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Children, Costume, and Identity in the Chester Midsummer Show¹

Child actors play a familiar part in the standard performance history of late medieval and early modern England. The practices of the cross-dressing youths in the early modern acting companies have enjoyed close examination, and the REED volumes and general studies of English childhood attest to the participation of young people in varied kinds of play and entertainments.² Outside the confines of the acting troupes and stages of London, however, the study of children as a category of performer remains at a documentary level. Even when the identities of young actors are known, these figures are rarely situated within local social context or their immediate historical environment. What can the evidence for children's participation in geographically-specific performance reveal about the changing urban societies of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries? This essay focuses on the performances of children in late medieval and early modern Chester, using questions about gender identity and fashion to unpack the intricate social meanings of their representations in the Chester Midsummer Show.³

The roles of children in the Midsummer Show changed drastically in the decades before and after 1600, when depictions of boys in performance shifted from representing them as uncivilized and outside the social order to imagining them as a symbolic merchant 'nobility'. This transformation has not been examined primarily because interest in performance in Chester has focused sharply on the Chester Whitsun Plays, which disappeared during this period. Like the Plays, the connection of children to performance practice illuminates some of the complex social and cultural history that underpinned urban identity in Chester during a time of considerable unrest. In the mid- to late-sixteenth century, boys played a variety of characters in the Midsummer Show, which included five to sixteen 'naked boyes' armed with arrows to attack a dragon that was borne alongside them. The mayor of Chester, Henry Hardware, banned all carnival figures from the Show at the turn of the

century, initiating the end of this particular visual representation of children. In the last decades of the sixteenth century, however, many of the Chester guilds turned to a new custom in which extravagantly dressed young boys on horseback depicted lords.⁴ By the early seventeenth century, boy lords adorned in silk and gold dominated the symbolism of the Midsummer Show. The introduction of these figures roughly corresponded to a period in which the inhabitants of Chester faced new social problems stemming from the presence of troops bound for Ireland, increased urban poverty, and internal divisions in civic life and government, among other things.⁵ What did the diverging representative possibilities for children mean to the audience of the Show within this historical context? Boy lords overlapped with naked boys before the latter were eliminated from the tradition, such that the performances of children visualize some of the shifting social and cultural ideas that the guild members and citizens of Chester wished to project over time. In particular, local hierarchies of status influenced the choice of child actors and the significance of costume. By the seventeenth century, the body of the child no longer represented a sexual and societal blank slate, but instead recreated the social order of the civic elites through aristocratic clothing that drew on sumptuary law to safely express social distinction, social aspiration, and legitimized local authority.

The Midsummer Show originated around the year 1500, emerging from circumstances in which a group of armored men gathered ceremonially to represent the military defense of the city.⁶ The Show consisted of a procession of civic leaders and the city guilds that proceeded in a specified, hierarchical order on a traditional route through town before breaking into smaller groups for individual banquets. Performed in alternating years with the Chester Whitsun Plays, which depicted episodes from biblical history that ranged from the Fall of Lucifer to the Last Judgment, the Show incorporated both fantastical characters and characters from the Plays into its procession. The carnival-like figures and play characters included the naked boys and their dragon, giants, and Balaam and his ass, all of which participated in the Show for many years after the final performance of the Plays in 1575.⁷ The young lords appeared as early as 1571, overlapping with the naked boys for several decades before the lords became the dominant performance practice. In 1600, the mayor banned the play and carnival elements from the Show and instead endorsed the practice of placing a young boy to ride at the head of each company.

Despite some scholarly confusion over the presence of the naked boys, their participation in the Midsummer Show can be dated to the mid-sixteenth century.⁸ In a 1564 agreement made by the City of Chester with Thomas Poole and Robert Hallwood for the supply, construction, and/or maintenance of ‘ornamentes’ for the Show, the men are contracted to provide ‘won dragon, sixe hobby horses & sixtene naked boyes’.⁹ This entry does not specify whether actual boys or puppets appeared, and another payment for ‘Airows & skyns for the naked boy & workmanshipp all new wrought’ might indicate that the naked boys were constructed objects.¹⁰ It is more likely, however, that the naked boys were played by real boys in leather costumes who carried bows and arrows to attack the dragon with which they were paired, since several points support the use of live actors. London pageantry commonly incorporated naked characters played by actors during this period.¹¹ Leather garments represented nudity in the English dramatic tradition and prelapsarian Adam and Eve wore flesh-colored or white leather to represent their nakedness.¹² The new ‘workmanshipp’ of the second entry would thus refer to newly made costumes of leather for the boy actors. The fabrication of a leather costume demanded special skills and materials similar to those required for the giant puppets, as did the arrows, which may have been oversized for greater visibility.¹³ The arrows themselves provide further evidence for an active performer, since as props they would need to be carried separately from the skins. Conclusive evidence for the participation of costumed boys appears in two entries that describe a sum contributed by the sheriffs toward ‘payinge 6 naked boys’ and payments ‘for the makeinge new the dragon ... & for 6 naked boyes to beat at it’.¹⁴ These records of direct payment to individual actors provide the clearest indication that the Show employed boys who were paid for their work as the naked boys. Young performers, clothed in leather garb to represent their nakedness, carried the arrows with which they portrayed an attack on the dragon during the procession.

In these performance circumstances, the body of the naked boy revealed an absence of social status that the youth of the performer reaffirmed. The small set of characteristics used in the late middle ages in the visual arts to identify childhood included bows and arrows, and the use of these props in the Midsummer Show marks the naked boys as both young and naked, not merely the latter.¹⁵ Young children contained the potential for both good and evil, and nakedness was seen in this period as a way of revealing the true self.¹⁶ So the naked boys represented the idea of a natural, unshaped self, or a self unaffected by civilization or culture while nonetheless carrying the seeds of adult

society within themselves. These boys did not perform without costume, but instead wore leather garments that depicted them as nude. This visualization of nakedness masked the potential evils of the post-Edenic physical body and redefined it as a neutral space. The absence of clothing also signaled the removal of the social markers provided by clothing, since without it there was no way to create or portray a false self.¹⁷ Thus through the representation of nakedness, the Midsummer Show devised a site beyond cultural definition. Costumed nudity in Chester designated certain children as being outside the hierarchical constraints of status and outside the social order.

