COMPETING DISCOURSES:
A BARTHIAN READING OF *ROXANA*

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A BARTHIAN READING OF GENDER

IN

DANIEL DEFOE'S

ROXANA

By

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A Thesis

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements

For the Degree

Master of Arts

McMaster University

MASTER OF ARTS (1989) McMASTER UNIVERSITY
(English) Hamilton, Ontario

TITLE: The Competing Discourses:
A Barthian Reading of Gender in Daniel Defoe's Roxana

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SUPERVISOR: Dr. Mary O'Connor

NUMBER OF PAGES: v; 82

ABSTRACT

In this thesis I have constructed a "gender code" in the Barthian theory as outlined in S/Z and "Textual Analyses of Poe's 'Valdemar' " in order to examine the plural discourses at play at the site of the narrating "I" in Daniel Defoe's Roxana. Present scholarship on Daniel Defoe's use of the first person female point of view has predominantly concentrated on Moll Flanders, subordinating the importance of Roxana, Defoe's last novel and second attempt with a female narrator in his novels. Like Moll, Roxana self-consciously tells her own story, but the absence of a reason for narration in Roxana makes Roxana a far more complex novel. Using Barthes's hermeneutic code and his theory of antithesis I have attempted to explain why Roxana tells her story. Furthermore, Defoe's paradoxical views on women are more problematic in Roxana. In Chapter One I have discussed the useful aspects of Barthes's structuralist and poststructuralist theory as appliedto a feminist theory on gender. Chapters Two and Three analyze lexia by lexia some gendered sections of Defoe's Roxana only to discover a shifting gendered identity at the site of "I" which is discussed in detail in Chapter Four. I conclude this paper with the observation that both the presentation of paradoxical attitudes towards women and Roxana's reasons for narration can be explained by the power struggles at the site of "I."

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to thank Dr. Mary O'Connor for her guidance, her perceptive suggestions and her patience during the preparation of this thesis. I am also grateful to my parents for their encouragement and support and for tolerating numerous long distance phone calls. As well, I would like to express special gratitude to Tomo Hattori and Douglas Gessell for all their typing and personal support during the final hectic moments of its preparation.

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INTRODUCTION

> I might enlarge upon the usage of Woman in many Nations in Europe, even the most civilized; and Argue the inhumanity of setting up to Tyrannize over the Sex. Also the cruelty of denying them that early Erudition, which would make them Equal, if not Superior in all manner of Science, and even more capable of all possible Improvement than Men.
>
> (Defoe, "A Defence of the Female Sex" 290-91)

In a period when women were reduced to and evaluated in terms of the limited roles of wife and mother and, as Katharine M. Rogers has observed, "the qualities considered feminine were those appropriate to a subordinate class" (Feminism in Eighteenth-Century England 38), women "tended to be seen as a homogeneous group separate from humanity in general" (Rogers, Feminism in Eighteenth-Century England 38). In light of these attitudes towards women, Daniel Defoe is highly sympathetic towards the woman's position in eighteenth-century patriarchal England. Time and time again, both in his novels and in his prose works, Defoe tried to illustrate the inhumanity of the eighteenth-century limited notions about women. He argued that given the proper education, namely one that is comparable to that granted to men, women could and would excel in various areas and perhaps could escape from the mistreatment they usually received from men. Defoe's empathy with eighteenth-century women, who were subjugated by men and vulnerable to abuse from men, enabled him to create his two great female heroines: Moll Flanders and Roxana. Both Moll and Roxana must face the harsh reality of being a single woman in a fiercely patriarchal society. Virginia Woolf, herself a pioneer of the feminist movement, in her Collected Essays has suggested that perhaps Moll Flanders and Roxana should be listed among the "patron saints" of "the advocates of women's rights" as:

> it is clear that Defoe not only intended them [Moll Flanders and Roxana] to speak some very modern doctrine upon the

> subject [of women's rights], but placed them in circumstances where their peculiar hardships are displayed in such a way as to elicit our sympathy (66).

Present scholarship on Daniel Defoe's use of the first-person female point of view in his novels has predominantly concentrated on Moll Flanders, subordinating the importance of Roxana , Defoe's last novel and second attempt with a female narrator. In both Moll Flanders and Roxana Defoe is well aware of the numerous problems facing women in social situations such as marriage and family. Moreover, Defoe is concerned with the single woman who, seeing the disadvantages of the married or family life — the wife or mother role — and the generally abusive treatment imposed on women in these situations, intentionally decides to be independent and seeks a way to support herself in society. Although Moll does not want to be independent, she is single and must support herself for a good part of the novel. Roxana, on the other hand, after her disastrous marriage with her brewer husband, purposely denies marriage, when it is initially offered to her, in favour of the single life. Because Roxana, unlike Moll, is against married life and only resorts to it when she is in difficulty, this last novel by Defoe provides deeper insights into the evil effects of married life on women in the eighteenth-century. Furthermore, not only does Roxana reject married life but she is vociferously against the prejudiced social ideas that only respect women who are successful wives and mothers and that always criticize and mistrust women who remain single no matter how successful. Roxana's extreme position, I mean extreme in the eyes of an eighteenth-century gentleman, on the issue of married life versus the single life makes her a far more complex character than Moll who essentially does not reject the moral principles concerning marriage in her society. Whereas Moll is a whore and a thief for survival reasons, Roxana consciously chooses to be a whore even after poverty is no longer a threat.

In Roxana Daniel Defoe is acutely aware of the bleaker aspects of marriage in the eighteenth-century. As Jane Jack has observed, there is a tension in the novel between Defoe's sympathy with Roxana's extreme ideas and his genuine shock with her views concerning the woman's role in society (Jack x). The moral conflicts Roxana experiences within herself — that is, of being an independent whore as opposed to a dependent wife — accentuate the incompatibility of Defoe's simultaneous demand that women be intelligent and independent, yet also submit to patriarchal authority. Because the novel ends tragically for Roxana, one is tempted to ask whether Defoe was ever really able to solve the problem of successfully being an independent woman worthy of respect in the patriarchal eighteenth-century. In the final analysis, Defoe's views on women may not be so much early feminist as they are paradoxical. For although Defoe criticizes his society for "setting up to Tyrannize over the [female] Sex" ("A Defence" 290-91), he is still unable to fully grant women an equal status to that of men. As Shirlene Rae Mason has pointed out, Defoe's "real interest seems to be with the woman who is clever and independent, living on her wit and plucking the good things from life. The creations of Moll and Roxana allow Defoe to show that women, even in adverse circumstances, can often do very well on their own" (161). On the whole, from Defoe's other writings it appears that he believes that a woman should be educated in order to be a "more rational and understanding helpmate, not an independent individual capable of providing for herself" (Mason ix). Perhaps the reason why Roxana suffers and Moll does not is precisely because Roxana refuses to be a "helpmate," but instead marries for her own selfish needs after she has gained financial and emotional independence.

Roxana and not Moll Flanders is the more complicated novel from a narrative viewpoint. Structurally, both novels offer a first-person retrospective account of female experiences in patriarchal eighteenth-century society. However, the reason behind the need

to tell the story differs in each novel. For Moll Flanders, the retrospective narration is a form of repentance and instruction to others not to follow her footsteps in life. The novel closes with a new Moll who has "resolve[d] to spend the Remainder of ... [her] Years in sincere Penitence, for the wicked ... [Life she has] lived" (Defoe, Moll Flanders 343). In Roxana the reason behind the narrative account is not given. Does Roxana tell her story as an example of what can happen to a "bad" woman? At times, Roxana is proud of her abilities to seduce men and acquire large amounts of wealth from them. Does this imply that Roxana recounts her life story because of pride? The novel closes with Roxana's words: "my Repentance seem'd to be only the Consequence of my Misery, as my Misery was of my Crime" (Defoe, Roxana 379). Is Roxana's narrative, then, a type of repentance like that of Moll's? Indeed, Defoe's last novel presents an important enigma: precisely why does Roxana recount the events that lead to her tragic downfall?

The twentieth-century French literary theorist and critic Roland Barthes in his book S/Z, in which he formulates his structuralist and poststructuralist theories, defines a "hermeneutic" or "enigmatic" narrative code "by which an enigma can be distinguished, suggested, formulated, held in suspense, and finally disclosed" (19). This "hermeneutic code" is a name under which the reader can group together all those aspects of her reading which are associated with the initial enigma in the novel. Barthes terms all these narrative aspects relating to the enigma the "hermeneutemes" (S/Z 209). He outlines in S/Z ten different hermeneutemes or subgroups of the hermeneutic code, including the proposal of the enigma and its formulation, and the various ways in which the text itself withholds the solution to the enigma until the end of the novel — such as equivocation, snares, and partial and suspended answers. By using Barthes's hermeneutic code as one of the methodological tools I will be employing in the reading of Daniel Defoe's Roxana , I hope to discover those aspects of the text which will solve the main enigma I have proposed.

Because Barthes breaks the enigma into several precise subgroups, the reader may be able to discover why and where in the narrative a specific enigma fails to be resolved by the end of the novel. Even if I am unable to uncover Roxana's true motive for telling her story, using Barthes's structuralist method I will be able to discover where and why the breakdown of the resolution to this enigma occurs. I intend, then, in this study to construct a feminist Barthian structuralist reading of relevant sections from Defoe's Roxana in order to clarify the presentation of ambiguous attitudes towards women and possibly to discover Roxana's hidden motives behind the narration of her tale.

CHAPTER I

The Theoretical Basis Behind the Reading of Defoe's Roxana

For the traditional author who chooses the first-person narrative voice the distance between the creator and his or her fictional creation appears to be erased, but this appearance is only a narrative construct. Indeed, the writer would seem to identify wholly with his or her creation--the first-person narrator--in order to successfully portray the character in question. Since all the information concerning other characters in the work is filtered through this internal narrator or first-person speaker, the information is necessarily limited by the gendered attitudes of the narrator. Thus, a female narrator created by a male author--as in Daniel Defoe's Roxana--should describe her surroundings, including other male and female characters, through a woman's eyes, from a woman's body. It is the male novelist behind this fictional female narrator who must try to view all of life from a female point of view. He cannot slip back into his own gendered attitudes when portraying a character or an event. Because of the restraint this convention places on the novelist, the representation of gendered experiences may occasionally become ambiguous, which is the case in Roxana. Depending on the skill of the novelist, the representation of gender in the text may be extremely accurate. Research on and associations with the opposite sex may help the writer in his attempt, but ultimately the representation of gendered experience in the novel is influenced by the author's own gendered experience and also by the "social discourses on gender in circulation at the time of writing" (Weedon 153). Defoe's Roxana, a novel told from the point of view of its eponymous heroine, to a large extent describes a young woman's growing experience of her own sexuality. How Roxana views her body and how she uses it for her own needs is a gendered concept. By rereading Roxana from

this perspective one may begin to locate the different views of women's sexuality presented in the novel.

A feminist theory on gender, like all feminist theories, needs an analytical or methodological tool with which to form an effective critical reading of a text. Liberal-humanist criticism, like New Criticism in its tendency to fix meanings, insists that it is addressing the universal human condition, but in the process reaffirms a strongly patriarchal system. A structuralist or poststructuralist theory which refuses to fix meaning and instead asserts that meaning is created by language is invaluable for a feminist theory on gender since language can now be the site of gender construction.[1] Furthermore, structuralism's and poststructuralism's undermining of the author's power over a text is useful to feminist theory. Structuralism insists on observing the structuration within a text and consequently, like New Criticism, does not consider anything outside the text such as an author or an external reality. Poststructuralism in undermining the notion that there is any ultimate structure in a text may consider the author's contribution to his or her work, but this author is only one of many voices present in the text. One can already see the value of this type of thinking to any feminist theory. If feminist theory intends to recover the voices of the suppressed, specifically women, then a theory that subverts the position of the author and allows for plurality of voices is comparable to undermining patriarchal ideology and restoring other ideologies in a society.

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[1] Classical structuralism believes that a text has some inherent structure which will reveal the "truth" and/or "reality." Barthes, in discovering the structure of a text, neither claims that there is one inherent structure nor believes that there is any "truth" or "reality" in a text. Barthes reveals the various codes (structures) that authors and readers share and the role these codes play in the text itself. Poststructuralism no longer considers a text to be an unified object. For poststructuralists the "text" is a fluid object produced through the interactions of reader and the written words. The reader too is made up other texts and various influences (as is the text). The ideas of intertextuality and plurality (many meanings in a text) are important for poststructuralists. Terry Eagleton has said that the work of Roland Barthes, especially S/Z, is a valuable way "of charting the development" (134) of structuralism into poststructuralism. In S/Z Barthes may use a structuralist method but his conclusions (or results from his reading) are poststructuralist.

Additionally, both structuralism and poststructuralism destroy the stability and unity of the sign. In particular, poststructuralism explodes the comfortable relationship between signifier and signified. In exposing the arbitrary nature of the associations between sign and referent or signifier and signified, both structuralism and poststructuralism threaten the "naturalness" of the sign. For a feminist structuralist or poststructuralist theory, signs, language and ideologies are not inherently "natural" or "real" because of their power but are created to appear so. In other words, power itself, whether the power of specific words or the underlying power of a dominant ideology, is not an intrinsic aspect of these words or ideologies but is attributed to them by history, culture and society. Power is created in and through language. In undermining the assumed power of these concepts and showing the arbitrariness of the relationship between the concept and the power granted to it, feminists can undermine the authority of any one particular ideology. A feminist structuralist or poststructuralist theory can in Nelly Furman's words "debunk the myth of linguistic neutrality" ("Textual Feminism" 48) and reveal the underlying gender assumptions behind every word, every utterance and essentially every human ideology. To this end Roland Barthes's structuralist and poststructuralist theories are invaluable for a feminist analysis of gender.

Roland Barthes in S/Z and his later "Textual Analysis of Poe's 'Valdemar' " focuses on the reader's ability to detect the various voices behind the written word and to extract significant portions of meaning from the text through the use of "codes." For Barthes, "all contexts come to man already coded, shaped,and organized by language" (Scholes 150). The reader has to identify the different codes which are present in the text. Because Barthes's system of codification includes all the aspects of culture that influence a narrative, it is feasible to create a "gender code" or a code which considers the basic assumptions and general ideas about males and females and their interactions with each

other and society. A "gender code" is essentially a subgroup of Barthes's "cultural code" which, like all the Barthian codes, "is a perspective of quotations, a mirage of structures; we only know its departures and returns" (S/Z 20). "Under this heading Barthes groups the whole system of knowledge and values invoked by a text. These appear as nuggets of proverbial wisdom, scientific 'truths,' the various stereotypes of understanding which constitute human 'reality'" (Scholes 154). In rigidly adhering to a system of codes, Barthes's theory of reading is structuralist but in refusing to organize these codes in some final meaning and instead allowing for the plurality of voices, Barthes's theory becomes poststructuralist.

What makes Barthes's poststructuralist method in S/Z and "Textual Analysis of Poe's 'Valdemar'" useful for analyzing Defoe's Roxana is that this method, in both Barthes's works, discusses transgressions, S/Z specifically theorizing about gender transgressions. Because the speaker's voice in Defoe's Roxana sometimes connotes masculinity, sometimes femininity and sometimes both, one can argue that Roxana also presents gender transgressions. In Roxana the "I" that narrates becomes the site at which identities are formed, whether male or female. Roxana is only one of the many names of this "I" who speaks. The "I" that narrates Defoe's novel comes to represent the symbolic battleground on which the male and female voices struggle to have power and be heard. Similarly, in Balzac's novella Sarrasine, which Barthes "reads" in S/Z, La Zambinella physically manifests a gender transgressio, for La Zambinella is a castrato who dresses as a female. The "I" in Roxana, in one sense, is a "Zambinellan" creation--a site at which masculine and feminine traits combine together. Unlike La Zambinella, Defoe's "I" is not castrated. This fact alone makes the battle of voices in Roxana more fierce, for the male quality of the "I" is not lost but temporarily suppressed. Barthes's comments in S/Z, then, will also apply to Defoe's Roxana.

