refined, it can cause women to deny their strongest, most basic appetite. Central to Mandeville's social theories and his formulation of them are his reflections on women and their role in civil society. Given his reliance on the paramountcy of the passions and the socially destructive effects of lust coupled with men's selfish and domineering nature (II: 272),¹ it is difficult to imagine how Mandeville could have formulated his theory in the way he did without his speculations on women and their importance for civil society and material progress.

All wise laws, Mandeville claims, are crafted to direct the energies of those who are meant to obey them. Even laws as sacred as the Ten Commandments are merely stronger versions of prohibitions and rules which were in existence

1 Mandeville returns to this theme again and again. For example: The Fable I, p. 344; II, p. 132, 270-5, 321.

amongst the Israelites at the time of Moses. The prohibitions against stealing, coveting and adultery all stem from the necessity of regulating relations between the sexes so as to foster harmonious relations within the social group (II: 272/3). Herein lies the conservative nature of Mandeville's thought, for though he credits women with intelligence and ability equal to men's, and rejects the notion that moral virtues are divinely determined, he does not reject the double standards that society applies to women.

Mandeville's social theorizing ought to be understood as a radical defense of the status quo. He sought to justify the social practices and mental habits of commercial societies by employing original and unsettling modes of analysis to achieve this end. Mandeville's aim is not to reform society, but rather to illuminate it, and his arguments about women are a central feature of this enterprise. If men and women are to live together in complex, materially prosperous societies, Mandeville insists, then, given human nature, laws and prohibitions must exist to restrain their socially destructive tendencies. For this reason, female chastity and stable marriage are as necessary to the growth, harmony and prosperity of civil societies as are patriotism and wise laws. So important is female chastity and so difficult is it to preserve it given the compelling nature of the sex drive, that even enforcing chastity with the entire weight of the social, religious and political structure will not ensure it. Only pride has the power to overcome lust. Only by allying honour with chastity has society succeeded in enforcing it upon women.¹ The deceptions and manipulations based upon pride, fostered by society and practiced by women, result in a functioning and polished social order.

¹ Bayle makes this point in his Pensées. He argues that women "sont retenues par la dure loi de l'honneur, qui les expose a l'infamie, quand elles succombent au penchant de la nature." Pensées Diverses Sur La Comète, p. 79.

Investigation of Mandeville's attitudes towards women and women's issues reveals that no discussion of his social, moral or economic thought is complete without a consideration of their central role. Beginning with his analysis of human psychology in The Virgin Unmask'd, he develops his characteristic arguments about the passions, and the civilizing effects of society, by satirizing contemporary assumptions about women. He attempts to demonstrate the hypocrisy inherent in claims for the absoluteness of conventional moral, social and economic standards by exposing the motives behind conventional assumptions about women, the roles they were expected to play and the moral standards they were obliged to maintain.

Mandeville discusses associations between the sexes in the context of civil society. Throughout his work, he argues that men and women are essentially the same in nature and ability, desires and appetites. Thus, in a state of nature, when their desires and appetites are unfettered by convention or prescription, they will copulate promiscuously and at will. "Tho' Lust in Man is not so raging as it is in Bulls and other salacious Creatures, yet nothing provokes Men and Women both sooner and more violently to Anger, than what crosses their Amours, when they are heartily in Love" (I:204/5). To prevent the mischief which this must invariably bring once any number of men and women live together in close proximity to one another, Mandeville, adopting the ancient Lucretian device of the skilful politician, postulates that "Lawgivers and other wise Men, that have labour'd for the Establishment of Society, have endeavour'd...to make the People they were to govern, believe, that it was more beneficial for every Body to conquer than indulge his Appetites, and much better to mind the Publick than what seem'd his private Interest" (I:42). Thus

Mandeville shows that it is civil expediency, not religious canon, that demands chastity be the primary virtue in women and allies it to their honour to ensure its enforcement and prevent civil strife.¹ In the same way that chastity has been made a moral virtue, marriage has been made a religious and civil institution. Mandeville's arguments about marriage, first made in The Virgin Unmask'd, remained a constant and important part of his social theorizing. In An Enquiry into the Origin of Honour, published in 1732, the year before his death, Mandeville repeats his claim that marriage is an institution designed by politicians, not God, and "Instituted to regulate strong Passions and to prevent the innumerable Mischiefs that should ensue, if Men and Women should converse together promiscuously, and love and leave one another as Caprice and their unruly Fancy led them."² Once the continuity in Mandeville's arguments is recognized, it becomes clear that in The Virgin Unmask'd he is not just attempting to show the hardships of marriage. Rather, he uses a satirical description of marriage to develop comprehensive social and moral arguments. Crucial to his famous maxim that private vices bring public benefits are his arguments that chastity and marriage (both, he claims, necessary for materially prosperous, multi-strata, societies, in which property is passed on from one generation to the next), are the result of lust and pride.

Pride, allied to luxury, creates rich and powerful nations (V. 168; F.T. 30 Nov., 1709; II: 147). Mandeville's beliefs about the effects of self-interest on women's behaviour, and the relationship between the two and luxury, art and science, make women as consumers an important component of his economic

1 See The Fable II, p.21; and I, p. 347 for Mandeville's discussions on the necessity for men to behave in ways that are beneficial to the group as a whole.

2 Mandeville, An Enquiry into the Origin of Honour, pp.28/9.

theorizing. His argument that women's self-esteem is derived from men's good opinions of them, which, in turn, depend solely on how physically attractive they are, made him a vocal critic of those who argued against luxury spending, and maintained that women are most attractive to men when dressed in plain, unadorned clothes. Women's need for men's approval, Mandeville claims, makes them particularly susceptible to manipulation concerning their appearance. For this reason, men like Steele and Addison are, in his eyes, not only self-deluded, but also a threat to prosperity and society as it is currently enjoyed. It is women's desire for fashion and ornaments which so powerfully helps to turn the wheels of trade. It is their competition for men's attention and their striving to set themselves off from one another that spurs industry and invention. Therefore, convincing women that men find them most attractive when they are modestly dressed and plainly ornamented is counterproductive in Mandeville's eyes. The wife who goads her husband to earn more so that she can dress as lavishly as her betters, and thus distinguish herself from those whom she believes to be her inferiors, and the husband who takes pride in his wife's appearance, and in his ability to provide her with the means to achieve this status, are the contributors to the general well-being and profit of society (I: 124-34). It is this constant round of desire fuelling acquisition, propelling productivity and invention, that pushes society to new and greater heights of power and splendor.

Mandeville's conviction that society derives from mankind's self-interested passions, particularly pride, is not unique to him. What is unique in this regard, and largely unrecognized, is his emphasis on women. Mandeville's analyses of women and women's issues and his speculations concerning the psychology employed to manipulate them into behaving in socially desirable

ways are important, both to the development of his economic theory and to the development of his larger theory about the origin and evolution of civil society. Without his speculations on women, Mandeville might have written his famous Fable, but it would not have been quite the same powerful book.

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