Correspondingly, social status appears to have had little effect on the selection of the young actors who played the naked boys, following the general process of recruitment of children for roles in the early Midsummer Show and Whitsun Plays. For certain kinds of parts in both events, a few members of the community supplied appropriate boys chosen on the basis of appearance and acting or singing ability. The participation of boy singers from the cathedral, for example, resulted from payment to an adult who delivered them as a group. A reference to 'mr Chaunter' appears in 1567, when someone speaks to him about providing shepherds' boys.¹⁸ Scholarship identifies him as John Genson, a precentor of the Cathedral who supplied choir boys for outside performances.¹⁹ Since Thomas Poole and Robert Hallwood assembled actors externally on at least one occasion, the naked boys seem to follow this model. Overlap between the methods of obtaining shepherds' boys and naked boys suggests a meritocratic approach to the selection of both, perhaps based on performance ability.

The tradition of representing children as outside the social order decreased, however, in the last decades of the sixteenth century when a slow transition from the presentation of naked boys to that of richly dressed lords occurred in connection with the end of the Plays and with social changes in Chester.²⁰ Unsettled conditions resulting from new populations of deserters, the unruly troops, and the hunger-stricken poor suggest some reasons why, in the last decades of the century, the characters of the naked boys became less desirable. Perceived pressure from the presence of 'outsiders' could have led to a new perspective in which the depiction of persons of 'disorder' was of little interest. In the meantime, more and more of the guilds adopted boys on horseback to lead their companies in the Midsummer Show, and official pronouncement validated the new tradition in 1600. Mayor Hardware caused 'the gigantes *which* vse to goe at midsomer to be broken The dragon and naked | boyes he suffered not to goe' and substituted 'aboie to ride as other Companyes'

in place of the Butchers' devil.²¹ Scholars have scoured this pronouncement for evidence about the banned play characters, but its endorsement of a boy rider garners curiously little attention. Like the armored riders who have been linked with Hardware's desire to restore order, the riding boys represented a visual stratagem for dealing with the difficulties of the day.²² Hardware's reform uniformly imposed a common practice that had arisen in previous decades and regularized representations of childhood such that the 'reformed' Show expressed ideals about elevated status and proper civic hierarchy. The boys on horseback signaled a return to the military origins of the Midsummer Show, but children now displaced armored men as the central element of display. The figure at the head of each company no longer connoted military or defensive power exclusively: the riding child symbolized a 'lord' with all the aristocratic connotations of that term.

Once again, the 'true' age and identity of the performers contributed to the creation of the character, and the desire for elision between actor and role becomes apparent from early on. The boys must have been fairly young since men held them on horseback and the children rested at stops along the procession.²³ In this period, children who learned to ride could do so alone by the age of seven.²⁴ Since younger children rode seated in front of adults, the boy actors were likely seven years or under. Noble children also began to wear miniature versions of adult styles in their seventh year, an initial step toward their education in elite practices and rituals.²⁵ The Midsummer Show mirrored other such aristocratic habits in the depiction of the boy lord, since up to three men might lead a single boy's horse and footmen and maids accompanied the riders.²⁶ These subservient figures serve as external, supplemental markers of noble stature for the audience. The Mercers' records make the representation of elite identity perfectly clear and merge the children with their characters when referring to them with the terms 'lord' or 'lady'.²⁷ In the creation of a symbolic member of the elites, the companies mapped the desired status of the character onto the real body of the performer so that the Chester children 'played' nobility at the same age that aristocratic identity began to be formed through sartorial and ceremonial means, with reflexive consequences for both part and actor.

The mirroring of participant and role had many important implications for issues of status. Since one company presented an aristocratic female figure, hierarchies of gender also informed audience understandings of the riding children. In addition to their lord, an elegantly garbed 'lady' rode before

the Mercers and Ironmongers. An agreement between the two companies describes the origins of the lady and her symbolism:

Item more yt is further ordered concluded and agreed vpon by the same companye. That vpon midsomer even at the watche. shalbe set forth at the charges of the wholl companye of mercers and Iremongers. for the saide show. and the stewards for the tyme beinge, to *provyde* against that tyme, some comely striplinge or boye. to Ride before the same companye, and also to get some other childe, to Ride as agentelwoman or ladye, in respecte that the said companyes of *merc*ers and Iremongers are vnited and made one companye and one fellowship, whereas before they were two companyes.²⁸

In response to the merging of the Mercers and the Ironmongers, the two groups decided to present two figures in the Midsummer Show. The new, hybrid company felt the need to preserve and represent its dual sources of membership, rather than subsume both under one lord and so, in performance, the lord and lady visualized the unity of the guilds through noble marriage. Instead of depicting a homosocial bond between two lords – father and son, brothers, friends – the Mercers and Ironmongers reaffirmed the process of merging through a heterosexual pairing. The depiction of a male and female, joined in marriage, allowed the expression of both distinction and union as well as introducing the symbolism of the ideal patriarchal household.²⁹ The lord and lady suggested elements of hierarchy within the newly formed guild through the representation of gendered family roles.

The potential actors further complicate the character of the lady, since the role may present an exception to the general rule of performance by young boys. A child rode as the lady as early as 1606.³⁰ The company paid for gloves, hose, shoes, and two men to accompany the ‘geirle’ in the 1613 Midsummer Show and 1624 records ‘a *par*r of shewes for the gerlle’ and ‘a *par*r of hose for her’.³¹ The use of the terms ‘geirle’ and ‘gerlle’ could indicate that the child playing the lady is female. The similar role of the London Mercers’ maid, sometimes called ‘Lady M’, for example, was performed by a girl or woman dressed in noble costume.³² London and Chester may have both chosen biological females to play the female characters of the Mercers’ Lady M and the Mercers and Ironmongers’ lady. However, the Chester records frequently refer to participants by their roles and repeatedly label the boy actors as ‘lord’, with no indication of the child behind the title. The term ‘girl’ may simply represent the replacement of ‘lady’ with a diminutive term for a female or a child.³³ Despite the potential presence of a female child as the lady, the ter-

minology may conceal a boy being dressed to play the part. Without evidence for specific performers in this instance, the question must remain open.