In the principles of reading as outlined in S/Z and "Textual Analysis of Poe's 'Valdemar'," Barthes makes the distinction between "readerly" texts or classic texts and "writerly" texts or avant-garde texts that the reader composes in the process of reading. "Writerly" texts do not exist; "the writerly text is ourselves writing" (Barthes, S/Z 5). Barthes observes the degree of "writerliness" in a text. In other words, he reads texts such as Balzac's Sarrasine in order to determine the extent to which the text is closer to the writerly end of the spectrum. According to S/Z and "Textual Analysis of Poe's 'Valdemar'," the reader is now no longer a passive consumer but an active producer of the text. The process of reading itself becomes a dynamic one since the text is only created by the reader who discovers the numerous meanings embedded in the discourse. In Barthian terms, the reader

experiences the "plurality" of the text. For this purpose, Barthes in S/Z creates five separate codes with which to read the text: 1) the code of actions or the proairetic code; 2) the enigmatic or hermeneutic code; 3) the cultural or referential code; 4) the semic or connotative code and 5) the symbolic field or code. By reading in "slow-motion" Barthes demonstrates that the various codes one discovers are, in fact, "departures of déjà-lu" (Barthes, "Textual Analyses" 157). In the codes the reader recognizes what he or she has read before, for the reader is nothing less than "a plurality of other texts, of codes which are infinite or, more precisely, lost (whose origin is lost)" (Barthes, S/Z 10). These other texts, in turn, are "the entrance[s] into a network with a thousand entrances" (Barthes, S/Z 12). In other words, for Barthes each text is a "braid, woven of voices or codes" (S/Z 160) that provokes and evokes other texts. It is the reader's and critic's responsibility to discover these codes and therefore, enrich his or her own reading of the text.

Recognizing the descriptive and cultural codes ensures a familiarity between the reader and the text, while the code of actions makes the discourse easy to follow as it

maintains a linear, sequential order. The symbolic field, as Barthes refers to it in S/Z, in one way delineates the beginning and ending of the narrative. The symbolic code or field has three levels of entrance through which the reader may approach the text. The rhetorical entrance, which for Barthes includes the antithesis and its transgressions, is a valuable way of entering a text. When the balance of the antithesis is upset, there is a power struggle between the two sides and the space between the two sides, the "bar," if one may call it that, becomes occupied. At this point the narrative may begin. This upsetting of the balance maintained by the antithesis, or the attempt to fuse the two opposites or cross the "bar," for Barthes, is called a "transgression" (S/Z 27). The text or the narration itself represents the transgression or the play for power between the two sides. Once the transgression is destroyed, either by a retreat by each side or by the destruction of the transgressing element, equilibrium is once again restored and the narrative ends.

As one can see, there is an explicit relationship between the reader and the text. Initially through its cover design and title, the text seduces the anxious reader, then a mutual contract is established between the two in the form of a narrative in order to solve the numerous enigmas--the first one being in the title itself--and to restore equilibrium to the antithesis whose destruction begins the narrative. The text may finally "reserve some ultimate meaning, one it does not express but whose place it keeps free" and gives "meaning its last closure: suspension" (Barthes, S/Z 216-217). However, the end result is that the reader has the power, for the reader produces the text and if he or she stops reading or is not seduced by the narrative, the text ceases to exist. It is the reader who decides how to read--whether faster through the boring sections, slower in the more exciting sections or to omit whole sections entirely--and when to accept or refuse the codes he or she discovers. It is only through the interactions of reader with text that a narrative is created and reading begins.

Where does the author fit in Barthes's theory of reading? For Barthes the author himself is another text:

> The Author himself--that somewhat decrepit deity of the old criticism--can or could some day become a text like any other: he has only to avoid making his person the subject, the impulse, the origin, the authority, the Father, whence his work would proceed, by a channel of expression; he has only to see himself as a being on paper and his life as a biography (in the etymological sense of the word), a writing without referent, substance of a connection and not of a filiation (S/Z 211).

Hence the author has no "author-ity" over his text. The author is separate from his text. In relation to Roxana , Barthes would claim that Defoe himself is connected but not associated with the narrator of Roxana. The author Defoe creates a separate text from Roxana's narrator. The "text" in a Barthian sense is not the same as the work or a novel, both of which are closed entities. The "text" is the product of the relationship between the written words on the page and the reader who reads these words. The "text" also includes other texts. "Texts" are unstable open systems that only come into being in the process of reading. Thus, an author cannot have any power or final say over anything he has written because that written word is open to the contributions of the reader and other texts, to name just two sources. As Josué V. Harari points out "Barthes's major preoccupation has been to displace the author as center, as originating and fundamental condition of the work" (63). For our feminist analysis of gender, then, we can use the "gender code" (that I have created) in order to locate the various opinions about women presented in Defoe's Roxana without narrowing them down to the sole voice of Daniel Defoe. In other words, the author's position in a structuralist and/or poststructuralist sense has been displaced. The traditional novelist with which we began this chapter can now be read as one voice in the narrated tale. Daniel Defoe's voice is just one of the many the reader or critic can locate in the narrated story of Roxana.

CHAPTER II

From Powerlessness to Power: The Formation of "I"

For Barthes, the activity of reading begins by arbitrarily dividing the narrative text into lexias or brief "units of reading" (S/Z 13). In slowing down the process of reading the reader is able to "observe the meanings to which that lexia gives rise" ("Textual Analysis" 136). By "meaning" Barthes implies the various connotations or "secondary meanings" of the lexia, not the denotation ("Textual Analysis" 136). Since I am concerned with gender in Defoe's text, it is necessary to limit our textual analysis to those sentences, phrases, paragraphs and scenes that present significant gender issues. These sections of the text will then be divided up into lexias. Thus, our reading will not follow every word of the text, as does Barthes's reading of Balzac's Sarrasine in S/Z. Nor is it imperative that we attempt to trace every meaning of gender in the text for, as Barthes has said, "forgetting meanings is not a matter for excuses, an unfortunate defect in performance; it is an affirmative value, a way of asserting the irresponsibility of the text, the pluralism of systems (if I closed their list, I would inevitably reconstitute a singular, theological meaning)" (S/Z 11). In this study, I will attempt to locate some of the different "avenues of meaning" (Barthes "Textual Analysis" 135) in relation to gender issues and "live the plurality" (Barthes, "Textual Analysis" 135) of the gendered voices in the text.

In our analysis we will number the sections from lexia (1) to lexia (51). For each lexia I will observe the significance of the gender issues presented. In some instances the gender issues will be obvious. Where there is a hidden or implicit gendered assumption I will indicate this by labelling the lexia "G" for the gender code and then by specifying the exact nature of the gendered assumption. When the lexia raises a question, presents an

enigma, or partially resolves the enigma I will indicate this with the letter "E," and include the subject matter of the enigma. Each enigma will then be numbered in order to refer to them later on in the paper. If a lexia connotes certain gendered traits I will label the lexia with the abbreviation "SEM" which represents connotative signifier. "Semantically, the SEME is the unit of the signifier" (Barthes, S/Z 17). The particular connotations of the signifier will also be included. In order to illustrate this method we can consider the noun "patriarchy." "Patriarchy" means a system of government or society controlled by males. However, "patriarchy" has numerous connotations. It could connote power, dominance, authority, control, oppression, dictatorship and the list could continue. All these connotations are attributed to the signifier "patriarchy" by history, culture, and society. According to our scheme we could label "patriarchy" as "SEM. power, dominance, authority" to use just three of our connotations.

Labelling the lexias with the gender code, hermeneutic code and the semes or connotative signifiers will enable us to discover at exactly what point the speaker transgresses her gender boundaries and why she does so. Although the Barthian system of labelling, coding and numerically arranging lexias may seem an end in itself, this structuralist method is, in fact, an effective way of detecting the numerous gendered power struggles at work in the novel. It is the power struggle created by a pairing of two antithetical terms that causes the narration to begin and the narrative to exist in Barthes's theory of the text[1]. Thus, it is only by carefully reading the text and in the process noting our observations in an organized manner that one may begin to understand the gendered power struggles inherent in Defoe's Roxana.

The beginning of a text for Roland Barthes is indicated by the title, which not only acts as a suitable starting point for the narrative but also serves to entice the reader to read

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[1] The antithesis is part of Barthes's "symbolic field" and a way of entering the text.

the book. The primary function of a title is thus twofold: the title advertises the text--"to constitute the text as a commodity" (Barthes, "Textual Analysis" 139)--and it marks the beginning of the narrative. Defoe's text (title) begins with The Fortunate Mistress. We will label this lexia (1).

(1) The Fortunate Mistress: Immediately the title raises questions. Who is the "fortunate mistress"? Why is this person fortunate? What is the person the mistress of? To whom is this person a mistress? Because any title raises questions--that is, presents the first enigma--Barthes includes the title in the "hermeneutic code" or:

> All the units whose function it is to articulate in various ways a question, its response and the variety of chance events which can either formulate the question or delay its answers; or even, constitute an enigma and lead to its solution. (S/Z 17)

This first lexia is also the first step in a hermeneutic sequence which will end later in the novel when the initial enigma will be solved. We can code this lexia as "E.1 fortunate mistress." The "E" represents enigma. If one now considers the connotations of this first lexia, some of the questions may be answered. The noun "mistress" connotes femininity and may imply the female head of a household, a female teacher or a woman involved with a gentleman in an illicit sexual relationship (OED). In the eighteenth-century the word "mistress" had several other meanings. In addition to the ones already stated, "mistress" meant (according to the OED) "a woman, goddess or something personified as a woman having dominion over a person or regarded as a protecting or guiding influence; ... a woman who has mastered any art, craft or branch of study; ... or a woman who has command over a man's heart." From these definitions "mistress" could imply a woman who has influence or some sort of power over a man, or a woman who has mastered some discipline such as love. From a second reading of Roxana the connotations of the noun

"mistress" become more lucid. This retrospective reading links "mistress" with a woman (whom we come to know as Roxana) who not only has mastered the art of seducing men but has also perfected her ability to overpower men in order to receive wealth from them. The adjective "fortunate" modifies "mistress," so that there is an additional connotation of wealth, chance or luck. The mistress may have authority or mastery over wealth or chance. "Mistress," then, connotes femininity, authority and mastery. We can represent these connotations by the abbreviation SEM. Thus we can label this lexia with "SEM. Femininity, authority and mastery."

(2) or, a History of the Life and Vast Variety of Fortunes of: One is told that the discourse will be a "history of the life." Where will the history begin? Will the discourse begin with the conception of the protagonist as in Sterne's Tristram Shandy? When will the history end? Will the discourse close with the death of the main character, as in Richardson's Clarissa which ends not only with Clarissa's death but also with the effect of her death on her family and friends? In the eighteenth century one of the definitions for "history" was a recounting of a long and eventful career or a life worthy of recording (OED). Is this eighteenth-century definition the connotation of history used in lexia ? Indeed, from a second reading, one discovers that Roxana has had a long and prosperous career as a courtesan, but is this life "worthy of recording?" In using the word "history," lexia (2) may be presenting an ironic commentary on Roxana's life. Her chosen career may be eventful and lucrative but spiritually it may be degrading and sinful and therefore, not worthy of narration. In the second part of the lexia, the Latin root "fortuna" is repeated reinforcing the connection between the first title and this subtitle, presented as an alternative, evident from the word "or." Both "fortunate" and "fortune" are related to chance or luck as a force in human affairs, and to money. Therefore, either the text itself or

the author behind the written word is suggesting that the "mistress" is either wealthy or lucky, or both.

(3) Mademoiselle de Beleau, Afterwards call'd The Countess de Wintselsheim, in Germany. Being the Person known by the Name of the Lady Roxana, in the Time of King Charles II: Lexia (3) presents a list of proper names. According to Barthes, "A proper name should always be carefully questioned, for the proper name is ... the prince of signifiers; its connotations are rich, social and symbolic" ("Textual Analysis" 139). The French "Mademoiselle de Beleau" transforms into the German "Countess de Wintselsheim" which changes to become the English Roxana which by Daniel Defoe's time "had become a generic name for an oriental queen, suggesting ambition, wickedness, and exoticism" (Blewett, Introduction 394 n. 191). (This additional connotation partially answers the first enigma: the fortunate mistress may be a gentleman's lover). It is interesting to note that all four names--the "fortunate mistress," "Mademoiselle de Beleau," "Countess de Wintselsheim," and "Lady Roxana"--contain a title used to address a female. "Mademoiselle" is the title used for an unmarried French woman, corresponding to the English "Miss." "Countess" is the title used to designate a wife or widow of an earl or count or a woman holding the rank of an earl or count. "Lady" may be used to describe any woman of polite or refined disposition. Lady is also a title "used as a less formal prefix to name of peeress below duchess, or to Christian name of daughter of duke or marquis or earl, or to surname of wife or widow of baronet or knight" (OED). The woman begins with the respectable title of "Mademoiselle," becomes even more respectable through an association with a man in receiving the title of "Countess," but with the final title of "Lady," she degrades herself to the rank of wife to a baronet, "the lowest hereditary order of British nobility" (OED).

Furthermore, all these titles have aristocratic connotations. In addition, "Lady" may be used disparagingly or ironically to address a woman. In each and every name there is a further connotation of power given to a woman by a man. In other words, the woman derives her title from her position in relation to a man ("Mademoiselle" is used precisely because the woman has no man or husband in her life). Because the names vary in their socio-ethnic backgrounds and in the ranks of their titles, I suggest, as one possible explanation, that this "fortunate" woman is fortunate because she is a mistress or lover to several gentlemen of wealth and rank. This woman travels all over Europe meeting new men of wealth and status. Enigma 1, who is the "fortunate mistress" and why is this person fortunate, is now partially answered. The "mistress" is a woman who appropriates the power she receives from men to gain an identity for herself. Through various names which she is given in her sexual and economic relations with men she not only amasses wealth (fortune) but power. However, the power she receives is the greatest with the title of Countess and this power decreases with the title of Lady. From lexia (2), then, the narrative is "history" but "he" has given his power through his name to "her" (as the "count" gives his rank to his wife). We can thus code lexia (3) as follows: "SEM. Femininity, aristocracy, power."

There is a foreign element in the names of lexia (3). In Defoe's time, foreign places, especially, as John J. Richetti points out, Paris, were associated with "moral laxity and sensuality" (Daniel Defoe 106). The Orient too (which is implied in the meaning of "Roxana") was associated with exoticism and eroticism. On a purely narrative level, the foreign names because of their connections with sexual freedom and indulgence are used as a way of seducing the prospective reader, which the title does in a Barthian reading. Because she is originally from France, the speaker herself is also associated with sexual freedom. This "mistress" who assumes the various names presented in lexia (3)

appropriates not only the power and status that men enjoy through their titles but also the sexual freedom they experience in foreign countries. In other words, by becoming, for example, "Lady Roxana," the woman receives the power, however minimal, behind the title of "Lady" and through the foreign name "Roxana" she enjoys the promiscuous life, not as an objectified mistress but as a dominant mistress, or the one who is in control of the relationship. The power behind the title, which the mistress receives from her lover, enables the mistress to be the subject and not the object of sexual freedom when she travels to foreign lands.