The possibility of male and female performers in the Midsummer Show raises ideas about gender with implications for other social and cultural categories, however. If a young girl played the lady, then the sex of female children seems determinate at an early age. Since female children were sexed for marriage before puberty, they could only play female parts. Already seen as 'future women', girl children would have been uniquely suited to marriage-oriented roles such as the lady.³⁴ Alternately, the lady could have been played by a boy, which would correspond to a model of gendered performance that included the cross-dressing young men attached to professional theater troupes.³⁵ If a boy enacted the lady, he would express flexible gender and the exclusion of women from the liminal realms of performance. Unlike the gendered girls who were 'ladies' from birth, the costumed, pre-pubescent male body could be seen as neutral or ambisexual.³⁶ Thus in the transition from naked boy to lord or lady, young performers underwent a transformation from deliberately blank, pre-pubescent innocents to inherently multi-gendered bodies that were ready to be inscribed with masculine or feminine noble identity. The unstable position of boy actors in the gender system also implied flexibility in other spheres, since boys performed characters of varied age and social status.³⁷ For certain parts in the Midsummer Show, the body of the boy became a space ripe for forging the self. Costume expressed potential roles through the visualization of traditional identifiers and symbols and served as a substitute for the boy's natural body, producing new cultural meanings through performance.

The Midsummer Show also reveals attention on the part of the Chester companies to the cultural and social potential of special ceremonies linked to the participation of the child riders. The 'changing' of a boy into a lord through costume became its own ritual, a side-performance that accompanied the other celebrations of the Show. Interest in the act of dressing the boy dates to the introduction of the boy lord, and in 1574 the Painters, Glaziers, Embroiderers, and Stationers spent money 'at the dressyng of the chyld vpon mydsomer euen'.³⁸ The line is unclear as to whether the payment was for the costume or for putting it on the child. By 1588 the records become more specific, however, when the Innkeepers make a payment 'for a quart of wyne to the Ientill women that drest the Chylld' and the Painters, Glaziers, Embroiderers, and Stationers 'paid for drincke att the bowninge of the Childe'.³⁹ In 1591 the Joiners, Carvers, and Turners also paid 'Ientillwomen'

to dress the child.⁴⁰ Whether these truly were woman of noble birth, or as was more likely, women of common birth but good standing, the choice of title is interesting. By employing so-called 'gentlewomen' to costume the children before the Show, the guilds marked the process and production of nobility as a 'gentle' and thus elite act.

The celebrations surrounding the ritual costuming grew more involved and more widespread as the practice of dressing the children before the Midsummer Show developed into a regular ceremony that may have recreated the dressing practices of the aristocracy.⁴¹ The total cost for the Innkeepers' 1588 'dressing' was two pence for a quart of wine, but in 1592 this rose to eight pence for wine and cakes 'when the Child was in Dressinge'.⁴² The quadrupling of expenses suggests more festive circumstances, a lengthening of the task, and a complicated process of costuming. By 1607, many of the companies had taken up the tradition, now paying larger sums than they had before for food and drink. In that year alone, individual guild records preserve four different dressings at which between eight and twenty pence were spent on wine and sugar.⁴³ Similar amounts appear in the accounts throughout the seventeenth century to pay for refreshments during the dressing. A 1633 decision by the Painters, Glaziers, Embroiderers, and Stationers to eliminate their Midsummer banquet and have 'no drinking at all but dressing of the child according to the ould custome' emphasizes the importance of the dressing ceremony to the customs of the Midsummer Show.⁴⁴ Guild members witnessed the dressing in a festive setting that used participatory group ceremony to fashion the socially mobile character of the lord.

The visualization of the social status of the lord character through clothing and accessories aligns with the contemporary desire for 'fashionable' garments. The specific costumes worn by the boy lords in Chester correspond with the growing interest of England's mercantile elite in representing gentility through sartorial means. The children's costumes expressed ideas of richness and luxury, and clothing was both sewn from raw materials and rented for this purpose. All the lords and ladies' costumes shared a basic characteristic: they were made up of several layers of ostentatious and expensive garments. They incorporated large amounts of silk, taffeta, velvet, and ribbons, which might become gowns, cassocks, girdles, breeches, buskins, doublets, and cloaks.⁴⁵ Accessories included hats, gloves, stockings, spurs, Spanish leather shoes, gold chains, and jewels.⁴⁶ The costumes of the lord and lady riding for the Mercers and Ironmongers in 1606, for example, contained gold parchment lace, two dozen gold buttons, and nineteen yards of ribbon, in addition

to many yards of taffeta and silk.⁴⁷ The expense and content of the costumes could even go beyond the personal possessions of the average guild member, as is indicated by a payment for travel by the Beerbrewers in 1607, 'layd out in traveling to procure a Chayne against mydsomer for the Childe'.⁴⁸ Thus some guilds equipped their lords with clothing and accessories more lavish than what was readily available to their members, and such displays of luxury would have been especially striking during years of hardship in Chester. All of this went toward the formation of a 'lord' who derived his social status from what he wore. Expensive clothing identified the characters of the lord and lady, and secondary markers such as footmen and elaborate rituals of dressing supported this symbolism. The use of costume to indicate rank reflects the widespread acceptance of a connection between specific sartorial items and certain elite groups.⁴⁹

The garments that formed the children's costumes expressed a complex set of meanings about status that drew on a long tradition of legislation. From the mid-fourteenth century onward, sumptuary laws in England tried to restrict the consumption of many goods, including clothing, and declared in specific, hierarchical social categories who could wear certain fabrics, furs, and jewelry. Laws of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries prohibited anyone below the rank of knight from wearing silk, for example.⁵⁰ Dress practices became a tool for emerging mercantile groups to engage and transform social identity and, in the era of the Midsummer Show, urban elites used fashion as a means of displaying political and cultural capital.⁵¹ Wealthy citizens and guild members expressed an interest in defining their social order as equal to that of the aristocracy, and non-noble townspeople assumed the 'presuppositions and practices surrounding sumptuary law' when participating in the expression of political power.⁵² In theory, local mayors enforced such laws in urban centers, since a 1562 proclamation gave them authority over the surveillance of towns and cities.⁵³ Although mayors rarely enforced these regulations, contemporaries nonetheless had knowledge of their content. The citizens of Chester were especially familiar with sumptuary law due to a prosecution that took place in that city under a 1554 act forbidding silk to anyone under the status of 'magistrate of corporation' that carried a penalty of three months in prison and a fine of £10.⁵⁴ The increasingly wealthy guild members of cities such as Chester also used exemptions to the laws to their best advantage since local officeholders received a sartorial classification corresponding to that of knights.⁵⁵ Local elites knew the rules of sumptuary law and employed them in their own efforts at self-definition. Rather than being

important for their legal impact, laws regarding dress defined a widely understood system of signs that expressed social status in the urban environment.

The flexible 'language' of clothing also expressed social identity in a performance context, during and after the era of sumptuary law. All regulations exempted actors and generally speaking, 'the theater was a space outside the rules of dress'.⁵⁶ Actors wore the discarded clothing of the nobility and made their own luxurious costumes. The trade in used clothing was vital to dramatic companies since clothes intended for any social rank or gender could be 'rented or sold' safely to actors.⁵⁷ In putting on the 'costumes' of the nobility, actors adopted the identity of the aristocracy while on the stage.⁵⁸ Performance provided a liminal space in which the symbolism of certain garments or accessories could cross legislated social boundaries. The specific meanings of clothing in performance and the association of rich clothing with high status continued long after the repeal of sumptuary law in 1604.⁵⁹ At that point the system opened to all persons who had the resources to purchase or rent formerly forbidden garb, yet despite the removal of legal restrictions, previous understandings about social status and dress still held true. Individual fabrics carried connotations of royalty or other status groups, even after they became legally available to the larger population. Thus, during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, clothing was transformed into a set of explicit markers for social standing through sumptuary law and functioned as a transferable social identifier within the realm of performance.

The Chester companies drew upon precisely this transformative social possibility in their creation of the lords in the Midsummer Show. The guilds avoided the proscriptions of sumptuary law prior to 1604 by dressing children as nobility in a performance context, using rich clothing to evoke a hierarchical understanding in the audience of the social status of the wearer. Fabrics and jewelry defined by sumptuary law as marking certain status groups formed a major portion of the costumes. Regulations in 1463, 1510, and 1533 restricted to the ranks above knight the use of silk, counterfeit silk, cloth of gold or silver, cloth mixed with gold or silver, cloth embroidered with gold, silver, or silk, ermine, sables, velvet, satin, crimson, scarlet, blue, taffeta, and damask and also controlled the use of gold chains, ornaments, and embroidery with precious stones.⁶⁰ Rather than dissuading the Chester guilds from presenting the lord characters, however, the rules must have functioned as guidelines since child actors wore almost all of the forbidden materials. Connections between social status and clothing were essential to the performance of nobility in the Midsummer Show since the success of the 'playing' of

lords and ladies depended on the audience's ability to interpret the fabrics and clothing they saw as producing noble status. Sumptuary legislation established specific social categories in a clear hierarchy, yet the fluid possibilities of costume and performance created porous boundaries. In performing elite social identity, the boy lords claimed high status at the same time that they underscored social rank as a construct.

For the Midsummer Show, the companies chose to depict representations of nobility that drew on the expressive cultural meaning of other performances that featured royal and aristocratic figures, such as pageants and royal entries. The practice of setting a boy lord at the head of the company suggests an overlap between local dramatic activity and the ritual and dramatic traditions of the civic triumph. This interaction appears in general structural aspects, such as the ceremonial procession of city officials and guilds in both types of performances. The citizens of Chester also had exposure to and experience with the specific use of children as elite figures in the civic triumph. An elaborate St. George's Day pageant in 1610 that paid 'homage to the kyng & prynce', for example, centered on boys on horseback who sang and recited in the roles of allegorical figures.⁶¹ In its presentation of riding lords, the Midsummer Show mirrored the imagery of royal performance. The citizens of Chester created and celebrated their own figures of royal and elite status by setting the boy lords at the center of processional performance in the yearly Midsummer Show. The children served as self-reflexive mascots for the guilds when they functioned as a site for the expression of the companies' idealized cultural and social identity and its association with royal power.

Whose ideal did the lords represent, however? Despite the Midsummer Show's affiliation with forms of 'ritualized communal drama' that forged common political bonds, it was not a performance that imagined all Chester's citizens as united and free of social hierarchy.⁶² Changes in the selection method for performers and the identity of specific children who played the boy lords reveal stratification within and among the companies. A shift took place in the recruitment of children for performance at about the same time that the companies began to appoint a boy to ride. Guild officials still held responsibility for finding the child actors, yet the evidence for contracted group roles and skilled boys disappears with the transition from naked boys and carnival figures to lords. The new roles did not require the memorization of lines or the performance of music and thus no longer demanded trained young performers. As early as 1578, instead of hearing auditions, guild members began to 'entreat' fathers to provide their sons for the role of lord. In

1614 and 1626, for example, the Joiners, Carvers, and Turners spent money ‘vppon mr Pilkinton when we went to entreat him that his sonne might Ride’ and on a ‘pynt of wyne in *procuring* the Boy to Ryde’.⁶³ Many of the companies approached specific members of the community about having their sons play the lord. Documents sometimes preserve payments for the actual performance, but meetings over wine to speak with a particular boy’s father appear far more frequently. By the early seventeenth century this ‘entreating’ by the aldermen or stewards had become the common practice for obtaining a rider.

Only a few names of the boys’ fathers survive, but they hint at the identity of these children and suggest why the Chester guilds chose certain boys and not others to lead their companies in the Midsummer Show. For example, a sheriff’s son rode for the Painters, Glaziers, Embroiders, and Stationers in 1634.⁶⁴ This suggests a preference for the son of a locally notable father. In 1578, the Smiths, Cutlers, and Plumbers spent money on ‘mr bauand requestinge his sonne to ryd at midsomer wach’.⁶⁵ Richard Bavand appears elsewhere as a witness to mayoral documents and as a supporter of mayoral actions.⁶⁶ The broader history of the period reveals Bavand to have been a member of one of Chester’s leading families, a rich merchant who himself served as mayor.⁶⁷ Furthermore, in 1614 the Cordwainers and Shoemakers spoke to William Gamuell, the outgoing mayor of 1609, about his son riding at Midsummer.⁶⁸ Gamuell was another former mayor and also head of Chester’s second-richest family, which was closely tied to the Bavands by marriage.⁶⁹ This implies a pattern to the selection of the boys based on local groupings of elite merchant families. The practice of recruiting the sons of men prominent in local political affairs to play the lord appears again in the Joiners, Carvers, and Turners’ records, in which Richard Bolland received payment in two consecutive years, 1629 and 1630, ‘to *provyde* necessaries for his sonne to Ryde for our Companie’ and ‘to furnish his boy for to ryde on Midsomer eve’.⁷⁰ Bolland served as a steward of the company in 1625/6 and 1631/2 and became alderman in 1637/8.⁷¹ His rise in office corresponds suggestively with the choice of his son to represent the Joiners’ lord. Despite the small sample size, these examples indicate that the guilds selected their riders with care to incorporate the boys’ ‘real’ status. Outside the realm of performance, the ‘lords’ were the sons of men who held positions of power in the companies and civic government of Chester.