The various names also suggests that this "fortunate mistress" is a woman of disguises. (The narrator's first married name is, in fact, never included). The reader is thus already cautioned by the title. Can the reader trust the tale he or she will be told? This attempt by the title to caution the reader will be the beginning of a series of actions in the narrative which involve deception.

(4) "The Preface"[1]: The actual words "The Preface," which exist in the first edition of Roxana, introduce the subject matter or contents of the narrative tale. In light of the wealth of connotative signifiers we have discovered in the title, it would seem unnecessary for the author to include further explanatory or introductory remarks in a preface. One reason for stating "The Preface" in bold letters, may be to alert the reader to the possibility of the author having doubts concerning his abilities to successfully communicate his ideas through the narrative discourse. Defoe's Prefaces, as observed in his other works particularly Moll Flanders , usually serve the purpose of presenting the narrative tale as grounded in "facts" and offering "truth." Defoe goes to great lengths to argue that the

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[1] Daniel Defoe, Roxana, ed. David Blewett (Harmondsworth: Penguin Classics, 1987) 35. All subsequent lexias in the thesis will be from this edition. Only the page number of the lexia will be given in the body of the paper.

narrators of his stories are real people who existed and that Defoe himself is merely recounting their lives.

(5) "The History of this Beautiful Lady, is to speak for itself" (35): This is, indeed, an ironic statement for not only is the author prefacing the "History" and effectively not allowing the History "to speak for itself" but this very line is the first sentence of the Preface. The act of stating that "the History [will] ... speak for itself" is linguistically scandalous for in making this announcement one is speaking for the History. Additionally, it is the "History" and not the "Lady" who is allowed to speak. Power of speech is denied to the female. Because this lexia presents a power struggle between "his story" and her story, we can include this lexia in the gender code. We will label this lexia, "G. power struggle" ("G" representing gender code).

> (6) If it is not as Beautiful as the Lady herself is reported to be; if it is not as diverting as the Reader can desire, and much more than he can reasonably expect; and if all the most diverting Parts of it are not adopted to the Instruction and Improvement of the Reader, (35)

First of all, these statements are made in the conditional tense allowing for the possibilities which each statement puts forward. Second, the narrative warns the reader not to trust the tale since the lady is only "reported" to be beautiful. This implies that she may not be. Third, the second conditional statement suggests that there is a quantitative way to measure what a reader desires and expects and that the narrative hopes to fulfill the reader's hopes. The last sentence claims that the reader should be both entertained and improved by instruction. These three conditional statements, in fact, are implicitly telling the reader how to read the narrative and what to expect from it. The last point to note is that the "Reader" is a "he." At this stage, the narrative appears to be directed to a male audience.

(7) "the Relator says, it must be from the Defect of his Performance" (35): "E.2. Relator. Who is the "Relator'?" The "Relator" appears to be yet another voice. This voice has constituted himself (for the "Relator" is addressed as a male) in the third person and thereby, distances himself from the narrative. It appears that by blaming himself beforehand for the "Defect of his Performance," he is essentially freeing himself from being blamed later on for what could be much worse than a defect in performance. The "Relator" is also stealing the power of utterance from the "History" which is "to speak for itself." Thus, there is a male relator, not allowing the history of a female to be told by itself. The "Relator" is assuming this power. Is the "Relator" Daniel Defoe? Traditionally, the author writes the Preface. In lexia (4) we assumed that Defoe wrote the Preface to Roxana. In this lexia, however, there is a "Relator." The "Relator" seems to be an intermediary. Already, it would appear that Defoe, as in his other Prefaces, is disguising or diminishing his authority over the narrative by introducing an intermediary voice. The "Relator" too, however, disappears once the narration begins. In refusing to accept the final control over his tale or rather in allowing for the Lady's story to be heard, Defoe may be doing precisely what feminist poststructuralists aim to do with texts, that is, he is liberating the voices other than his own within the narrative.

(8) "dressing up the Story in worse Cloaths than the Lady, whose Words he speaks, prepared it for the World." (35): The metaphor of dressing is suggestive of deception or the attempt to hide something. In this case, there is a male "Relator" dressing up the story of a female to appear as a lady. It is suggested that the Lady prepared her story in beautiful clothes for the World. The "Relator" claims to dress the story of the Lady in worse clothes than the Lady would herself. In other words, the "Relator" admits to his inability to metaphorically dress the story of the Lady, and by implication the Lady, beautifully, yet he refuses to give her the power to do so herself. Not only does the

"Relator" take the power away from the "Lady" to dress her story, but the "Relator" takes the power of speech away from "History." Neither the "History" is allowed to "speak for itself" nor is the "Lady" allowed to dress herself. The final authority, then, rests with the male Relator who dresses the "Lady's" story and edits "History's" words. Because this lexia presents a male and female power struggle we will include lexia (8) in the gender code. "G. power struggle."

One should keep in mind the concept of a male dressing up a female, for if he speaks her words and tells her story under the pretence of his story speaking for "itself," I suggest that he may be her. Or, it may be the case that she is actually he. "She," the lady, pretends to be "he," the Relator, and states that "he" is dressing "her" in order to tell her story when what happens in the process is that his story speaks for "itself" because she is a "he." In other words, neither "he" nor "she" is able to control the "History" which unfolds. Thus, throughout the narrative there is a battle between "him" and "her" to regain control of the story. The narrative, then, brings together the two antithetical terms, the male Relator's story and the Lady's story to the battle ground of the discourse. Since each side (the "Relator," perhaps Defoe, and the "Beautiful Lady," perhaps Roxana) tries to control and direct the narrative there is a transgression through the "wall of the Antithesis" (Barthes, S/Z 27) that separates the two terms. For Barthes, transgressions begin narratives. One reason why the history of the lady speaks is that there has been a transgression. Lexia (8), then, because of the presentation of a transgression is part of the symbolic field or code which includes antithesis. From this point onwards, we can use the Barthian "symbolic code" ("SYM") to designate all the terms that pertain to an antithesis. Thus, we can code lexia (8) as "SYM. Relator's story / Lady's story."

(9) "I was Born, as my Friends told me," (37): "E3 Speaker." This first sentence of the narrative discourse raises a new enigma: who is the "I" speaking? Is this "I" the

"fortunate mistress," the "Relator," "History," or some other voice? Barthes says in S/Z that "the character who says 'I' has no name ... ; in fact, however, I immediately becomes a name." (68) The "I" speaking becomes a character who has "no chronological or biographical standing" (Barthes, S/Z 68). "I" becomes a site at which other names, masks, and disguises intersect. Thus, the "I" in Defoe's text may sometimes be the site of the name Roxana and therefore, female; at other times, "I" may be the site of Defoe's own views on a particular matter and therefore, "I" is male. In this particular lexia, "I" is gender neutral.

(10) "I learnt the English Tongue perfectly well, with all the customs of the English Young-Women" (38): "E.3 speaker: partial answer. SEM. Femininity." Here the "I" has become a young woman who is not of English origin but can speak English and, hence, she is disguising herself to appear as an English gentlewoman. Because we have now discovered that the speaker is not English by birth, we have a clue to the speaker's identity and therefore we have a "partial answer" to our third enigma concerning the speaker's identity.

(11) "Being to give my own Character, I must be excus'd to give it as impartially as possible, and as if I was speaking of another-body" (38): "I," the young woman, in speaking of herself now says that she wants to describe herself in such a way that one will think she is speaking of someone else. "I" is, of course, attempting to be objective but in mentioning the other "body" there is a suggestion that "I" wants to dissociate herself from the other character. Like the Relator who speaks the Lady's words, "I" is also "speaking of another-body." "E.2 Relator: snare." This lexia presents a snare because it suggestively associates the "I" with the "Relator," when, in fact, the two may not be so later on in the novel.

(12) I was (speaking of myself as about Fourteen Years of Age) tall, and very well made; sharp as a Hawk in Matters of common Knowledge; quick and smart in Discourse; apt to be Satyrical; full of Repartee, and a little too forward in Conversation; or, as we call it in English, Bold, tho' perfectly Modest in my Behaviour. Being French Born, I danc'd, as some say, naturally, lov'd it extremely, and sung well also, and so well, that, as you will hear, it was afterwards some Advantage to me: With all these Things, I wanted neither Wit, Beauty, or Money. (38-9)

"E.3 Speaker: partial answer." We are given a description of "I"'s character, for instance, we now know "I" is French. Yet we do not know "I"'s name. "SEM. Masculinity." Here "I" becomes more masculine for "I" is described as "tall, and very well made," the identical words used to describe "I"'s husband; "I" is associated with a Hawk, which represents a bird of prey, a person who is aggressive, also related to falconry (traditionally a masculine activity); and "I" is bold. Furthermore, "I" claims to be a "little too forward in Conversation." One of the definitions of "Conversation" is sexual intercourse or intimacy, a meaning used in the eighteenth-century (OED). It is implied, then, that "I" initiates sexual intimacy but remains modest in behaviour. To initiate sexual intimacy is to play the traditional masculine role, for in the eighteenth-century women became known as the "fair sex," the "gentle sex," and the "weaker sex" (Hunter 76). Women who "demonstrated any self-awareness or self-confidence" were looked on with horror and considered daring creatures (Hunter 76). To be bold is to have self-confidence. "I" will be seen to seduce others later on in the narrative. In addition, "dancing" in the course of the narrative takes on sexual connotations. Joan Cavallaro Foster has said that:

> dancing becomes a metaphor for sex and the entire situation foreshadows the eroticism of the Turkish dance. In this light, ... ['I"s] love of dancing and her 'natural' talent for it suggest her strong sexual nature, which grows more and more prominent as the novel progresses (91).

As in the Preface, this description of "I" in lexia (12) is reported to be true by others ("as some say"). It is questionable, then, whether "I" danced naturally. So lexia (12) may also be deceiving the reader. Also, at this point, "I" claims to be beautiful and wealthy although one is given neither a detailed account of "I"'s beauty nor the amount of money "I" possesses. Later on, one will hear of "I"'s beauty and wealth. There may also be a gender ambiguity here as well since "I" connotes masculinity while previously "I" was described as a young woman.

> (13) If you have any Regard to your future Happiness; any View of living comfortably with a Husband; any Hope of preserving your Fortunes, or restoring them after any Disaster; Never, Ladies, marry a Fool; any Husband rather than a Fool; with some other Husbands you may be unhappy, but with a Fool you will be miserable (40)

"E. 4. Who is the "you"?" If the "I" speaking is giving advice on marriage one would assume the "you" are the female readers. However, in the Preface the readers are described as male. According to Nancy Armstrong in Desire and Domestic Fiction: A Political History of the Novel, eighteenth-century authors were increasingly addressing their novels to a female audience as women made up the largest reading population. We may conclude then that the speaker in Defoe's novel is addressing a female audience at this point as the speaker will do at all other points. What is still an enigma is who the speaking "I" is, a male or female? In lexia (13) the "I" warns eighteenth-century women against marrying fools. By assuming the right to warn others, the speaker assumes the position of experience. Therefore, "I" has knowledge and authority with which to give advice. Hence there are reappearing connotations of authority and mastery (which were present in lexia (1)). The "I" may then very well be the "fortunate mistress" herself. "E.1 fortunate mistress: partial answer." However, if a woman seeks happiness, comfort and security, a foolish husband is not the worst type of husband. In a period when wives were often

physically and mentally abused by their husbands, who were "Brutes" to their wives (Defoe "On Matrimony, and the Most Suitable Age for the Ladies" 369), a woman's primary concern would not be with the reasoning faculty of her husband. Only an eighteenth-century man who valued reason in a friendship and desired it in a relationship, as is evident by Defoe's own comments on the necessity of educating young women in his article "An Academy for Women," would emphasize reason as a quality in a mate. In other words, an eighteenth-century man would consider a fool the worst type of husband but a woman, whose fear of physical abuse was much greater, would not. There is an attempt by the speaker to mask his true gender by appearing to be a woman. Like the Relator who dresses the Lady's story, this "I" speaking in lexia (13) may be dressing himself in the Lady's clothes, a case of transvestism. "SEM. Masculinity, G. transvestite." The "I" may be a woman, but the discourse which "I" utters is masculine.

(14) "Nay, be any thing, be even an Old Maid, the worst of Nature's Curses, rather than take up with a Fool." (40): In advocating independence over subjugation in a bad marriage the speaker is presenting an early feminist argument. However, the terminology stems from patriarchal discourse, for being single is described as being an "Old Maid" and being cursed by Nature. "Old Maid" connotes unattractiveness and worthlessness. The word "even" before "Old Maid" further suggests that being an "Old Maid" is the extreme alternative which according to the argument is the lesser of two evils. The speaker is attempting to be a female or to sympathize with women's subjugation in marriage, but in employing patriarchal terms the speaker undermines his own argument. "SEM. Masculinity and Femininity, G. power struggle."

(15) "I had now five Children by him; the only Work (perhaps) that Fools are good for." (43): Not only is the male's ability to produce offspring valorized but the act of reproduction is considered a masculine chore. The woman is a mere receptacle waiting for

the man to do "Work" on her, like the "Lady" who waits for the "Relator" to dress her story. Once again, the "I" speaking is superficially female but her diction is suggestively male. "E. Speaker: equivocation." By equivocation I mean the combination in one answer of a snare and a truth. After the speaker embarks on her lucrative career as a whore, she no longer worries about her own children. The children of her illicit affairs are, indeed, looked after but not loved by the speaker, because she considers them a product of whoredom. There is then a discrepancy between the speaker's valorization of children in lexia (15) and her negligence later on. It might be suggested that, by being a whore, a woman abandons the essence of her femaleness by denying her maternal instincts. This argument will reappear in the speaker's discussion with the Dutch merchant on marriage.

(16) "not valuing all that Tears and Lamentations could be suppos'd to do" (43): The words "could be suppos'd to do" immediately alert the reader to the fact that the power of feminine ("I" is speaking here) tears over men is a social construct. If "I" is a female she is exercising power over men in the only way she knows--using her physical body. If "I" is a male masquerading as a female then "I" is stating what he believes is the power women possess over men. Thus, lexia (16) belongs to a gender code appealing to common assumptions about women. "G. assumptions."

(17) "AMY, (for that was her Name) put it into my Thoughts" (49): "E. 5 Who is Amy?" This is the first proper name in the narrative itself. Upon rereading, one will discover that in the entire novel only the three female characters of the speaker, the speaker's first daughter and the speaker's maid (Amy) are given proper names. Everyone else, especially the men, are characterized by their position. There is the jeweller, Prince, Dutch merchant and Lord. Since men are described by their vocation and status in life, one could argue that the men are objectified in the speaker's tale. The speaker regards the men with their titles as ways of getting power and wealth. The men in the novel are not so

much individuals as they are representatives of various degrees of power, wealth, and status. The name Amy is reminiscent of amie, the French word for friend. From lexia (12) we know that the speaker is French; therefore, the speaker would be well aware of the connotations of Amy's name. Is Amy, then, a friend of the speaker? Terry J. Castle points out that Amy could also be "a 'me'--an oddly displaced and altered version of the speaker herself" (84). Amy, a female, essentially tells the speaker what to think (she "put it into my Thoughts"). One will remember that the Relator speaks the words of the Lady. The Relator's stance, namely that of speaking for the lady, is suggestively similar to that of Amy who also dictates what her "Lady" will say. The Relator may be a female disguising herself as a male in order for her story to be heard and accepted. "E.2. Relator: partial answer."