The identity of the boy lords within the context of Chester points to possible motivations for the new performance practices that originate in local so-

cial trends. During the half-century between 1550 and 1600, Chester's government came more and more to resemble a merchant oligarchy. A shrinking group held positions in its civic government, which increasingly relied on internal elections, and its trade was dominated by ever-smaller numbers of men.⁷² Yet Chester was not truly an oligarchy; despite their place among the city's mercantile elite, these boys were not members of the nobility and generational continuity remained a valuable and sought-after goal.⁷³ Increased emphasis on parental 'training' of children in the seventeenth century suggests that the role of lord might have been seen as preparation for the boys' future social and political roles.⁷⁴ Entry into the most lucrative and prestigious guilds could only be obtained through social status, connections, and wealth.⁷⁵ Considering this alongside the various serious problems that Chester faced in the early decades of the boy lords – unruly and mutinous troops, vagrancy and desertion, and widespread poverty, followed by repeated plague outbreaks – it comes as no surprise that the imagery of enduring authority was welcome to those who put on the Show. In addition to addressing immediate familial and social concerns, the lord characters might have asserted Chester's right to self-governance in the face of external pressure or expressed internal competition during the years of 'prolonged factional division' within the city.⁷⁶ By mirroring the noble imagery of civic triumphs and pageants, the guilds could link a powerful father with his son in a generational bond of elite non-mercantile social status and masculine identity.⁷⁷ Through their bodies, boys provided a physical connection and a creative space. If historical ideas about childhood represent a 'social construct of dominant adult society', then performance here depicted both the desired stability and the social aspiration of the guilds through the sons of already well-to-do families.⁷⁸ Public performance represented the Chester lords as suitable leaders in a time of crisis and after on an aristocratic model to an audience of the governed. Biological and imaginary lineage combined when these sons portrayed the inheritable, legitimate, noble authority desired by guild elites.

A visible discrepancy existed, however, between the costumed child lord of the Midsummer Show and the 'true' royal personages who appeared in triumphs. Across England, costume and processions contributed to the active dissemination of the idea of 'rule by the rich'.⁷⁹ The shapers of the Midsummer Show wanted to associate themselves and the Chester leadership with an ideal of aristocracy that had been translated for the particular circumstances of their urban sphere. So the audience for the Midsummer Show might have accepted the desired image of the boy lord as a representation of authorized,

good leadership even as local, insider knowledge of the participants simultaneously provoked questions about the ability of costume or expensive clothing to accurately reveal the 'true' status of the wearer. If earlier sumptuary laws were attempts to control the production of status, then the Chester Midsummer Show was one place to employ the resultant system of signs against traditional and determinate social groupings. No mere 'spectacle staged for visiting crowds', this performance addressed and expressed specific local concerns by sending a message to the high and low, the insider and outsider alike.⁸⁰ The representation of the small sons of wealthy citizens as lords served as one way for groups to re-imagine themselves in the attempt to gain legitimacy and longevity in their rule and to promote an image of Chester as a place of order and affluence. At the same time, station and status were themselves revealed as fabrications; onlookers could decide for themselves how to understand the markers of nobility, both inside and outside the realm of performance.

Thus in Chester, the participation of children in the Midsummer Show provided a vehicle for ideas about gender and social rank, revealing complex local understandings of children and society in the process. When young boys played 'naked boys', performing in leather costumes, they represented an earlier, unconstructed self at the same moment that they were being dressed to conceal physical identity. In costuming 'nakedness' the Chester guilds established a site beyond cultural definition, designating children as outside the hierarchical structure of society. Historical changes in Chester, however, reduced the appeal of the naked boys and costume would come to serve as an explicit marker for status. Rather than being depicted as stationless and ungendered, the bodies of boys who played lords became a site for the formation and re-formation of the social order. In the process, the method of finding children to participate changed. Using their own children, the elite of the Chester guilds shaped a figure of high status in a ritualized ceremony of costuming in which elaborate garments and accessories that carried symbolic weight indicated to the viewer the social standing of the wearer. Aristocratic costumes that invoked cultural definitions of sumptuary law made this performance of hierarchy possible. This in turn permitted guilds to display transformed social identity and power, while gender and social status functioned together to transmit ideas about masculine, urban identity. In the instance of the boy lords, the sons of prominent men became the instruments of the companies' social aspirations as they were manifested in aristocratic clothing. Through sumptuous costume, the guilds' attitudes toward status were woven into gender and made visible. The expensive garments served as a substitute

for the body underneath, transforming the boy or girl into a man or woman and concealing 'true' gender and social identity. Although the transition to boy lords in the Midsummer Show was not a literal displacing of the naked boys, it did mean a shift in representational practice and meaning. The lord characters were more desirable to civic authorities during a time of crisis, and kept their expressive power in an era of external pressure and internal conflict. Moving from outsider to insider, the 'neutral', 'uncivilized' body became a site for the merchant elite to symbolically establish a local 'royalty', although a problematic one. Combining the ritual and symbolism of the civic triumph with the sartorial freedom of the theater allowed the guilds of Chester to produce a social structure in which certain of their members held a higher status than might otherwise have been warranted; the boy lords literally put on the desired signs of nobility on behalf of specific members of the mercantile community.

Notes

- 1 Portions of this article were presented in papers given at the New York City Doctoral Consortium on 20 April 2001 and at the International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan on 4 May 2002. Special thanks are due to *Early Theatre's* anonymous readers for their careful, detailed comments and suggestions. Any flaws that remain, of course, are wholly my own.
- 2 See Lucy Munro, 'The Humour of Children: Performance, Gender, and the Early Modern Children's Companies', *Literature Compass* 2.1 (2005) and Brandon Centerwall, 'A Greatly Exaggerated Demise: The Remaking of the Children of Paul's as the Duke of York's Men (1608)', *Early Theatre* 9.1 (2006), 85–107 for examinations of children in the London acting companies. Bibliography for the subject may be found in Centerwall's notes 1, 6, and 74. For youthful cross-dressing on stage, see Stephen Orgel, *Impersonations: The Performance of Gender in Shakespeare's England* (Cambridge, 1996) and his bibliography. The entries for 'boys' in the indices of R.W. Ingram (ed), *REED: Coventry* (Toronto, 1981), 651 and Lawrence M. Clopper (ed), *REED: Chester*, (Toronto, 1979), 561 provide examples of the variety of evidence to be found on children in the REED series. Nicholas Orme, *Medieval Children* (New Haven, 2001), 163–97 documents children at play. For more general studies of early modern childhood, see Linda Pollock, *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from*

1500 to 1900 (Cambridge, 1983) and Hugh Cunningham, *Children and Childhood in Western Society Since 1500*, 2nd ed (Harlow, 2005).

- 3 The larger meaning of children's roles in the Chester Midsummer Show has gone largely unanalyzed. For general evidence of boys participating in the Whitsun Plays and playing music, see David Mills, *Recycling the Cycle: The City of Chester and its Whitsun Plays* (Toronto, 1998) and Elizabeth Baldwin, *Paying the Piper: Music in Pre-1642 Cheshire*, EDAM Monograph Series 29 (Kalamazoo, 2002).
- 4 Only the accounts of the Mercers, Ironmongers, Grocers, and Apothecaries refer to the lord character by his title. The term 'lord' dates to 1625 with 'the boye yat ride lord', but a 'lady' appears in the earliest entry for the company, in 1606. This suggests that the male figure was seen as a lord all along. In this article I will apply the term 'lord' to all the riding children, since the other guilds also present a figure of high status. Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 366 and 214.
- 5 For the role of Chester in the Irish wars, urban troubles across England in the last decade of the sixteenth century, and a discussion of the connections between Hardware's ban and contemporary social upheaval in Chester, see chapter six of John McGurk, *The Elizabethan Conquest of Ireland: The 1590s Crisis* (Manchester, 1997), 137–64, entitled 'Chester: The Chief Military Port for the Irish Service in the 1590s', Peter Clark, 'A Crisis Contained? The Condition of English Towns in the 1590s', *The European Crisis of the 1590s: Essays in Comparative History*, Peter Clark (ed) (London, 1985), 44–66, and Robert Tittler, 'Henry Hardware's Moment and the Puritan Attack on Drama', *Early Theatre* 1 (1998), 39–54.
- 6 For a general description of the origins and format of the Midsummer Show, see Mills, *Recycling*, 85–8.
- 7 For an overview of the role of play characters in the Midsummer Show, see Mills, 88–94.
- 8 Scholarship remains undecided on the issue of boys versus puppets. David Mills refers to 'bearers or wearers' (90), for example.
- 9 Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 71–2.
- 10 Clopper, 480.
- 11 The London Midsummer Show and Lord Mayors' Pageants also employed representations of children and nudity during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. However, the child's body carried a different potential meaning than it did in Chester. Naked boys and nakedness were associated with darkened skin and thus Moors. For example, in 1519 ten boys were paid 2d apiece for playing the 'mores' in the London Midsummer Show. In 1521 naked boys who had been dyed black 'like devils' accompanied the King of the Moors. The records for that year include a wage paid to sixty 'moryans grete & small', as well as a payment for 'fyre for the moryans

- aft' they had put of ther clothes & were nakyd'. The payment for a fire to keep the actors warm may indicate a practice of actual nakedness in London, paired with body makeup to indicate the role being played. This practice was ongoing and as late as 1620 the Lord Mayor's Pageant included a figure with 'naked limmes' and the 'naked shape' of a 'blackamoor'. Unlike the naked boys of Chester, these boys were not naked innocents who battled the infernal enemy. Their uncovered bodies revealed the dark color of devils. For primary sources, see Ian Lancashire (ed), *Dramatic Texts and Records of Britain* (Toronto, 1984), 189, Jean Robertson and D.J. Gordon (eds), *A Calendar of Dramatic Records in the Livery Companies of London, 1485–1640*, Malone Society Collections (Oxford, 1954), 3.4 and 6–7, and John Nichols (ed), *Progresses, Processions, and Magnificent Festivities of King James I* (London, 1828), 4.619–20.
- 12 See Meg Twycross, 'Apparell Comlye', *Aspects of Early English Drama*, Paula Ness (ed) (Cambridge, 1983), 39, Twycross's 'The Chester Cycle Wardrobe', *Staging the Chester Cycle*, David Mills (ed) (Leeds, 1985), 100–23, and Clifford Davidson, 'Nudity, the Body, and Early English Drama', *Journal of English and Germanic Philology* 98.4 (1999), 499–522. Davidson discusses the use of leather body stockings in Chester and elsewhere, concluding that such costumes represented the two extremes of Edenic innocence and shameful damnation.
 - 13 Chester had an important leather manufacturing industry during this period. C.P. Lewis and A.T. Thacker (eds), *VCH: A History of the County of Chester*, vol 5, pt 1: The City of Chester, General History and Topography (Woodbridge, 2003), 102–9.
 - 14 Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 478 and 481. The latter entry appears in a list of expenses for the Midsummer Show that pairs constructed objects with the live performers who used them, such as the hobby horses and the boys who danced with them.
 - 15 Elizabeth Sears, *The Ages of Man: Medieval Interpretations of the Life Cycle* (Princeton, 1986), 5 and 134. Children's play in late medieval and early modern England also frequently integrated toy bows and arrows. Nicholas Orme, 'The Culture of Children in Medieval England', *Past and Present* 148 (1995), 53 and 63.
 - 16 The conflict in the Show between the naked boys and the dragon, a traditional symbol of evil and the devil, deliberately situates the boys in opposition to the infernal enemy. Yet late medieval and early modern attitudes toward children were more complex than 'modern ideolog[ies] of childhood innocence'; such ideas encompassed both virtue and vice, with increased emphasis in Protestant regions on the presence of original sin. Kim Phillips, *Medieval Maidens: Young Women and Gender in England, 1270–1540* (Manchester, 2003), 4, Orme, *Medieval Children*, 75, Pollock, *Forgotten Children*, 102, and Cunningham, *Children and Childhood*, 47–8. For understandings