(18) "My Landlord had been very kind indeed" (58): A new character has been introduced by the speaker. "Landlord" connotes wealth, status and power. The Landlord's kindness to the speaker may be interpreted as the landlord bestowing his wealth, title and the power of his name on the speaker. A second reading, "the reading which places behind the transparency of suspense ... the anticipated knowledge of what is to come in the story" (Barthes, S/Z 165) provides a second connotation to the Landlord's kindness: the Landlord is kind to the speaker and he seduces her. Kindness becomes the first step in seducing the speaker. I must point out that, according to Barthes,

> it would be wrong to say that if we undertake to reread the text we do so for some intellectual advantage (to understand better, to analyze on good grounds): it is actually and invariably for a ludic advantage: to multiply the signifiers, not to reach some ultimate signified. (S/Z 165).

The second reading opens up the kindness of the Landlord to new connotations. Only by rereading is it then possible for the reader to observe the initial stages of the speaker's

seduction, and to ultimately witness the transference of power from the men to the speaker in the sexual relations.

(19) "he came to Dine with me, and that I should give him leave to Treat me" (59): From a second reading one realizes that "to dine" is the second step in the process of seducing the speaker. At this point in the narrative "he" asks the woman (the "I" speaking) permission to be in control of the situation. Power is given to the man by the woman, yet it is the man who initially seduces the woman with his kindness. The power has always been with the man up to this lexia.

(20) "the Maid Amy, ... a cunning Wench, and faithful to me, as the Skin to my Back" (59): "E5. Amy: partial answer." Amy is the maid but she will become much more to the speaker. From this lexia, one gathers that Amy is still subservient to the speaker. The imagery used to describe Amy's relationship to the speaker, however, suggests a far more intimate relationship.

(21) "he came to me, and kiss'd me" (59-60): It is not clear where the Landlord kisses the speaker, whether on the cheek or on the lips, but the connotations of this kiss become overtly sexual from a second reading. It is important to notice also that the man initiates the action. "G. masculine power, or the man is in control."

(22) "he sat down, made me sit down, and then drank to me" (60): Again, the Landlord has control or power over the speaker. "G. Masculine power." He "makes" her sit down.

(23) "he is not so unacquainted with things, as not to know, that Poverty is the strongest Incentive; a Temptation against which no Virtue is powerful enough to stand out" (61): Poverty becomes the primary argument for the seduction to take place. Because the Landlord takes advantage of the speaker's poverty in order to seduce her, the blame for the seduction can be transferred onto the Landlord.

(24) "Dear Madam, says Amy, if I will starve for your sake, I will be a Whore, or anything, for your sake; why, I would die for you, if I were put to it." (62): "E.5. Amy." This lexia, like lexia (20), presents an intimacy between maid and mistress. Why will Amy do anything for the speaker? I suggest that Amy may be the speaker herself. It is significant that in the entire narrative told by the speaker the only other female character who is present from the beginning to the end is Amy. Amy's extreme loyalty to the speaker and her intimate knowledge of all of the speaker's affairs persuades one to believe Jackson Wallace's argument which states that "Amy is an extension of Roxana's will, an instrument by which Roxana can objectify her own sense of herself" (187). This lexia could then be a partial answer for "E.3., the identity of the speaker." Amy may be the active element in the speaker's being. The word "Whore" first appears in this lexia foreshadowing Amy's function in the speaker's seduction, for it is because of Amy's promptings that the speaker is convinced to "lye" with the Landlord.

(25) "a Woman ought rather to die, than to prostitute her Virtue and Honour, let the Temptation be what it will" (63): This statement occurs immediately after Amy's discussion with the speaker on the necessity of being a whore when one is starving. By comparing the loss of chastity to the loss of life, and in valuing the former over the latter, the speaker is not only objectifying or reifying her sexual status but she is also valorizing or elevating her "Virtue and Honour" to an abnormally high level. In other words, the speaker is making her chastity a valuable asset. In the eighteenth century, and particularly in the nineteenth, a woman's virginity was so precious that a woman who remained a virgin prior to marriage and chaste within marriage was deemed an angel while one who did not was labelled a whore. This extreme view of women's sexuality reduces women to the loss of their virginity and in doing so unnecessarily values this one aspect of a woman. The tone of the statement in lexia (25) is so much like a moral pronouncement that it is

impossible to believe that the starving speaker herself has uttered it. It is an assumption about women based on the reification and valorization of a woman's virginity. "G. sexual assumptions."

(26) "I had dress'd me, as well as I could" (63): There is a connotation that the "I" cannot dress herself that well. On the literal level "I" does not have fine clothes. The Relator, too, admits to his inability to dress the Lady's story in lexia (8). The reader may well question at this point the relationship between the Relator, the Lady's story, Amy and "I," the speaker. If, in fact, all four are related or one person, then the narrative before us is a presentation of the one self which has been disintegrated into four selves, some of the selves male, some female. The different gendered voices that are heard are the different fragments of the one self, each trying to dominate this one self. From the various names in the title, the reader and critic are already aware of a need by the speaker to disguise herself or himself. David Leon Higdon suggests that the speaker "has worn so many masks and adopted so many identities that she finally loses control of her own being and knows not who the real Roxana is" (80). This, then, explains why the "I" speaking sometimes connotes masculinity, sometimes femininity, and why the actions of the speaker are often reminiscent of the pose taken by the Relator of the Preface.

(27) "after kissing me twenty times, or thereabouts, put a Guinea into my Hand; which, he said, was for my present Supply" (65): The Landlord, in giving money to the speaker essentially pays the speaker for the pleasure of kissing her. Power to control the woman is now associated with monetary exchange. Also, he "gave Amy Half a Crown" (65). Amy, as one discovers, is with the speaker for a large part of the novel and if she is not physically present she vicariously experiences the same pleasures. A good example of this vicarious pleasurable experience occurs when the speaker is in bed with the Prince upstairs while Amy is sleeping with the Prince's gentleman downstairs. The lives of the

two women (Amy and the speaker) are so similar that it is inconceivable not to regard Amy as another version of the speaker herself. In their relationships with the Prince and his gentleman, however, each woman differs in the way she uses her power over men. The speaker, as I will discuss later on, seduces the Prince under the pretence of being seduced. Amy, on the other hand, admits that she asked the Prince's gentleman if he wanted to sleep with her. At this stage the speaker still pretends to be seduced by men, whereas Amy seduces men. One may thus conclude that Amy represents the speaker's active feminine side. It is also Amy who verbally forces the speaker to accept the Landlord's sexual overtures.

(28) "Amy and I went to Bed that Night (for Amy lay with me)." (65): There is a suggestion that Amy and the speaker are lovers because the fact of Amy and the speaker going to bed is further modified with a parenthetical expression. The act of putting a statement in parenthesis serves to highlight instead of diminish the importance of the statement. However, this lexia may only reemphasize the parallel lives of Amy and the speaker. Amy is so close to the speaker that she is allowed even in the speaker's most personal spaces, namely her bed. "E.5 Amy."

(29) "the Expectations of what he might still do for me, were powerful things, and made me have scarce the Power to deny him any thing he wou'd ask" (67): "G. Power struggle." The speaker is trying to have control in the relationship but the Landlord's initial kindness which later solidifies into monetary gifts grows into an overpowering tool with which to seduce the speaker.

(30) "This Gentleman had freely and voluntarily deliver'd me from Misery, from Poverty, and Rags; he had made me what I was" (69): Once again, a man is granted the power to create the woman. Just as the Relator dresses the Lady, the Landlord dresses the speaker. Similarly, the Relator speaks the Lady's words, so here the words are more

appropriate to a masculine voice. The "I" loses control of itself and its words, in giving the Landlord the power to recreate the speaker. "G. Power struggle."

(31) "I courted him" (69): The speaker's power over the Landlord is reasserted and the seduction becomes not a loss of the speaker's honour but a way of receiving kindness, in whatever form, specifically material goods and money, from the Landlord. It is not so much the man seducing the woman in order to gratify sexual desires but the woman seducing the man in order to gratify material needs. The speaker's active role (in the disguise of a passive role) in the seduction becomes more obvious in her subsequent relationships, most notably with the unnamed Lord. "G. power struggle." The last lexia and this one both reveal the shift in the speaker from being one who is seduced to one who seduces. In lexia (30) the speaker loses her control over the Landlord but in lexia (31) she recovers this power (however, the power to seduce is still masked as the weakness to be seduced). Therefore, in both lexias there is a power struggle within the speaker herself to regain control over the Landlord.

(32) "I cou'd have took him in my Arms, and kiss'd him as freely as he did me, if it had not been for Shame." (71): The speaker admits to her desire to initiate sexual intimacy but is prevented from fulfilling her wishes because of shame. It is only a socially constructed notion that tells women to remain passive in sexual relations and also to be ashamed of oneself if one desires illicit sexual relationships. In this relationship with the Landlord, as in her other relationships, the speaker carries the entire burden of guilt upon herself. She not only blames herself for what occurs but she also blames herself for not responding to the man's proposal and thereby acknowledging gratitude for his kindness. This lexia presents yet another assumption about female sexuality which the speaker is struggling against. "G. assumptions."

(33) "has he not brought you out of the Devil's Clutches; brought you out of the blackest Misery that ever poor Lady was reduc'd to? Can a Woman deny such a Man any thing?" (71): The insistence by Amy that the speaker must accept the Landlord's propositions demonstrates that it is Amy and not the Landlord who actively seduces the speaker. Once Amy has convinced the speaker, the speaker almost encourages the Landlord to satisfy his desires. Furthermore, the reification of a woman's virtue and honour as a commodity used in exchange for saving one's life becomes a repeated pattern in the novel. Initially, the speaker is saved by the Landlord from poverty; later the Prince saves the speaker from misery. With the Dutch merchant this pattern gets reversed.

(34) "the Jade prompted the Crime, which I had but too much Inclination to commit" (75): The speaker blames both Amy and herself for the ensuing seduction reinforcing the theory that Amy is the active side (the one who initiates the seduction) of the speaker. "E.3 Speaker: partial answer."

(35) "so with my Eyes open, and with my Conscience, as I may say, awake, I sinn'd, knowing it to be a Sin, but having no Power to resist" (79): The power to control the seduction has been taken away from the speaker and given to the Landlord, and yet the speaker blames herself for committing a sin. The socially constructed notion that condemns the victim of a rape or seduction instead of the attacker is internalized and reiterated by the speaker. The "I" who objects to marrying the Dutch Merchant and who argues that a woman would be able to "entertain" a man just as a man entertains his mistress, cannot be the same "I" who in this lexia condemns herself for consciously sinning. Either the "I" gets transformed after her first seduction or there is a gender struggle within "I" between the eighteenth-century masculine notions of female sexuality and the feminine conceptions. The Relator may state that he is only dressing the Lady's story, yet he cannot help but insert patriarchal views on the Lady's actions. Therefore, the

reader observes sentences such as the one in lexia (35) that are uttered by a female character but that advocate masculine notions of women and employ patriarchal diction. "G. power struggle."

(36) "what a hardness of Crime I was now arriv'd to" (79): In light of the previous lexia, the reader cannot take this statement seriously, for these cannot be the words of a woman who has just been forced to submit to sexual intimacy with a man who has saved her from poverty. The speaker had no choice but to submit to the Landlord; if she did not she may have risked starving to death, as Amy so poignantly says to the speaker. Again, the speaker is taking the responsibility for a crime which she had no control in. As Nancy K. Miller in "The Exquisite Cadavers: Women in Eighteenth-Century Fiction" has pointed out, "a young woman is vulnerable ... by nature, [and] by virtue of gender" (39). To blame the woman for not resisting a seduction attempt and to implicitly call the woman a criminal is to comply with patriarchal views of women. This lexia then is part of the gender code based on general assumptions of female behaviour. "G. assumptions."

(37) "I was a Whore, not a Wife" (79): It is important to observe that the word "whore" is used by the female speaker and not by the Landlord in order to describe the female's sexual actions. If the speaker is a whore, then the Landlord should be a rogue, as the speaker claims prior to the seduction: "[we] were no more than two Adulterers, in short, a Whore and a Rogue" (Defoe, Roxana 78). However, the Landlord considers himself a husband to the speaker when he addresses her as "the Wife of his Affection" (Defoe, Roxana 82). The speaker acknowledges that she is not the Landlord's wife. At the same time she is not allowed to express her pain and her feelings of humiliation without resorting to the derogatory word, "whore." "The exercise of female sexuality is rarely perceived as anything but degradation" (Miller, "The Exquisite Cadavers" 39), whereas the exercise of male sexuality is presented as charitable kindness. By virtue of the presentation

of the relationship between the speaker and the Landlord, the reader is urged to applaud the Landlord in elevating a destitute woman to the position of his wife and to condemn that very woman for losing her chastity.

(38) "Madam, says Amy, what have you been doing? Why you have been Marry'd a Year and a half, I warrant you, Master wou'd have got me with Child twice in that time" (80): "E.5 Amy." Amy, the maid, by asking such a question of her mistress is no longer subservient but equal to her mistress. That a woman's sexuality is related to her reproductive capabilities demonstrates that a woman is severely limited to the roles of wife and mother. A man's sexuality is associated not only with his ability to produce offspring but also with his ability to seduce (and in his opinion please) a woman sexually. In asking the question, Amy acts as the traditional male husband questioning his wife's abilities, for the Landlord never questions the speaker on this matter. This lexia marks the beginning of a new sequence of actions in the text which is related to motherhood. Earlier the speaker had to give away the children of a first marriage; now she is accused of not producing any.

> (39) I sat her down, pull'd off her Stockings and Shoes, and all her Cloaths, Piece by Piece, and led her to the Bed to him: Here, says I, try what you can do with Your Maid Amy: She pull'd back a little, would not let me pull off her Cloaths at first, but it was hot Weather, and she had not many Cloaths on, and particularly, no Stays on; and at last, when she see I was in earnest, she let me do what I wou'd; so I fairly stript her, and then I threw open the Bed, and thrust her in. (81):

This shocking scene complicates the exact nature of the relationship shared by the speaker and Amy. At first glance it appears that the speaker is in the process of physically encouraging the seduction of Amy at the hands of the Landlord, as Amy had earlier verbally convinced the speaker to be seduced by the Landlord. However, if one carefully looks at this lexia, the reader observes the absent figure of the Landlord. He is only

mentioned once when the speaker leads Amy to "him." The passage contains the character "I" six times, an overwhelming justification for claiming that Amy is not seduced by the Landlord but is, in fact, raped by the speaker. The aggressive words: "pull'd," "Piece by Piece," "stript," "threw," and "thrust," are all suggestive of a violent rape, not an overpowering seduction. Paula Backscheider agrees that the "words Defoe chooses to describe ... [the speaker's] actions are those usually given to male rapists" (186). The detail with which the speaker describes how she removed Amy's "Stockings" and "Shoes" further demonstrates a certain sexual pleasure the speaker experiences in stripping Amy naked. The female speaker appears to have undergone an incomplete gender metamorphosis for she is neither wholly male nor entirely female. Because of the diction used in this scene the speaker connotes masculinity; her words are too much reminiscent of those used to describe a rape by a man. On the other hand, the speaker cannot be completely male because it is not the speaker but another male, the Landlord, who carries the rape to completion.

The reader might recall that in lexia (20) Amy is metaphorically described as the "Skin" on the speaker's "Back." The speaker always uses such intimate terms in order to define her relationship with Amy. Amy is the speaker's "Right-Hand" (Defoe, Roxana 366), her "Trusty Agent" (Defoe, Roxana 371), and "not only an Agent, but a Friend, and a faithful Friend too" (Defoe, Roxana 365). Furthermore, it is implied that Amy is far more than a friend to the speaker who says, that "to have Fall'n upon Amy, had been to have murther'd myself" (Defoe, Roxana 350). One must also remember that the story is narrated by this one speaker. The reader only receives the sequence of events from the speaker. However, the Relator speaks the words that the speaker has prepared, so within the "I" who narrates there are at least two separate voices--the Relator and the speaker. If Amy is an aspect of the speaker's personality as the descriptions of Amy tend to indicate,

then the speaker could be reenacting her original seduction (by the Landlord) through the eyes of the rapist or seducer. This scene with Amy may be a way of telling the reader about the speaker's version of the rape which the Relator has chosen to present as a seduction. Amy may not be so much an individual character who is either a friend or an enemy to her mistress, but a powerful element in the speaker's own constitution. "E.3 Amy: partial answer."

(40) "Nay, Amy,you see your Mistress has put you to Bed, 'tis all her doing, you must blame her; so he held her fast, and the Wench being naked in Bed with him, 'twas too late to look back, so she lay still, and let him do what he wou'd with her." (81): Despite his active role in raping Amy, the Landlord blames the speaker. The man blames the woman for being raped. To continue with the concept of this scene being a reenactment of the speaker's own seduction, the speaker is exposing to the reader the sheer absurdity of a man who blames a woman for being raped while the man is in the middle of ravishing her. He holds "her fast" yet the scene is narrated as her "letting him do what he wou'd." In other words, the Lady's story is once again trying to escape the editorial control of the Relator's grasp who insists that it is Amy's fault by describing Amy as a woman who allows or "lets" the man do what he wants. How can Amy resist if he is holding "her fast"? This lexia clearly represents the power struggle between the male Relator and the Lady, each of whom is fighting to expose his or her own story. "G. power struggle."

(41) Had I look'd upon myself as a Wife, you cannot suppose I would have been willing to have let my Husband lye with my Maid, much less, before my Face, for I stood-by all the while; but as I thought myself a Whore, I cannot say but that it was something design'd in my Thoughts, that my Maid should be a Whore too, and should not reproach me with it. (81) :

The "you" in this lexia is no longer Amy but the reader. The speaker is directly addressing the audience. She tries to justify her actions by implying that she is either avenging Amy's verbal seduction of the speaker by physically raping her maid to the best of her ability or that the speaker does not want to lose her position of power over Amy by allowing Amy to remain virtuous while the speaker is a whore. Novak in his article "Crime and Punishment in Defoe's Roxana" has suggested that the speaker plays the Devil by intentionally forcing evil upon Amy (450). G. A. Starr suggests that the speaker, at this point is spiritually "hardened enough to want others to share her guilt" (172). Neither critic takes into account the Relator's role in this scene, for it is the Relator after all whose words the reader is hearing. If indeed, there is a power struggle between the Relator's "history" and the Lady's story then this scene may be a symbolic representation of the Lady being forced to watch her own story unfold as a "history" abiding by patriarchal views of female sexuality. On the other hand, if the speaker is really the Relator disguised as a woman then this scene is an acting out of a repressed desire on the Relator's (speaker's) part. Amy is not part of the Relator in this case but a potential lover with whom the Relator can only experience vicarious sexual pleasure by watching Amy be raped or seduced by another man. The words "something design'd in my Thoughts" further suggests that somebody, either the Relator or the Lady, is behind the speaker's words. The passive tense of these words indicates that the subject of the "design" wants to be kept hidden or disguised. One lexia, then, can give rise to plural connotations allowing for various voices to be heard simultaneously. In this lexia we have real gender transgressions occurring at the site of the "I" speaking. "G. transgressions."

(42) "she was ruin'd and undone, and there was no pacifying her; she was a Whore, a Slut" (81): This description of Amy by the speaker demonstrates the speaker's complicity with patriarchal views of female sexuality. Amy is the unwilling victim of a

forced rape. "Whore" and "Slut" connote sexually impudent and immoral women. A woman who considers herself "undone" or "ruin'd" is a victim not a seductress or whore. The juxtaposition of these two antithetical descriptions--"ruin'd" and "undone" with "Whore" and "Slut"--immediately reveal the linking of two gendered voices in the character of the speaker. An eighteenth-century man, like his nineteenth-century descendant, imposed on women the angel/whore dichotomy. A woman was an angel as long as she retained her virginity and chastity; once she was stripped of these qualities, whether intentionally or not, she was a whore. If the speaker were speaking from the female gendered voice she would consider Amy ruined and a victim, as Clarissa considers herself after Lovelace's vicious rape in Richardson's Clarissa. If the speaker were speaking from the male gendered experience he would label Amy a Whore, as Fielding does to his female characters who are not virgins nor chaste. Thus, the words "ruin'd" and "undone" belong to the Lady's story; whereas, "Whore" and "Slut" belong to the Relator or a masculine voice which is not necessarily the Relator's. "G. power struggle."

(43) "neither my Gentleman, or Amy either, car'd for playing that Game over again" (83): By now the word "Game" carries obvious sexual connotations with it. We are told in the narrative prior to this point that the speaker has forced Amy and the Landlord to sleep with each other many times. The speaker is in control. She addresses the Landlord as "my Gentleman" objectifying him into her possession. I suggest that it is the speaker and the Landlord who play games at the expense of Amy's sexuality. The voyeuristic pleasure which the speaker derives from describing Amy's rape in detail suggests as much. "SEM. power"--that is, the speaker and not the man has the power to control the relationship.

(44) "how tenderly he had us'd me to the last" (89): In this lexia the speaker fondly remembers her relationship with the Landlord, after he has been murdered. There is a

gender struggle within the speaker's voice for the speaker connects "tenderly" with "us'd." In the eighteenth-century, "tenderly" suggested gentleness, passion and affection (OED). "Us'd" brings to mind force and resentment. For an eighteenth-century reading audience "us'd" would have sexual overtones (OED). In other words, the speaker is stating that the Landlord treated her like a sexual object or a whore. By saying that the Landlord "tenderly ... us'd" the speaker, the speaker is alerting the reader to the Landlord's true nature which is suppressed by the Relator's editing. The Lady's story appears to be trying to escape from the narrated "history." "G. power struggle."

(45) "I was soon made very publick, and was known by the Name of La Belle veuve de Poictou; or, The pretty Widow of Poictou" (93): "E. speaker: partial answer." "I" finally gets a name. "I" is literally made "publick" for "I" is now revealed to have a name. However, the narrative cautions us by stating that "I" was "known by the Name ... ." At this point, the reader still cannot definitely fix a name on "I." "I" intends to remain hidden. As in the title, "I" is "known by the Name" of the Lady Roxana;" here "I" is known by another name. Additionally, the precarious nature of "I"'s identity maintains the possibility that "I" could be the site of competing discourses.

(46) "He treated me with abundance of Civility" (93): "He" is the Prince who expresses his condolences to the speaker on the occasion of the Landlord's death. Because of the connotations associated by now with "kindness" given to the speaker by a man, one can assume that "civility" connotes sexual overtures as well. Thus, the Prince's civility is the first step in a familiar sequence of seduction.

(47) "his Highness rise up to go, and told me, he had resolv'd however, to make me some Reparation; and with these Words, put a silk Purse into my Hand, with a hundred Pistoles" (94): Once again, the bestowing of money, because of its previous connotations, is associated with the early stages of the speaker's seduction.

(48) "he took me up, and saluted me" (94): In the eighteenth century a "salute" was a kiss (OED). As with the Landlord, we are not given the specific location of the kiss but considering the previous steps one can assume that the kiss is more than a respectful kiss. "SEM. Sexual."

(49) "I reply'd, with some Tears, which, I confess, were a little forc'd" (94): The female speaker is relying on her body, specifically her tears, in order to have power over the potential male seducer. The speaker admits that she forced herself to produce the tears. This action is also part of the seduction sequence, but it transfers the power to seduce from the male to the female. From this point onwards, the reader and critic alike are able to detect the first signs of the speaker's increasing power over her male friends and lovers. "G. power struggle."

> (50) upon it, was set two Decanters, one of Champaign, and the other of Water, six Silver Plates, and a Service of fine Sweet-Meats in fine China Dishes, on a Sett of Rings standing up about twenty Inches high, one above another; below, was three roasted Partriges, and a Quail; as soon as his Gentleman had set it all down, he order'd him to withdraw; now, says the Prince, I intend to Sup with you. (97) :

The detailed description of the food and the dishes all connote luxury and indulgence. From the previous seduction with the Landlord, "I intend to Sup with you" comes to mean "I intend to sleep with you." Even the sound of the letter "s" in "Sup" insinuates a sexual encounter. Defoe himself in his book Conjugal Lewdness states that, "nothing is more certain, than that luxurious living, eating and drinking, what we call rich Diet, high Sauces, strong Wines, and other Incentives, are great Occasions of Vice" (309) and that "Matrimonial Whoredom follows the Drunkenness and the Gluttony, by the same Necessity, and as naturally as the consequence follows the cause" (322). The Prince himself connotes "luxurious living," so that from Defoe's argument, the Prince's lifestyle

is inherently prone to lasciviousness. Because Defoe associates luxurious living with sexual promiscuity one cannot assume that connotations of indulgence in Roxana necessarily imply sexual indulgence. However, Defoe's opinion or voice is one legitimate voice in a Barthian reading. Defoe's voice is not the authority but one source for textual clarity.

(51) "but the Prince told me, Princes did not court like other Men; that they brought more powerful Arguments; and he very prettily added, that they were sooner repuls'd than other Men, and ought to be sooner comply'd with" (101): Just as Amy threatens the speaker with the possibility of the Landlord withdrawing his kindness and, therefore, his money if the speaker does not sleep with the Landlord, the Prince in this scene threatens the speaker with the same argument. Both the landlord (through Amy) and the Prince must threaten the speaker in order to seduce her. The speaker, however, considers herself a whore and a woman who should not "scruple any thing" (104), after both seductions, ignoring or forgetting the threats. The male voice once again intrudes on the Lady's story in order to elevate the seducer into a model of charity and kindness while characterizing the speaker as a woman who should be grateful but, simultaneously, a whore for complying with the seducer. The woman in the story--the object of the discourse--like the Lady whose story is being narrated--the subject of the discourse--is trapped by a man.

Throughout the narrative the "I" speaking is either seduced or seduces because the 'I" is the site of shifting gendered experiences. The Barthian reading which allows the reader to examine closely specific sections of the text reveals the existence of two gendered experiences present at any one point at the site of "I." Without a lexia by lexia analysis one would be unable to detect the shifting gender of "I." From our analysis up to this point in the narrative we have discovered the instability of "I"'s gendered identity. From the

biological description we know "I" is a female. However, from "I"'s actions, she is sometimes male and sometimes female. In other words, "I" often behaves in the manner in which eighteenth-century women were supposed to behave. For example "I" is suitably shocked by Amy's suggestion that "I" prostitute her body for food. At other time "I" acts like an eighteenth-century man, which is the case when "I" actively becomes the seducer in the relationship with the Prince.

The pattern of seduction, whereby kindness is followed by a kiss or some sign of familiarity, then a gift of money, and finally the luxurious meal which occurs just prior to the seduction, is established with the Landlord and gets repeated with the Prince. The only difference is that with the Prince, the speaker encourages the man to act in the first place. The speaker intentionally dresses herself beautifully in order to receive the "kindness" of the Prince. Hence, the speaker becomes the one in control even though the Prince performs all the required steps in the seduction pattern. From this last lexia (51) onwards the speaker gains more and more control over her lovers until,with the Lord in Britain, the speaker herself breaks the pattern of seduction so that the act gets reduced to a monetary exchange. In the scene with the Lord, the speaker patiently listens to the Lord discuss "the Subject of Love" (225) until she has no patience since love is a "Point so ridiculous ... without the main thing, I mean the Money" (225). The speaker even says to herself that "if Your Lordship obtains any-thing of me, you must pay for it; and the Notion of my being so rich, serves only to make it cost you the dearer, seeing you cannot offer a small Matter to a Woman of 2000 £ a Year Estate" (225). Indeed, the speaker has become nothing more than an expensive prostitute.

Because of "I"'s beauty and sexual attractiveness, "I" is unmistakably a female as Katharine Rogers has suggested (Feminism in Eighteenth-Century England 70). However, "I"'s actions measured in terms of eighteenth-century notions of femininity are often male.

"I" assumes power and control over men. Interestingly enough, "I" only can master men by appearing to be subservient to them. Hence in the seduction scene with the Prince, specifically lexia (51), it appears that the Prince is threatening "I" to give her body to him. In other words, the Prince believes he is seducing the speaker when, in fact, the Prince is doing exactly what the speaker desired him to do in the first place, as is seen from the speaker's original intentions of attracting the Prince. With the Lord, too, the speaker gets what she wants under the disguise of accepting the Lord's seemingly overpowering offer. What overpowers the speaker or what really seduces the speaker is not the man's amorous intentions but his monetary gifts. Anthony James has observed that the speaker,

> describe[s] her reactions to wealth and status in terms of heat, blushes, fire, fever, caresses and mental distraction, images which are more familiarly associated with love and with sexual rather than pecuniary or social appetite. (235).

Although James wrongly describes the speaker as an "unnatural and unwomanly" (242) individual, he does indeed correctly identify the speaker's true love: not men or sex but power and money. Even in the speaker's most feminine disguise, that of the Turkish dress in which she receives the name "Roxana," the speaker is merely feigning "compliance and submission [to a masculine order] ... by playing the slave, by presenting her body as eroticized material and fetish of her sexuality" (Flynn 90). Our lexia by lexia analysis of the initial gendered sections of the narrative trace the gradual shift at the site of "I" from powerlessness, associated with femininity, to power, associated with masculinity. "I"'s most powerful arguments for her chosen career surface in her conversation with the Dutch merchant. As we shall see, the results of our analysis of lexias (1) to (51) converge in this scene where the speaker and the Dutch merchant argue about the institution of marriage.

CHAPTER III

Marriage: Patriarchy's Honourable Institution for Women

Alice Browne in her book, The Eighteenth Century Feminist Mind, states that during the eighteenth century, "in every genre of writing about women, it was clear that marriage was the most important event in a woman's life; it changed her legal status and imposed a new set of duties on her" (30). It would seem that Daniel Defoe's Roxana also considers marriage to be a momentous event in a woman's life but in a different way. The speaker's life in Roxana is radically altered because of her opinions concerning the institution of marriage. One can divide the novel into three phases on the basis of the speaker's associations with marriage. The first phase could be classified as the speaking "I"'s initiation into her prosperous career as a courtesan. Because of her parents' (and also her own) foolish choice of a husband, the speaker is abandoned by her brewer husband, only to suffer in extreme poverty. Poverty, with the added stimulus of an overly "kind" Landlord, becomes the primary reason for the speaker's decision to embark on the life of a whore. The second phase, which I suggest begins with the speaker's conversation with the Dutch merchant, could be regarded as the peak in the speaking "I"'s career--the stage of heightened glory, success and power. It is in this second stage that the speaker becomes known as the famous (I propose infamous) "Roxana." The speaker, at this point, is not only sexually attractive and desirable but also wealthy and powerful. Despite various offers of marriage, including that of the Dutch merchant, the speaker chooses high-class prostitution over marriage. In this second stage, the speaker presents some powerful feminist arguments for electing to remain single in a society which derides unmarried women. The third phase, which I consider the most destructive stage in the speaker's life,

begins with the speaker's acceptance of the Dutch merchant's second proposal. In this final stage, the speaker is no longer confident and secure with her choice of the single life. Although she is wealthy, she is not able to survive alone in a fiercely patriarchal society. She abandons her early feminist arguments to reconcile herself with patriarchal society's expectations for a woman, that is, the married life.