- of nakedness, see Claire Sponsler, *Drama and Resistance: Bodies, Goods, and Theatricality in Late Medieval England* (Minneapolis, 1997), 7.
- 17 Sponsler, *Drama and Resistance*, 11. Social status came from covering, not revealing, the body. Orme, *Medieval Children*, 75.
- 18 Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 81.
- 19 David Mills, 'Music in the City', *Paying the Piper: Music in Pre-1642 Cheshire*, Elizabeth Baldwin (ed) (Kalamazoo, 2002), 60–1.
- 20 The Archbishop of York banned the Plays in 1572 and the last performance, in 1575, was presented on a reduced scale. For a financial argument as to why play characters disappeared, see David Mills, 'Who Are Our Customers? The Audience for Chester's Plays', *Medieval English Theatre* 20 (1998), 104–17. While it might be true that the lords were a less expensive form of performance than the full plays, for local interests the riders also offered the other advantages discussed below.
- 21 Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 197. Despite their supposed elimination, the forbidden characters sporadically reappeared.
- 22 The perceived usefulness of military imagery in combating Chester's immediate troubles is discussed in Tittler, 'Henry Hardware's Moment', 39–54. Although groups of men in armor accompanied the guilds, they did not lead the parade. See Clopper, 168 for an example of men in 'harness', a type of body armor.
- 23 Clopper, 437, 460, and 397.
- 24 Shulamith Shahar, *Childhood in the Middle Ages* (New York, 1990), 210. The seventh year of life was generally perceived to be a point of transition from infancy to childhood or youth. Alexandra Shepard, *Meanings of Manhood in Early Modern England* (Oxford, 2003), 54–8 and Orme, *Medieval Children*, 6, 68, and 79. For the significance of riding in the early modern era, see the essays in Karen Raber and Treva J. Tucker (eds), *The Culture of the Horse: Status, Discipline, and Identity in the Early Modern World* (New York, 2005).
- 25 Shahar, *Childhood*, 210.
- 26 For example, Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 144 and 319.
- 27 See, for example: Clopper, 380.
- 28 This document is undated. Clopper, 471.
- 29 For the ideal of the patriarchal household, see Cordelia Beattie, 'Governing Bodies: Law Courts, Male Householders, and Single Women in Late Medieval England', *The Medieval Household in Christian Europe c. 850–1550: Managing Power, Wealth, and the Body*, Cordelia Beattie, Anna Masalakovic, and Sarah Rees Jones (eds) (Turnhout, 2003), 199–220.
- 30 Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 215.
- 31 Clopper, 279 and 361.

- 32 The 1534 Lord Mayor's Show employed females and recorded them by name: 'It to Elyn Tuck that plaid the ladye .M. Elizabeth smyth agnes Newell & to Margret Cristean the iij ladies that satt in the same pagent'. Robertson and Gordon (eds), *A Calendar of Dramatic Records*, 40. This article can only touch on some of the themes and evidence that I presented in a paper for the 2002 International Congress on Medieval Studies in Kalamazoo, Michigan: 'Sexual Bodies in the Assumption of the Virgin: Women on Stage in Late Medieval England'. Very generally, I argued that the potential presence of women should be kept in mind for roles recorded in unclear terminology since a small number of examples indicate the presence of female actors. Unfortunately, no definitive evidence survives for Chester. For the potential contributions of women in Chester to the Whitsun Plays, see Denise Ryan, 'Women, Sponsorship and the Early Civic Stage: Chester's Worshipful Wives and the Lost Assumption Play', *Records of Renaissance Drama* 40 (2001), 149–75.
- 33 In the usage of a century earlier, 'girle' could refer to a child of either sex or to a female child. Hans Kurath (ed), *The Middle English Dictionary* (Ann Arbor, 1952–2001).
- 34 Lynnea Brumbaugh-Walter discusses how children's literature encouraged girls to see themselves as 'future women', not children. See her 'Selections from the *Gesta Romanorum*', *Medieval Literature for Children*, Daniel T. Kline (ed) (New York, 2003), 33.
- 35 The contemporary transition of a children's company to an adult company is examined in Centerwall, 'A Greatly Exaggerated Demise'.
- 36 In literature, male children often functioned as a kind of 'generic' child, with female children being generally absent. Brumbaugh-Walter, 'Selections', 33.
- 37 Cross-dressing blurred gender boundaries and thus produced a breakdown of other social and cultural definitions, too. See Ad Putter, 'Transvestite Knights in Medieval Life and Literature', *Becoming Male in the Middle Ages*, Jeffrey Jerome Cohen and Bonnie Wheeler (eds) (New York, 1997), 281 and 285.
- 38 Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 100.
- 39 Clopper, 150 and 151.
- 40 Clopper, 164.
- 41 Heads of households also used ceremonial dining to establish elite male identity. See Sharon Wells, 'Manners Maketh Man: Living, Dining, and Becoming a Man in the Later Middle Ages', *Rites of Passage: Cultures of Transition in the Fourteenth Century*, Nicola F. McDonald and W.M. Ormrod (eds) (York, 2004), 67–81.
- 42 Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 150, 165.
- 43 Clopper, 216, 218–19, 220, and 221.
- 44 Clopper, 418.