From a structuralist point of view, one can, indeed, structure the novel in this way in order to conclude that there are at least three different "discourses" at work in the narrative. By "discourse" I mean the language produced by a specific ideology and/or theory. Chris Weedon is helpful for our definition in stating that:

> Social structures and processes are organized through institutions and practices such as the law, the political system, the church, the family, the education system and the media, each of which is located in and structured by a particular discursive field . ... Discursive fields consist of competing ways of giving meaning to the world and of organizing social institutions and processes. They offer the individual a range of modes of subjectivity (35).

Marriage in Roxana belongs to the discursive field of the institution of marriage. Some of the discourses within this discursive field may uphold the status quo, which for Roxana is that the most critical duty of an eighteenth-century woman is to marry and marry well. Other discourses may, to use Weedon's words,

> challenge ... [the] existing practices from within or will contest the very basis of current organizations and the selective interests which it represents. Such discourses are likely to be marginal to existing practices and dismissed by the hegemonic system of meanings and practices as irrelevant or bad (35).

In Roxana , the speaker's irreverence and dismissal of the marriage institution constitutes a discourse, within the discursive field of marriage, that challenges the founding beliefs of

the relationship between men and women in marriage. This discourse which surfaces in the argument over marriage between the Dutch merchant and the speaker is later disregarded by the speaker when she decides to marry the merchant. Additionally, the speaker's earlier decision to remain single (the discourse challenging the preconceived notions of marriage) is considered unnatural and wicked by the Dutch merchant. Later, when the speaker repeats her theory that marriage imprisons a woman and states that "I wou'd be a Man-Woman; for as I was born free, I wou'd die so" (Defoe, Roxana 212), the speaker's discourse is described by Sir Robert, her financial advisor, as "a kind of Amazonian Language" (212). David Blewett in the notes to this edition of Roxana defines Amazonian as "aggressively feminist (from the legendary race of female warriors" (n. 183, 393). In stating that the discourse is feminist, both Blewett and Sir Robert Clayton classify "I"'s discourse as marginal to the dominant patriarchal discourse which forces women to marry.

The third phase of the speaker's life is marked by a rejection of this feminist discourse in favour of the dominant one. For my focus on gender, the crucial stage in "I"'s life is the second one in which she proposes her radically unpatriarchal discourse and challenges the existing concepts of the female gender. To return to our Barthian reading, it is only through a lexia by lexia analysis of the marriage scene between the narrator and the Dutch merchant that the reader and critic alike can begin to see the shift within the speaking "I" from an internal power struggle between the dominant and marginal discourse to a powerfully confident voice preaching, practicing and expounding this marginal discourse.

To begin with, I must state that the Roland Barthes of S/Z may notice the structure of a text--what I have called the three phases of the speaker's life--but he would not use this structural pattern as the principal organizing scheme for the novel. My structuration is not meant to be rigid nor is it the only one. It is one way of highlighting the significance of the

marriage scene for the purposes of this paper. As with the previous chapter, we will continue to number our lexias and discover the connotative signifiers and symbolic aspects of each lexia.

(52) "I had no Inclination to be a Wife again, I had had such bad Luck with my first Husband, I hated the Thoughts of it": As one can see from this lexia, the speaker is not initially against the dominant eighteenth-century ideology that believes marriage is a woman's best option. It is only because of a bad marriage that the speaker comes to this logical conclusion. The use of the word "Luck" brings to mind the original title of this narrative, The Fortunate Mistress. Is the speaker suggesting that she is only unfortunate in marriage? In other words, there is an implication that the speaker may be lucky or fortunate outside of marriage and thus be a "fortunate mistress." One can code this lexia as "SEM. good luck without marriage."

(53) "I found, that a Wife is treated with Indifference, a Mistress with a strong Passion; a Wife is look'd upon, as but an Upper-Servant, a Mistress is a Sovereign" (170): The antithesis of wife (marriage) versus mistress (prostitution) is clearly established by the speaker at this point. The wife (an "Upper-Servant") is treated as an inferior whereas the mistress (a "Sovereign") is the superior. The conventional angel/whore dichotomy seems to have an underlying inferior/superior binary opposition. It is implied that the wife by virtue of her chastity is an angel whereas the mistress is obviously a whore. However, the "angel" gets disregarded while the "whore" becomes deified. The binary opposition is inverted; that is, the connotations of "angel" and "whore" are interchanged, and the paradoxical nature of the eighteenth-century attitudes towards women is revealed.

(54) "a Wife must give up all she has; have every Researve she makes for herself, be thought hard of, and be upbraided with her very Pin-Money; whereas a Mistress makes the Saying true, that what the Man has, is hers, and what she has, is her own" (170): In

this lexia the marriage/prostitution or more specifically, the wife/mistress antithesis is reintroduced. In lexia (54) the wife is essentially the property of her husband; she is objectified. On the contrary, as a mistress, the woman makes the man her property. He is objectified. Indeed, the mistress is the superior whereas the inferior is the wife. Thus, there is an antithesis of object versus subject within the larger one of wife versus mistress. "SYM. object/subject."

(55) "the Wife bears a thousand Insults, and is forc'd to sit still and bear it, or part and be undone; a Mistress insulted, helps herself immediately, and takes another" (170-1): "SYM. restriction/freedom." The wife is not only verbally abused but also restricted from leaving the situation as she will suffer more (from society) outside of the marriage. She is imprisoned both within and without marriage. The mistress, however, has the freedom to escape from the sexual relationship at any time she chooses. Furthermore, because the eighteenth-century man both despises and desires the whore, a mistress has no difficulty in finding another mate. Once again, it is the wife who suffers the most. Nevertheless, neither the wife nor the mistress is capable of surviving independently of a man. Although the mistress is free to reject any man she no longer wants, she is still dependent on a man to support her. She may "help herself immediately" after she is abused by the man, but the mistress also "takes another." There is an implication in these words that the mistress must take another man. Thus, neither woman is entirely free from the patriarchal hands of men. One is subject to the biased attitudes of the patriarchy while the other exploits these same prejudiced attitudes.

(56) "These are many wicked Arguments for Whoring" (171): Clearly, the previous arguments are undermined by a statement such as this one. A woman who has so much insight into the ills of being a wife and the virtues of being a mistress cannot claim that these differences in the two female roles can be merely "wicked Arguments for

Whoring." Only an eighteenth-century man or a woman fully convinced of the sinfulness of disobeying patriarchal morals would claim that to escape the oppression and subjugation of marriage, in whatever possible manner, is evil. Thus, we have a gender power struggle between a patriarchal and a feminist discourse on marriage. "G. power struggle."

(57) "He told me, what he should desire of me, wou'd be fully in my Power to grant, or else he shou'd be very unfriendly to offer it." (177-8): "SEM. Sexual desires." Because of the speaker's previous relationships with men (the illicit affairs with the Landlord and the Prince) the desires of the Dutch merchant in this lexia carry sexual connotations. The power to fulfill this desire rests with the woman; however, it is the man who gives the woman this power to begin with. The merchant claims that he would not communicate his desire to the speaker unless he thought that she could satisfy him. He is, therefore, confident that she will not refuse him. However, this confidence is based on his gendered assumption that no woman can refuse a man to whom she is indebted. Thus, this lexia is also part of our gender code. "G. assumptions about women."

(58) "he kept me for a deeper Reckoning, and that, as he had told me, he would put me into a Posture to Even all that Favour" (179): "SEM. sexual favours." The diction of this lexia ("Reckoning," "Even," and "Favour") suggests that the speaker and the merchant are involved in a business relationship. However, the implications of the word "Posture" suggest an underlying sexual nature. Money and sex merge in this lexia to create the appearance of a business venture when in reality the relationship is nothing more than that of a man paying a woman for her sexual abilities. In other words, eighteenth-century women are not allowed to conduct business without employing their sexual bodies. A woman is always regarded as a sexual being with the power to satisfy men's lusts.

(59) "seeing Providence had (as it were for that Purpose) taken his Wife from him, I wou'd make up the Loss to him" (180): Although the reader now discovers the

honourable intentions of the Dutch merchant, the woman is still depicted as an object for the man. The female speaker is to "make up the Loss" to the merchant by filling the position of wife. She is not so much an individual person as a suitable candidate for a vacant role. The woman is objectified in the role of wife. "SEM. objectification of woman."

(60) "if he cou'd take me at an Advantage, and get to-Bed to me, and then, as was most rational to think, I should willingly enough marry him afterwards." (181): "G. assumptions about women." It is assumed by the Dutch merchant, in this lucid description of the merchant's intentions, that a woman who has been seduced will naturally marry her seducer in order to prevent further embarrassment to herself. Because of what Alice Browne has called the "double standard in sexual morality" (1) in the eighteenth century, the female victim of a seduction is an outcast of society whereas the only crime of the male seducer is his inability to keep the woman. As Browne has indicated, "for men to demand chastity of women, but not of themselves, was immoral, absurd and damaging to men as well as to women" (1). The principle that the only course of action for the victim of a seduction to take is to marry her seducer is the same principle that enables men like the Dutch merchant to force a woman (who has already politely refused) to enter into marriage.

> (61) It is true, to my Shame be it spoken, says I, that you have taken me by Surprize, and have had your Will of me; but I hope you will not take it ill that I cannot consent to Marry, for-all that ; if I am with-Child, said I, Care must be taken to manage that as you shall direct ; I hope you won't expose me , for my having expos'd myself to you , but I cannot go any farther (183):

"G. assumption about women; the double standard." As in lexia (60), the woman feels shame for the seduction. It is almost as if the woman is begging forgiveness for allowing her attacker to seduce her. How can a rational woman marry the very man who has made

her a whore? In marrying the seducer, the woman not only gives up all her rights, according to the matrimonial laws of the early eighteenth century, but because she has been proven to be a whore she is subjecting herself to the contemptuous attitude of her husband. Furthermore, the speaker's desire not to be exposed, in lexia (61), reinforces the double-standard or the notion that a woman commits a sin by sleeping with a man prior to marriage, whereas a man is guilty of weakness in not being able to maintain the woman under his power. The speaker is, indeed, extremely pragmatic in her dealings with the merchant for she also considers the necessary actions to be taken if she is pregnant.

(62) "if I shou'd be a Wife, all I had then, was given up to the Husband, and I was thenceforth to be under his Authority only; and as I had Money enough, and needed not fear being what they call a cast-off Mistress" (183): From the speaker's point of view, marriage is an institution that provides financial security . Without the need for money, marriage becomes unnecessary, especially since in marriage the woman loses all her money. Indeed, as Marsha Bordner in "Defoe's Androgynous Vision in Moll Flanders and Roxana" points out, the speaker "wishes to be the active controller of her fortune. She does not reject the traditional associations of the feminine role in marriage, but the fact that her husband would legally acquire her wealth" (84), as is evident from the speaker's later acceptance of the Dutch merchant's marriage offer. Sudesh Vaid has pointed out, however, that both marriage and prostitution are essentially similar "in that they are both means to financial security" for women (137). Only marriage "has the legal, moral and social sanctions that prostitution does not have" (Vaid 137). Vaid claims that in Roxana "the marriage/prostitution antithesis is developed as a female subordination versus female independence issue" (138), which, indeed, is the case.

(63) "his Project of coming to-Bed to me, was a Bite upon himself, while he intended it for a Bite upon me" (183): "Bite" here means "trick [or] hoax" (Defoe, Roxana

n. 153, 391). By refusing to marry the merchant after sleeping with him, the speaker exposes the corrupt and exploitive nature of the merchant's plan. The speaker's marginal discourse in rejecting the dominant patriarchal one becomes the discourse in power. "G. power struggle."

(64) "I continued to refuse to marry him, tho' I let him lye with me whenever he desir'd it" (184): Although the merchant is allowed the favour of sleeping with the speaker, he insists on imprisoning her in the institution of marriage. The merchant's need to legally marry the speaker stems not from his moral assumptions about marriage (for if he saw marriage as the only honourable path through which to make love to a woman he neither would initially seduce the speaker nor would he continue to sleep with her after she had refused marriage several times) but from his need to be the one in control of the situation. His patriarchal discourse tells him that the woman is always subordinate to the man, even in the case of a mistress. A mistress may be treated like a superior but by virtue of her sexual status--she is nothing more than a whore--she is always inferior to the man. The speaker's ability to overpower the Dutch merchant both with her sexuality and with her refusal to submit to his desires subverts the traditional eighteenth-century power balance between the sexes. "G. power struggle."

(65) "Why then his Question was, why I wou'd not marry him, seeing I allow'd him all the Freedom of a Husband?" (185): Again the double standard is introduced. If a man can refuse to marry a woman but maintain her as a mistress, enjoying all the liberties of having her as a wife, why cannot a woman do the same? The speaking "I" through her resistance to marriage exposes the prejudiced nature of the sexual morals of her society. Indeed, later on "I" succinctly states her position:

> a Woman was as fit to govern and enjoy her own Estate, without a Man, as a Man was, without a Woman; and that, if she had a-mind to gratifie herself as to Sexes, she might

> entertain a Man, as a Man does a Mistress; that while she was thus single, she was her own, and if she gave away that Power, she merited to be as miserable as it was possible that any Creature cou'd be (Defoe, Roxana 188).

The reason why the Dutch merchant is so adamant in his intentions to marry the speaker is that he cannot morally accept his own deceptive and sexually immoral behaviour. One gathers that the Merchant does not want to keep the speaker as a mistress but, at the same time, he is incapable of making her his wife. Because of the rigid angel/whore and wife/mistress dichotomy at work in the eighteenth-century society, the Dutch merchant is unable to regard the speaker as an equal as she so much desires to be. The speaker, in fact, despises any intelligent, wealthy woman who willingly submits to the authoritative power of a man through marriage.

(66) "You are the first Woman in the World that ever lay with a Man, and then refus'd to marry him" (185): The Merchant's insistence that the speaker is not acting according to patriarchal social standards emphasizes the extent to which the speaker's discourse is considered marginal, subversive, unnatural and wicked. Whereas men have lain with women they refused to marry--the Landlord, Prince and Lord to name a few--women are not given this freedom. The Merchant assumes that if a master had decided to marry his whore, the woman would have been more than willing to accept. Because a single woman was viewed with derision and a whore was disregarded entirely, most eighteenth-century women did seek marriage partners. But as Miriam J. Benkovitz has observed:

> The woman of the eighteenth century who liberated herself came to the realization that for self-development and self-fulfillment, she must first escape the narrow role assigned by society ... in the making of marriages. She must have the right of choice ... in sexual decisions, the right to define her own emotional needs and seek their satisfaction (40).

For the speaker who has rejected the Merchant, this refusal to marry is a necessary step towards the realization of a fully confident rational and sexual self. The Merchant in appealing to patriarchal notions of female sexuality cannot even begin to understand the speaker's need to escape the marriage institution. We can code lexia (66) as a gender code relying on patriarchal assumptions about women, thus, "G. assumptions."

(67) "either you are already engag'd, and marry'd to some other Man, or you are not willing to dispose of your Money to me, and expect to advance yourself higher with your Fortune" (186): "G. patriarchal notions of women." The Dutch merchant cannot conceive of any other reasons for the speaker to refuse marriage except that of already being married and that of unwilling to part with one's money. However, a woman may not want to marry solely because she finds more happiness in being independent. Paula Backsheider has said that eighteenth-century women often considered the single life as "viable, desirable and even admirable" (189). The speaker, through her arguments, introduces this distinction between female and male attitudes towards women who intentionally decide to remain single. However, the speaker's own arguments are undermined by her mercenary motives: "the divesting myself of my Estate, and putting my Money out of my Hand, was the Sum of the Matter, that made me refuse to marry" (Defoe, Roxana 187). Thus, the speaker is not so much criticizing the fundamental principles of matrimony in the eighteenth century as she is exploiting the patriarchal institution itself.

(68) "That the very Nature of the Marriage-Contract was, in short, nothing but giving up Liberty, Estate, Authority, and every-thing, to the Man, and the Woman was indeed, a meer Woman ever after, that is to say, a slave," (187): "SYM. Marriage/prostitution." As in lexia (53), the dichotomy established in this lexia is subverted by the speaker's own actions. The speaker may claim that a wife is a slave; however, while she was a mistress to the Prince she played the slave's part in living

secretly and in obeying all the Prince's desires. As a mistress to the Prince she did not have the liberty to live openly let alone do what she wanted. Robert James Merrett is quite correct in stating that the speaker "far from wishing to reform conventional male distinctions between wives and mistresses, ... exploits them" (18).

(69) "Women had only the Care of managing, that is, spending what their Husbands get; and that a Woman had the Name of Subjection indeed, but that they generally commanded not the Men only, but all they had" (188): "SEM. Power given to women." The Merchant insists that, although wives are described as subservient, they are, in fact, the ones in control in a marriage. The power women have over their husbands, however, is initially granted to the women by the men. Thus, a man who is dissatisfied with the manner in which his wife commands him can revoke her powers over him at any time. A woman's power over her husband is, therefore, only an illusion.

> (70) I return'd, that while a Woman was single, she was a Masculine in her politick Capacity; that she had then the full Command of what she had, and the full Direction of what she did; that she was a Man in her separated capacity, to all Intents and Purposes that a Man cou'd be so to himself; that she was controul'd by none, because accountable to none, and was in Subjection to none (188).

Spiro Peterson has said that "when the status of the married woman at common law is surveyed, it is not surprising that ... [the speaking "I" of Roxana] should reach the conclusion that the laws of matrimony were wholly on the side of the husband" (188). The speaker's analysis of the matrimonial laws of her society leads her to believe in the freedom of the single woman, yet by becoming a mistress to several men of fortune she is not a single, unattached woman. However much the speaker is able to control her own fortune, she is, as a mistress, controlled by the whims and sexual desires of her master and, therefore, "accountable" to him, and "in Subjection" to him. The opposition of a single

woman versus an attached woman, then, is not the same as the mistress/wife antithesis. Both the mistress and the wife are essentially subjugated women; it is only a matter of the degree of restriction that makes a mistress appear to be a free woman.

(71) "he had Reason to expect I shou'd be content with that which all the World was contented with" (189): The Dutch merchant assumes that because the majority of people believe in the institution of marriage (and the implicit subjugation of women by men) that marriage is inherently the natural choice for women. In other words, the Merchant fails to recognize that all moral notions whether sanctioned by "the World" or not are grounded in certain theoretical and ideological choices which do not make these morals any more correct or natural than any other. In arguing that "Marriage was decreed by Heaven; that it was the fix'd State of Life, which God had appointed for Man's Felicity, and for establishing a legal Posterity" (Defoe, Roxana 191), the Dutch merchant is reiterating the indoctrinated patriarchal beliefs about marriage. By relying on transcendental values, that is God, or by appealing to the masses, the Merchant reveals the arbitrary and biased nature of the patriarchal ideals he is upholding.

> (72) the Pretence of Affection, takes from a Woman every thing that can be call'd herself; she is to have no Interest; no Aim; no View; but all is the Interest, Aim, and View, of the Husband; she is to be the passive Creature you spoke of, said I; she is to lead a Life of perfect Indolence, and living by Faith (not in God, but) in her Husband (189):

"SYM. wife/mistress antithesis." Indeed, a wife is nothing more than a glorified, objectified possession of the husband. However, the speaker is lying to herself in believing that it is only a wife who suffers in this manner. When she was the mistress to the Prince, the speaker was as subjugated as the wife she describes in this lexia. With the Prince, as with the Lord later on, the speaker leads a "Life of perfect Indolence." The speaking "I", at one point in her relationship with the Prince, says that the "Prince was the

only Deity [she] ... worshipp'd" (106). Whether a wife or a mistress, the speaker still appears to lose her own interest in serving that of the man's. As a mistress, however, the woman is more comfortable in her situation, because she knows that she can leave any time and get another man. But the fact remains that a mistress during her affair with the man is obligated to serve the man in every way possible.

(73) "It is not you, says I, that I suspect, but the Laws of Matrimony puts the Power into your Hands; bids you do it, commands you to command; and binds me, forsooth, to obey" (190): What I call the "Laws of Business" are similar to the "Laws of Matrimony" in that the mistress by virtue of acquiring great wealth from her lover is forced to obey the man. In both marriage and illicit sexual relationships, the man has the ultimate power over the woman. In the former, the man has power according to the law; in the latter, power is given to the man because of his wealth. Thus, a woman is a loser both in her marriage and in her affairs.

(74) "to resist a Man, is to act with Courage and Vigour" (192): "SEM. power of woman." In refusing a man, whether as a lover or as a husband, the woman earns the right to be respected. However, the manner in which the speaker is presented--as a money-hungry woman--weakens the power of this statement. It is, thus, implied that the speaker is no more courageous than a common whore. In other words, in rejecting the Dutch merchant's offer of marriage but accepting the Prince's and Lord's offer of money in exchange for sexual favours, the speaker exposes herself as not an ardent feminist but a shrewd opportunist.

(75) "after a Man has lain with me as a Mistress, he ought never to lye with me as a Wife; that's not only preserving the Crime in Memory, but it is recording it in the Family" (192): "SYM. wife/mistress antithesis." To make the mistress into a wife necessarily implies that the wife is also partially a mistress. In any dichotomy, the two terms of the

antithesis are two sides of one concept; therefore, each side exists within the other. To define a woman as either a wife or a mistress is to adhere too rigidly to the two extreme ends. Thus, the man in wanting to marry his mistress or in prostituting his wife is physically representing the relationship between the two sides of the dichotomy.

(76) "I had no-mind to let him go neither; and yet I had no-mind to give him such hold of me as he wou'd have had; and thus I was in a kind of suspence, irresolute, and doubtful what Course to take." (193): "SYM. wife/mistress antithesis." The rigid classification of women in the eighteenth century as either angels or whores, wives or mistresses, prevents the speaker from engaging in a relationship with the Merchant in which both parties are of equal status. In trying to create a third term in the wife/mistress dichotomy, the speaker, in Barthian terms, becomes the site of the transgression and, therefore, is held in "a kind of suspense."

(77) "if ever Woman in her Senses rejected a Man of Merit, on so trivial and frivolous a Pretence, I was the Woman ; but surely it was the most preposterous thing that ever Woman did." (197): After presenting her marginal discourse, the speaker, as it were, returns to expound the indoctrinated masculine discourse of patriarchal eighteenth-century society. The terms "trivial," "frivolous," and "preposterous" clearly undermine and dismiss all of the speaker's previous arguments against marriage, and reinforce the inability of the speaker's marginal, feminist discourse to completely assert itself within a predominantly patriarchal discursive field.

> (78) He would have taken me as a Wife, but would not entertain me as a Whore; was ever Woman angry with any Gentleman on that head? and was ever Woman so stupid to choose to be a Whore, where she might have been an honest Wife?
>
> But Infatuations are next to being possess'd of the Devil (197) :

With this last lexia, my belief that the speaker abandons her feminist discourse in favour of a patriarchal one is confirmed. The speaker describes her passionate arguments against the patriarchy's so-called honourable institution for women, namely marriage, as "infatuations" and "being possess'd of the Devil." Furthermore, she claims that by refusing the Dutch merchant's proposal she has chosen to be a whore. What, in fact, she chooses is the greater freedom associated with whoredom. Although, as I have suggested, both the whore (or mistress) and the wife share the restrictions, the subjugation, and the oppression of a slave, the whore suffers a lesser amount of pain for she has the temporary illusion of power when she rejects one lover or when she chooses another. The only way to escape from all bondage is, of course, to be a single woman; but, as I quoted in the beginning of this chapter, for the eighteenth-century woman marriage was the only option available. In the eighteenth-century society, to be a single woman meant unhappiness, to be a married one meant imprisonment, and to be a whore meant demoralization. The trap that women were in by virtue of their gender led to the creation of paradoxical dichotomies that neither eighteenth-century men nor women would acknowledge.

CHAPTER IV

The Site of "I": The Plural Discourses at Play

In arbitrarily creating lexias with which to observe the presentation of gender issues, we have in our textual analysis of sections of Daniel Defoe's Roxana detected a complex plurality of voices at the site of the "I" who narrates the tale. "I" has, in effect, become the site at which numerous voices interact, often in a power struggle to be the dominant voice. From the personal masculine and feminine voices to the impersonal voices of truth and morality, these different voices represent various discourses. Each discourse, whether originating from a personal or an impersonal voice, subscribes to a specific ideology which is inherently gendered. "I" then is the site of different gendered attitudes. Defoe's text becomes no longer the story of Roxana but the story of "I" who is continuously assuming new disguises, names and titles. In the process of transforming its identity, the various discourses gather at "I." It is only the physical description of "I" as a woman, that enables the reader to identify "I" with the female sex. Without this biological identification, it would be difficult to identify the gender of the speaking "I" since "I" presents both male and female gendered discourses. At times in the narrative, for example the first scene in which "I" discusses the disadvantages of marrying a fool, the prevalence of a masculine discourse, by which I mean a discourse subscribing to the eighteenth-century notions of masculinity, persuades the reader that "I" is actually male and not female. By analyzing specific parts of Defoe's text in a Barthian lexia by lexia fashion, it has thus been possible to observe the construction of a gendered subjectivity at the site of "I."

The story of "I" from the very beginning is unconsciously involved in three separate discourses. In other words, three voices are simultaneously present at the site of "I" prior to other voices appearing. The immediate story of "I," who later becomes known as Roxana, is that of a young woman coping with the harsh realities of eighteenth-century society. This story however is told in retrospect. Therefore, "I"'s immediate tale is told through the voice of an older, more experienced "I." The older "I"'s story is filtered through the voice of a male Relator who edits the story and prepares it for the reader. However, once the tale begins the Relator's voice unobtrusively disappears leaving one with "I" telling the story of herself. At this point one may ask where is the voice of Defoe, the author behind "I"'s words? From a Barthian structuralist viewpoint, the author's voice is just one of many that contribute to the plurality of voices embedded in the text. The author does not hold the key to the meaning of the text anymore than the voice of a character, for example. As I have argued, from a feminist structuralist perspective the undermining of the absolute authority of the author is especially important to challenging the patriarchy. Feminist structuralist readers, in considering the author as having no more power over the meaning of events and ideas in a text than any other voice present in the narrative discourse itself, are in an analogous position to women challenging the dominant patriarchal ideology by considering the patriarchal views to have no more authority over society than any other view expressed by members of the society not from the dominant patriarchal culture. By undermining the concept of authority, whether that of an author over his text or that of a particular ideology over society, feminist structuralists recover the plurality of voices which have been lost at the expense of one dominant voice. Defoe's views on a specific matter, then, do not have more vested power than those of the Lady's whose story is being narrated in Roxana.

As we have seen from the lexia by lexia analysis, there is an obvious masculine voice or male discourse present in the text. Although a male Relator narrates the story, it would be imprudent to suggest that all male discourse in "I"'s story originates from the Relator's voice. The masculine discourse, particularly when "I" labels herself a whore, may be the voice within "I" herself which has been indoctrinated from the start with a specific patriarchal discourse, in this case the eighteenth-century notion that reifies a woman's virginity and chastity to the extent that women are placed in a dichotomy of angel or whore. By not subscribing to this masculine discourse in her actions--"I" may negatively label herself a whore, yet she continues to act with relish the whore's part--"I" effectively opposes the masculine discourse which she utters.

The preservation of her chastity is the initial reason for not agreeing with Amy's proposal of sleeping with the Landlord, but once "I" agrees to be seduced she no longer exhibits any scruples in being a kept mistress. For G. A. Starr in Defoe and Spiritual Autobiography, the reason for "I"'s desire to disparage her chastity and idolize her promiscuity is the beginning of "I"'s "hardening in sin" (165). This notion that valorizes a woman's virginity and chastity stems from patriarchal discourse. What we see, on the other hand, is a highly prosperous, economically independent woman. She is, for all intents and purposes, an opportunistic "She-Merchant" (Defoe, Roxana 170), whose shrewdness and skill in business affairs enables her to succeed to a high degree in the financial world. Through her economic and sexual relations with men she not only gains power and financial security but also self-respect, pride and independence. When the speaker arrives in England and establishes herself at Pall Mall, she is a confident woman. She is no longer the same woman at the beginning of the novel who cried so much at the onset of poverty that she was incapable of even disposing of her children. Neither is she the victim of an overwhelming seduction at the hands of the Landlord. By the time "I"

meets the Prince the reader can already detect signs of the speaker's growing self-awareness and self-confidence. She tells the reader that

> I did not forget to set myself out with all possible Advantage, considering the Dress of a Widow, which in those Days was a most frightful thing; I say, as I did thus from my own Vanity, for I was not ignorant that I was very handsome; I say, on this Account, I was soon made very publick (Defoe, Roxana 93).

"I" is essentially advertising her merchandise like a business person, and she is successful in drawing the public attention to her wares. In her first meeting with the Prince she is able to force some tears in discussing the loss of her fortune in jewels and the death of her jeweller (husband).

The action sequence of seduction gets reversed at this point for "I" is no longer the seduced but the seducer. Henceforth, she seduces the men. This shift from powerlessness to power--that is, the power invested in the seducer's role--for some critics, like John J. Richetti, is proof that "I" is really a male disguised as a female. In other words, he argues that "I" is a transvestite. Richetti in his "The Portrayal of Women in Restoration and Eighteenth-Century English Literature," states that "I" is a "female impersonator ... not simply strong and self-reliant but unperturbed by the implications of female experience. For ... [her], sexuality is simply an available and efficient means for self-advancement and survival" (88). It is a masculine discourse that suggests that a female cannot be as sexually free as a male. Masculine discourses restrict the expression of female sexuality to the limiting boundaries of wedlock and romance. Prior to marriage, a woman's role is to preserve her virginity and during marriage she is to preserve her chastity. I am not suggesting that a female must be promiscuous in order to express herself freely in a sexual way, but that to limit her experience of sexuality to a preservation of her virginity and chastity is to unnecessarily valorize these two qualities. In valorizing virginity and chastity

one is regarding women not as human beings but as sexual beings. To view "I" as a whore and nothing else is too reductive and too damaging to Defoe's portrayal of her.

From Defoe's description of the Quaker woman, it is obvious that the reader is to compare "I" with the Quaker woman. Both women are abandoned by their husbands and left to survive with their children. "I" herself asks whether it was possible to

> think of a poor desolate Woman with four Children, and her Husband gone from her, and perhaps good for little if he had stay'd; I say, was I, that had tasted so deep of the Sorrows of such a kind of Widowhood, able to look on her, and think of her Circumstances, and not be touch'd in an uncommon Manner? (Defoe, Roxana 297)

Instead of condemning the speaking "I"'s direction in life and applauding the Quaker woman's, which the reader is urged to do, one can look at this scene as the victorious moment of one woman helping another woman, for "I" not only gives emotional support but also financial support to the Quaker. If one considers Amy's function in leaving the children with the speaker's relatives and in encouraging "I" to sleep with the landlord,then one can argue that Amy inadvertently helps "I" to embark on a highly lucrative career. The men in "I"'s life are merely ways of attaining the financial success and independent status "I" desires. It is the women who resolve to act against the predominant masculine discourse, which encourages women to be dependent and subservient to men, who survive and in the process may help other women. "I"'s economic discourse is, in fact, masculine because she is performing the role of the male who is financially independent. In this sense, "I" has transgressed her designated gendered discourse. Of course the Quaker woman by remaining an honest widow manages to get by, but in comparison to the riches and self-confidence of "I" , the Quaker is essentially a loser in the game of success. One also has to remember that the reader never sees the Quaker woman as destitute as "I" was.