- 45 For particularly lavish examples, see the 1606 and 1612 entries for the Mercers and Ironmongers: Clopper, 214–16 and 273–4.
- 46 For example: Clopper, 214–15.
- 47 Clopper, 214–15.
- 48 Clopper, 218.
- 49 Sponsler, *Drama and Resistance*, 13.
- 50 Wilfred Hooper traces the restrictions on silk, among other goods, in ‘The Tudor Sumptuary Laws’, *English Historical Review* 30 (1915), 433–49.
- 51 Alan Hunt, *Governance of the Consuming Passions: A History of Sumptuary Law* (New York, 1996), 144, 170, and 307. The desire for fashionable clothes and the emulation of the elite garb was represented in literature, too. See Kim Phillips, ‘Desiring Virgins: Maidens, Martyrs and Femininity in Late Medieval England’, *Youth in the Middle Ages*, P.J.P. Goldberg and Felicity Riddy (eds) (York, 2004), 53.
- 52 Hunt, *Governance*, 164.
- 53 4 Eliz I procl 6 May 1562, Humphrey Dyson, *A Booke Contayning All Such Proclamations as Were Published During the Reign of the Late Queen Elizabeth* (London, 1618), no 45, and Paul L. Hughes and James F. Larkin (eds), *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, vol 2 (New Haven, 1969), no 493.
- 54 1 and 2 Philip and Mary c 2, *Statutes of the Realm*, vol 4 (London, 1810–22), 239. Hooper calls attention to the Chester prosecution in ‘Tudor Sumptuary Laws’, 436.
- 55 Such privileges were extended to mayors and aldermen, for example. 3 Edw IV c 5, *Statutes of the Realm*, 2.399–402.
- 56 Sponsler, *Drama and Resistance*, 177 n 84.
- 57 Peter Stallybrass, ‘Worn Worlds: Clothes and Identity on the Renaissance Stage’, *Subject and Object in Renaissance Culture*, Margreta de Grazio, Maureen Quilligan, and Peter Stallybrass (eds) (Cambridge, 1996), 302 and 305. Stallybrass notes that a clothing trade existed in Chester: in 1560 the Church of the Holy Trinity sold the ‘best cope & vestment & appurtenantances’ to the mayor and in 1569–70 it ‘sould to Thomas sheuynntons sonne the belman & Tho Dychers sonne 3 Course vestments & a course Stremer to make players garments’ (citing Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 89). For a larger discussion of the trade in used clothing in early modern England, see Beverly Lemire, *Dress, Culture, and Commerce: The English Clothing Trade Before the Factory* (London and New York, 1997).
- 58 Stallybrass, ‘Worn Worlds’, 312.
- 59 1 Jac I c 25, *Statutes of the Realm* vol 4 pt 2, 1050–2. The repeal was seen as a temporary step in the reform of sumptuary law and did not intend to eliminate them for good. Hunt, *Governance*, 322–4.

- 60 1463: 3 Edw IV c 5, *Statutes of the Realm* 2.399–402, 1510: 1 Hen VIII c 14, *Statutes of the Realm* 3.8–9, and 1533: 24 Hen VIII c 13, *Statutes of the Realm* 3.430–2.
- 61 The performance, in honor of the absent Prince Henry, also included the mayor and ‘his brethren ... with their best apparell’: Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 258–60. A detailed description appears in a contemporary pamphlet, which lauds how ‘Zeale procured it; Love devis’d it; Boyes perform’d it; Men beheld it, and none but fooles dispraised it The chiefest part of this people-pleasing spectacle, consisted in three Bees, viz. Boyes, Beasts, and Bels’. Thomas Corser (ed), *Chester’s Triumph in Honor of Her Prince, As it Was Performed Upon St. George’s Day 1610* (Manchester, 1844), 4. Although it is beyond the scope of this project, I have discussed elsewhere how this record of the pageant places particular emphasis on the performance roles of boys.
- 62 Gordon Kipling highlights this potential communal effect, outside the context of Chester, in *Enter the King: Theatre, Liturgy, and Ritual in the Medieval Civic Triumph* (Oxford, 1998), 47. Great variations in levels of luxury existed among the various companies’ lords, since less-wealthy guilds borrowed or rented expensive items such as jewelry or hats. Their lords must have strongly contrasted with the opulent display made by the Mercers and Ironmongers’ lord and lady, for example.
- 63 Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 291–2 and 379. Mr Pilkington may be Francis Pilkington, an acclaimed composer who had been attached to the Cathedral since 1602. He enjoyed ties of patronage with the Earl of Derby and his brother and father were in the Earl’s service. If the reference is to this Pilkington, then the use of his boy provided a rare conjunction of musical and aristocratic connections in one child. See *VCH: Chester*, 5.1.102–9 and Baldwin, *Paying the Piper*, 129–30.
- 64 Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 413.
- 65 Clopper, 122.
- 66 Richard Bavand appears as a witness in 1579–80, 1599–1600, and 1603. Clopper, 129, 195, and 486.
- 67 *VCH: Chester*, 5.1.102–9.
- 68 Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 282 and Mills, *Recycling*, 67.
- 69 *VCH: Chester*, 5.1.102–9.
- 70 Clopper, *REED: Chester*, 396–7 and 401.
- 71 Clopper, 374, 405, and 441.
- 72 *VCH: Chester*, 5.1.97–109.
- 73 *VCH: Chester*, 5.1.102–9. For contemporary awareness of social fluidity, see Barbara A. Hanawalt, *Growing Up in Medieval London: The Experience of Childhood in History* (Oxford, 1993), 90, Peter Laslett, *The World We Have Lost*, 3rd ed (New York, 1984), 36–52, Keith Wrightson, *English Society: 1580–1680* (London, 1982),

- 26–30, and Lawrence Stone, ‘Social Mobility in England, 1500–1700’ *Past and Present* 33 (1966), 15–55.
- 74 Pollock, *Forgotten Children*, 100–1 and 112–13.
- 75 Hanawalt, *Growing Up*, 132.
- 76 The decades after 1600 saw the growing intrusion of central government into Chester’s affairs. Tittler, ‘Henry Hardware’s Moment’, 45. The years 1602–33 were particularly rife with intra-merchant disputes in Chester. William Gamuell, for example, became embroiled in decades-long disagreement over the collection of tax on imported wine. The conflict postdates his son’s performance, but one might speculate on how such internal divisions affected the choice of boys for the lord. *VCH: Chester*, 5.1.97–109.
- 77 Age distinctions could compartmentalize society through performance, as was the case in sixteenth-century Coventry. The opposite occurs in the Chester Midsummer Show, where ideas about age create generational continuity. For the former, see Brandon Alakas, ‘Seniority and Mastery: The Politics of Ageism in the Coventry Cycle’, *Early Theatre* 9.1 (2006), 15–36.
- 78 Although this quote addresses the history of older youths, the insight applies equally well to young children. See Paul Griffiths, *Youth and Authority: Formative Experiences in England 1560–1640* (New York, 1996), 1. Situated at the edge of the adult community, children in literature often represented the community itself, particularly if the group was an emerging one. Jeffrey Jerome Cohen, ‘The Green Boy: Conquest, Memory, and Gender’, Conference on Masculinities in the Long Middle Ages, CUNY Graduate Center, 17 March 2006.
- 79 Stephen Rigby, ‘Urban “Oligarchy” in Late Medieval England’, *Towns and Townspeople in the Fifteenth Century*, John A.F. Thomson (ed) (New Hampshire, 1988), 64 and 66–7.
- 80 Mills, *Recycling*, 100.