In denying the patriarchal concepts of the female role in society, including the proper channels for expressing female sexuality (within marriage only), the speaker creates her own discourse, what I would call a female or feminine discourse in the novel. In feminist readings of traditional literary texts such as Charlotte Perkins Gilman's "The Yellow Wallpaper," the female discourse emerges as a suppressed subtext within the larger context of the masculine discourse. The same can be said of Defoe's Roxana. For example, for some critics such as Blewett (Introduction) and Novak ("Crime and Punishment"), "I" is punished for her sinful life of whoring. Read from a feminist perspective, "I" is not punished but defeated by an oppressive patriarchal ideology that denies women the right to express themselves sexually and to gain independence. Furthermore, I suggest that Defoe was well aware of this because from the beginning, in the Preface, Defoe claims that the Lady's story will be narrated within the larger context of the masculine discourse of the Relator's story. From the start the Lady's story is acknowledged to be subsumed into the Relator's story. Thus it would seem that the occasional appearance of a female discourse in the narrative itself is a forgone conclusion. As was mentioned in our analyses of lexia (8) ("dressing up the Story in worse Cloaths than the Lady, whose Words he speaks, prepared it for the World"), the Relator, although admitting to his inability to dress the Lady's story beautifully (metaphorically speaking),denies her the power to do so herself. The masculine discourse, in acknowledging the existence of a feminine or female discourse, insists on controlling that discourse. When the speaker decides to pursue her own ambitions and fulfill her own inclinations she, in a sense, escapes from this masculine control. The only power left to the masculine discourse is to condemn the woman for committing numerous sins. From George A. Starr's point of view in Defoe and Spiritual Autobiography , "I" suffers at the end of the novel because she has lived a corrupt life of sin. Novak,in his article "Crime

and Punishment in Defoe's Roxana," would argue that "I" is punished for disobeying natural law by denying her maternal responsibilities. The reason, I think, that "I" suffers is that she concedes to the indoctrinated masculine discourse within her which teaches her that to cross the specified gender roles is to experience the immorality and sin of a wretched life. From the standpoint of the masculine discourse, her life is guided by the Devil and not the voice of reason. But it is precisely "I"'s own desires and the voice of reason which lead her to make the choices she does.

Having the intelligence and ambition to pursue her goals, "I" makes a successful career the only way she can. Ian Watt in The Rise of the Novel has said that "given a knowledge of banking and investment, ...[the speaker's] scandalous speciality could be developed into the most lucrative career then open to women" (160). Given the resources she has, "I" is successful. From this Marxist angle, "I" is not so much a sinful failure but an "embodiment of economic individualism" (Watt, The Rise of the Novel 69). Katharine Rogers, in her book Feminism in Eighteenth-Century England, glorifies "I"'s success, which would not be possible by obeying conventional patriarchal discourses:

> As a mistress ... , ["I"] can enjoy ego gratification from professional success, which would not have been available to a woman in respectable domestic life. She wants public acclaim and wealth, and prostitution happens to be the only field in which she can use her talents to pursue her aims (69).

Instead of listening to the voice of morality which condemns "I"'s actions as criminal, the reader discovers in "I" a woman with cunning and with business skills.

The speaker knows how to get what she wants. She knows which audience is susceptible to agree with her conditions. After her experience with the Landlord, she begins to take control of her most valuable asset, her beauty. She presents herself to her best advantage when the opportunity arises, as with the Prince, and she knows when not to

risk losing her earnings, as when she agrees to marry the Dutch merchant after he has promised not to take her money. She has the requisite ambitions to succeed as when she aims to be the mistress of the King after being the Prince's mistress. In the same light, she also knows how to suffer through and to leave an unwanted business merger (knowing full well that the suffering will be magnificently rewarded). Here I am speaking of "I"'s liaison with the Lord. In establishing herself as the famous "Roxana" at Pall Mall, she creates the necessary atmosphere for business ventures to occur. Her Turkish dance is the promotional exposure she needs. And when the "business" is no longer fruitful, she closes down and moves elsewhere. Seen in this fashion, the story of "I" is the story of how to succeed as a woman in the eighteenth-century. Nevertheless, no matter how financially successful "I" becomes, she does have to prostitute her body to do so. The fact that the speaker cannot use her business skills in any other way given her situation demonstrates the extent to which the patriarchal society of eighteenth-century England had limited women's options in life.

The success "I" does achieve is the feminine or female discourse that struggles within the masculine or male discourse at the site of "I." Rogers makes an additional point and says that in "presenting women in the same terms as men, Defoe implied that they were equally capable and equally entitled to self-determination and self-fulfillment" (Feminism in Eighteenth-Century England 70). When Richetti labels "I" a "female impersonator" what he is detecting is a woman capable of acting and desiring like a man. Because of the strict definitions of masculinity and femininity in Defoe's time, Richetti interprets this incongruous behaviour in "I" as a manifestation of a gender transgression. "I" is the transvestite. However, the feminist viewpoint would not see "I" as a deviant from the norm but as a woman trying to express herself under the strict control of a dominant patriarchal society. My point is that whereas some readers may consider the non-

patriarchal discourse in Defoe's text as belonging to a deviant class or to the voice of immorality, I tend to see it as the creation and expression of a feminine discourse fighting the predominant masculine one.

If "I" is the site of both these two gendered discourses, then one of the reasons, according to Barthes, for the actual narration of the tale is the initial power struggle between the two antithetical discourses. One can label these two discourses as the Relator's history opposing the Lady's story, but as I mentioned earlier the masculine discourse is not always identical to the Relator's story. One can therefore separate two power struggles. From the Preface, there is a power struggle between the Relator's history and the Lady's story. The Relator, in a sense, is becoming the figure of the gender transgression since he is taking the Lady's words and appropriating these words for his own story. He is usurping her rightful role as the narrator of the tale. This bringing together of two gendered stories in one body produces a supplement in the text. The narrator's body becomes "the site of the transgression" (Barthes, S/Z 28). Because there is this extra transgressive element, a narrative must be told which only ends when one of the terms of the antithesis is destroyed or removed. In Roxana, the Lady unable to continue with her story abruptly ends the narrative. She effectively removes her words from the Relator's voice leaving the Relator with no words to utter. Similarly, within the narrative itself the "I" is the site of the two gendered discourses which struggle to be heard. The narrative only ends because the "I" decides to subscribe to the masculine and not the feminine discourse, removing one of the two terms of the antithesis. As with the Relator's body, "I"'s body is the site of the gender transgression.

"I" is also the site of two feminine discourses. The younger "I" who decides to make prostitution a career expounds one feminine discourse, while the older "I" who glorifies the younger "I"'s achievements in the former's retrospective narration presents the

second feminine discourse. Since the two discourses, which are temporally separated initially by about forty years, are brought together at the site of "I," we have another antithesis operating in the novel. This antithesis also instigates the creation of the narration. To return to a question that haunts all critics and readers alike of Roxana, "why does the speaker tell her tale?" one can begin to discover the reason by examining the antithesis in the novel.

On a purely narrative level, the narration begins because an enigma is raised in the title. This is true for any narrative, for creating the solution to an enigma is the most effective way for any novel to justify its existence. The enigma, "who is the fortunate mistress?" does not get resolved until "I" has accumulated enough wealth to refuse the Dutch merchant's proposal. Even then, the reader does not know the speaker's true identity. Not until page 247 of a 379 -page book does the reader discover that the speaker's true name is Susan. The narrative discourse tries to "lie as little as possible: just what is required to ensure the interests of reading, that is, its own survival" (Barthes, S/Z 141). Barthes goes on to say that "caught up in a civilization of enigma, and decipherment, the discourse reinvents on its own level the moral terms elaborated by that civilization: there is a casuistry of discourse" (S/Z 141). The prolonging of the initial enigma into a hermeneutic sequence is one reason for narration to begin.

On another level, the older "I"'s desire to talk of her success--to tell others of her "rags to riches" story--begins the narrative. If one considers that what the speaker wants most is attention, particularly public attention, then a more significant reason for the narration of her tale is the desire to be the focus of attention. Throughout the novel "I" emphasizes the importance of words and the importance of being able to argue effectively. One of the main reasons the speaker so vehemently condemns her first husband is that he is a fool: "And so look like a Fool, or, which is worse, hear him talk Nonsence, and be

laugh'd at for a Fool" (Defoe, Roxana 40). Amy's rhetorical power incites "I" to action. The Quaker woman, too, is skillful with her words. Defoe even inserts the actual dialogue between the Quaker and the girl Susan to demonstrate the Quaker's ability. It should be remembered as Janet E. Aikins has stated that the Jew is not punished for "dishonesty but for discovering the truth of "I"'s history and 'talking impudently' about it" (551), which by the way is the same reason Susan is punished. Words for "I" hold a great power and "I" takes pleasure from hearing persuasive arguments. Both the Landlord and the Prince initially captivate the speaker with their eloquent speech. The Dutch merchant, on the other hand, initially acts (he tries to get "I" into bed with him); he does not rely on the power of words. "I"'s verbal pleasure suggests that she essentially enjoys listening to a good tale.

The scene in which Susan recounts the story to the Quaker woman, the Captain's wife and "I" is the one scene which succinctly presents the key to the speaker's dilemma:

> in a word, I was oblig'd to sit and hear her tell all the story of Roxana, that is to say, of myself, and not know at the same time, whether she was in earnest or in jest; whether she knew me or no; or, in short, whether I was to be expos'd, or not expos'd. (Defoe 331)

To be exposed or not to be exposed. This may well be the essence of "I"'s inner conflict. In this scene, however, "I" asks Susan many times to describe the speaker's beauty and the details of "I"'s life. The speaking "I", in fact, revels in the glorious achievements of her life which Susan recounts. Despite her fears of exposure, "I" , "in a word," is seduced by her own story. It is interesting to notice as well that the teller and the primary listener of this "story of "I" " share the same name. Both women are christened "Susan." One cannot overlook the implications of this relationship. If Susan (the daughter) is telling Susan (the mother) the story of Susan ("I"), is not this form of narration suggestive of the stance the older "I" takes? Not only does the older "I" tell her story of herself to us, the readers, she

herself also attentively listens to the tale. It is because she is so charmed by her own tale, her own voice as it were, that she prolongs the narration for as long as the charm remains for her. The older "I", like the Lady who listens to the Relator unravel her story, watches herself become a successful woman. "I"'s desire to narrate, stemming from her desire to describe her enormous victory over the patriarchal system which subjugates women emotionally, sexually and financially, creates or rather arouses a corresponding desire for narration. Thus the narrative discourse originates. In her sequence of seductions, "I"'s greatest and most triumphant seduction is the seduction of herself.

The story of Roxana then becomes a story of power struggles involved in seduction. Ross Chambers in his critical book Story and Situation. Narrative Seduction and the Power of Fiction observes that, "narrative communication in some important nineteenth century French and English short stories conceives itself as a matter of seduction" (10). I suggest that Defoe's eighteenth century novel of a courtesan also uses the metaphor of seduction to explain its own "narrative communication." Furthermore, Chambers states that one cannot "narrate with impunity ... To tell a story is an act, an event, one that has the power to produce change, and first and foremost to change the relationship between narrator and narratee" (74). Roxana's tragic ending is a result of the speaker's seduction. "I" seduces herself until she believes she has achieved what no women could in the eighteenth century, but ultimately the magic of this glamorous life disappears and she is left with the masculine voice within her which seduces her back to the complicitous position of agreeing with patriarchal definitions of femininity. Thus, her narration ends and her feminine discourse is heard no more.

CONCLUSION

Daniel Defoe's paradoxical attitude towards women comes through in the power struggles at the site of "I" in Roxana. Upon first reading this Defoe text it appears that the speaker, like Mme. de Lanty in Sarrasine, is, to use Barthes's words, the "castrating woman, endowed with all the hallucinatory attributes of the Father: power, fascination, instituting authority, terror, power to castrate" (S/Z 36). Indeed, the speaking "I" becomes in the course of her flourishing career a powerful woman whom men desire. In her sexual relationships, particularly those with the Dutch merchant and the Lord, she has the authority and power to dictate the terms of the sexual agreement between the two parties. "I" may be seen as a castrating woman in the sense that she has the power to take away that which the man desires the most, namely, her eroticized body. In other words, by refusing a man the pleasure of her body (which she does to numerous suitors when she is at Pall Mall) the speaker is castrating that man's complete expression of his sexuality. If according to the eighteenth-century standards of femininity "I" appears to be masculine in her behaviour, it is only because she has appropriated the designated masculine powers for her own needs. This is especially evident in the various names and titles which she receives from men. One should also note the pattern of her successful career: she begins as the mistress to a Landlord, then a Prince, she reaches her peak with the King, and finally she ends as the mistress to a Lord with whom she becomes sick of the "Vice." She begins and ends her whoring life with a lord, either a "land" lord or a lord with a capital "L." Through these men and their names (and powerful titles) "I" maintains the right to initiate or encourage sexual activity, to enjoy a man sexually, and to remain economically and emotionally independent if she so desires. Once she realizes the power she inherently

possesses over men (I mean her sexual beauty), "I" refuses to be the passive woman which eighteenth-century society wanted their women to be.

To state that "I" is merely a failed attempt by Defoe to transgress his own gendered experience is too simplistic and too reductive. Rather, the reason why "I" comes across as a strange (by eighteenth-century standards) mixture of male and female qualities is that she herself is struggling against the indoctrinated masculine/patriarchal discourse about what women should be and how they should act. In her struggle she creates a counter discourse which I have called a feminine discourse. This feminine discourse essentially employs the eighteenth-century definition of masculinity and grafts that definition onto the valuable feminine qualities of beauty and sexual attractiveness. As Cixous has pointed out, the woman "is given images [by the man who represents society's patriarchal notions] that don't belong to her, and she forces herself, as we've all done, to resemble them" (47). In the beginning the speaker tries to mold herself to society's standards. For example she does not insist that her father leave her inheritance with her instead of her brother. Later on she refuses to accept society's views which only allow a man--either a brother, a husband, or a father--to control a woman's money; she insists on being responsible for her own money. In the end, however, she abandons her critical position of society's attitudes towards women, and returns to embody the indoctrinated patriarchal discourse.

In using Roland Barthes's method as outlined in S/Z and "Textual Analysis of Poe's 'Valdemar'," one is able to detect the complexity of the power struggle between these two discourses, male and female, at the site of the narrating "I." It is only by closely examining the connotative signifiers (or connotations) of masculinity and femininity received at any one point at the site of "I" that one observes the shifts and transgressions in gender, as well as, the actual construction of gender. Furthermore, Barthes's theory of antithesis, as one of the ways narration begins, is effective in determining why "I" (the site

of power struggle between the antithetical masculine and feminine discourses) narrates her tale to begin with. The hermeneutic code in combination with the antithesis further helps to explain the relationship between the two discourses. Finally, by creating a gender code in the Barthian scheme we have been able to gather those aspects, especially the implicit ones, of Defoe's text that contribute to the creation of either a masculine or feminine discourse. From our analysis we have watched the speaker of Roxana transform from a powerless woman expounding the masculine discourse about eighteenth-century women to a powerful woman challenging the dominant patriarchal discourse with her own feminine discourse. Finally, however, "I" is defeated by the powerful forces of masculine discourse and therefore, her feminine discourse is lost and "I"'s tale ends.

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